

Cetină, Iuliana; Cristache, Silvia Elena; Ciobotar, Georgeta Narcisa; Badin, Andrei

## Article

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## LARGE-SCALE CULTURAL EVENTS: AN ARGUMENT FOR STRENGTHENING ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Iuliana Cetină<sup>1</sup>, Silvia Elena Cristache<sup>2</sup>, Georgeta Narcisa Ciobotar<sup>3</sup>  
and Andrei Bădin<sup>4\*</sup>

<sup>1)2)3)4)</sup> *The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania.*

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### Abstract

The economic-social and technological dynamism, the changes produced in the natural environment force the society to change the attitude and the behavior towards the environment by developing the ecological awareness, a process that must materialize in a behavior of acquisition, purchase and consumption based on ecological principles and criteria. The major differences in consumer behavior, business practices, and entrepreneurial practices are an effect of cultural differences. Under the conditions of sustainable and systematic development of the states of the world, it has become necessary to consider cultural institutions as organizations that through their purchasing behavior based on ecological principles and by creating and transmitting thematic messages, can significantly contribute to the development of the ecological awareness of the society. In this context, the purpose of the research is to determine the impact of major cultural events on increasing the awareness of the society regarding the protection of the environment, through the component of ecological acquisitions. The opinion poll conducted took into account the participants' perceptions during large-scale cultural events regarding the importance attributed by organizers to the development of the ecological awareness and the way in which they practice ecological acquisitions. Also, through this survey it was aimed to establish the existence or non-existence of the relationship between the degree of reception of the message with ecological theme of the organizers and the demographic-cultural characteristics of the attending public, implicitly of the society. The aim was to analyze the need of increasing major cultural events organizers' degree of involvement in increasing participants' ecological awareness by diversifying the types of actions that will stimulate acquisition, buying and ecological consumption behavior.

**Keywords:** development of ecological awareness, major cultural events, ecological theme messages, demographic-cultural characteristics.

**JEL classification:** M30, Q01, M31, Q57.

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\* Corresponding author, **Andrei Bădin** – badin.andrei@gmail.com

## **Introduction**

The current paper aims to be a first step in analyzing practice and involvement of ecological actions in the context of large-scale cultural events. In order to obtain the most relevant results which can underpin further research, the authors' proposal is to use as a means of communication the broad cultural events (pop, rock and electronic festivals), both to promote a lifestyle oriented towards reducing or eliminating products that pollute and use those with a lower or even zero level of pollution, as well as to analyze the awareness campaigns of the public and therefore of the society, on the importance of protecting the environment.

There are three general directions that converge and are analyzed throughout the paper. These three directions refer to: large-scale or major cultural events, ecological practices and how consumers respond to the efforts of cultural event organizers to protect the environment through purchases or campaigns.

The large-scale cultural events selected are the major pop, rock and electronic festivals: Untold, Neversea, Electric Castle and Summer Well. The shortlisting of these events was made due to the following coordinates: duration (between 3-5 days), number of participants (between 50,000-300,000), high diversity (tourists, diversity of education level, diversity of material level) etc. It is very important to underline the fact that during these events, the local budgets receive an extremely high infusion of money that is reinvested in infrastructure and environmental protection (Untold – Cluj). The worldwide reputation of these events, as well as the increasingly higher number of tourists, guarantees consumer satisfaction.

In this context, the research carried out aimed both at highlighting the relationship between the purchasing behavior on ecological principles of the organizations and the development of social ecological culture, as well as the degree of societies' acceptance on ecological themed messages transmitted by the organizers of large-scale cultural events. Presented throughout the paper are the influences of ecological acquisitions within the cultural services, as well as the influences or non-influences of the demographic and economic characteristics on the ecological acquisitions in the field of musical cultural services. It was based on the premise that event organizers can make a significant contribution to shaping the ecological awareness of the society both through their good practices in the field of ecological procurement by using ecological products and packaging and by creating and transmitting thematic messages directly to the attending public and indirectly to society as a whole. The fundamental premise that underpinned the development of the research was the need to protect the environment by developing the ecological awareness of the society as an objective necessity.

This premise was supported by the fact that the development of ecological awareness of the society must start, first of all, from the awareness regarding the importance of the purchase/acquisition/consumption on ecological principles and criteria. A relevant point of view is that the organizers of major cultural events have adapted both their purchasing behavior on ecological principles and criteria, as well as the way of transmitting this behavior to the attending public and to society; large-scale cultural events represent an optimal channel for transmitting the message with an ecological theme.

In this context, cultural events of international fame were considered within the study. These festivals represent a real opportunity to contribute to the development of the ecological awareness of society as they attract a large audience with different demographic-cultural characteristics and with real potential to reshape the society. This audience is

mainly formed of young people with a certain level of education, so with a significant influence on the development of societies' future ecological awareness.

The main idea is that the organizers of large-scale cultural events can make a significant contribution to shaping the ecological consciousness of the society, to increase the responsibility towards the protection of the environment, through the component of ecological acquisitions as part of the message with an ecological theme, transmitted by them. After defining the premises, we proceeded to test them, through a direct research. As a result, a survey was conducted with a sample of 1020 people, segmented by age, gender, place of residence, income, occupation and level of training.

The survey aimed to determine the relationship between the behavior of ecological procurement and the thematic messages of the organizers of cultural events. The research also followed the degree of reception of these messages, as well as whether they have a significant impact on society. Based on the results obtained, conclusions and recommendations were formulated in order to improve the process of ecological procurement, for creating and exploiting opportunities to develop ecological awareness, to adapt cultural norms, customs and traditions to the ecological component of the economic sphere.

### **1. Review of the scientific literature**

An aspect to consider in the development policy of the countries is the effects of product consumption on the environment. In the current context of globalization, adaptation and standardization, as well as maintaining the balance of the natural environment, most countries have stipulated in their development policy the obligation to choose the most advantageous offer, both economically and ecologically (Kotler, 2017; Lee and Kotler, 2019). In this respect, they have included in their sustainable development policies both economic criteria, in order to ensure efficiency, as well as ecological criteria, in order to ensure the protection of the natural environment (Andronie, 2019). The problem of human activity residues has taken on worrying proportions and pollution, degradation of water and air, threat of the ozone layer, desertification, toxic and radioactive waste cause alteration of the quality of the environmental factors (Comănescu, 2010).

The objective of green procurement is to identify and reduce the impact on the environment and maximize the efficiency of the resources. Green Public Procurement – GPAs are defined as "a process by which public authorities try to procure goods, services and works with a low environmental impact throughout their life cycle, compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function, which were to be purchased differently" (EU, 2016). In this context, the study "Global Outlook on Sustainable Consumption and Production Policy" conducted under the United Nations Environment Program, emphasizes the need of creating and promoting sustainable lifestyles (Fernandez, 2015, UNEP, 2012). The intention of ecological purchase is conceptualized as the probability and the availability of a person to use mainly products that have ecological characteristics compared to other traditional products, for purchase reasons (Rashid, 2009). Ecological purchases are a specific type of ecological behavior that consumers have in expressing their concern for the environment (Chen and Chang, 2012). Purchase intention is a critical factor in anticipating and predicting consumer behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). This was the reason for introducing as a variable the importance of the concept of green procurement in the questionnaire. On the one hand, given that society generates needs, needs specific to the

level of development it has reached, needs that transform into demand and then into desired products, we can say that the social determines the economic (Lee and Kotler, 2019). Thus, it is possible to address both the influence of ecological procurement within the cultural services and the influence of the demographic and economic characteristics on the ecological procurement. Environmentally conscious consumers are white, women, professionals and young people (Harris et al, 2000). The demographic factor must be one of the most influential factors in pro-environmental behavior (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002). The level of education of women must be high among environmentally conscious consumers (Hustad and Pessemier, 1973).

The preservation of the hygienic-sanitary, recreational and aesthetic functions of the components of the natural environment is the guarantee of a continuous development of the human society and the concerns must be taken into consideration both by the authorities and all the components of the civil society at local, national, European and international level (Roberts, 2007). It confirms the attitude of environmentally conscious consumers who are alert and bettering themselves (Berkowitz and Lutterman, 1998; Bourgeois and Barnes, 1979). Usually, the prosocial or proetic behaviors of consumers are strongly influenced by demographics and have characteristics according to age, income level, education level and occupation. Other researchers identified the place of residence as an identification variable (Carlson, 1993). Most of those who examined the relationship between place of residence and environmental protection found that the urban population was more concerned with environmental protection than the rural population (Samdahl and Robertson, 1989). In this context, the questionnaire included, as we have specified previously, variables such as: age, place of residence, gender, graduate studies, occupation and income; similar variables are used in the literature (Wahba and Zenou, 2012). Regarding the idea stated above regarding the influence of ecological purchases within the cultural services, the aim was to raise awareness of the issues related to environmental protection by the organizers of large-scale cultural events. Lately, it has been found that those who participate in music-oriented cultural events are aware of the significant social and environmental impact that these events have on the issues of waste, water and food consumption and transport. Therefore, the participants in these events can develop their ecological awareness with the help of messages (actions) from event organizers.

Thus, for the planning of a festival, the following elements must be considered: effects on the natural environment, solid, gaseous and liquid waste as a result of the procurement choices, depletion of natural resources, the use of non-renewable resources and the result of the supply choices, the local protected or restored environment, the impact on water deficiency (Browne, et al., 2019) and equitable distribution of access to water, proliferation of genetically modified organisms etc. (Jones, 2014). Therefore, within the questionnaire it was introduced as a variable the development of ecological awareness through messages from the festival organizers as well as their ecological behavior. The main objective of the organizers of music-oriented cultural events is to find management practices that reduce the negative impact (congestion, water pollution, waste, air pollution, etc.) and increase the positive impact on environmental protection. Therefore, within the questionnaire, actions for improving the process of green procurement among festival organizers were introduced as a variable. In conclusion, consumers with their own demographic characteristics are implicitly educated both on the existing offers on the market and on the behavior of state organizations and bodies through the process of green procurement. Moreover, purchasing behavior on ecological principles can be brought to the attention of the general public and

can be promoted through cultural events. According to the paper *A healthy and sustainable environment for future generations* developed by the European Commission, there is widespread public support for EU measures to improve the environment. Thus, a survey conducted at pan-European level, in mid-2011, showed that over 90% of respondents consider that environmental protection is an important aspect for them. Nearly 9 out of 10 have been in favor of EU funding of environmentally-friendly activities and more than 8 out of 10 believe that EU legislation is necessary to protect the environment in their country. The most frequently expressed concerns were those related to water pollution, depletion of natural resources and increase of waste quantity (U.E., 2013).

## **2. Large-scale electronic music, pop and rock festivals in Romania and educational-ecological initiatives associated with them**

The major cultural events organizers of electronic music, pop and rock festivals have formulated their message on two major components, respectively on the purchasing behavior on ecological principles and on the campaigns for promoting and sustaining a behavior of buying and ecological consumption. Event organizers use this message with maximum efficiency in their efforts to develop the ecological awareness of the attending public and implicitly, society as a whole. Company purchasing and consumption behavior of the organizers is an example of good practice for the attending public, while ecological themed campaigns are the guide for adopting and supporting this type of behavior. The message of the organizers built on the two components becomes credible, attractive and uniform for the attending public and at the same time for the society as a whole.

Large-scale cultural events focused on electronic music, pop, rock represents an efficient and effective channel for transmitting the ecologically themed message of the organizers. In this context, due to the tendency of globalization, Romania has rapidly adapted and acquired the concept of communication through cultural events. The events chosen for the analysis are: Untold which takes place in Cluj-Napoca, Neversea which takes place in Constanța, Electric Castle which takes place in Cluj-Napoca and SummerWell which takes place in Bucharest. Untold in 2015 had 240,000 unique participants, and in 2018 it reached 355,000 unique attendees, reaching over 450,000 in 2019. In the case of Electric Castel, the growth is even greater, in 2015 having 97,000 unique attendees, in 2018 exceeding 200,000 attendees, and in 2019 reaching 250,000 unique attendees. We can see the same growth trend at the SummerWell festival, from 60,000 unique attendees in 2015, to over 100,000 in 2018. In 2018 NeverSea had over 200,000 unique attendees.

These four major cultural events generate a business between 300 and 350 million lei in 2018 through the high flow of participants (purchases of products and services). Moreover, these festivals made in 2018 almost 100 million lei in revenue from tickets and sponsorship contracts. It is very important to know that Untold and Neversea were nominated for the European Festival Awards 2019 in the category "Best Major Festival" and Electric Castle and SummerWell in the category "Best Medium Sized Festival". The major opportunity to strengthen the ecological awareness through these organizers of large-scale cultural events can be analyzed economically: comparing 2010 with 2018 we can see that the turnover of the organizers has trebled, and the profits have increased by 600%.

The major cultural events chosen for sampling (Untold, SummerWell, Electric Castle and NeverSea) provided information on using "green campaigns" on their websites. Therefore,

the main point was taken into account that the concept of cultural event is being perfected continuously, taking over and adapting methods, techniques and tools used globally, especially those related to environmental protection in the fields of circular economy (Pistol and Țoniș, 2017), ecological acquisitions, development of the ecological culture by involving the attendees in environmental protection activities – recycling, cleaning and contact with nature (D'Souza, 2007).

Activities related to the event can be considered as promoting messages and organizing campaigns to support the concept of green procurement, purchasing behavior, purchasing and consumption on ecological principles and criteria. Among them can be mentioned a series of messages and campaigns with ecological themes within the four major cultural events.

Thus, the message of Electric Castle is "Eco and Safe": The right to enjoyment belongs to everyone equally, as long as the health and safety of people, but also the environment is not endangered.

Untold developed "Blood network" campaigns; "Happy camp"; "Bac of 10"; „Romania all inclusive”. Through the "Blood network" campaign, Untold staff offered a free ticket for the first day of Untold or Neversea if they donate blood to the mobile caravan and they register in the "And I Donate" database. The "Bac de 10" campaign offered discounted prices to all those who have registered for the baccalaureate and obtained a perfect score of 10 for the baccalaureate exam meaning free access to the Untold event. A campaign carried out by the organizers of Untold in 2019 was the redevelopment of the Central Park and the change of the lawn on Cluj Arena, which were affected by the Untold festival, which totally covered the costs of approximately 1 million lei, respectively 370 thousand of lei. Also, the year 2018 involved the creation of a new "Show you can" campaign, in which the organizers have proposed the selective collection of waste and the recycling of aluminum pockets with the help of the partner Ursus Breweries.

NeverSea or "Sea Untold" has the message "Keep Nature Clean #Neverthrow" and in addition to the continuation of the campaigns initiated by Untold, "Blood network"; "Bac of 10"; "Romania all inclusive", added the WWF campaign "Colors on the verge of extinction", which brings to the public's attention five causes for which WWF acts in Romania – Forests, Danube and Delta, Brown Bear, Sturgeon and Zimbri (aurochs). "Colors on the verge of extinction" is a WWF platform that aims to bring together as many communities, artists and brands as possible in a joint effort to raise awareness and fundraising to save these colors in nature and implicitly the biodiversity of the planet.

With the support of Lidl Romania, the Electric Castle partner in the Environment First program – a premiere that can establish a new direction for all the events in Romania: every day, the quantities of food that was not been used will be recycled, either by redistributing them to several NGOs that helps disadvantaged people, either by transforming them into compost. The Cluj Food Bank will coordinate this action with the Electric Castle teams.

We can thus say that all four events took place on the same coordinates regarding both the acquisition, purchasing and consumption behavior, as well as the concept and message of the campaigns with the ecological theme. Given the increasing success of the large-scale cultural events, as well as the social responsibility and environmental protection actions undertaken by the organizers, there is an opportunity to strengthen the ecological awareness among the attendees. These events can be the perfect communication vector for improving the efforts to protect the environment due to the fact that there is a synergy of ingredients:

the geographical positioning of the events, the unique number of participants, the socio-demographic coordinates of the participants, the scale and the active environmental involvement of the organizers. These efforts are materialized by establishing a normality, for example, to recycle or dispose of waste selectively for the attending company.

### 3. Research methodology

It should be noted that the most common methods of data collection in qualitative research are the questionnaire, the observation and data collected from different types of documents. These methods can be used either separately or in different combinations depending on the research issues and the available research resources (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). The statistical analysis for the processing of the questionnaire followed the following stages: collecting, processing, analyzing and interpreting the results of the survey. Therefore, after grouping the data gathered, we went through the research to perform an analysis of the responses horizontally and vertically. *The horizontal analysis* considered the systematization of the survey data in order to characterize the variables included in the questionnaire. *The vertical analysis* aimed to achieve statistical correlations between variables, in order to derive some essential characteristics of the sample such as: the existence and intensity of the correlations between the variables included in the questionnaire. The non-parametric correlation matrix developed in the vertical analysis included the following qualitative and quantitative variables: age, occupation, importance of the concept of ecological procurement for the development of the environment and awareness development through messages of the festival organizers as independent variables and the ecological behavior of the organizers of festivals in compliance with the principles of green procurement, as a dependent variable.

In the research, we considered the following objectives and hypotheses:

*Objective 1:* Determining the perception of participants in cultural events regarding the importance attributed by the organizers to the development of ecological awareness, through the component of ecological acquisitions;

*Hypothesis 1:* Most of the organizers of cultural events have adapted their development strategies to the requirements of protecting the natural environment through an ecological procurement behavior;

*Objective 2:* Determining the connection between the degree of reception of the message with ecological theme of the organizers and the demographic-economic characteristics of the attending public and implicitly of the society;

*Hypothesis 2:* The degree of reception of the event organizers message differs according to the demographic-economic characteristics of the participants in events and implicitly of the society. Thus, the message transmitted by the organizers through ecological procurement behavior and ecological-themed campaigns is received differently, depending on the demographic-economic characteristics of the attendees;

*Objective 3:* Determining the need to increase the degree of involvement of the organizers of major cultural events in the development of the ecological awareness of the society, by diversifying the types of actions that determine the improvement of the ecological purchasing behavior;



*Hypothesis 3:* A large part of the respondents consider that in order to increase the awareness of environmental protection, it is important that the organizers of large-scale cultural events to implement both actions aimed at increasing the degree of consumer involvement, as well as actions aimed at developing and promoting sustainable consumption based on the principles of green procurement.

The variables used in the research were: factual (age, income, educational level, occupation), binary (gender, place of residence), opinion (importance of the concept of ecological procurement, the ecological behavior of the organizers of cultural events based on music, development ecological awareness through messages of the organizers, the influence of demographic characteristics in the development of ecological awareness).

The interviewed population was 1020 respondents, data collection was conducted through direct interviews based on a questionnaire with 20 predetermined questions, identical for all interviewees. The subjects interviewed with the help of the questionnaire were asked whether they participate in major cultural events (electronic, pop or rock music festivals), by automatically eliminating those who did not participate in such events. During the research we also considered organizational constraints that intervened in establishing the sample size: the financial resources needed for the research; number and capacity of people involved in the survey; the period of completing a questionnaire; the duration of the research. The biggest problem encountered in this phase of the research was the lack of cooperation of the people questioned. To record the answers, the method of direct interviewing was used. The data was collected during the period 1.06.2019-15.07.2019.

The results obtained in the research, based on the answers recorded by the respondents, were processed and analyzed horizontally and vertically, based on simple methods (graphical method and absolute modification method) and complex processing (non-parametric methods for measuring intensity links between the variables included in the questionnaire). Non-parametric methods, beside the fact that they can determine the intensity of the connection by excluding the type of distribution, allow the intensity measurement of the connection not only for the quantitative characteristics, but also for the qualitative ones, which require prior quantification. Based on this analysis, we aimed to determine whether the music-oriented cultural events, through the campaigns promoted among the participants had an impact on increasing the awareness of the protection of the environment through the component of ecological acquisitions. The results of the research were achieved using database analysis and management programs (Excel, SPSS). In conclusion, the large-scale cultural events focused on electronic music, pop, rock represent an efficient and effective channel for transmitting the message with ecological theme of the organizers.

#### **4. Research results**

One of the questions from the questionnaire considered the respondents' frequency of participation in major cultural events. This was the filter question. Following the centralization of the respondents' answers, the following structure of responses resulted: 59% stated that they go Very Frequently, 24% stated that they go to festivals Frequently, 12% stated that they go Rare and 5% stated Very rarely. Most respondents 83% (46% and 37%) consider the concept of green procurement to protect the environment very important and important, in order to ensure sustainable development. 9% of the respondents answered regardless of this concept, and 5% considered it Not Important. 3% responded with I don't

know. In conclusion, those who participate in these festivals are informed people, with a high degree of environmental protection actions awareness. In this context, the organizers should base their actions towards diversification and extension of the communication channels, developing the methods of transmitting messages, increase the impact of transmitted messages to participants, etc.

At the same time, according to the interviewees, the ecological behavior of the festival organizers in relation with respecting the principles of ecological procurement is Very Good and Good in proportion of 66%, Unfavorable in proportion of 20%, Very Unfavorable 14%. According to the respondents, the demographic criteria (age, training level, income level, residence environment) are essential for the participants to receive ecological awareness messages from organizers of large-scale cultural events as 81% of the respondents answered with Yes to this question. The answers given by the respondents regarding the actions to improve the process of ecological procurement among the festival organizers considered the following types of actions: actions aimed at developing the current technology; actions aimed at developing and promoting sustainable consumption; actions aimed at increasing the degree of consumer involvement in supporting sustainability efforts; actions aimed at the circular economy – reducing the consumption of resources and raw materials, stimulating the recycling of sorting it by types of packaging etc.

The answers given by the respondents regarding the-planning of green procurement actions that the festival organizers should implement, we have centralized and classified the answers as follows: actions aimed at informing consumers – sending messages informing consumers about the use of organic products or the use of environmentally friendly packaging; actions aimed at influencing consumers – sending messages influencing consumers regarding the consumption or use of organic products or the use of organic packaging; actions aimed at determining the purchase of organic products –organizing events to stimulate consumption or use of organic products. From the analysis of the horizontal responses, the main characteristics of the sample were obtained (Table no. 1).

**Table no. 1. The main characteristics of the sample**

Characteristics of the sample					
<b>Gender</b>	M	F			
	60%	40%			
<b>Age</b>	15-26	27-38	39-50	>51	
	48%	36%	11%	5%	
<b>Education</b>	High School	University	Post University		
	31%	65%	4%		
<b>Occupation</b>	Pupil	Student	Employee	Entrepreneur	Others (unemployed, retired)
	12%	32%	40%	15%	1%
<b>Residency</b>	Urban	Rural			
	86%	14%			
<b>Income</b>	< 1000 lei	1001-2000 lei	2001-3000 lei	3001-4000 lei	> 4001lei
	10%	10%	16%	52%	12%

Source: Own data processing

The results from table 1 shows that more than half of the respondents (60%) are male and over 80% come from urban areas. Regarding the grouping of the respondents by age groups, the following results were obtained: the young people included in the questionnaire (15-26 years old) represent 48% of the total of the interviewed people while the people over 51 years old are at the opposite pole with a percentage of 5%. Regarding the occupation (40%) of the respondents are employees, 32% students, 15% entrepreneur and in an insignificant percentage of 1% are represented by other categories (pensioners and unemployed). Most are educated people with higher education (65% have university studies and 4% postgraduate studies). More than half of the people included in the questionnaire have an income between 3000-4001 lei. To see if the attitude towards environment protection by the organizers of large-scale cultural events through ecological acquisitions we determined within the research descriptive indicators according to tables 2, 3, 4 and 5. The majority of the respondents aged between 15-26 years consider the ecological behavior of good festival organizers as good (modal value = 4 degrees of importance), since most perceive the importance of the concept of ecological procurement as very important (modal value = 5 degrees of importance).

**Table no. 2. Descriptive indicators for the variables included in the research**

Variables	Descriptive indicators			
	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>15-26 years</b>				
Age (years)	22	3.51	15	33
Organic behavior of the organizers (1-Very unfavorable; 5-Very good)	4	1.17	1.00	5.00
Income (lei)	600	1090.69	300.0	3800.0
Importance of purchasing concept (1-I don't know; 5-Very important)	5	0.75	2	5.00
Developing ecological awareness (1-No; I don't know-2; Yes -3)	3	0.59	1	3.00
Occupation (1-Pupil; 2-Student; 3-Employee; 4-Entrepreneur; 5-Other categories: unemployed, retired)	3	0.87	1	4

Source: Own data processing

At the same time, according to the majority of them, the messages transmitted by the organizers in order to develop an ecological awareness are significant (the modal value = 3 degrees of importance). The young population (33 years old) and very young people (15 years old) are very informed about the ecological campaigns that the organizers of music focused festivals practice and support the development and promotion of sustainable consumption through the ecological procurement component.

**Table no. 3. Descriptive indicators for the variables included in the research**

Variables	Descriptive indicators			
	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>27-38 years</b>				
Age (years)	33.00	3.03	27.00	38.00
Organic behavior of the organizers (1-Very unfavorable; 5-Very good)	4	1.30	1.00	5.00
Income (lei)	3400	1410.71	2900.00	10000

Variables	Descriptive indicators			
	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>27-38 years</b>				
<b>Importance of purchasing concept (1-I don't know; 5-Very important)</b>	5	1.30	1.00	5.00
<b>Developing ecological awareness (1-No; I don't know-2; Yes -3)</b>	3	0.47	1.00	3.00
<b>Occupation (1-Pupil; 2-Student; 3-Employee; 4-Entrepreneur; 5-Other categories: unemployed, retired)</b>	3	0.41	3	4

Source: Own data processing

Regarding the category of respondents aged between 27-38 years, the answers led to the conclusion that the ecological behavior of the festival organizers is in the shared by the majority of the respondents, a good one (the modal value = 4 degrees of importance), when the majority perceives the importance concept of green procurement as very important (modal value = 5 degrees of importance). According to the respondents, the messages transmitted by the organizers in order to develop an ecological awareness is received as being significant within the participants (modal value = 3 degrees of importance). Mature people with mainly occupational status as employees, consider that the actions of the festival organizers involve and raise awareness of enough consumers when buying organic products, although they are in the early stage of development in Romania.

**Table no. 4. Descriptive indicators for the variables included in the research**

Variables	Descriptive indicators			
	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>39-50 years</b>				
<b>Age (years)</b>	45	2.38	39.00	47.00
<b>Organic behavior of the organizers (1-Very unfavorable; 5-Very good)</b>	4	1.19	1	5
<b>Income (lei)</b>	4500	1163.52	2000	6500.00
<b>Importance of purchasing concept (1-I don't know; 5-Very important)</b>	4	0.64	3	5
<b>Developing ecological awareness (1-No; I don't know-2; Yes -3)</b>	3	0.60	1	3
<b>Occupation (1-Pupil; 2-Student; 3-Employee; 4-Entrepreneur; 5-Other categories: unemployed, retired)</b>	4	0.50	3	4

Source: Own data processing

Most respondents aged between 39-50 years appreciate the ecological behavior of festival organizers as (modal value = 4 degrees of importance), while most perceive the importance of the concept of ecological purchases as important (modal value = 4 degrees of importance). Also, most of them are positive regarding the messages transmitted by the organizers in order to develop an ecological awareness (the modal value = 3 degrees of importance). Their specific occupation (employees and entrepreneur), as well as the level of education (most university and postgraduate studies) makes them receptive and encourage the promotion of sustainable consumption through ecological procurement

**Table no. 5. Descriptive indicators for the independent variables**

Variables	Descriptive indicators			
	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
> 51 years				
Age (years)	63	5.52	51	66
Organic behavior of the organizers (1-Very unfavorable; 5-Very good)	4	1.15	2	5
Income (lei)	6000	821.93	4000.0	7000.0
Importance of purchasing concept (1-I don't know; 5-Very important)	4	1.35	1	5
Developing ecological awareness (1-No; I don't know-2; Yes -3)	3	0.37	2	3
Occupation (1-Pupil; 2-Student; 3-Employee; 4-Entrepreneur; 5-Other categories: unemployed, retired)	4	0.77	3	5

Source: Own data processing

Most respondents over the age of 51 have the same positive opinions as those in the 39-51 age group regarding the organizers' efforts to implement advertising of green purchasing campaigns. The study continued with the vertical analysis, which highlighted the following conclusions of the applied non-parametric correlation model (see table no. 6).

**Table no. 6: Correlation matrix**

Correlations			Age	Attitude	Imp_concept	Dev_conscience	Occupation
Spearman's rho	Age	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.558**	-.517**	-.321	.854**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.057	.000
		N	1020	1020	1020	1020	1020
	Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	-.558**	1.000	.479**	-.316	-.595**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.004	.000
		N	1020	1020	1020	1020	1020
	Imp_concept	Correlation Coefficient	-.517**	.479**	1.000	.435	.340
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.026	.000
		N	1020	1020	1020	1020	1020
	Dev_conscience	Correlation Coefficient	-.321	-.316	.435	1.000	.331
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	.004	.026	.	.049
		N	1020	1020	1020	1020	1020
	Occupation	Correlation Coefficient	.854**	-.595**	.340	.331	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.049	.
		N	1020	1020	1020	1020	1020

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The dependence between the ecological behavior of the organizers and the age (-0.558) shows that the expectations of young people regarding ecological procurement are higher. The younger the participants in large-scale cultural events, the more important they are to the concept. This is due to the permanent volunteer actions in which they participate. The non-parametric correlation between the ecological behavior of the organizers and the importance of the concept of green procurement (0.479) suggests that with the increase of

advertising campaigns on environmental issues, there will be a significant increase in participants' consciousness regarding the concept. However, the value of the Spearman correlation coefficient is low due to the fact that participants are still not fully aware of the role of green procurement due to a low level of ecological education. The non-parametric correlation relation, determined between the importance of the concept and the age (-0,517), suggests that the importance of the concept is more representative among the very young and young population due to the digital environment that young people master and are savvier than the mature population.

The correlation established between the importance of the ecological procurement concept and the development of the ecological awareness through messages from organizers highlighted a non-parametric correlation coefficient of 0.435. This low value shows that as the importance of the concept among the participants in large-scale cultural events increases, their degree of ecological awareness through messages also increases. Between the importance of the concept of ecological procurement and occupation the correlation link is weak (correlation coefficient has the value of 0.340). This low value suggests that a development of the occupational status of the participants in large-scale cultural events leads to an increase in the awareness of the importance of the concept.

A high level of education and a job that fits the level of knowledge is not necessarily a significant factor for knowing the importance of the concept of green procurement, because these concepts are still in an early phase of knowledge and awareness among participants in culturally oriented events in Romania. Therefore, the values of non-parametric correlation coefficients are low due to the concept of ecological procurement, a relatively new concept that is not yet widely used in Romania. There are multiple justifications, but mainly, this concept requires high implementation costs and requires a long time to demonstrate its positive effects. Regarding the correlation between the development of the ecological awareness through messages from organizers and the age (the non-parametric correlation coefficient has the value -0,321) it is observed that the younger the participants are the awareness increases. They are more receptive to new concepts with beneficial actions for the environment due to the green campaigns of different organizations in which they frequently participate. The determined correlation link (non-parametric correlation coefficient of 0.85) between age and occupation shows that increasing the age of the respondents leads to the diversification of the employment status. Between the development of the ecological awareness through messages from organizers and occupation, a non-parametric link of direct, weak correlation was established, the coefficient of 0.331 showing that a more complex level of occupation leads to a higher degree of awareness. Although the results obtained in the study show us a reduced impact of awareness regarding the concept of ecological procurement, according to the majority of participants in large-scale cultural events, the organizers have adapted their development strategies to the requirements of protecting the natural environment through green procurement. Thus, the first hypothesis was confirmed. This positive opinion found in all age categories of the participants demonstrated by the value of the descriptive indicators obtained in the analysis. So, hypothesis 2 is confirmed.

In conclusion, we note that the level of development of ecological awareness is low because this concept is still in the early stage of implementation in Romania. Another argument of the low awareness regarding the importance of green procurement would be the fact that the four festivals have a reduced age on the Romanian market. In Romania, the

funds for environmental protection are low, therefore ecological awareness is not part of the organizational culture, and the principles of ecological procurement behavior are not sufficiently used. Also, some of the respondents considered that these messages are not systematically transmitted, they are not too aggressive, and they are not completely in line with the standards and norms imposed by the European Union. A large part of the respondents consider that it is important to increase the awareness of environmental protection by implementing actions aimed mainly at increasing the degree of consumer involvement as well as actions aimed at developing and promoting sustainable consumption. Hypothesis 3 was thus confirmed that their predominant occupational status (employees and entrepreneurs) makes them receptive and encourages the promotion of sustainable consumption through the green procurement component, as well as the level of education (most university and postgraduate studies) confirms it. High level education participants know the actions that should be taken in order to increase environmental safeguarding through green procurement.

### **Implications and conclusions**

It should be mentioned that Romania invests in public procurement almost one fifth of the GDP and is quite behind in regards with the attention paid to the green acquisitions. This was also highlighted in the survey. Major cultural events attract a large, predominantly young, dynamic audience, competitive, a public or a generation that has the perspective to model the society and the economy. That is why raising awareness on the concept of green procurement is also very important. In this context, the research has shown that their degree of information, communication and digitization is high. At the same time, the research has shown that the ecological principles are implemented at a low rate in Romania. The management and behavior of organizations, state bodies and businessmen have begun to adapt their development strategies to the requirements of protecting the natural environment through green procurement. The research also highlighted the fact that the ecological responsibility of the organizations, including the event organizers, as well as the design and transmission of ecological consciousness messages of development and stimulation through large-scale cultural events did not significantly increase the degree of development of the participants' ecological awareness. The degree of knowledge regarding the concept of ecological purchasing and consumption is in an early phase due to low level ecological education, as resulted from the research. This is why it is necessary for large-scale festival organizers to invest more in actions to improve the process of ecological procurement, to diversify the communication ways and typology of messages oriented towards protecting the environment, as well as to increase the frequency of dissemination of these types of messages, taking into account the opinions of participants. According to the idea stated above, the behavior of ecological purchases is influenced to a significant extent by the organizers' revenue. They can develop a behavior based on ecological principles, as long as their income allows the purchase of environmentally friendly products and packaging.

Although most of the participants in the electronic music, pop and rock festivals are well informed and receptive to the need for ecological behavior and the organizers strive to strengthen the ecological awareness of the participants, we appreciate that these large events have a limited contribution to strengthen the ecological attitude and behavior among the participants and the socio-demographic categories that they can influence. There is

room for improvement by creating more partnerships with different entities, especially among recycling. The final conclusion of the research is that music based cultural events are an efficient and effective channel for transmitting the message with the ecological theme of the organizers (Richardson, 2018).

A comparison between quantitative modeling and qualitative modeling could represent a future analysis. This is a limitation of our study, because there is not enough information and specialized studies published by authorized institutions (Ministry of Environment, National Institute of Statistics, National Agency for Environmental Protection, etc.), regarding secondary data that could characterize the ecological purchasing behavior in Romania. Another limitation of our study the lack of dialogue, since in the opinion polls questionnaires were completed, which deprived the research of the possibility of identifying the attitudes expressed freely, attitudes that highlight the specificity of the verbal and non-verbal language in the communication process, as well as some forms of externalizing and free expression through attitudes, which would require a new stage of marketing research. (Popovici, 2014). Another limitation would be that a research should not start from the population or from companies, but from an adequate legislation on public ecological procurement (especially those regulating the development of cultural events).

This first research carried out on large-scale cultural events establishes in a certain way the opportunities to decipher several elements of social interest: the practice of ecological acquisitions by the organizers of major cultural events and also the awareness of the consumers on the efforts to maintain a "green" policy" in procurement.

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