



# FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now

## **Report on the survey on Festivals & Cities, Regions** (Villages, Towns, Islands, Quartiers, etc.)

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**festivalfinder.eu**  
BY EUROPEAN FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION (EFA)



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# 1. ON THE SURVEY

The survey was designed and carried out as part of the **FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now** project which aims at identifying the conditions of alliances with the cities and regions that constitute festivals' geographical and social setting, and to enhance such alliances across Europe. The project is led by a consortium led by the European Festivals Association (EFA) involving the City of Bergen, Italiafestival, Summa Artium, EURACTIV and publiq, and is co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. An important constituent of the project is to explore for what benefits and in what ways festivals - and, in the future cities and regions - can affiliate to the FestivalFinder portal. Such an objective requires deeper acquaintance with the characteristics of the bonds that connect festivals to their physical and social environment: the survey was conceived with the aim of assembling such knowledge.

Festivals registered to FestivalFinder.eu were invited to respond to the online questionnaire consisting of 18 questions, identifying its purpose as follows: the **FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now** project wishes to expand and unlock the potential in the common web portal for European arts festivals. We want to identify what the various stakeholders – public authorities, tourism businesses, and especially festival organisers – can expect from the portal. The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect information that can be used for designing models of strategic co-operation with the administrations as well as new business models with tourism.”

The questionnaire “Survey on Festivals & Cities, Regions” was launched on 22 January 2021 and was available for a month. It closed on 21 February 2021. The 178 evaluable responses (after the deletion of duplicates and incomplete entries) by festival organisers originated from 37 countries, the great majority from Europe. (See Annex for the list of countries.)

The survey has been disseminated by the consortium with a focus on EFA's communities: EFA members, EFFE Hubs (Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe), festivals registered on FestivalFinder.eu website among which the EFFE Labels. EFA has also shared it on its social media channels.

The participants of the survey explored the various facets of their relationships to the communities that give space to their programmes – and in most cases much more. The questions were designed to expose the added value that both parts, festivals and their settings, gain from their relationship.

The respondents were not pre-selected. Therefore, the findings of the survey are not intended to not convey a representative sample of today's festival scene. They are revealing, however, for the kind of festivals which FestivaFinder.eu serves (it is indicative that only three rock festivals volunteered to the survey).

The organisers of the survey – the members of the consortium of the **FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now** project – are grateful to all those festivals that took part, as well as the EFFE Hubs that have played an important role in disseminating the questionnaire in their respective country, and the festival colleagues who have shared the questionnaire around. The organisers also give special thanks to the Budapest Observatory of Summa Artium, especially to Péter Inkei and Zsuzsanna Hunyadi, and the trainees Sampo Ryoppy and Camille Durnez, who have helped in processing, analysing and interpreting the data collected.

## 2. FESTIVALS AND CITIES

### 2.1. The relationship between cities and festivals

As well as urban festivals, a variety of other events have been enrolling on FestivalFinder.eu: those taking place in villages or different and sometimes unusual natural settings (farms, islands, lakes, woods, ruins etc.). Luckily, quite a few such atypical out-of-town festivals joined the survey as well. For sake of simplicity, the word *city* was applied in the questionnaire, covering all kinds of geographical entities that are to some extent organised as a collective entity.

The survey asked about the following **dimensions of this relationship**:

- Cities' attitude, as perceived by festivals
- The intensity of the relationship
- Festivals' primary contact with the city
- The percentage share of the city in the festival budgets
- Festivals' position in the communication plans and on the city portal
- Other sorts of the support festivals get from cities
- The sustainability of the relationship
- Cities' expectations from festivals

Furthermore, festivals were asked to give narrative accounts of particularly important or innovative co-operation projects they have carried out in conjunction with cities.

### 2.2. Cities' attitude towards festivals

Answers to the first question are reassuring. 41% of the responding festival organisers find that festivals are a focus of attention for their city. At the other end, as few as 3% complain about a state of neglect.

The survey reveals some of the facets of the rich scale of the relationship between festivals and their environment. One indicator – which is at least as one-sided as the GDP figure in describing the performance of countries – is **the percentage that the city represents in the festival's budgets**.

In case of the 178 responding festivals the average is **26%**. The following two figures illustrate the enormous variety of this indicator:

<b>The share of the city in the festival budget</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Number of responding festivals	7	27

Ten of the festivals with no municipal finances were compensated by their regions (which we shall discuss later) but there are 17 participants without subsidy from either. This is a surprising share – but is a signal of some degree of representativity, in the sense that the sample is not overly biased towards municipal or regionally run festivals.

By presenting the perceptions of festivals about their **cities' attitudes** towards them, the graph displays the percentage of city financing in the group of respondents that expressed opinions about the issue. The largest group – the above mentioned 41% of responding festivals that feel in focus – get, on average, 35% of their finances from the city.

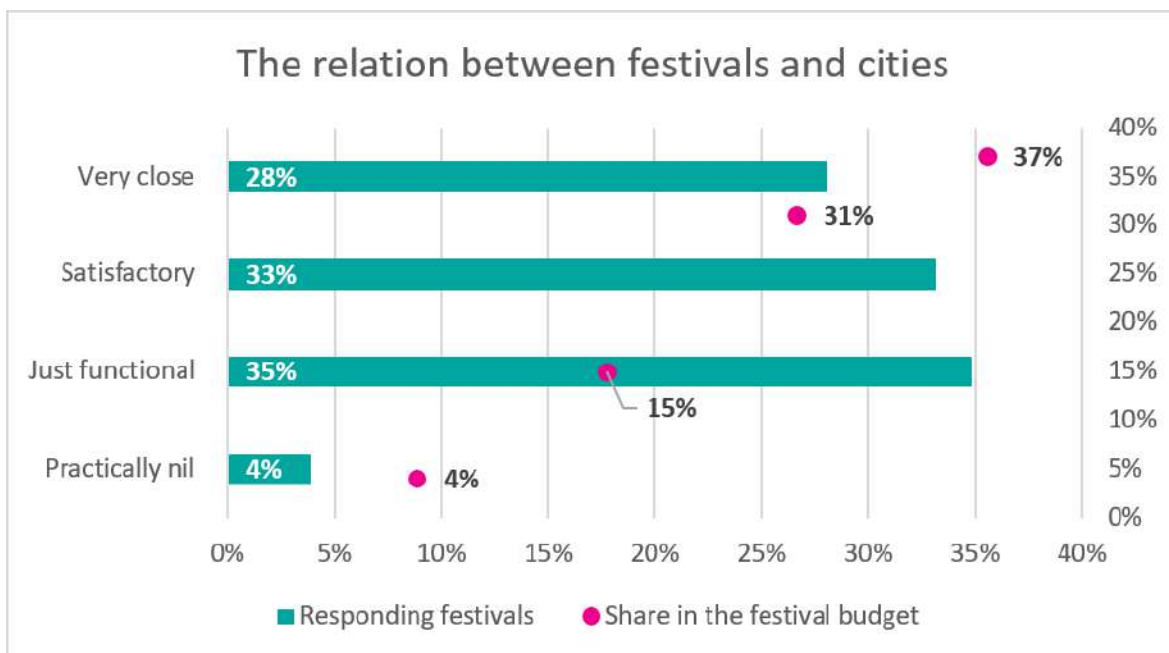


In the few cases where neglect is experienced, the average municipal contribution to the budget is only 5%.

## 2.3. The relationship between festivals and cities

Most festivals in the survey are run in conjunction with the city. Most often, in 35% of cases, the co-operation is “just functional (we observe official requirements and get minimum support)”. That “minimum support” is, however, not negligible. On average, 15% of the budgets come from the cities in this segment of respondents, in addition to other kinds of assistance that we shall see later. Only seven festivals reported about no contact with the municipality (4%, “practically nil”).

The match between **the intensity of the relationship** and the rate of municipal financing confirms the same correspondence as in the first case: the closer the bond, the higher the percentage of financial contribution from the city. It reaches 37% for those, where the link is “very close”. Many of these are owned by the city or are run in close conjunction (e.g. they bear the city's name).

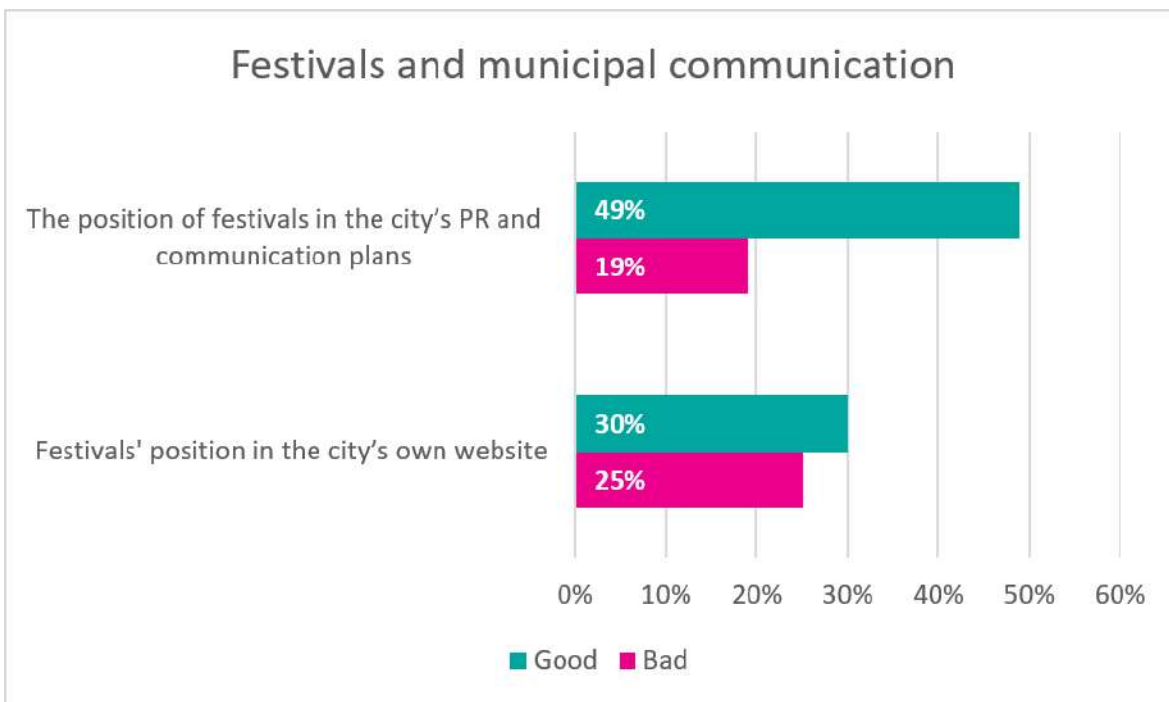


Answers to a separate question revealed that in the great majority of cases (69%) the co-operation takes place **through the cultural department of the city**. The tourism department is the second most frequent interface (21%), while direct link to the Mayor’s office and the political section occurs in 18%. This indicates that the festivals in the FestivalFinder.eu remit are clearly seen as primarily cultural activities.

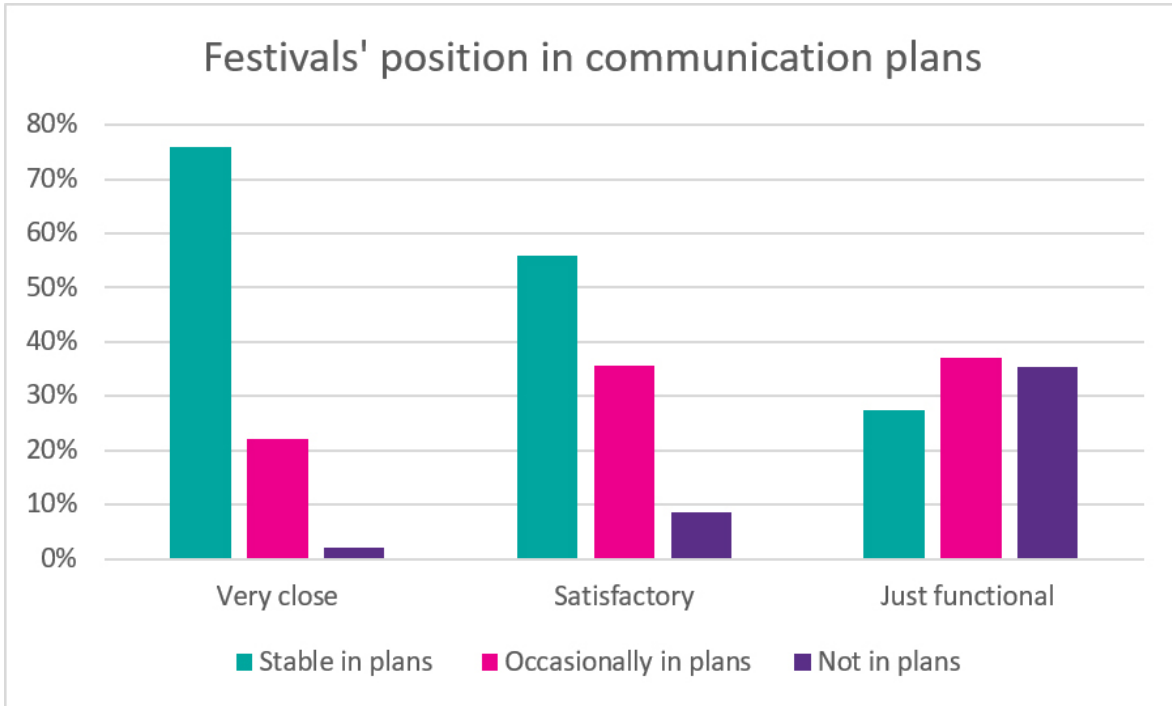


## 2.4. Co-operation in communication

The partnership between festivals and cities can take a variety of forms. Reference was made to the financial connection above and we shall touch upon some aspects of logistical collaboration. Next to these, communication is the most widespread and usually most fruitful area of co-operation between festivals and their social and administrative setting. The survey inquired about this with two questions. Respondents were first asked to indicate whether they had stable, occasional, or practically no place in the PR and communication plans in their cities. Second, they described their position on the municipal website (good visibility – not prominent enough – nil). Skipping the intermediate positions, the diagram shows the good or poor situations, revealing that the percentage of festivals that are well integrated into the communication operations of the city is much higher than those left out (49% vs 19%). More balanced is the rate of satisfaction with the websites, where invisible festivals (“bad”) are nearly as numerous as the ones that enjoy good visibility.

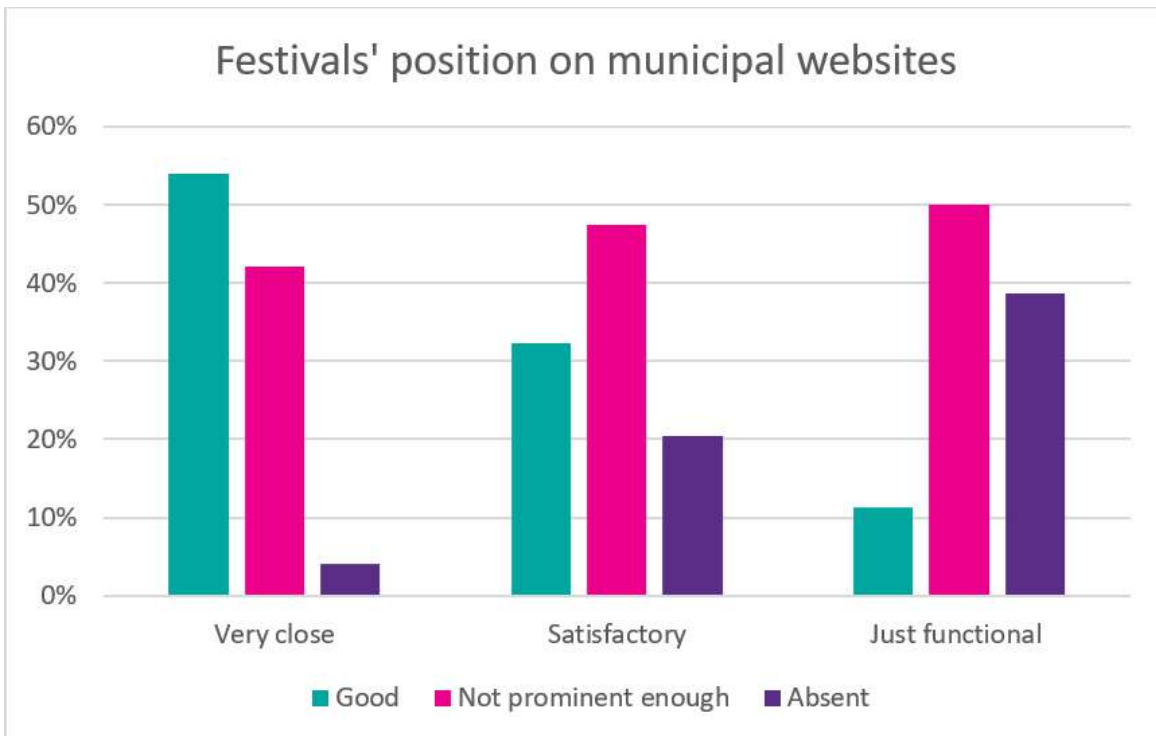


In the following, involvement in municipal communication is correlated to the degree of closeness of the relationship between festival and city. Practically all those festivals that are in very close contact with the city are included in the municipal communication plan. This position is stable for 76% of this group of festivals. (The festivals in the survey with no relationship to the city are too few to show their internal composition and compare it with the three larger clusters.)



## 2.5. Place on the website

Portraying the correlation between the strength of the bond between festival and city and the position on the city's website produces – not surprisingly – the same trend. The closer the connection, the better the visibility.



The questionnaire did not specify “website of the city” but presumably the responses covered both the official main portals and the tourism-oriented parallel sites that most cities operate.

## 2.6. The nature of the help from the city

Besides cash, festivals usually receive a variety of other assistance from cities. The use of premises and technical equipment **free of charge** or at special preferential fees are the most typical examples.

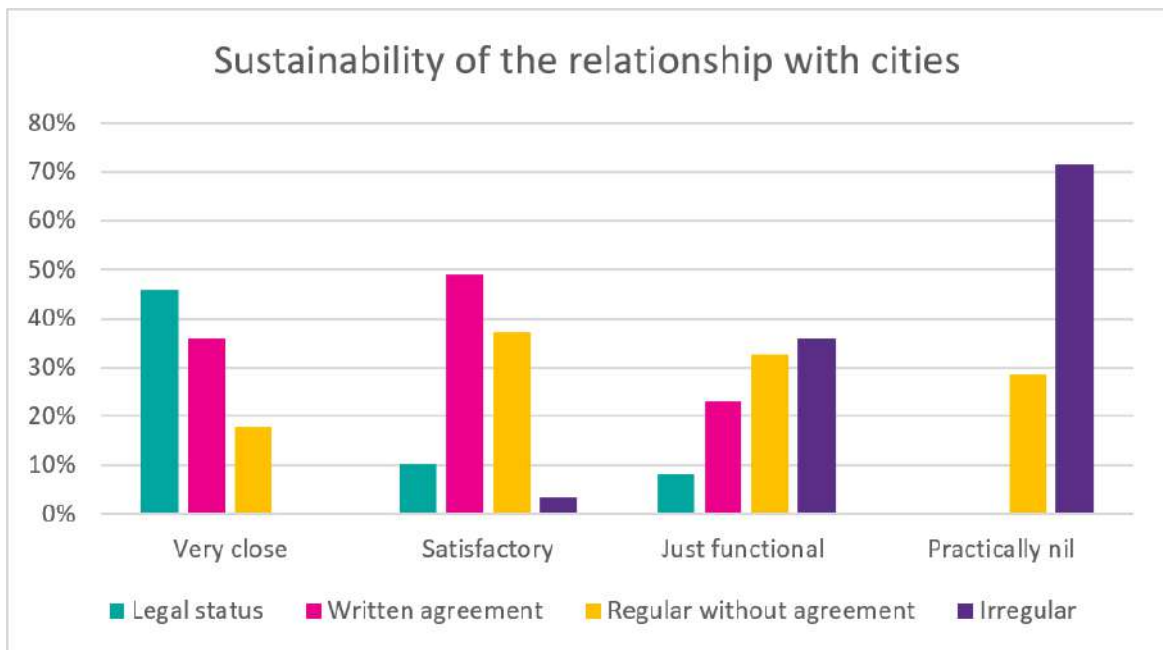


58% of festivals with a close connection to the municipality mentioned free use of services but this practice is widespread also in the two largest groups (those in satisfactory or functional relationship).

## 2.7. The sustainability of the relationship

The great majority of respondents to the questionnaire maintain a stable liaison with the city. In most cases this is based on **formal agreement**. Even those festivals that keep distance from the municipality reported about some sort of connection that is “regular without formal agreement”.

<b>Liaison with the city</b>	<b>Festivals</b>
Guaranteed by the legal status of the festival	19%
Based on multiyear agreement	33%
Regular without formal agreement	28%
Ad hoc and unpredictable	15%
Other	5%
<b>Total, 178 festivals</b>	<b>100%</b>

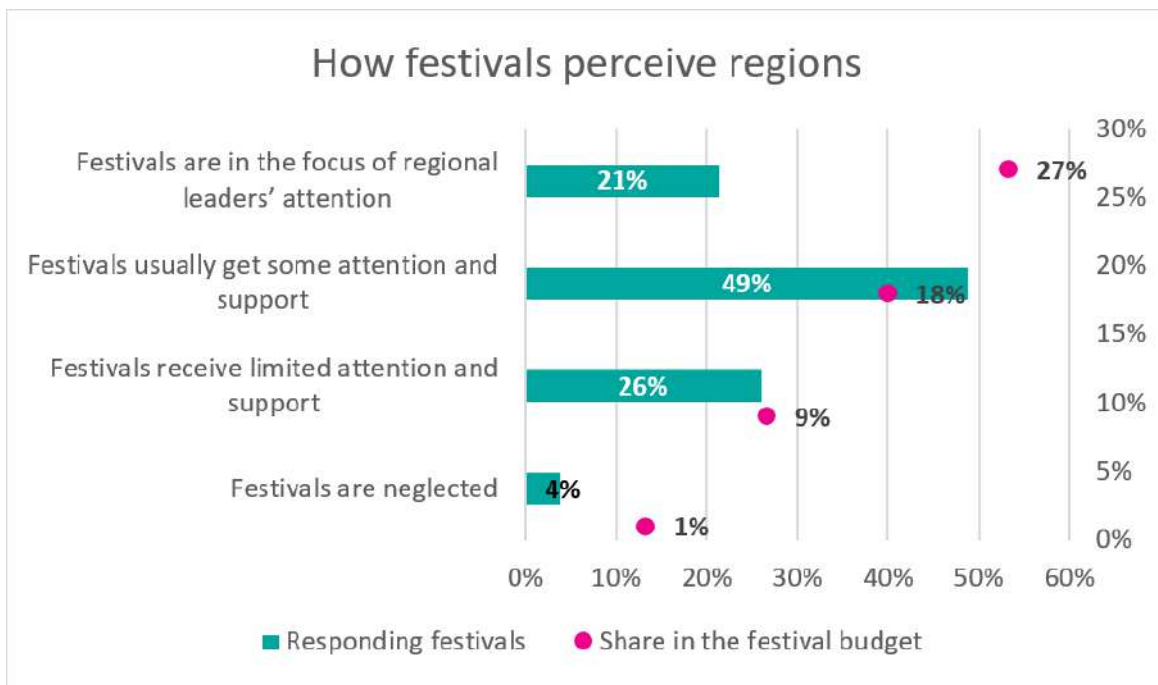


# 3. FESTIVALS AND REGIONS

## 3.1. The attitudes of regions towards festivals

The questionnaire asked all participants whether a relationship with the regional administration (county, province, department etc.) was relevant for their festival. 131 festivals gave an affirmative answer. They were then asked about the same sequence of questions as cities in relation to their regions. Thus, they first had to share their opinions about the **regional leaders' general attitude** towards festivals.

The response was not as reassuring as with cities, where the largest group of 41% felt that festival was in the focus, against only 21% in relation to regions. And while only 20% of respondents pronounced festivals receiving limited attention from city leaders, 26% thought so with regard to regions.



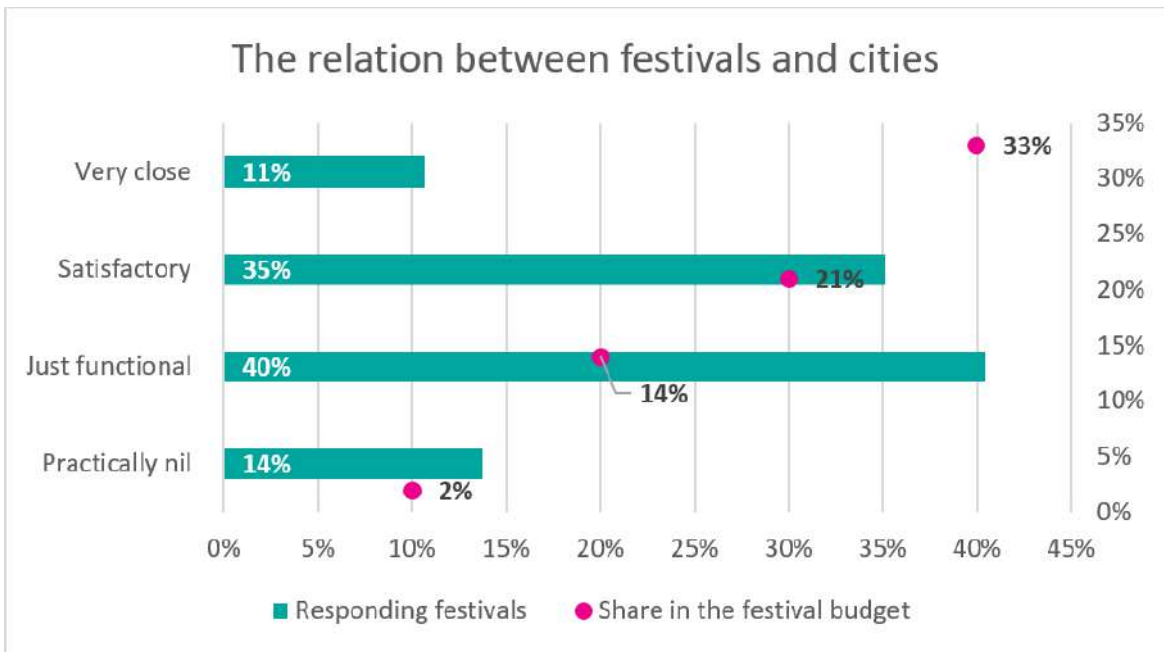
On average, regions covered 17% of the finances of festivals. The responses spread along the full scale, from two fully financed events to receiving no subsidy from the region. In fact, 34% of the 131 respondents got less than 3% regional contribution to their budgets – in 34 cases zero. (This number of course does not include festivals that reported no relationship to regions. All 34 connect with the regional administration but they receive no subsidy.)

<b>The share of the region in the festival budget</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Number of responding festivals	1	34

The size of the financial involvement of the region corresponds closely to the perceived level of commitment to festivals. The 21% that feel festivals are strongly in focus receive 27% of their budget. Where festivals are neglected, the average subsidy is less than 1%.

### 3.2. The relationship between festivals and regions

As the data on financing reveals, **the relationship between festivals and regions** (provinces, counties etc.) is more business like than emotional. This is clearly seen on the diagram. As we saw earlier, 28% of the 178 respondents feel “very close” to the municipality; among the 131 festivals with regional connections this connection is reported by only 11%. 4% of festivals had practically no links to their city; in regions 14% remain aloof.



The percentages of regional subsidies demonstrate the same regularity as in the case of cities: the closer the bond to the regional administration, the higher the share in the budget. On average, the regions cover a third of the budgets of the most loyal 11% in the survey.

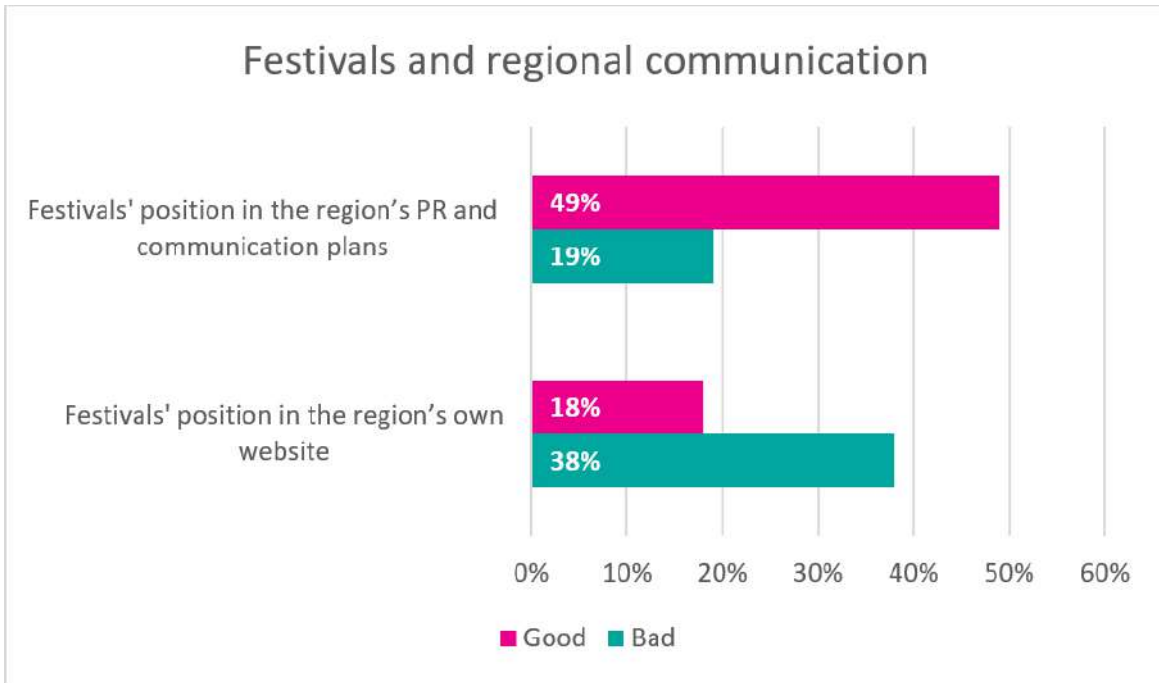
Combining the data of finances from both sources (city and region) produces the following:

Receives more from the region than from the city	27%
No subsidy from either source	7%
The same percentage from both sides	22%
More from the city than from the region	44%

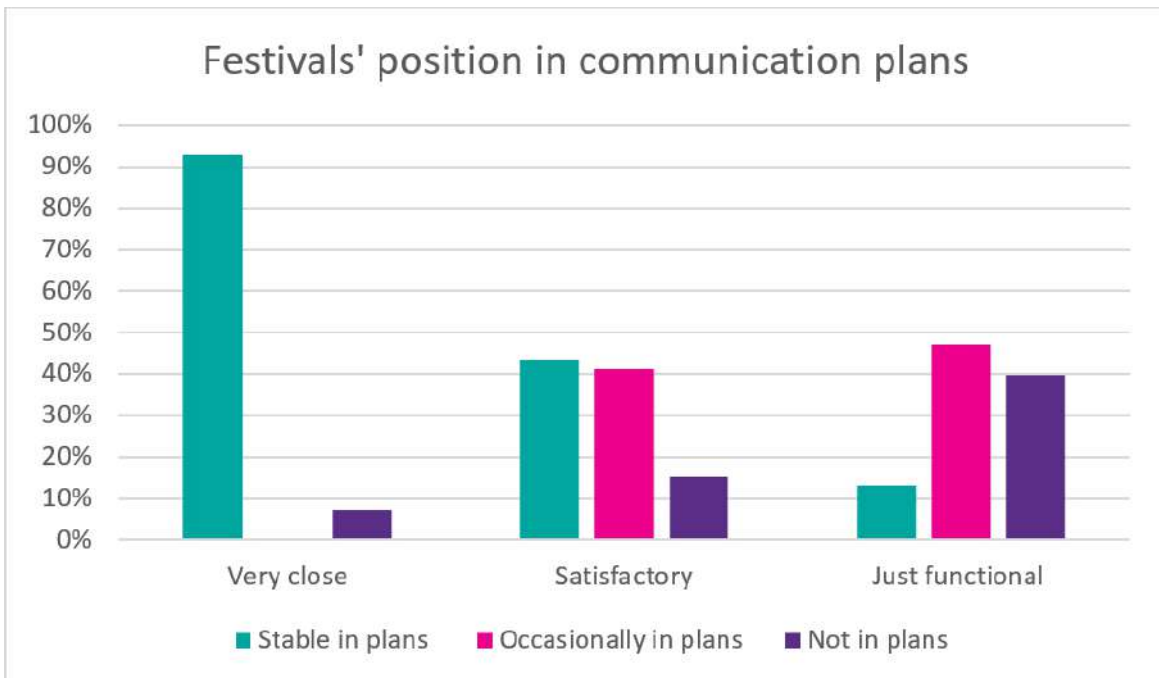
That means that among the 131 festivals with regional attachment only a minority (27%) is primarily a regional event. There were a few odd cases in the responses where the two sources add up to more than 100%. This may have various explanations. Some may be due to careless responding or misunderstanding the question. Others, however, may refer to various events produced by the same festival organiser being attached to the city in one case and to the region in others, respectively. The description of projects in the frame of the survey proves that in many cases the responding “festival” is in fact a festival organiser running more than one event.

### **3.3. Festivals and regional communication**

The questions were the same as about municipal communication, first on communication plans and second on official websites. In the first instance, the response rate among the 131 regionally active festivals was exactly the same as in cities from all 178 respondents: 49% had a significant position in the communication operations of the region and 19% had none (the rest were occasionally involved). The answers about visibility on the regional websites did not echo those of cities: 38% was absent from those portals and only about half were satisfied with their prominence.



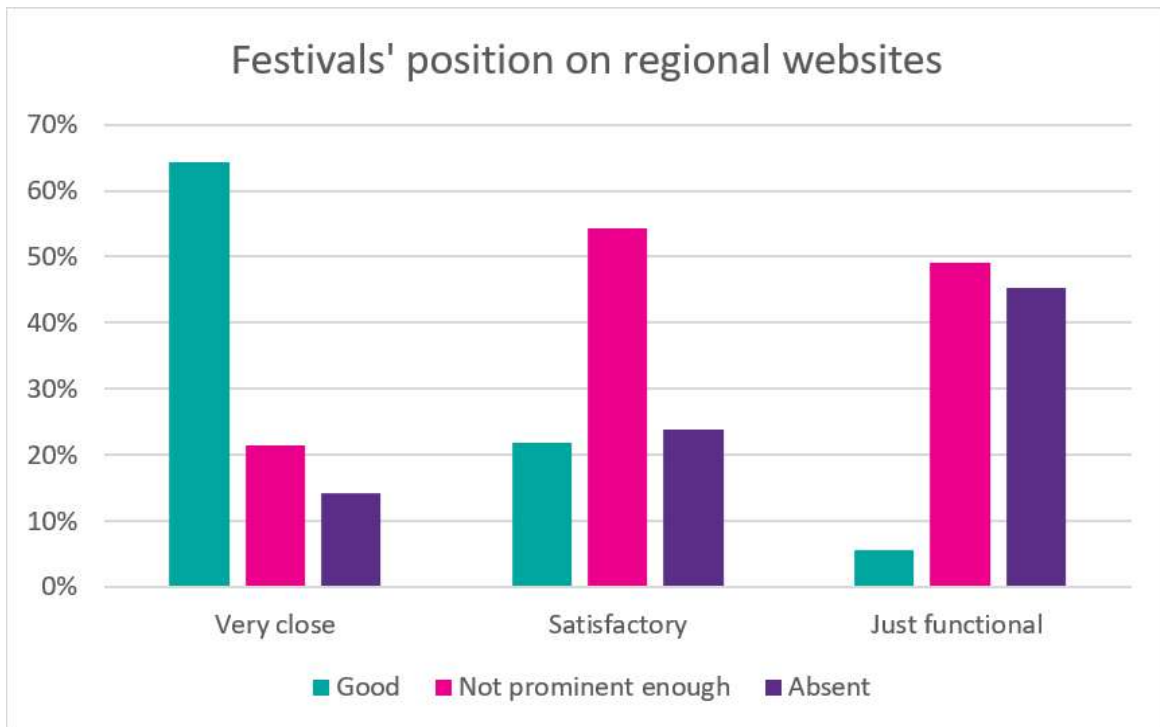
The position of festivals in the communication programmes of the regions correlates even more strongly to the degree of relationship with the regional administration than we saw in the context of cities. Once a festival is closely related to the region, it almost certainly figures in the communication and marketing activity. No relationship equals absence from those services.





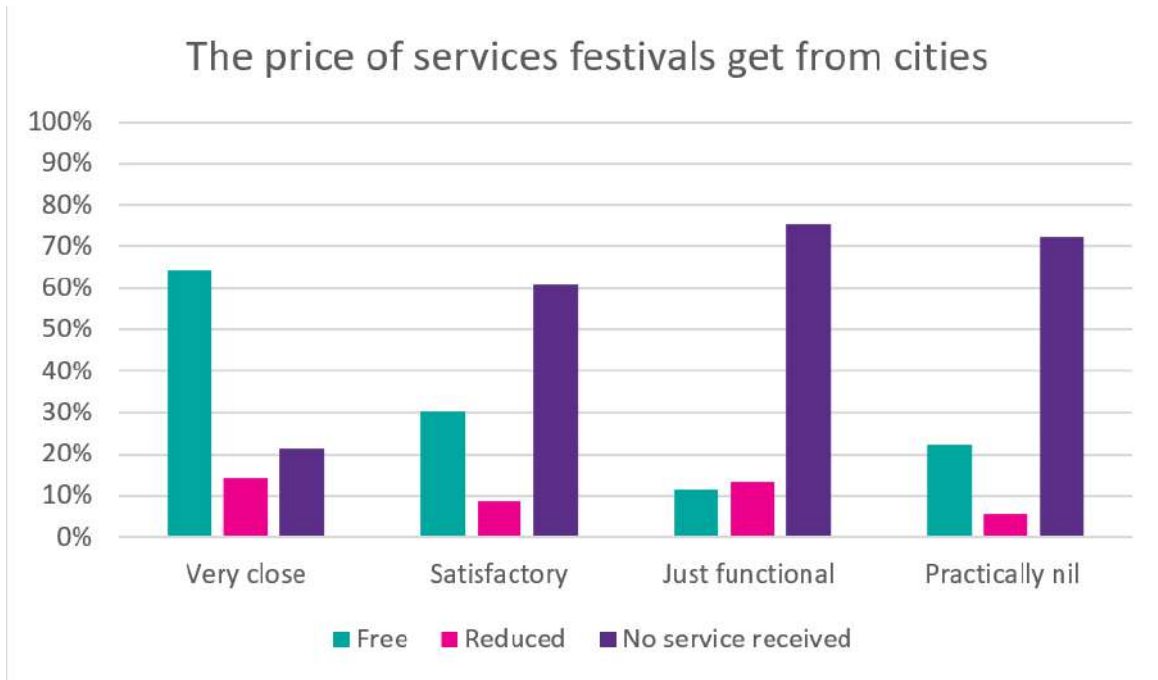
### 3.4. Place on the website

Appearance on the websites of the regions is a less categorical issue, not a question of yes or no. 21% of festivals that are very close to the region feel unhappy about visibility, and 14% are absent from the sites of the region.



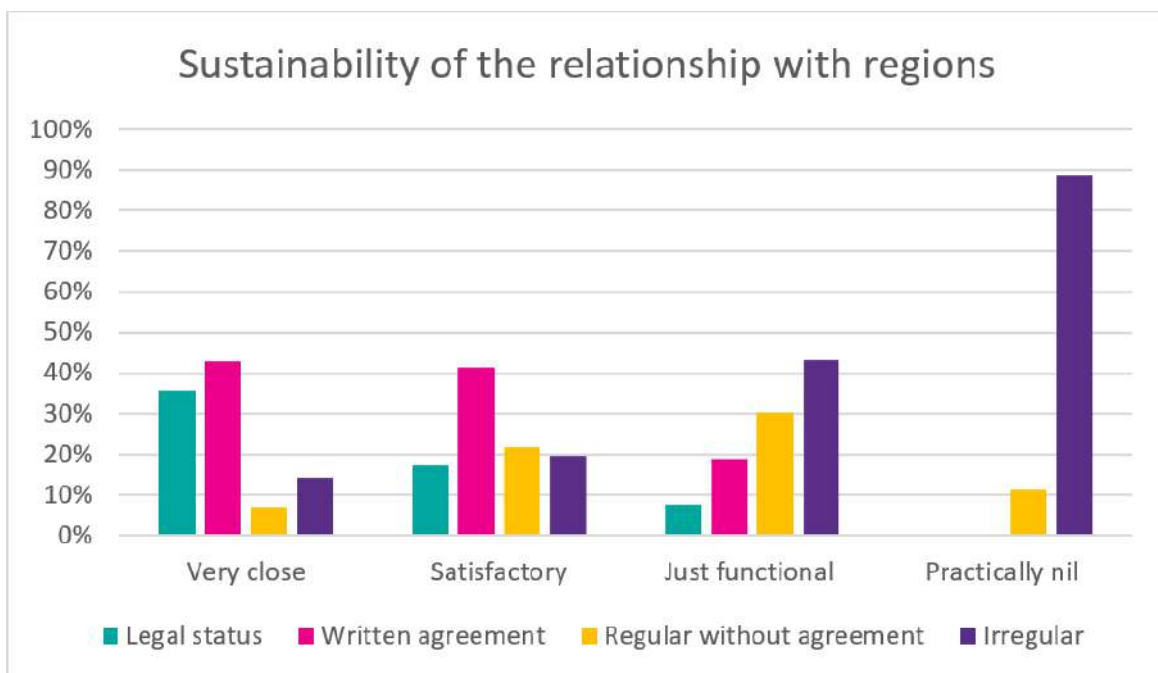
### 3.5. The nature of the help from the region

Assistance in kind from the regions is less widespread than in cities' case. Nevertheless, 22% of the 131 festivals that report "practically no connection" to the region still claim using services free of charge, and some more for reduced fees. This may refer, for example, to spaces or premises that are accessible for certain causes without (full) payment without establishing a "relationship" to the region (e.g. commons).



### 3.6. The sustainability of the relationship

As we saw above, 14% of the 131 festivals have no link with the regional administration. That may be explained by the nature of their regional governance: more distributed and indirect than the focused and direct administration that municipal authorities perform. Accordingly, contacts between festivals and regional bodies are typically irregular and *ad hoc*, even if the character of relationship is very close or satisfactory. That 20% of festivals in satisfactory relationship with their region should deem cooperation as irregular is an inconsistency that we did not see in the case of cities.



## 4. GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES

The 178 responses to the questionnaire came – as it was indicated above – from 37 countries. The **geographical distribution** of the responses in a survey is always intriguing and it usually gives useful insights. To arrive at valid and reliable conclusions about geographical characteristics a sufficient frequency of cases is required, at least a couple dozen respondents by each area (be it a country, a group of countries or a city for that matter), not to speak of a conscious selection to provide representativeness. Our survey does not meet these criteria. What the 178 responses reveal is nevertheless symptomatic and characteristic of regional, in some instances even national features. Citing them in the following has anecdotal value primarily, with indicative power rather than sophisticated conclusions. This observation is particularly true about the geographical specificities of the festival-cum-region relationships, owing to the even smaller sample of 131 cases.

### 4.1. The Iberian Peninsula

Starting with this area pays tribute to the 14 Spanish and 12 Portuguese festivals that responded to the questionnaire. Another reason is that these 26 informants drew a picture of their conditions that distinguishes them from most other parts of Europe. Typically they feel very close to the city (they are often portrayed as the city's own festival), twice as often as the average of all 178 participants. Also, exactly half of the participating festivals from Portugal and Spain opted for the answer that festivals are a focus of the leadership's attention (whereas the total is 41%, as seen in our first graph).

Accordingly, 81% of Spanish and Portuguese festivals report having a position in the communication plans of the city and claim good visibility on municipal websites. Both shares are higher than the overall average in the survey, 56% and 30% respectively. On the Iberian Peninsula 42% of respondents' co-operation with the city is guaranteed by their legal status and only 4% feel insecure about sustainability. Cities finance them with 35% of their budgets and 77% receive free municipal services (or nominal prices). Similar generosity is found with the regions: the two festivals in the survey that are fully financed by a regional authority are both Portuguese.

For Iberian festivals it is fairly customary to arrange for projects that extend the original time frame and programme of the event, both at city and regional level. (The analysis of the narratives on projects that the participants have entered in response to the relevant question can be read separately and [downloaded here](#).)

## 4.2. Italy

Italy constitutes one of the two largest contingents in the survey. The majority of Italian respondents "usually get some attention and support" and feel to be in the focus of attention in fewer cases than for festivals in the Iberian countries. Also, connections are less close. Nevertheless, most of them have strong position in communication plans and 57% of responding Italian festivals claim prominence on the municipal websites, more than all other countries in the survey. Cities' share of the budgets is also above average at 32%.

It is in the regions where Italian festivals occupy a stronger position than the rest. 16 from the 21 participating respondents from Italy reported regional connections (on top of their links with cities). In this group of sixteen, 38% found that festivals are the focus of regional leadership's attention. This share is much higher than the 21% among the 131 responses relevant to this issue. Interestingly, this is not reflected in some details: only two of them have very close connection to the region, and the 18% regional percentage in the festival budgets is below the average.

Italian festivals appear from responses to be more active than those from other countries in terms of cultural and related projects undertaken beyond their original zones of activity.

## 4.3. Belgium

Belgian festivals produced the same number of responses as Italy. Here are the main features, offering a few intriguing deviations from the general picture in the survey. The good news is that every third festival communicates directly with the Mayor (every tenth on grand average in the survey) and 71% use free municipal services (over 47% grand average, the average of all subjects). Yet most of the other features reveal basic conditions; the Belgian percentages match the respective averages of the 178 responses (in brackets):

- municipal contribution to the budgets – 8% (26%)

- absent from city communication plans – 43% (19%)
- absent from municipal websites – 52% (25%)
- unpredictable support from the city – 33% (15%)

The regional scene is similar. Corresponding to the country's federal setup, the regional connection is relevant to 19 of the 21 participants: they report tougher conditions than the rest of the 131 festivals in this part of the survey in almost every respect.

- festivals receive limited attention and support from the regions – 42% (26%)
- maintain just functional relationship with the administration – 53% (38%)
- regional contribution to the budgets – 11% (19%)
- absent from region communication plans – 68% (36%)
- absent from region websites – 68% (39%)
- receives no services at discount price – 95% (64%)
- unpredictable support from the region – 58% (32%)

One more perplexing thing is that almost no Belgian respondent made mention of any project undertaken outside of the usual frame of the festival. Are Belgian festivals exposed to market conditions more than most of their colleagues in Europe?

#### 4.4. The post-communist East

Information came on 19 festivals in 9 post-communist countries in the East of the continent. Most typically, they receive limited attention and support and communicate with the city "just functionally" – both much higher than is usual with participants in the survey from other geographical regions. But no city was blamed for neglecting festivals or with which there was no relationship whatsoever in the area from Slovenia to Azerbaijan.

The support that they described as limited, however, amounts to 45% in their budgets, which is almost double the average of 26% of all. On the other hand, festivals in these countries receive limited assistance in kind.

- Communication plans involve them occasionally only at 63% (this is 32% in the entire survey)
- they complain about lack of prominence on websites at 68% (45%)
- get little technical aid free of charge; reduced price is the norm in 37% (21%)

In this group of countries 12 out of the 19 respondents co-operate with the regional administration which brings them 22% of their budget, somewhat higher than the 17% of the survey sample average. Support is guaranteed by statute for both Serbian cases and two out of the three from Georgia.

More than half of the responses from these nine countries include narratives about out-of-festival activities: all of the Georgian and Romanian participants to the survey and most of the Bulgarians do so.

## 4.5. Visegrad countries

Normally, they are labelled as V4 but regrettably no Slovak festival filled in the questionnaire. The 18 festivals from the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland differed the most from the rest in that multiyear agreements are customary there (in 67% against the 33% average). Together with the other post-communist countries, festivals are treated as a cultural activity, in almost 80% handled through the cultural departments of the municipalities.

The 11% that the region finances in the budgets of the 13 festivals that act in conjunction with counties as 'voivodships' falls short of the 17% survey average. Otherwise, no great differences from European standards were reported in regional co-operation.

## 4.6. West

25 festivals from the area of central and north-western Europe between Austria and Ireland (excepting Belgium) responded. A curious thing is that they report much lower frequency of close relationships to the cities than the average but contact them through the Mayor's office almost twice as often as the rest.

The share of festivals with no involvement in the municipal communication operation and absent from the official websites (29% and 39% versus the overall 19% and 25%) is relatively high. The 26% who said support was unpredictable is the highest share of all regions, although the frequency of multiyear agreements, on the other hand, is also above the average.

The nature of relationship that festivals from these countries maintain with regional authorities differs little from the survey average. This implies a warmer relationship than with cities in the same area. One notable difference is that 76% get no technical assistance or free space from the regions, the highest share in the sample.

## 4.7. North

The 25 countries from the north, complemented with four Baltic respondents, do not differ significantly from the rest in any respect. The item where they stand out the most is the frequency of regular co-operation with the municipalities without formal agreement, which happens in 44% of cases (versus the 28% in the survey). Accordingly, guaranteed collaboration is rare, and unknown among the 13 instances of regional relationships.

Regional financing at 10% of the budget on average is lower than usual (17%), while the 46% that have only functional co-operation with the administration is high. This area is rich in projects outside the box carried out by festivals.

## 4.8. Southeast

Two thirds of the 14 participants from Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Turkey report just functional connections to the municipalities, double the average. The 19% of cities' support in their budgets is accordingly lower than usual, and this subsidy is unpredictable for 29% of them.

Every second festival claims a stable position in communication plans, much more often than in the west and north. Almost all Greek participants are present on the city websites and four of them enjoy good visibility.

The 11 festivals in this area that liaise with their regions do so under the usual conditions. Regular co-operation without formal agreement is the usual case, much more often than elsewhere.

## 5. NO RANKING

The great variety of data and indicators assembled by the survey suggest various hierarchies – and indeed, the previous descriptions contained quite a few open or concealed value judgments. Sorting festivals by the various factors is the way to analyse findings. But ranking is not the aim. When the conditions in which festivals operate, and the responses they give to the various challenges are compared, it is done to identify better how these conditions can improve and how the efficiency of festivals' adaption to their environments can be enhanced.

### 5.1. The most privileged festivals

One of ways the festivals were sorted is by the strength of the relationship between city and festival, measured primarily by the **financial bond**. Out of the 178 responses we find eleven cases where the municipalities subsidise the festival between 50 and 100% and this is a guaranteed status. In this **top eleven** both Portugal and Serbia are represented with three festivals each. The remaining five festivals are in Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, and Greece.

By extending the view on regional attachments, we can single out nine festivals with very **close relationships** to both the region and the city and stable positions in their communication plans. The budgets of these **top ten** contain 38% from the city and 32% from the region – both way higher than usual. Iberian festivals are well represented in this elite group too: two Portuguese and Spanish, next to a Finnish, Hungarian, Italian, Serbian, Swiss, and Turkish festival. Only one Portuguese festival from the Aveiro region is included in both top groups.

The data of the survey prove that these two groups are not an exclusive elite. Favourable numbers dominate the total sample. But even if we consider that these 178 festivals represent a positively biased contingent – supposing that responding to the questionnaire is in many cases a sign of affinity to the values of the EFFE community – the general image about the nature and intensity of the bonds between festivals and their societal environment is reassuring.



## 5.2. The least privileged cases

It is only natural that after a focus on the top categories we should examine the least privileged participants of our survey. We chose one single criterion for this and identified 29 respondents who claimed that assistance from the city is **unreliable or non-existent**. Instead of listing all national affiliations it is enough to mention the seven Belgian cases: exactly a third of the participants from that country report such dire conditions – which is in fact less than the 100% from Scotland: the two Scottish festivals in the sample are fairly self sustaining, with limited assistance from their cities. Also, some others in the list get little or none on the spot as the central government is the main source of public funding.

## 6. EXPECTATIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

For a successful design of the patterns of mutually beneficial co-operation between cities-regions and the festivals in their remit, it is essential to be familiar with the expectations and motivations of both parties. Two of the questions in the survey served this purpose specifically. No matter how important this issue is, much less is talked, written or discussed about it. The questions themselves, including the wordings they used, were certainly new to many respondents. The participants coped with ranking their own priorities better than when they were supposed to specify the authorities' expectations. (Just as it would be a challenge to municipal officers to define festival organisers' motivation.)

### 6.1. The expectations of cities

“In your experience, what do cities and regions most expect from festivals? This is not about the priorities of your festival but about those of the authorities.” With this question, the survey aimed at exploring more about the motivations that fuel the interrelationship between festivals and their environment. (For a full, that is essential to the goals of the **FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now** project, similar questioning can uncover perceptions and expectations that cities and regions nurture vis-à-vis festivals.)

Respondents to the questionnaire had to explain what they believed about the **expectations** of the cities and regions towards them. They had to rank the five most important statements from a list of twelve. The diagram reflects both the frequency and the ranking of the answers.

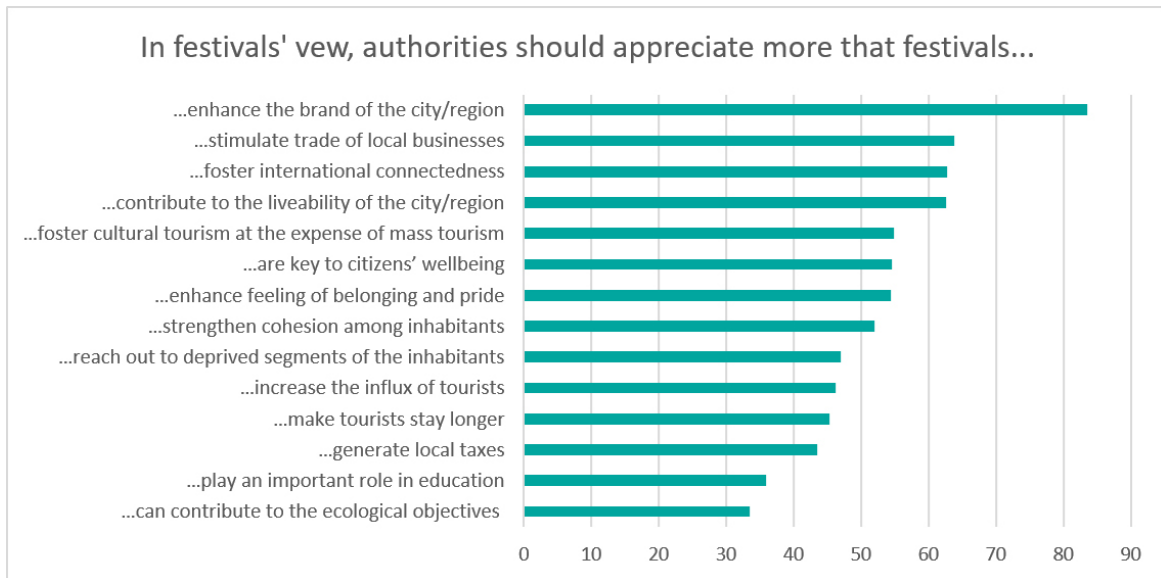
After the obvious first task of enhancing the brand – image, goodwill – of the place, festivals feel that cities put an accent on their impact on tourism. Both on quantity – boosting numbers of visitors – and quality. This latter, quality, finds expression in a variety of aspects that appear to be high among city leaders’ wish lists: cultural tourism, city liveability, and more arts.



## 6.2. The expectations of festivals

The participants of the survey were finally asked to express their opinion about the most undervalued effects that festivals can exert. Branding the place is on top here, too. Besides the irresistible appeal of the concept, festival organisers may feel that festivals’ role in enhancing the brand of the city is acknowledged – but not enough.

In respect of the remaining thirteen aspects, one would expect arts festival organisers to complain about the low respect that culture enjoys – but no, in a pragmatic manner, the positive effect of festivals on local businesses was identified as second, with a narrow lead over the aspects of international connectedness and the liveability: aspects that call for deeper recognition.



### 6.3. Expectations, from various angles

Asking festival organisers to share their views of about the motivations of decision makers is admittedly a subjective approach. Opinions and beliefs are, however, also facts. Plans and proposals about festivals must take these views into consideration, especially if they bring interesting new insights, but also if they confirm earlier assumptions.

In the following we shall browse among the choices that festival organisers made from the two sets of statements about the presumed expectations of the authorities. These choices are linked to the countries they come from without claiming in any form to reflect national specifics – especially when there were very few of them, in cases as few as a single festival. As it was pointed out above, such anecdotal observations may, nevertheless offer useful insights on the conditions in which arts festivals prevail.

### 6.4. Impact on tourism

As we could see, *boosting tourism* is supposed to be the third most important expectation. Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Scottish, and Turkish respondents especially emphasised this pressure by the authorities. Georgian, quite a few Belgian, and interestingly the same Greek festivals, however, believe that festivals' potential in increasing tourist numbers needs to be appreciated more. A glance at the “top ten” respondents closest to cities reveals that they feel this property of festivals is the most expected by municipalities.

The issue of *prolonging tourists' stay* is particularly for Bulgarian festivals.

Authorities are acknowledged to put a bit even stronger emphasis on the quality side of tourism. They expect festivals to make the place more attractive as a *cultural destination*, especially in the view of Czech, Spanish and Swedish festivals. A considerable proportion of French, Georgian and Spanish participants believe this aspect deserves more attention. The same is little emphasised by Belgian, Dutch, German, and Portuguese festivals.

Many Finnish and Italian festivals feel that the authorities want them to strengthen the *cultural segment* in tourism.

## 6.5. Impact on society

Several of the supposed effects of festivals on the social environment indirectly affect tourism, like the mainstreaming of *the arts* and the liveability of cities. Finnish and Spanish views especially contributed to a relatively strong position of the issue of the arts in the list of perceived expectation, and the festival in Kinshasa finds this as the primary expectation for them. Bulgarians, Poles, and Swedes, however, do not sense such a wish on behalf of the authorities.

*Liveability* is a robust aspect in both dimensions. The Dutch and German leaders appear to put an accent on it, and it is also strong in the value lists of Dutch and Scottish informants.

Citizens' *wellbeing* is closely related to the previous quality. Most of the Dutch, Finnish, and Norwegian participants to the survey insist on the importance of this effect of festivals. On the other hand, the group of 29 least privileged festivals put a much lesser accent on this function than the rest.

Little emphasis was put on festivals' role in *ecological* programmes. Italians and Spanish report about some official interest, and a few Finnish responses place it among the aims that deserve more attention. A Bulgarian and a Greek festival identified the ecology as the single most important aspect of festivals. Not so the "top eleven" by rate of municipal subsidies: none of them mentioned the issue of the ecology.

Belgian, Hungarian, and Romanian festivals especially feel the expectation to improve the feeling of *belonging and pride*, while authorities in the Baltic countries, Bulgaria,

Georgia, Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland seem to pay no heed to the issue. Still, eight festivals in eight countries claim to enhance this feeling their topmost priority.

Festivals put strong emphasis on their impact on the *international connectedness* of their environment – it was the third on their ranking list. For both Scottish, and the single Azeri and Latvian festival in the survey, this deserves the greatest attention, and is high on the agenda also of Austrian, Czech, Italian, Serbian, and Slovene festival makers.

*Reaching out* to deprived segments of the society is linked to the issue of cohesion. Danish and Hungarian festivals emphasise this function, but it is absent from the British, Dutch, French, Georgian, Norwegian, Romanian, Spanish, Swedish and Swiss responses. Six participants found this the most undervalued issue.

In festivals' view, authorities do not expect from them much with respect to the *cohesion* among inhabitants. Several Belgian, Italian, and Turkish festivals nevertheless feel this expectation, which is almost fully absent in the post-communist as well as the Nordic countries – an unlikely coincidence. A considerable share of respondents from France, Hungary, but also from Belgium and Italy would put festivals' role in strengthening cohesion higher on the agenda. For seven participants, this is the most undervalued aspect.

The issue of cohesion among the inhabitants of the place produced a strange contradiction between the two groups of privileged festivals. While those on top by the rate of municipal share in their budgets underscore this matter, the top eleven by the closeness to the authorities put the strengthening of cohesion their most important concern.

Festivals' role in *education* collected the second fewest mentions. Ironically, many of these – concretely eleven respondents – put this aspect on top of their own agenda. Czech, Romanian, Serbian, and Spanish festivals stress their educational effect in greater number than the average. The issue is entirely absent in the Dutch, French, Georgian, German, Greek, and Norwegian answers. It is missing too from the Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek and Irish responses.

This is another concept where a look at the most deviating clusters of participants surprises us. All three groups – the most generously financed, the ones with closest bonds and the 29 with uncertain supports – placed a somewhat greater accent on the educational function of festivals than the grand total of the survey does.

## 6.6. Economic impact

Festivals appear to feel relatively modest pressure by the authorities about their economic benefits. Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Portuguese participants reported expectations to help attract investments, which was missing from most Spanish responses.

This latter was underlined because the opposite happened about the effect on local businesses. The Spanish authorities are keen on this, while no Portuguese festival mentioned this aspect. They (Portuguese respondents) on their part emphasise festivals' stimulating power on local trade and so do numerous Belgian and Finnish participants.

Generating taxes is an unexciting but obvious function of festivals. Seven responses found this as the most noteworthy issue, three of them German and two Norwegian.

## 6.7. Political impact

Austrian, Belgian, Czech, Hungarian, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish answers mentioned the political advantages to be gained through festivals. The issue was fully missing from answers from the northwest and the far north of Europe.

We skipped the role of festivals in branding their cities and regions, as it was such a favourite in both points of view that the analysis of the distribution of mentions between the various groups of participants offered little added value.

## 7. FESTIVAL SPILLOVER

With time, most festivals stretch beyond their initial frame, and perform activities outside the original remit of the programme or step out of its bubble of time and space. The survey asked about such spillover by asking respondents about “the most important or innovative co-operation projects that your festival realised with the city/region in the last three years”. The responses confirmed that most participants to the survey are eager to expand their radius of action.

Most widespread is the desire to reach out, which takes a broad variety of forms. Most common is physical outreach, when, on top of the standard venues and stages, performances happen in various public spaces, in the *open air* like squares, parks and streets – Bari/IT • Bilbao/ES • Buzau/RO • Gasteiz/ES • Katerini/GR • Milan/IT • Modena/IT • Utrecht/NL • Vilnius/LT • Vratsa/BG.

Spinoffs frequently take place *indoors*: in schools, galleries, museums and so on – Helsinki/FI • Katowice/PL • Tampere/FI.

With their offshoots some festivals target socially *deprived spaces* like outskirts, areas with a bad reputation, nursing homes or villages with no cinema – Bilbao/ES • Cork/IE • Helsingør/DK • Mérida/ES • Milan/IT • Nagyharsány/HU • Serpa/PT • Tallinn/EE • Varna/BG.

Several festivals make innovative efforts to *involve citizens* in artistic activities – Belgrade/SR • Bruges/BE • Linz/AT • Serpa/PT • Zsámbék/HU.

The festival programme often comprises *educational activities* both for children and adults with the aim of developing audiences – Cologno al Serio/IT • Gozo/MT • Helsingør/DK • Macerata/IT • Palau/IT • Peralada/ES • Skudeneshavn/NO • Varna/BG

Catering for *professionals*, workshops, residencies, masterclasses and talks serve the development of the artists and cultural operators, often with a special emphasis on young artists, in a great number of festivals – Arezzo/IT • Aveiro/PT • Bania Luka/BA • Bergen/NO • Cagliari/IT • Snedsted/DK • Stockholm/SE • Syros/GR • Zagreb/HR • Zutphen/NL • as well as Batumi • Poti • Rustavi in Georgia.

Arriving at a stage of a *sustainable festival* is the agenda in several places – Bruges/BE • Herceg Novi/MN • Tampere/FI.

Elsewhere care about cultural heritage is in focus – Cagliari/IT • Galway/IE • Kraków/PL • Rhodes/GR • Rome/IT.

Several festivals contribute to the celebration of anniversaries, national and other holidays – Banja Luka/BA • Kraków/PL • Napoli/IT • Rome/IT.

There are festivals that are fully devoted to one cause, like promoting the arts – Chateaufort-du-Faou/FR • Cologno/IT • Peralada/ES - or connecting tradition and innovation – Palau/IT.

The questionnaire called for “important or innovative co-operation projects” – the modalities of collaboration, however, were expounded in a few responses only. It remains to be explored which projects are par excellence products of festivals’ partnership with cities and regions. Which side was the initiator? When was joint responsibility indispensable to the success of the undertaking? Who was the main beneficiary? Projects where the description underscored the role of collaboration with the administration deserve further observation – Filipstad/SE • Granada/ES • Helsinki/FI • Herceg Novi/MN • Istanbul/TR • Milan/IT • Rome/IT • Stockholm/SE • Vilnius/LT.

The FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now project also wants to explore festivals’ connection to tourism. Some of the narratives about the spillover projects were explicit about that relationship, without, however, touching upon the same nuances to which the previous paragraph refers in the municipal or regional context.

Several festivals feature consistently strong connections to tourism boards, agencies, and authorities – Favignana/IT • Granada/ES • Kuhmo/FI • Modena/IT • Palau/IT • Tampere/FI • Vaasa/FI • Zagreb/HR.

Compliance to the objectives of tourism, its character and growth, or its distribution in time and space, characterises festivals in various places – Aveiro/PT • Belgrade/SR • Gozo/MT • Mérida/ES • Zutphen/NL.

For more detailed analysis of the festivals’ projects, you can [download a summary of the narratives here](#).



## 8. CONCLUSIONS FOR COLLABORATION WITH CITIES/REGIONS

The information accumulated from 178 festivals across Europe (and a little beyond) enables us to identify the most important commonalities. Certain traits in the circumstances in which festivals collaborate with their environments are relatively similar if not exactly the same, regardless of country or the character of the event. Then again, the principal differences that the survey exposes in the conditions and behaviour of festivals are equally meaningful.

A part of the findings corroborates prior knowledge. This is at least as important as the discovery of new trends and correlations. Contradicting and modifying our earlier assumptions about festivals' interaction with cities and regions is valuable new knowledge.

In the light of the above, the lessons of the survey much depend on the observer's former experiences. Things that surprise some can be commonplace to others. Certain results of the responses, however, can expect common agreement:

- The collaboration between festivals, cities and regions is more intensive, the connection closer, and its areas better exploited than most of us would have presumed;
- Spanish and Portuguese festivals have an eminent level in most of the aspects of such collaboration;
- Italian festivals excel in the intensity of their regional affiliations as well as with the variety of spillover projects they carry out;
- Festivals in the former communist countries continue to rely on public subsidies to a higher degree than in most other areas;
- Central and western European festivals are more self-sustaining, and depend more on municipal assistance, including (to a lesser degree) various services;
- In these aspects, Belgian festivals stand out, which supposes there are other resources behind their achievements.

Contributing to the definition of priorities and providing guidance in the quest for best co-operation protocols between cities or regions and their festivals – these are the ultimate measures of the success of this survey; more specifically, in designing the role that the FestivalFinder.eu portal can play in this endeavour. The knowledge accumulated in the 178 responses can certainly lead to productive conclusions. The many questions that emerge while examining the findings are nevertheless no less instructive about future work.

Is a certain statement (statistical fact, opinion etc.) that respondents from a country expressed the prevailing position on a broader scale? Do the politicians' expectations, as seen by festival organisers, coincide with our own experience and assumptions? Are the projects that the respondents showed a genuine cross section of festivals' social engagement? The survey fulfils an important function if it provokes great numbers of questions to follow up and consider while enabling the harmonisation of festivals' collaboration with their environment supported by a joint portal.

## 9. ANNEX - DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPATING FESTIVALS BY COUNTRY

Belgium	21	
Italy	21	
Spain	14	
Portugal	12	
Finland	11	
Greece	10	
Poland	9	
Netherlands	8	
Germany	7	
Hungary	6	
Bulgaria	5	
France	5	
Norway	4	
Switzerland	4	
Czechia	3	
Denmark	3	
Georgia	3	
Serbia	3	
Sweden	3	
Turkey	3	
Austria	2	
Ireland	2	
Latvia	2	
Lithuania	2	
Romania	2	
Scotland	2	
Azerbaijan	1	
Bosnia	1	
Congo DR	1	
Croatia	1	
England	1	
Japan	1	
Malta	1	
Montenegro	1	
N. Macedonia	1	
Slovenia	1	
South Africa	1	<b>Total 178</b>



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