

HABILITATION THESES

The Role of Tourism Higher Education in Developing Student Competencies to Drive Positive Change

Dr Ágnes Raffay-Danyi

**Associate Professor
University of Pannonia
Faculty of Business and Economics
Tourism Department**

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Scientific career

My relationship with tourism started in 1996 when I embarked on the journey to earn my second university degree from the University of Pannonia (formerly University of Veszprém), as an economist specialising in tourism. After having completed the 8-month internship at Tourinform Veszprém I was offered a job there, where I could gain deeper understanding into the multifaceted and complex nature of tourism. The years spent at Tourinform have contributed to turning my interest in tourism into a passion for researching tourism, and the experience gathered there also provided the foundation to be invited as a sessional lecture to teach the predecessor of the Destination Management module (Local Authorities and Tourism) by my alma mater. The opportunity to teach was also greatly welcome as it is related to my original interest, since my first degree is in education (teacher of English and German), and developing student competencies has been a key focus area for me ever since.

To pursue my passion for researching tourism, I continued my studies at the University of Derby (UK), where my doctoral research focused on stakeholder involvement in urban tourism development. Besides the PhD studies I became actively involved with the Veszprém Tourism Association, where I was elected as Vice-President in 2011. Working with the association on destination management has provided me access to the real-life experiences of destination-level tourism organisations, which I have been able to utilise in my teaching.

My commitment to student skills development was further enhanced through the participation in projects such as the Hungarian collaboration project *Social Innovation National Laboratory*, where I was working on developing a competency map for business higher education, and the international Erasmus+ projects *LELLE – Let's Learn How to Learn* and *SKIPPER – Skills Portfolio for Personal Development*.

I was involved in further tourism projects, including the *Sustainable, intelligent and inclusive regional and city models* project, where I also served as sub-project leader for the Quality of Life at the Balaton as a living space chapter; and was part of the Faculty-wide research team of the *Establishment of a circular economy-based sustainability competence centre at the University of Pannonia* project addressing sustainability issues linked to festivals and events. I am currently working a European Horizon project as the professional leader of the activities of the University of Pannonia, and work package leader of WP4: Cross-border Living Lab Areas in the *CROCUS Cross-Border Cultural and Creative Tourism in Rural and Remote Areas*.

Besides my academic role, I am the faculty level coordinator of the AACSB accreditation of the Faculty of Business and Economics. Alongside coordinating the process, I am responsible for complying with the Assurance of Learning standard, which involves ensuring that the teaching activities of the Faculty are mission-driven, hence providing high quality business education based on real-world learning experiences, and preparing students to create positive change.

I also had the opportunity to be actively involved in the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture project, being part of the presentation team as a tourism expert in the first round of the selection process in February 2018 and hosting the international jury panel in the second round in December 2018. My personal engagement for the European Capital of Culture project has motivated me to participate in several research related to the successful implementation of the project as well as the impacts of the title, including the VEB2023 Research Group of the Faculty of Business and Economics between 2020 and 2023.

Scientific project responsibilities between 2020-2024

Task	Project
Sub-project leader	Sustainable, intelligent and inclusive regional and city models - Quality of Life at the Balaton as a living space
Researcher	Establishment of a circular economy-based sustainability competence centre at the University of Pannonia
Researcher, later sub-project leader	Social Innovation National Laboratory – Competency Map sub-project
Researcher	SKIPPER – Skills Portfolio for Personal Development
Professional project leader, work package leader	CROCUS Cross-Border Cultural and Creative Tourism in Rural and Remote Areas

I am proud to be part of an extensive academic network, through which I was invited to participate in doctoral activities as an opponent and committee member, at Budapest Corvinus University Budapest, University of Pécs Business (Doctoral School Business Administration and Doctoral School of Earth Sciences) and the University of Pannonia.

I am on the editorial board of the Hungarian Tourism and Regional Development Studies journal, and a member of Hungarian Regional Sciences Association and of the Public Body of the Economics and Law Chapter of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

I have been invited to chair a session at the IV. International Tourism Marketing Conference in Pécs (2025), and as a keynote at the International Scientific Conference Communication Along the Amber Road in the Iron Age: New Perspectives in Multidisciplinary Research and Promotion held in Szombathely (2025). Furthermore, I served as a workshop facilitator and round table discussion participant at the 12th Training Academy of the Culture Routes of the Council of Europe in Torres Vedras, Portugal (2025). I have contributed as an editor to the compilation of two Conference Proceedings of the Balaton Tourism Research Institute.

My significant publications include

- SCIMAGO Q1:1
- SCIMAGO Q2: 2
- SCIMAGO Q3: 3
- Hungarian Cat. A: 3
- Hungarian Cat. B: 6

Known independent citations: 256

H index: 9

1. The Role of Tourism Higher Education in Developing Student Competencies to Drive Positive Change

1.1. Introduction

Since the second half of the 20th century, tourism has been the most dynamically growing industry, one of the new centers of gravity in the global economy, with spectacular growth in the service sector within national economies and, within that, the continuous strengthening of the role of tourism. (Michalkó, 2010). The study by Csapó and Lőrincz (2020) points out that, parallel to the dynamic growth, the demand and supply sides have undergone significant changes in both space and time, in terms of both quantity and quality.

These changes are also reflected in how jobs in the tourism industry have evolved in recent decades. Primarily technological changes have contributed to the emergence of new jobs, and new ways of performing already existing jobs (Bogdány et al., 2023). The unprecedented rate of growth in information technology has resulted in the growing sophistication of software and applications, which enhance the need for digital skills. Furthermore, due to societal changes, customers have become more demanding, therefore soft skills such as problem solving and empathy have come to the forefront. Last but not least, the increased emphasis on sustainable development influenced the changes in competency requirement in tourism employment.

Tourism higher education has a significant role in preparing the future tourism professionals for a changed (or changing) labour market. However, the question emerges how higher education can cope with the pace of technological and societal changes. Research focusing on education and competency development (Tran, 2018; Herbert et al., 2020) concludes that there is a competency gap between the competencies of graduates and the requirements of the labour market.

My background in tourism and education, as well as active participation in the Competency Map subtheme of the Social Innovation National Laboratory has reinforced my interest in student competency development. My recent research includes both investigations relating to competency requirements in the tourism industry and assessment of factors that contribute to the development or enhancement of key competencies tourism graduates need. The habilitation theses aim to present significant examples of my scientific contribution to tourism and competency development research based on the roles, tasks and activities outlined in the section about my scientific career.

1.2. Structure of the theses

The theses are structured to a sequence of research tourism competency development, establishing the foundations competency development in higher education, proposing a novel methodology that can be utilised to rank the key competencies required from tourism graduates, and providing insight into research findings on two selected competencies.

1. The first part of the theses focuses on the gap between the competencies developed by Hungarian universities in compliance with the national educational and outcome requirement and the competencies that tourism businesses and organisations require from tourism graduates, based on the analysis of job portals and focus group interviews conducted with representatives of the tourism industry.
2. The second part discusses a proposed methodology for assessing the importance of and ranking competencies to be developed based on Q-methodology. There are some examples of the use of Q-methodology in nursing education and teacher evaluation, and it has been tested in Hungary for competencies to be developed in the course of human resource management higher education, the results of which suggest that it can serve as a useful tool for assessing the importance of competencies for tourism higher education.
3. The final part of the theses will provide examples of research into key competencies that enable tourism graduates to create positive change; and also enhance their employability. The research on university students' willingness to volunteer in ECoC events highlights the significance of volunteering in instilling values of social responsiveness and empathy in university students and providing opportunities to enhance their skills. This goes beyond their personal gain as students also contribute to creating positive societal impact by undertaking volunteering tasks. The research on visitor attitudes towards sustainability awareness initiatives at a popular music festival provides insight into the gap between the perceived importance of sustainability initiatives and the respondents' actual contribution to sustainable consumption.

2. Assessing the competency gap between tourism higher education in Hungary and the expectations of the labour market

2.1. Introduction

The 21st century has experienced an unprecedented rate of technological development (it is also referred to as the age of accelerated technological innovations (OECD, 2019), which has brought along significant changes in the labour market. Jobs have appeared that we would have not even dreamt of some decades ago, and the way we do our jobs has also changed. Furthermore, workplaces have become more flat, open, flexible and transparent; in organisations, teamwork is valued more highly than hierarchy (OECD, 2019).

Such changes should be followed by the education sector in order to prepare future generations for working in a changed environment (Bogdány et al, 2012). The statement stands true for all levels of education: schools at every level should see themselves as a part of the larger eco-system in which they operate, forming networks or partnerships with stakeholders to ensure that teachers and students can become familiar with the skills and competencies that employers and other community members consider important. Recent research reveals that the importance of soft skills has grown significantly in the recent years (Balogh et al, 2012; Herbert et al, 2020; Bogdány et al, 2021). Skills development enhances the chances of employability of graduates, which brings benefits not only for the graduates themselves but for the community and the economy as well, therefore connections to the area of social innovation can be detected.

The question emerges how higher education can cope with the pace of technological and societal changes, if at all. Various research focusing on education and competency development (Tran, 2018; Herbert et al., 2020) refers to a competency gap that can be observed between the competencies of graduates and the requirements of the labour market.

In the tourism industry the diversification of tasks and jobs is also rather apparent. While 20 years ago tourism businesses used to employ a marketing manager, now this job has been split different jobs such as online marketing expert, social media manager or content developer, just to name a few recently emerged tasks. Furthermore, the development of online solutions enhanced the need for digital skills, while soft skills such as problem solving, social perceptiveness and empathy have also become important competencies as customer needs have become more complex. Last but not least, the increased need for sustainable development has also impacted on the skills requirements in tourism employment (<https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/>)

Within the framework of the Competency Map sub-theme of the Social Innovation National Laboratory project, the research team I was part of aimed to assess the potential gap between the competencies developed by business higher education as defined by the Hungarian educational and outcome requirements, and the expectations of the labour market. The research involved all the bachelor programmes of the Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Pannonia, and the results of the research focusing on tourism higher education was already discussed in the first part of the theses.

The Competency Map research throughout all business programmes relied on the OECD competency definition and its threefold classification into ‘knowledge’, ‘skills and abilities’ and ‘attitudes and values’ types of competencies.

For the research on tourism competencies, the following research questions have been formed:

Q1: What are the competency expectations of tourism labour market?

Q2: Is there a gap between the competencies developed by tourism higher education and the expectations of tourism and hospitality labour market?

Desk research incorporating content analysis of the national educational and outcome requirements of the tourism and hospitality curriculum as well as of job advertisements and job skills requirements; and focus group interviews conducted with tourism professionals working in different areas of tourism and hospitality will inform the research.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Notion of competency

According to the Education Policy Committee (Taguma (OECD) – Rychen, 2016, p.3) „a competency is defined as the ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context through the mobilization of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values”. This competency definition rests on three pillars, which are defined as follows:

- „Knowledge includes theoretical concepts and ideas as well as practical understanding based on the experience of having performed certain tasks ... disciplinary, interdisciplinary, epistemic and procedural.” (Speiser – Lang (OECD), 2018, p.72)
- „Skills are the ability and capacity to carry out processes and be able to use one’s knowledge in a responsible way to achieve a goal ... cognitive and meta-cognitive skills; social and emotional skills; and physical and practical skills.” (Speiser – Lang (OECD), 2018, p.85)
- „Attitudes and values ... refer to the principles and beliefs that influence one’s choices, judgements, behaviours and actions on the path towards individual, societal and environmental well-being.” (Speiser – Lang, 2018, p. 101.)

Although it is inevitable that knowledge type competencies are fundamental in being able to perform certain tasks, the role of soft skills has gained significantly more importance. The World Economic Forum publish their forecast periodically about future competencies ranked according to their importance. The list of the top 10 competencies has changed a bit in the recent years however, problem solving has been ranked as the most important competency for the 2015, 2020 and 2025 predictions as well (Csizmadia – Raffay, 2019). Although the latest World Economic Forum *Future of Jobs Report 2020* ranks the specific complex problem-solving skill as third on the list, preceded by analytical thinking and innovation, however these two skills are acknowledged as problem-solving type skills in the report. Critical thinking and technology use have also been gaining importance, while newly emerging skills include resilience, stress tolerance, flexibility and active learning.

2.2.2. Competency requirements in the tourism industry

The tourism industry, just as other industries, has also experienced significant developments in the recent years, both in terms of the further diversification of tasks and jobs, and in terms of technological and societal changes that impacted on how jobs are done. The growing sophistication of software and applications enhanced the need for digital skills, while the customers have become more demanding, therefore soft skills such as problem solving and empathy have come to the forefront. Furthermore, the increased need for sustainable development on the customers' as well as service providers' side has also influenced the changes in skills requirement in tourism employment.

A European research partnership, Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTG), has been established recently to unveil the future skills that the next generation of tourism professionals will need to be empowered with. The research partnership, aiming to establish a collaborative and productive relationship between education and industry, and as an outcome, to provide employees, employers, entrepreneurs, teachers, trainers and students with a set of core NTG modules in digital, green and social skills. (<https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/>)

Research carried out by the Hungarian project partner in five areas of tourism and hospitality revealed that core digital and social skills will be most required in the Hungarian tourism industry in the different jobs by 2030. These results have been incorporated into the Hungarian National Tourism Strategy 2023, the Turizmus 2.0 strategy document, emphasising that strategic human resource planning with the aim of influencing the development of a devoted and highly skilled employee basis is a key prerequisite of high-quality service provision. The Turizmus 2.0 tourism strategy summarises the expected future skills in tourism and hospitality in three core areas:

Table 2.1. Future skills in tourism and hospitality

Digital skills	Green skills	Social skills
Programming	Knowing environmentally friendly detergents	Team spirit
Digital content creating	Selective waste collection, Recycling	Problem solving
Personalisation	ECO certificates	Empathy
Big Data analysis	Environmental awareness	Tolerance
Cloud-based software usage	Knowing related regulations and standards	General knowledge
Effective social media usage	Renewable energy usage	Adaptability and flexibility
Mobile applications usage	Knowing local produce	Openness
	Preferring reusable tools	Conflict management
		Awareness of dietary requirements
		Proactivity in guest relations

Source: Own editing based on Turizmus 2.0, p. 131

2.2.3. Competency development in higher education

In higher education programmes, designing of the education process on the foundation of the curriculum starts with the development of learning goals and outcomes (Appleton et al., 2006). The learning goals and outcomes should reflect the needs of the industry the higher education institutions train graduates for, therefore the learning goals and outcomes should be defined in a way that enhance the employability of graduates (Shrivastava et al., 2022). As the 21st century is characterised by globalism, constant change and networked operations, higher education empowers graduate to be able to respond to the fundamental global and national trends and to the challenges of the future if they prepare graduates for interdisciplinary and problem-oriented thinking, as well as for working in teams (OECD, 2019).

Higher education institutions in Hungary operate along the national regulations both in academic and management terms. Curriculum content for each degree programme is defined by the decree 18/2016 (VIII.5) issued by the Ministry of Human Resources. The decree specifies the specific competencies that must be incorporated into the curriculum of each degree programme, grouped into four categories: 1) knowledge, 2) skills and abilities, 3) attitude and 4) autonomy and responsibility.

2.2.4. Competency gap

Even though the key aim of higher education institutions is to train graduates for the labour market (Brown, 2019), due to the high pace of development they often fail to capture the changes in the skills expectations of the labour market, which in turn also impacts on the employability of students (Harman et al., 2010; Jackson, 2016). According to Fajaryati et al. (2020, p. 600) “employability skills are the personal attributes enabling the people to get a job and support an individual’s career life more easily”.

Mourshed et al. (2012) claim that employers usually perceive the insufficiency of skills among the employees, while Conrad and Newberry (2012), Everson (2014) and Adrian (2017) also report that a competency gap exists between employer needs and the skill sets of university graduates. The International Labour Office (ILO) refers to this phenomenon as skills mismatch, which „is an encompassing term which refers to various types of imbalances between skills offered and skills needed in the world of work” (ILO, 2014, p. 6).

2.3. Research methods

The research rests on four pillars to detect the key competencies required from tourism and hospitality professionals. The research started with desk research, examining the competencies identified by three distinct sources: 1) the educational and outcome requirements for the tourism and hospitality bachelor programmes defined by the 18/2016 (VIII.5) Higher Education Decree issued by the Ministry of Human Resources; 2) the O*NET American job portal that lists the skills expectations of various tourism and hospitality jobs (as universities should aim to train graduates fit for international labour markets as well) ; 3) job advertisements on most frequently used Hungarian tourism portals (turizmus.com and turizmusonline.hu) to assess the most frequently required skills. Content analysis was used for the analysis of the above sources.

Furthermore, as the 4th pillar, focus group interviews were conducted with professionals representing different areas of business, different size companies as well as not-for-profit organisations to reveal the skills they would require from tourism and hospitality graduates with maximum one year experience. Altogether 11 participants shared their views, representing a wide range of tourism-related organisations:



2.4. Research findings

When assess the gap between the competencies developed by higher education institutions (Figure 2.1.) and the competency expectations of the labour market, the result gained from the three distinct labour market sources are presented jointly in the summative Table 2.2. (comprising the competency expectations of the labour market, based on the content analysis of job portals and the focus group interviews).

Figure 2.1. Competencies developed in alignment with the tourism and hospitality educational and outcome requirements



Source: Own editing, 2025

Table 2.2. below summarises the competency requirements of the labour market, indicating the sources of responses.

Table 2.2. Summary of the competency expectations of the labour market

Competency	O*NET portal	Job adverts	Focus groups
<i>Knowledge</i>			
Tourism/hospitality proficiency	x	x	x
English	x	x	x
Tourism/hospitality specific software			x
System of tourism			x
IT (social media, online meeting platforms)		x	x
Geography	x		x
Marketing and sales	x		
Administration	x		x
<i>Skills and abilities</i>			
Problem solving	x	x	x
Communication	x	x	x
Teamwork		x	x
Working independently	x	x	
Active listening	x		x
Assertive communication	x		
Conflict resolution			x
Time management	x		
Coordination	x		
Digital skills			x
<i>Attitudes and values</i>			
Guest (service) orientation	x	x	x
Empathy	x	x	x
Flexibility	x	x	x
Tolerance		x	x
Openness			x
Proactivity		x	x
Stress management			x
Problem sensitivity	x		
Social perceptiveness	x		
Precision		x	
Success orientation		x	
Resilience			
Tidy appearance		x	

Source: Own editing (2025)

The findings reveal a clear gap between the educational and outcome requirements and the expectations of the labour market, both in terms of the proportions of ‘knowledge’, ‘skills and abilities’ and ‘attitudes and values’ type competencies, and both in terms of concrete competencies.

While the educational and outcome requirements place significant emphasis on knowledge and proficiency in wide-ranging areas, and the ability to utilize this knowledge in practice, the labour market expectations, especially the job advertisements, contain more ‘attitude and value’ type competencies. The focus group interviews revealed two key reasons behind this. On the one hand, due to the current labour shortage in the tourism industry in Hungary, businesses are settling for people with the right attitude rather than demanding specific knowledge. On the other hand, as a result of the quickly changing work environment in tourism, employees are ideally able to adapt to the changed circumstances, therefore attitudes such as openness and flexibility are key characteristics.

As for individual competencies, in the knowledge competency category, all four components of the research argue for the importance of tourism proficiency, English (foreign language) and IT (including knowledge of different tourism specific software). However, it must be noted that the labour market expectations now specify IT knowledge in more detail, requiring the knowledge and ability to use social media and online meeting platforms; while the educational and outcome requirements were last defined in 2018, which clearly precedes the advent of online meetings, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A noticeable gap can be observed in general business knowledge developed by foundation modules such as mathematics and statistics or methodology: while these are integral parts of the educational and outcome requirements, neither of the labour market sources indicated these as competencies they would require from graduates.

More overlap can be observed in the skills and abilities’ type competencies. Problem solving features in all four lists, which is in line with the World Economic Forum future skills predictions, where problem solving is identified as the top skill. Communication is also a key competency that all the investigated sources regarded as important. A striking difference can be detected in the case of critical thinking, which is a key competency to be developed according to the educational and outcome criteria but none of the analysed sources representing the labour market require this skill. However, critical thinking is one of the top skills on the list of the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report.

Attitudes and values also show remarkable similarities, however the list of expected skills in this category is most extensive in the case of job advertisements. Guest/service orientation is the absolute overlap, but empathy and flexibility were further core attitude expectations which at least three sources confirmed.

2.5. Conclusions

The rate of technological development has resulted in significant changes in the labour market, both in terms of the appearance of brand-new jobs, and also in the way jobs are performed. Furthermore, the work environment has also changed significantly in the recent years, working in networked organisations, and working in teams have become prevalent, and the need for problem-oriented thinking has become more important, while the COVID-19 pandemic has also brought new challenges.

The role of higher education is to develop those skills that foster the employability of graduates however, it poses a great challenge to respond to the impacts of the accelerated rate of development.

The current research aimed to assess the gap between the core competencies that tourism higher education in Hungary develops and the expectations of the labour market. The results reveal that tourism proficiency, IT and English as a foreign language are the core knowledge type competencies, and also indicate the growing importance of soft skills, abilities as well as attitudes. The research reinforced the importance of the problem-solving skill, which has been amongst the top future skills according to the World Economic Forum future skills predictions for over a decade now. Guest focus, empathy and flexibility were considered as key skills in the tourism industry, alongside flexibility which has become more important due to the unprecedented uncertainties that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought, especially in the tourism industry.

The limitations of the research include the involvement of only one higher education institution in Hungary and focusing mostly on the competencies of the Hungarian tourism industry. Expanding the research involving all Hungarian universities that offer tourism higher educations, as well as an international comparison could lead to more generalisable results and would bring more benefits to the future of tourism higher educations, as in today's globalised world, higher education institutions aim to train 'global' graduates who can successfully fulfil tasks in the global labour market as well.

2.6. Proposed theses

Based on these, I propose the following thesis statements:

1.a) The gap between competencies developed by tourism higher education in accordance with the educational and outcome requirements and the labour market expectations can be detected both in the different proportion of knowledge, skills and abilities and attitudes and values type competencies, and in the importance of individual competencies.

1.b) Tourism higher education places roughly equal emphasis on the three types of competencies, while the labour market requires more soft skills, especially attitudes and values type competencies from tourism graduates.

3. A proposed methodology for mapping and ranking competencies that (business) graduates need

3.1. Introduction

The Competency Map sub-theme of the Social Innovation National Laboratory project aimed to assess the potential gap between the competencies developed by business higher education as defined by the Hungarian educational and outcome requirements, and the expectations of the labour market, for all the bachelor programmes of the Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Pannonia. The research relied the same four pillars to identify the key competencies required from business graduates: content analysis of the national guidelines for educational and outcome requirements; the O*NET American job portal; job advertisements on most popular Hungarian job portals; and focus group interviews conducted with professionals of the business areas relating to the different business programmes. The results of the research focusing on tourism higher education was already discussed in the first part of the theses.

The research presented here aimed to propose a methodology that can identify key competencies by ranking them according to importance, which can help to verify the set of competencies that business higher education should aim to develop. The pilot research assessed competencies that Human Resource Management graduates need to match the labour market expectations; the current theses focuses on the applied methodology and its implications for other business higher education programmes, including tourism and hospitality, therefore HRM competencies are mentioned only as examples to illustrate the steps of the Q-methodology research.

Current research on ranking tourism competencies utilising Q-methodology is still ongoing, therefore reliable results are not available yet to present in the theses.

3.2. Literature review

3.2.1. Assessing competency needs

Successful operation of organisations highly depends on the performance of its employees. However, the performance of workers is influenced considerably by the existence of professional knowledge, abilities and other necessary competencies (Vasanth - Bano, 2019). Employers frequently perceive the insufficiency of competencies among the employees (Mourshed et al., 2012). Moreover, research studies consistently report that higher education graduates are increasingly unable to perform work duties effectively (Tran, 2018). According to Ejiwale (2014) the lack of required competencies might hinder in finding a workplace, which contributes to the fact that a significant number of graduates cannot find a position appropriate to their qualification (Jackson, 2013). The high level of unemployment can be associated with the inadequacy of the education system in developing employability skills of graduates and thereby their workplace competitiveness (Fajaryati et al., 2020).

The mentioned activities and consequently the importance of different competencies may differ from organization to organization. Study by McLean et al. (2005) confirmed the suggestion that different groups of individuals perceive competencies differently and “ranking of competencies is more complex than previous studies have presented” (McLean, et al., 2005, p. 162). Examining the importance of specific competencies from different points of view, using the Q-methodology to explore individual opinions, allows for a well-founded understanding of it.

3.2.2. Q-methodology description

Q-methodology could be a reliable research methodology in different research fields (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Ranking competencies by using Q-methodology previously were applied in different fields e.g. nurse education research (Hensel et al., 2022; Tornwall - McDaniel, 2022), evaluating critical thinking competency (Gyenes, 2021); and teacher evaluation (Rodl et al., 2020). The Q-methodology has a number of advantages (mixed method, reliable compilation of concourse, few participants (Exel - Graaf, 2005; Watts - Stenner, 2012; Morea, 2022) that a higher educational institution could utilize to understand the stakeholders’ viewpoint on expected competencies. As Aldamen et al. (2021) mentioned it could be useful to redesign curricula. Moreover, according to Chen et al. (2015) Q-methodology can be better used to generate new ideas than testing hypotheses.

Q-methodology discovers the main attitudes among participants, compares these different opinions and finds differences between them in order to divide these opinions into categories. According to Exel and Graaf (2005, p.3) “an important notion behind Q-methodology is that only a limited number of distinct viewpoints exist on any topic ... any well-structured Q-sample, containing the wide range of existing opinions on the topic, will reveal these perspectives”. Q-methodology is the combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, moreover this four-phase process is about the revelation of subjective viewpoints of the participants in order to find qualitative evidence behind the underlying viewpoints by factor analysis (Brown, 1993; Watts - Stenner, 2012; Morea, 2022).

The first step of conducting Q-methodology is the concourse which is compiled based on the statements that are formulated from various standpoints (e.g. interview, relevant literature) and cover as many sub-topics as possible. After the concourse the clarification of the statements is the next step, called Q-set or Q-sample (Coogan - Herrington, 2011). The carefully selected representatives are asked to sort the Q-sample based on their own perspectives (Lee, 2017). At the end of the process factor-analysis needs to be conducted in order to find a reasonable number of attitudes (factors) among the participants.

Validity, reliability and generalizability are important in every methodology; in case of the Q-methodology we need to consider these conditions the following way. Content validity of the Q-sample is addressed by literature review and by obtaining expert advice, while face validity is ensured by editing the statements slightly and item validity means that it does not apply subjectivity (Valenta - Wigger, 1997). According to Thomas and Baas (1992) in connection to the reliability, findings of Q-methodology were consistent when it was used to different person samples, and even when different Q-samples and person samples were used. Q-methodology studies can rarely be generalized because of the explanatory nature of the research questions, therefore, it is not designed for large nonrandomized participant samples (Watts - Stenner, 2005).

The above discussions indicate that Q-methodology could be an appropriate answer to the questions of what competencies HRM graduates need to possess and what are the main angles behind these different competency rankings' perspectives.

3.3. Methodology

For the pilot research to identify and rank important HRM competencies Q-methodology was used. We followed the recommended steps of Q-methodology by Paige and Morin (2014) (Table 3.1.).

Table 3.1. The flow of Q-methodology

The flow of Q-methodology	
Development of Concourse	The process how Q-sample was created: Content analysis of Hungarian educational requirements Content analysis of job adverts, O*NET portal Focus group interviews
Compilation of Q-Sample (Q-Set)	40 competency definition were compiled
Selection of P-Sample (P-Set)	Selection of the sample of respondents
Q-Sorts (Pilot)	Participants sorting the definitions according to the importance
Further development	Analysis and interpretations before final sorting

Source: Bogdány, Cserháti and Raffay-Danyi (2023)

The following sections present the different steps of the applied Q-methodology.

3.3.1. Methods used during the development of the concourse

Content analysis

The Hungarian educational competency requirements defined for the HRM higher education was the starting point of the content analysis. Altogether 27 competencies were identified, grouped into the OECD categories.

In order to reveal the expectations of the labour market from different sources, job advertisements were extracted first from several Hungarian job portals. Altogether 65 different job advertisements were collected, which encompassed 12 various junior HRM positions, like HRM specialist, HRM assistant, HRM coordinator, recruiter, etc. In case of each job advertisement, we gathered the required competencies defined by employers and compiled a summarised list of competencies (992). We deleted repeatedly occurring competencies and drew together similar expressions referring to the same competency. As a result of data filtering, 65 different competencies were identified, based on which a frequency analysis was carried out.

Beside job ads, data of the international online database Occupational Information Network (O*NET) was also studied, to reveal requirements across an international basis. The database contains standardized occupation-specific descriptions. On the website of O*NET (www.onetonline.org) we selected such HRM specific occupations, where a bachelor's degree was

required (e.g. HRM Assistant, HRM Specialist etc.). Similarly to the analysis of job advertisements, we listed the expected skills, knowledge and abilities in case of relevant occupations. After deleting repetitions and merging competencies with the same meaning we identified 36 relevant competencies.

Focus groups

To gain a deeper understanding of the expectations of the labour market, focus group interviews were conducted with HRM professionals, representing both public and private sector organisations. During the selection of the participants, we were conscious about the size of the organization as HRM tasks may be significantly different in micro- or small organisations and in large multinational corporations. Altogether 13 participants shared their views, identifying 22 competencies.

3.3.2. Compilation of the Q-Sample (Q-Set)

We carried out an integrative content analysis in order to define valid and measurable items for a quantitative analysis, where the Q-methodology would be applied. Based on competency clusters of Hungarian educational competency requirements we have clear definitions on knowledge, skills and attitudes developed by higher education programmes. The O*NET database also provides detailed descriptions of required competencies. Competency requirements mentioned in the focus group interviews needed to be integrated. First, two authors independently analysed the transcripts of focus group interviews. They extracted all relevant aspects related to the required competencies and based on those formulated a unique definition for each competency. Afterwards, the separately formulated definitions were compared and discussed in two steps. In the first step, identical competency definitions were compiled by two authors. In the second step, the third author was involved in cases of lack of consensus regarding the remaining competency definitions.

After agreement on competency definitions based on the focus groups, we started to compile the specifications gathered from the Hungarian education and outcome requirements, O*NET database and focus group interviews to formulate integrated definitions of competencies. During this process we followed the same rigour as applied for the analysis of focus group interviews, augmenting the process with the three authors checking that the integrated definitions preserve all relevant aspects of the previous definitions. Following this rigour, the validity and reliability of competency definitions is well-founded.

3.3.3. Selection of the P-Sample (P-Set)

Significant characteristic of the Q-methodology is that only a few respondents need to be involved in order to identify preferences behind the different responses (Akhtar-Danesh et al., 2008). Brown (1993) indicated that 40-60 participants is appropriately enough to conduct the analyses.

The pilot research aimed to test Q-methodology as a process for HRM competency evaluation, therefore the study demonstrates only the pilot results of Q-sorts, and the experiences based on these results. Aligned with the aim of the study, the following selection criteria were applied for

enough, and to gain insight from participants impressions of sorting, as it could lead to the modification in procedures or in concourse. The sample testers (P-Set) were able to test the questionnaire and to give feedback about the procedure.

To investigate the pilot results, we applied one-sample t-test by using SPSS statistical program. By applying one-sample t-test competency differences (means) were compared to a predetermined value (competency means evaluated as neutral, test value=0) to determine if the mean of the competency evaluations is significantly greater or less than the test value.

3.4. Research findings

3.4.1. Development of HRM Q-set, utilising different perspectives

Based on a comprehensive data collection we identified competencies, that are on one hand determined for higher education degree programmes (Hungarian educational and outcome requirements) and are on the other hand required by workplaces (job advertisements, O*NET database, focus group interviews). After the identification of the 40 most relevant competencies (Q-set), we formulated integrated definitions for each competency. An example of the integration of statement definitions is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Formulating the definition of Complex Problem Solving

Definition of Complex Problem Solving			
Hungarian competency requirements	ONET	Focus group interviews	Integrated definition
Identifying facts and fundamental relationships, systematizing and analysing, drawing independent conclusions and critical remarks, preparing suggestions for decision-making, making decisions in routine and partially unfamiliar, national as well as international environment, by applying the acquired theories and methods.	Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.	Recognition of problems, situations different from usual; unfolding the fundamental reasons of the problem, based on the gathered information formulating professionally adequate suggestions to solve the give problem.	Ability to identify problems, to unfold the main reasons of the problem by complex analysis of relevant information and facts, to formulate rational alternatives and to make grounded decisions.

Source: Bogdány, Cserháti and Raffay-Danyi (2023)

3.4.2. Q-methodology ranking

As the first step, summarized the rankings were summarised based on the means and the Std. deviations. Results indicated that based on the means mainly knowledge type competencies were sorted into the not important categories. Few knowledge elements were evaluated by the participants significantly more important, such as foreign language, rules and processes of teamwork/cooperation, computer (program) knowledge, personnel and human resources. Despite these elements being significantly important for the participants, the range and the std. deviations are scattering. Also, we can highlight that altogether skills were evaluated more significantly important than knowledge elements. Assertive and basic communication skills were significantly important based the evaluation of participants.

As a second step, one-sample t-test was conducted to find out which competencies' evaluations were significantly differing from the neutral rankings. The mean difference presents that the calculated mean of the sample deviates from the value we provided previously in the following cases: foundations of economics, mathematics and statistics, rules of team leadership, social responsibility, business ethics and transdisciplinarity were significantly rated below, while basic communication, assertive communication, time management and independence were significantly rated above than 0.

The current theses will not go into further detail about the results regarding competencies HRM graduates need, the current work only intended to demonstrate the applicability of Q-methodology to assess the importance of competencies in the field of business higher education.

3.5. Conclusions

The use of the Q-methodology has delivered the desired results. Even though the method is more time-consuming, both in terms of time spent with compiling the Q-set and with filling in the questionnaire, the results provide a clear picture of the hierarchy of competencies. Furthermore, the research has identified the gaps between the competency requirements of the labour market and the competencies Hungarian (HRM) higher education develops according to the national regulations, therefore the results can be utilised by the educational policy makers to ensure a better match of developed and required competencies and by universities to incorporate further competency development oriented tasks into their extra-curricular activities within their remit.

3.6. Proposed thesis

Based on these, I propose the following thesis statement:

2.) Q-methodology can be used to identify the set of key competencies that the business higher education in Hungary needs to develop to ensure a better match with expectations of the labour market, thereby enhancing the employability of business graduates, and enabling them to drive positive change.

4. Research on key competencies that enable tourism graduates to create positive change: Sustainability awareness at a popular music festival

4.1. Introduction

Sustainability, and specifically green skills, have been identified as a key competency that the next generation of tourism professionals need to possess (www.nexttourismgeneration.eu), which then have also been incorporated into the Hungarian National Tourism Strategy, *Tourism 2.0*.

Research conducted within the framework of the „*Establishment of a circular economy-based sustainability competence center at the University of Pannonia*” project investigated the sustainability related initiatives of the Street Music Festival in Veszprém, assessing the attitude of festival visitors to sustainability at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. The festival is part of Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture (hereon in ECoC) Project as 2020, which places special emphasis on sustainability (veszprembalaton2023.hu).

Although sustainable practices aiming to reduce the negative environmental impacts have been prevalent at events for over a decade now (Mair - Laing 2012; Mair - Smith 2021), initiatives focusing on the economic impacts as well as supporting the local economy and society are also gaining more emphasis in event planning and management (Andersson et al. 2015; Perry et al. 2020). Studies by Mair – Laing (2013) and Ye et al. (2020) have established that music festivals attracting larger audiences are becoming especially aware of the importance of sustainability as well as of their role in the process of raising participants’ awareness of it.

Even though the research did not specifically target university students or graduates, a significant proportion of the participants of the Street Music Festival are young people including university students, which is typical of popular music festivals, the responses may provide useful insight into the sustainability related attitude of students and recent graduates.

4.2. Literature review

4.2.1. Environmental, economic and social pillars of sustainability

Sustainable practices aiming to reduce the negative environmental impacts have become key guiding principles of events (Mair - Laing 2012). Although all three pillars of sustainability are equally important, the literature of sustainable events suggests that organisers put environmental considerations in the focus, trying to ensure the negative impacts caused by the event are reduced to a minimum, and quite often this effort is accompanied by the promotion of green actions and communicating the green aspects of the event. In the research by Boggia et al. (2018) the terms sustainability and environmental effects are used interchangeably. Based on the focus of sustainable practices, a distinction can be made between organisations implementing green actions and organisations committed to all three pillars of sustainability in their management and operations (Mair - Jago, 2010).

Besides the green practices, initiatives focusing on the economic impacts as well as supporting the local economy and society are also gaining more emphasis in event planning and management (Andersson et al., 2015). Organisers consider the economic impacts by making sustainability equal to continuity, referring to guaranteed financial sources and income that ensures the event can be staged in the long run (Zifkos, 2015). In the case of profit-oriented events, one of the key aims is to generate income, (Choi – Sirakaya, 2006), however, economic sustainability has to be considered even in the case of non-fee-paying events where the main objective may relate to regional development by enhancing the image and attractiveness of the host area (Getz, 2010; Perry et al., 2020).

There is growing interest in researching the social impacts of the festivals, including how they impact on the everyday life of local residents and how they foster collaboration amongst various actors, such as local residents, local NGOs and other stakeholders. Generally, music events bring enjoyment to the participants. A ‘feel-good factor’ refers to senses of feeling good, (communal) wellbeing and happiness as a result of participation. It is also noted that the events can lead to the strengthening of local pride and patriotism and can enhance community spirit (Formádi - Hunyadi 2019).

4.2.2. Attitude of festival visitors to sustainability

The growing demand for sustainability on behalf of the participants has become a trend that facilitates or even forces the implementation of sustainable principles at events (Ye et al. 2020, Csapody et al., 2021). This demand can be traced back to the growing awareness of climate change and increasingly worrying lack of clear water and droughts in some places, and of extreme weather conditions that jeopardize the existence and staging of events. Furthermore, there is growing awareness of the impact food production on the environment, as the food and agriculture sector is responsible for a significant proportion (around 25%) of global greenhouse gas emissions (Ritchie, 2019). Due to environmental concerns and a growing awareness of healthy lifestyle, the eating habits have changed significantly in the 21st century. A reduction of certain food products, such as meat and dairy products, can be observed parallel with the growth of other types of products, such as vegetables, plant-based drink, gluten free products (Plant Menu, limevenueportfolio.com). The growing demand for special diets has also got its roots in the growth of the proportion of people suffering from certain food allergies or intolerances (Benedé et al. 2016). More and more festivals recognise the need as well as the business potential in providing catering options to satisfy the needs of visitors with special dietary needs and preferences (van Berkel 2014; Raffay-Danyi – Ernszt, 2021).

Music festivals attracting larger audiences are becoming especially aware of the importance of sustainability as well as of their role in the process of raising participants’ awareness of it (Mair - Laing 2013; Ye et al. 2020). Festival visitors may play a significant role in the realization of sustainable principles. An increasing number of research focuses on awareness raising techniques that target festival visitors, and the efficiency of sustainability centred educational programmes taking place at events (Mair – Laing 2013; Efeja et al. 2016; Tolkes - Butzmann 2018;). Mair and Laing (2013) concluded that primarily those visited green and sustainable festivals whose way of thinking is based on sustainability, therefore participating in such events served as a positive reinforcement of their way of thinking and lifestyle.

4.2.3. Sustainability initiatives at music festival

Most of the sustainability initiatives at festivals tend to focus on the environment, aiming to reduce and mitigate the potential negative impacts of the event (Paton – McCullen 2014). Waste reduction is a key concern, which can manifest in various forms, like in reducing the amount of rubbish generated at festivals and reducing the use of plastic wherever it is possible. Although it is possible to recycle plastic bottles, and even reuse them, by far the best option is not to have a disposable bottle at all. Many festivals aim to provide drinking water so that participants refill their own flasks and bottles instead of buying bottled water, such as the Lime Tree Festival and Glastonbury Festival (www.limetreefestival.co.uk; Marsh, 2019). As Efeja et al. (2016) point out, it is of utmost importance that awareness raising programmes are delivered in the spirit of edutainment to encourage visitor participation, for example through co-creation, joint search for solutions for sustainability related challenges, creative workshops, etc.

4.3. Veszprém Street Music Festival

The Veszprém Street Music Festival Hungary is well-established in the Hungarian festival calendar since the year 2000. Unlike other music festivals, the Street Music Festival is a free event taking place on the open streets of the historic city centre of Veszprém, instead of a dedicated festival site (www.utcazene.hu).

Since 2020, the Street Music Festival is part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture project, which has put sustainability as a key guiding principle on their flag (veszprembalaton2023.hu). The programmes organised under the umbrella of the ECoC project are encouraged and supported to implement sustainability goals. Even though sustainability is not a new concept for the organisers of the Veszprém Street Music Festival, the special emphasis on sustainability related to joining the ECoC project provided the key motivation for conducting the research on sustainability awareness at this event.

4.4. Methodology

The methodology is based on a questionnaire survey conducted during the festival in August 2020 assessing how participants rate the importance of sustainability measures and how they can contribute to sustainability. The respondents were chosen randomly at the festival site where festival volunteers assisted in recording responses on the paper-based questionnaires during the four days of the event, and the questionnaire was also available online on the www.veszprembalaton2023.hu website.

The research investigating visitor attitudes aimed to answer to the following research questions:

Q1: How important do festival visitors rate sustainability initiatives?

Q2: To what extent is the visitors' consumption at the festival site sustainable?

4.5. Research findings

4.5.1. Respondent profile

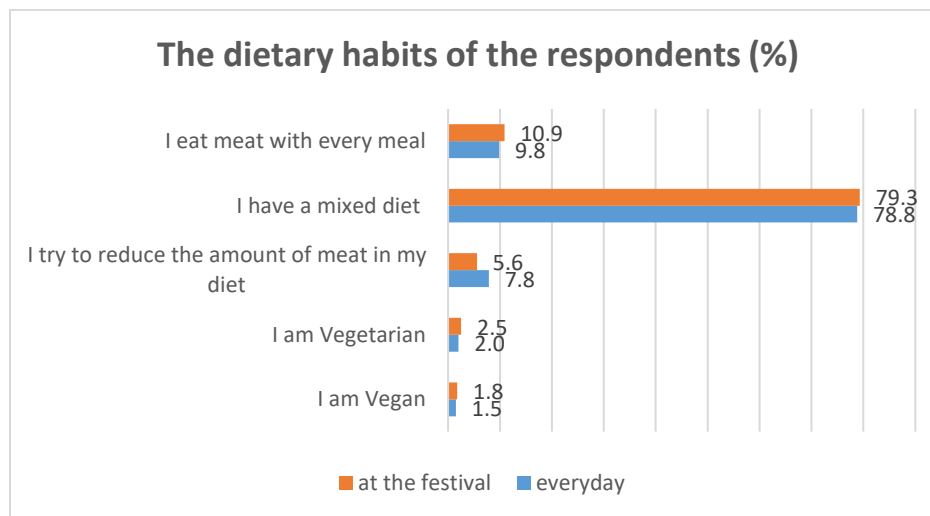
The Veszprém Street Music Festival attracts young and middle-aged people primarily. The majority of the respondents were between 18 and 49 of age, 55% of the respondents were female and 45% male. Almost half of the respondents have higher education qualification, and a further 35% have completed secondary education. The respondents are mostly local, 24% live either in Veszprém or close by, 45% within 10 kilometres from the city, and only 4% of the participants has arrived to the festival from more than 200 kilometres.

4.5.2. Attitudes towards sustainability initiatives

The sustainable production and consumption related questions focused on food and beverage consumption, specifically also about tap water consumption, on waste recycling, on interest in the local character of the event and on the potential sustainability issues that need addressing.

The first food related questions aimed to map the respondents' dietary preferences on average weekdays and during the festival. As Figure 4.1. shows there are hardly any differences to detect between the eating habits of the two scenarios, and most of the respondents have mixed diet. The proportion of those eating reduced amounts of meat is between 6 and 8%, and 10% of the participants consume meat with every meal, while the proportion of the vegan and vegetarian respondents is just a few percent in the overall sample, which equals to 6 and 7 people respectively.

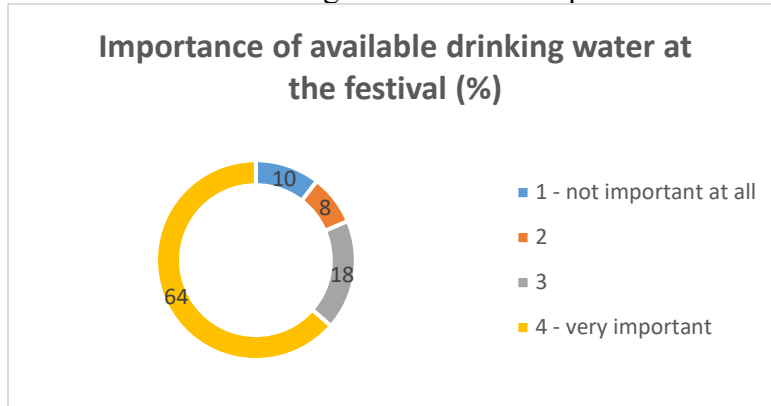
Figure 4.1. Dietary habits of visitors of the Street Music Festival



Source: Raffay-Danyi-Formádi (2022)

Another question, related to the opportunity to access tap water at the festival, which is one of the most established sustainability initiatives at music festivals. The majority of the respondents considers it very important to have tap water available at the festival (Figure 4.2.), rating it 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 is very important.

Figure 4.2. Importance of available drinking water at the Veszprém Street Music Festival

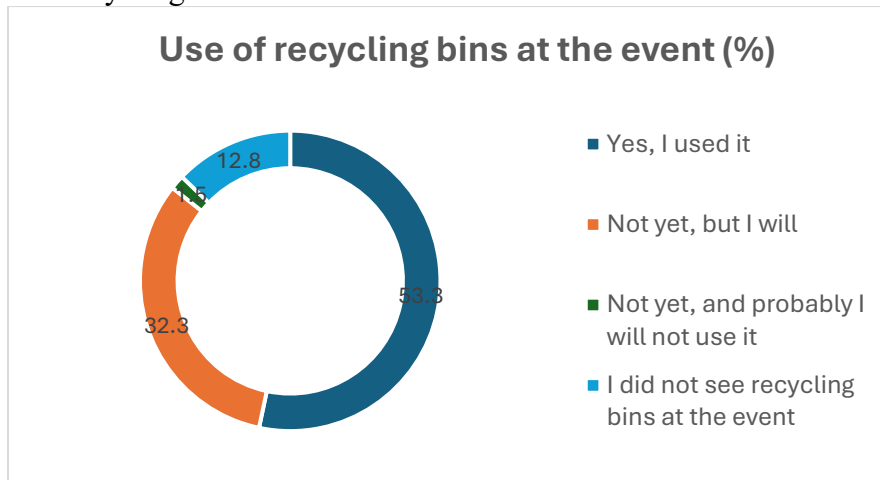


Source: Raffay-Danyi-Formádi (2022)

However, only a third of the participants declared that they refill their flasks at the festival site, while 41% buy bottled water. This finding indicates a significant gap between the attitude and the action of festival visitors, as even though they consider it important to have access to drinking water at the festival site, the majority still opts for bottled water. Those buying bottled water would purchase 1.8 bottles on average (80% suggested buying one or two bottles). Participants under 18 are most environmentally conscious, they are more likely to refill their flasks, but there was no difference to be detected in case of gender or educational qualification of the respondents in terms of buying bottles or refilling flasks.

The question of buying bottled water relates to the amount of waste produced as well as recycling. Respondents were asked whether they had come across recycling containers at the festival site and if so, had they used them. More than 67% of the respondents had noticed the recycling bins, and 53% of the participants had already used them, and 32% of them claimed they would use them once necessary, but it was not the case thus far (Figure 4.3.). In general, 80% of the festival goers argue it is very important to ensure recycling at a festival site, the average response rate was 3.8 on a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 is very important.

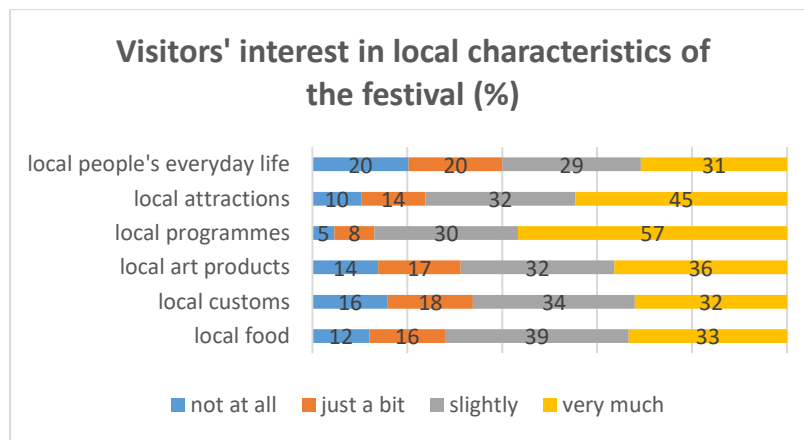
Figure 4.3. Use of recycling bins at the festival



Source: Raffay-Danyi-Formádi (2022)

The survey also aimed to assess some of the social impacts of festivals, in particular the role of the role in the festival. Various questions were posed to map if the participants were interested in local programmes, local customs, local attractions, local crafts produce, local food and the lifestyle of the local people. As the survey was conducted at a music festival, not too surprisingly respondents were mostly interested in local programmes, 57% of them indicated they were very interested, local attractions were the second most popular item on their list (45% marked these as very important for them), while participants are least interested in the lifestyle of the local people (20% of them were not interested at all). This indicates that festival visitors at the Veszprém Street Music Festival are less committed to the socio-cultural pillar of sustainability, as they are less interested in some of the factors through which the festival may have a positive social impact on the local residents' everyday life (Figure 4.4.).

Figure 4.4. Level of interest in the local characteristics of the festival



Source: Raffay-Danyi-Formádi (2022)

4.6. Conclusions

Based on the research results it can be concluded that the audience awareness does not yet translate into action at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. The findings of the survey showed that although visitors rate the importance of sustainability as very high, their contribution to responsible consumption is far from what could be considered sustainable. The most striking gap between awareness and action relates to water consumption: although the majority of the respondents consider it very important to have tap water available at the festival, only a third of the participants refill their flasks at the festival site, while 41% buy bottled water. As for food consumption habits, even though the organisers place emphasis on providing meet free options, there is no significant demand for meet free food options, only a minority of respondents follows a vegan or vegetarian diet, and reduced meet consumption is not typical at all. Based on these findings the festival food trends discussed in the literature review are not prevalent at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. Furthermore, visitors of the Veszprém Street Music Festival are less interested in the local character of the festival, the respondents indicated only low level of interest in local arts, and the local people's habits and lifestyle. The picture is more positive in the case of waste reduction and recycling: more than 67% of the respondents had noticed the recycling containers and 53% of the

participants had used them, and 32% of them would use them later during the event. In general, 80% of the festival goers argue it is very important to ensure recycling at a festival site, the average response rate was 3.8 on a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 is very important.

Research results imply that the concept of sustainability is important to festival visitors, however, only a few initiatives are successful and are reflected in the attitude and actions of visitors. It points to the need for better communication, to ensure that the initiatives are visible to festival goers and their awareness is raised. The limitations of the current research include that it only assesses only the attitude of visitors towards sustainability, it would be worth comparing it with the attitude of the service providers as well. Furthermore, the analysis was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic which made the implementation of certain sustainability measures rather difficult therefore it would be worth repeating the research when the Street Music Festival is back on the normal track. Furthermore, a comparison with other festivals would also be beneficial to gain a better understanding of festival goers' attitude towards sustainability at music festivals.

4.7. Proposed theses

Based on the above, I propose the following thesis statements:

3.a) There is a gap between sustainability awareness and sustainable consumption at the Street Music Festival: respondents rate sustainability initiatives important but their actions do not fully correspond to their perceived importance.

3.b.) Higher education needs to put more emphasis on encouraging students to employ sustainability practices to achieve positive change.

5. Research on key competencies that enable tourism graduates to create positive change: Assessing university students' attitude to volunteering in cultural events

5.1. Introduction

Volunteering can contribute to the development of various competencies, 'knowledge', 'abilities and skills' and 'attitudes and values' types of competencies alike. University students undertake volunteer activities for different reasons, including gaining experience that might help their career; learning more about the world; and exercising skills that are often unused potentially due to the lack of opportunity to use them. These motivations are aligned with the aim of higher education to develop competencies and skills that enhance student employability.

Veszprém was awarded the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title for 2023 in December 2018; the announcement crowned the significant efforts the project team put into the city's bid by involving a wide range of stakeholders. The mission of the ECoC proposal was to go 'beyond' the traditional way of thinking, the boundaries and the comfort zones so that there would be no more boring Tuesday evenings in Veszprém. This mission focused on 5 aspects: community building, volunteering, tradition, innovation and sustainability. With these focal values the ECoC2023 Veszprém programme aimed to become a catalyst for social change in the city and the region. One of the key success factors and catalysts is seen in the establishment of a reliable volunteer base that would provide assistance during the run-up years and in the year 2023.

Both the ECoC project host, the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Joint Stock Company and the University of Pannonia have established a volunteer framework to ensure the potential involvement of younger people, especially students. The Veszprém-Balaton 2023 project team launched the volunteer programme 'Shine' in 2020, with the aim of helping people "be part of the European Capital of Culture family and contribute to bringing about a fascinating and unforgettable thing (...) here back home in the Veszprém-Balaton region." (<https://veszprembalaton2023.hu/en/page/volunteer>). In cooperation with the VEB 2023 project team, the University of Pannonia has also set up their volunteer programme, "CoolLaunch" (<http://www.coollaunch.hu/home/>).

The University of Pannonia has been part of the Veszprém-Balaton ECoC project since the bidding phase, with experts helping to shape the strategies, being part of the Presentation Team and the Jury Visit Team, undertaking research and helping to establish the profile of volunteers. One of the studies by Kővári and Raffay-Danyi (also involved expert members in the ECoC Presentation Team and Jury Visit Team) carried out in 2018, before winning the title, aimed to gain an insight into the university students' cultural consumption patterns as well as their attitude to volunteering. A more complex, follow-up research was conducted by Kővári and Raffay-Danyi in 2022, aiming to assess the willingness to volunteer and potential factors influencing the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes among three distinct university communities: 1) students, 2) lecturers/researchers, 3) other staff; however, the current theses will present the results drawn from the student respondents only. Furthermore, the results regarding factors influencing willingness will only focus on emotional intelligence, especially as emotional intelligence impacts on empathy

and social responsiveness, two competencies that were identified amongst the key competency requirements of the labour market in the tourism industry.

5.2. Literature review

5.2.1. The European Capital of Culture initiative

The European Capital of Culture (ECoC) Programme is one of the most successful cultural initiatives of the European Union (Lőrincz, 2017). It is designed to showcase the diversity of European culture and the common cultural characteristics within Europe in order to foster and promote closer coexistence and better mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe (Lőrincz - Raffay, 2019):

Veszprém and the surrounding Lake Balaton region bid for the 2023 ECoC title in 2017. The main goals of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture (hereinafter VEB 2023 ECoC programme) are to stimulate mobility, increase the volume of cultural tourism and to put the Veszprém-Balaton region on the European map of tourism and culture. “The ECoC project is looking for answers to real-life questions such as how to ease seasonality by the Balaton region, how to widen cultural consumption while also strengthening economic and social sustainability and fostering regional cooperation.” (Lőrincz - Raffay, 2019, p19). As Palonen (2014) also noted, the ECoC title is a powerful tool for regions to get to some extent out of the breach of the national framework and to achieve regional pride. Veszprém and the Balaton region are hoping for similar achievements, where the individual settlements can shape and enhance their image through the ECoC process.

Although a framework for volunteering has been established in the ECoC programme, the success of the initiatives partially depends on the local communities’ willingness to volunteer, especially that of younger people living and studying in Veszprém.

5.2.2. Volunteering and motivations to volunteer

Volunteering has been popular since the 19th century in various countries of Europe, (Fényes – Kiss, 2011; Bartal, 2011), while in Hungary, volunteering started to gain popularity in 2001, since the International Year of Volunteers was declared by the United Nations (Bartal - Kmetty, 2011). The parameters of volunteering were codified in 2005 in Hungary, and volunteering becoming more widespread in Hungary with the designation of 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering by the European Commission. This aimed to foster more, and more regular volunteer activities and raise awareness of the social values inherent in volunteering (Farkas et al, 2012).

The motivation of volunteers can vary to great degree. Adongo et al. (2019, p 42) suggest that although volunteers are thought to be altruistic people, “their motivations can vary on a scale between altruism and self-interest”. Their motivation can range from helping others and thereby feeling a useful member of society to being amongst people, getting to know new people, gaining professional or other experience to getting close to celebrities or one’s sports idols (at events).

Clary et al (1998) linked the motivations of volunteers’ personal development, and identified six fundamental categories, presented in Table 5.1.:

Table 5.1. Motivational functions of volunteering

<i>Values function</i>	The person is volunteering in order to express or act on important values, such as humanitarianism and helping the less fortunate.
<i>Understanding function</i>	The volunteer is seeking to learn more about the world and/or exercise skills that are often unused
<i>Enhancement function</i>	The individual is seeking to grow and develop psychologically through involvement in volunteering
<i>Protective function</i>	The individual uses volunteering to reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or to address personal problems
<i>Career function</i>	The volunteer has the goal to gain career-related experience through volunteering
<i>Social function</i>	Volunteering allows the person to strengthen one’s social relationships

Source: Kővári and Raffay-Danyi (2022) based on Clary et al (1998).

Someone can be motivated by several or even all of these functions at the same time, but to varying degrees (Wilson, 2000). In the case of university students, gaining career-related experience (career function) and learning more about the world and/or exercising skills that are often unused (understanding function) may be the most significant motivators, which coincide with aim of higher education to develop competencies and skills that enhance student employability. Pólya and Martos (2012) argue that it is important to be aware of their motivation when employing volunteers; and volunteer motivations may change over time; they may have different motivations when applying to volunteer and when they decide to stay on as volunteers with an organisation (Managing Volunteers – A Good Practice Guide).

Research on volunteering in ECoC cities has become popular since the Liverpool 2008 “Liverpool Welcome” programme, and following their example, every subsequent European Capital of Culture has introduced a formal volunteering system. To name some of the most successful examples, Aarhus introduced the ReThinkers volunteers in the ECoC year 2017, who continued to work with the Visit Aarhus tourism board after 2017, and volunteers in Matera and Plovdiv (both ECoC cities in 2019) also remained active after the ECoC year and assisted in cultural, sport and public events.

5.2.3. Willingness to volunteer in the VEB2023 ECoC programmes

Kővári and Raffay-Danyi conducted a study in 2018 out as part of the Veszprém-Balaton European Capital of Culture 2023 project bid to investigate the role of the university communities in the project, with special attention to willingness to volunteer.

The research consisted of two parts:

- 1) A questionnaire survey was conducted among the Hungarian and international students to identify the kinds of programmes they are interested in, the sources of information they use

to find out about programmes, as well as the factors that influence their attitude and potential willingness to volunteering during the implementation of the ECoC project. The online questionnaire survey was available for students to fill in between 1st June and 1st August 2018, via the website and the Facebook page of the University of Pannonia, and the link was also sent out to all students using the official university e-mail system. The survey was completed by 374 Hungarian and 51 international students, coming mostly from African and Asian countries, mainly China. As some of the questionnaires were not fully completed, we analysed the responses to all the questions individually.

- 2) Two focus group interviews were conducted in July 2018 involving 11 participants, including Hungarian and international students, lecturers/researchers, including key decision makers (people in management positions including deans and the rector of the university), with the aim to investigate their willingness to volunteer during the ECoC project and their attitude towards the Campus Ambassador role related to the project.

The current theses will discuss only the results of the questionnaire survey conducted amongst students. The results revealed that 78% of the Hungarian respondents had heard about the ECoC initiative but only 52% were aware that Veszprém was bidding for the title for the year 2023.

One of the key aims of the 2018 study was to assess to what extent the city could rely on the university students as volunteers in case Veszprém won the title. The survey delivered promising results as 56% of the Hungarian and 75% of the international students would be happy to become a Veszprém 2023 volunteer. Those who indicated willingness to volunteer would like to be involved primarily in music events, followed by sporting events, then children's programmes and artistic events.

As for their motivation, both Hungarian and international students indicated that feeling a useful member of the community would be their primary motivation for volunteering, which is closest to the *enhancement function* where 'the individual is seeking to grow and develop psychologically through involvement in volunteering' based on the categories suggested by Clary et al (1998). This coincides with the mission of the Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Pannonia, striving to make societal impact, also by providing high quality business education that enables graduates to create positive change.

5.2.4. Emotional intelligence and volunteering

The 2022 study by Kővári and Raffay-Danyi also investigated factors that may influence the willingness to volunteer, including emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence. The habilitation theses focuses on the relationship between emotional intelligence and volunteering. The concept of emotional intelligence in relation to volunteering emerged only in the decade, therefore the number of experimental studies is limited, especially in the field of event and tourism management.

The concept of emotional intelligence itself came to the forefront towards the end of the 1990s, advocated by Daniel Goleman (1996). In the last 20 years, research (Hill, 2010) demonstrated the

importance, impact, and correlations of emotional intelligence e.g. with performance, study, culture that have made economic, social, and scientific actors interested in the concept. For example, David et al (2014), found that generally people with higher emotional intelligence are more active in social and cultural life, have more friends and better relationships, and communicate and negotiate better and with different problem-solving approaches. This may have significant implications for the Veszprém ECoC project, which relies on the involvement of the local communities in the cultural life of the city and aims to facilitate social change as well.

Emotional intelligence can be measured with various tests (e.g. EQ-I test, MEIS, MSCEIT tests, TEIQue), based on ability and personality traits (Petrides - Furnham, 2001; Mayer et al., 2011; Pérez-González - Ruiz, 2014). The above listed tests are all reliable, instrumentally and theoretically valid, however, for the purposes of the research, the TEIQue test was used as the test fits the aims of the research and is available in Hungarian as well. The TEIQue examines emotional intelligence through four dimensions: Well-being, Self-Control, Sociability, and Emotionality.

Assessing emotional intelligence is relevant from the point of view of volunteer satisfaction as well. The literature on volunteer satisfaction reveals a cognitive appraisal explanation of how volunteers experience and positively or negatively perceive the volunteer activity. Individual factors such as personality, motivation, emotional and cultural intelligence influence volunteers' behaviour, performance and perception (Qi et al, 2018). According to Fee and Gray (2011) volunteering helps in developing skills to manage emotions. Vveinhardt et al (2019) suggest that volunteer-receiving organisations should provide training to develop employees' emotional intelligence, because volunteers with high emotional intelligence can establish stronger relationships and have better performance. Furthermore, training provided to volunteers develop and/or enhance skills and competences which can complement the competency development activities of higher education institutions.

Vveinhardt et al (2019) assessed the emotional intelligence of volunteers and concluded that emotional intelligence is the mediator between the volunteer's intercultural competence and work productivity. A recent study (Vinickytė et al., 2020) carried out in Kaunas, Lithuania, which will be an ECoC city in 2022, revealed that those who have higher emotional intelligence and higher intercultural competence show more effectiveness in volunteering.

5.3. Research methods

The research aimed to assess the university communities' cultural and emotional attitudes, with special focus on the impact of cultural and emotional intelligence on cultural consumption as well as the influence of the emotional intelligence level on the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes, on the student community. The following hypothesis was formulated in relation to emotional intelligence:

H1: There is a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of the members of the university communities and the willingness to volunteer.

A questionnaire was devised comprising several validated questionnaire blocks, including sections examining cultural consumption clusters, sections measuring cultural intelligence (CQS) and

emotional intelligence (TEIQue), and general demographic questions. The survey available both offline and online included 38 question groups altogether and took about 20-25 minutes to complete. The research used convenience sampling therefore the results are not representative. Data analysis was performed with SPSS 20 statistical software.

For assessing the general emotional intelligence level, as well as four key components of emotional intelligence, which are 1) Emotionality; 2) Sociability; 3) Well-being and 4) Self-control, the 30 statements of the validated TEIQue test were used. According to Anastasi and Urbina (1997), for individual testing the minimum Cronbach alpha accepted for reliability is 0.80. TEIQue has higher convergent and discriminant validity (0.9) and shows the highest correlation with the Giant Three (extraversion, neuroticism and psychometrics) and Big Five (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) which are dimensions used to describe human personality. Furthermore, TEIQue has been proved to have the highest loading with multi-level personality hierarchies and is therefore considered a substitute for general factors of personality (Pérez-González & Sanchez-Ruiz, 2014).

5.4. Research findings

5.4.1. Respondents profile

The total responses included 317 students, but the present study only analyses data from respondents who fully completed both EQ and CQ blocks. The valid sample size is 196 student respondents, of whom 28.6% are men and 71.4% were women. The high number of female participants is due to two facts: the representation of female students at the university is more 50%, and the willingness to be involved in the research was also higher in the case of women. 55.6% of the respondents are students (Age = 24.98, min = 19, max = 53, SD = 7.34). It must be noted that part-time and PhD students were included in the sample, which explains the relatively high average age and maximum age as well.

5.4.2. Impact of emotional intelligence on volunteering

The testing of the relationship between emotional intelligence and volunteering has brought surprising results. Only 27.9% of the students involved in the 2020 study indicated they would participate in the ECoC programmes as volunteers (compared to 56% in the study conducted in 2018). It must be noted that only Hungarian students were involved in the first round of the survey of the 2020 research, and we found during the research that international students have a higher level of willingness to volunteer (75% compared to 56% of the Hungarian students), as well as more free time to undertake volunteering activities.

Hypothesis 1 expected a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of students and their willingness to volunteer. The SPSS ANOVA analyses indicated that participants' responses do not show significant correlation with the level of emotional intelligence on a general factorial level. As Table 5.2. demonstrates, the emotionality and sociability factor means are higher in the case of those respondents who would volunteer, thus with the EQ self-

control and well-being factors this is reversed. One of the reasons could be that sociable, expressive and empathetic people are more willing to volunteer.

Table 5.2. Relationship between willingness to volunteer in cultural events and emotional intelligence factors, comparing volunteers and non-volunteers

<i>Form of participation in cultural events</i>		EQ_Emotionality	EQ_Self-control	EQ_Well-being	EQ_Sociability
<i>Spectator</i>	Mean	40.00	32.00	42.00	19.00
<i>Volunteer</i>	Mean	43.035	26.12	33.55	27.93

Source: Kővári and Raffay-Danyi (2022)

Regarding the original hypothesis we can conclude that the results do not indicate a significant relationship between EQ and willingness to volunteer as summarized in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Relationship between EQ and volunteering at cultural events

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<i>EQ_Emotionality</i>	Between Groups	9.105	1	9.105	.237	.628
	Within Groups	3264.895	85	38.411		
	Total	3274,000	86			
<i>EQ_Self_control</i>	Between Groups	34.220	1	34.220	1.171	.282
	Within Groups	2484.837	85	29.233		
	Total	2519.057	86			
<i>EQ_Well_being</i>	Between Groups	70.640	1	70.640	2.077	.153
	Within Groups	2891.314	85	34.015		
	Total	2961.954	86			
<i>EQ_Sociability</i>	Between Groups	78.832	1	78.832	2.490	.118
	Within Groups	2691.581	85	31.666		
	Total	2770.414	86			
<i>EQ_Total</i>	Between Groups	84.898	1	84.898	.214	.645
	Within Groups	33724.849	85	396.763		
	Total	33809.747	86			

Source: Kővári and Raffay-Danyi (2022)

The rejection of H1 was surprising, as students with higher levels of emotional intelligence were expected to show more willingness to volunteer, due to reasons outlined in the literature. However, this finding contributed to the introduction of the optional ECoC module at the university with the aim of encouraging students to volunteer in the VEB2023 events.

5.5. Conclusions

The two surveys conducted amongst students showed different results regarding the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes, though it has to be acknowledged that the two samples are not fully comparable. The first research conducted in 2018, including both Hungarian and international students, indicated that international students show more willingness to volunteer as they have more time during term time than their Hungarian counterparts who claim to have less free time due to work or family duties. As for their motivation, both Hungarian and international students indicated that feeling a useful member of the community would be their primary motivation for volunteering. Those who indicated willingness to volunteer would like to be involved primarily in music events, followed by sporting events, then children's programmes and artistic events. The results of the 2020 research involving only Hungarian students indicated a much lower level of willingness to volunteer, which may be explained by the lack of a long tradition of volunteering in Hungary. However, when comparing the responses of Hungarian students participating in the 2018 study with the 2020 survey results, a drop in the willingness level can be observed, which raised concerns about the being able to engage Hungarian students in the ECoC activities as volunteers.

The assessment of the hypothesis, looking at the relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to volunteer, surprisingly did not reveal any significant relationship between the two factors. The rejection of testing H1 may reflect the limitations of the research. The questionnaire used in the 2020 research was only available in Hungarian, therefore excluding the international students who showed a higher level of willingness to volunteer in the 2018 survey. Also, the number of respondents who indicated willingness to volunteer was much lower compared to those who show no interest in volunteering, which might have influenced the results as the sample was too small to detect significant relationships. Furthermore, the survey was conducted before the volunteering frameworks 'Shine' and 'CoolLaunch' were set up, therefore the respondents had less (recent) opportunities to volunteer in programmes in the city, so it will be interesting to see if the willingness to volunteer grows now that the opportunities for volunteering are given. Last but not least, another limitation of the research relates to the sample comprising only the students of one university, in one ECoC city.

5.6. Proposed theses

Based on these, I propose the following thesis statements:

4.a) Volunteering contributes to the development of key competencies, especially empathy and social responsiveness, that enhance the employability of university graduates.

4.b) Emotional intelligence does not have a significant relationship on the willingness to volunteer in the case of university students; it is rather influenced by other factors (like lack) of time and tradition of volunteering.

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Kővári, E., & Raffay-Danyi, Á. (2022)	Can festivals bring social change in an ECoC city? Emotional intelligence and willingness to volunteer among university students https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2022.2087663	Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events Q2
Raffay-Danyi, Á. & Formádi, K. (2022)	Are We There Yet? Are we there yet? An analysis of visitor attitudes towards sustainability awareness raising initiatives in Society and Economy https://doi.org/10.1556/204.2022.00003	Society and Economy Q3



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A proposed methodology for mapping and ranking competencies that HRM graduates need

Eszter Bogdány, Gabriella Cserhádi, Ágnes Raffay-Danyi *

University of Pannonia, Department of Management, 10 Egyetem Str. Veszprem, 8200, Hungary

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century new jobs have emerged, and also the way we do our jobs has also changed. Therefore, certain competencies have become more crucial, so the question emerges how higher education can prepare graduates for such changes. The study aims to discuss the methodology applied to identify the key competencies relevant in junior human resource management (HRM) jobs in Hungary, which is hoped to bring HRM bachelor programmes closer to employers' needs. The research incorporated the analysis of the Hungarian competency requirements for HRM higher education, the requirements of the potential employers, based on requirements listed on job portals and during focus group interviews conducted with HRM professionals. The analyses revealed that communication, complex problem solving and digital skills are considered as highly important. The competencies identified provided the foundation of a Q-methodology research into the importance and hierarchy of the required competencies. For the pilot research, HRM professionals were selected from different functional areas, and with different previous professional experiences, ranging from 1 year to several years. The study presents the results as well as the experiences of using the Q-methodology in competency research, and refers to the implications for HRM professionals and HR education policy makers.

1. Introduction

The HRM profession has changed significantly in the past 20 years, which has resulted in the emergence of new HRM functions (Dajnoki & Héber, 2017), and therefore managing human resources has become a more complex area (Bogdány et al., 2012; Srikanth, 2020). The rate of these changes is faster than what HRM higher education can cope with as the curricula of university programmes does not change from year to year. Moreover it is evident that a competency gap exists between employer needs and the skill sets of university graduates (e.g. Adrian, 2017; Conrad & Newberry, 2012; Everson, 2014, pp. 18–22; Gunarathne et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2017). However, we have limited knowledge about the competency gap between the employer needs and the skill sets of university graduates in the case of HRM educational programmes (Kormanik et al., 2009; Clardy, 2008; Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018, Shrivastava et al., 2022).

As universities train students for the labour market, employability of graduates is a key concern, empowering students with certain key competencies that help them getting employment. Harvey (2001) refers to these competencies as the characteristics the employers seek.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: bogdany.eszter@gtk.uni-pannon.hu (E. Bogdány), cserhadi.gabriella@gtk.uni-pannon.hu (G. Cserhádi), raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu (Á. Raffay-Danyi).

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Higher education institutions in Hungary have to comply with the national regulations both in academic and management terms. Curriculum content for each degree programme is defined by the decree 18/2016 (VIII.5) issued by the Ministry of Human Resources, which specifies the competencies that must be incorporated into the curriculum.

The aim of this research is to identify HRM competencies and to discuss a methodology that could be used to verify the set of competencies that HRM higher education should aim to develop.

“A competency is defined as the ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context through the mobilization of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values” (Taguma (OECD) & Rychen, 2016, p.3). The current research builds on this definition and threefold classification.

The research relies on four pillars to identify the key competencies required from HRM professionals. The first pillar was the examination of the national guidelines for educational and outcome requirements for the structure, content and design of HRM Bachelor programmes. The O*NET American job portal was used for defining the competency expectations of HRM jobs, alongside job advertisements on most popular Hungarian job portals. Content analysis was used for the analysis of the above sources. Furthermore, focus group interviews were conducted with HRM professionals to reveal the competencies they would require from HRM graduates.

The competencies identified with the above described methods were narrowed down to 40 which provided the basis for the Q-methodology investigation into the importance and hierarchy of the competencies that the job market expects from HRM graduates.

The results and experiences of the current pilot research will help to fine tune the Q-methodology for competency research. Policy recommendations could be developed on this basis for higher education to address the competency gap. The scientific implications of the research derive from the experiences drawn from using the Q-methodology for the assessment of the importance as well as the hierarchy of the competencies. Furthermore, the results also bring practical implications as the research provides a clear insight into the expectations of the labour market, which provides directions for HRM higher education for revising their curricular and extra-curricular competency development practices.

2. Literature review

2.1. Assessing competency needs

Successful operation of organisations highly depends on the performance of its employees. However, the performance of workers is influenced considerably by the existence of professional knowledge, abilities and other necessary competencies (Vasanth & Bano, 2019). Therefore it is a necessary question for higher educational institutions, whether they are able to prepare their students for employability or not.

Employers frequently perceive the insufficiency of competencies among the employees (Mourshed et al., 2012). Moreover research studies consistently report that higher education graduates are increasingly unable to perform work duties effectively (Tran, 2018). According to Ejiwale (2014) the lack of required competencies might hinder in finding a workplace, which contributes to the fact that a significant number of graduates cannot find a position appropriate to their qualification (Jackson, 2013, 2016). The high level of unemployment can be associated with the inadequacy of the education system in developing employability skills of graduates and thereby their workplace competitiveness (Fajaryati et al., 2020).

Employability can be approached from several angles, as numerous researchers have indicated. Fajaryati et al. (2020, p. 600) consider “employability skills are the personal attributes enabling people to get a job and support an individual’s career life more easily”. However, Yorke and Knight (2003, p. 7) approach employability from the point of view of youth entering the labour market, and with that, assess the role of higher education in employability, how “the curricular process may facilitate the development of prerequisites appropriate to employment”.

According to Ayoubi et al. (2017) higher education decision-makers emphasise the social, public and higher-thinking competencies of business graduates, while employers in the business sector place more emphasis on individual, private and practical competencies. Higher education institutions often fail to capture the need for competencies in the labour market, therefore they cannot develop relevant employability skills for students (Harman et al., 2010). The biggest challenge for education in these days is to find the balance between development of academic skills, technical abilities and employability skills (Brown, 2019).

2.2. HRM competencies

The development of the profession has led to the emergence of new HRM functions alongside the traditional activities of the companies (Dajnoki & Héber, 2017). As a result, managing human resources has become a more complex area (Srikanth, 2020). As Cohen (2015) noted, experience was gathered primarily at the workplace, but usually in a non-structured way. In contrast, nowadays the highly trained HRM personnel may be key to the successful operation of an organization. Today the HRM professionals working for organisations of the modern age face the challenges of the quickly changing environment. Their job has become more complex, furthermore they have to consider the various (and potentially conflicting) needs of the organisations’ stakeholders (Srikanth, 2020). All these changes have necessitated the need for qualification in this field.

Competency is required to implement an activity, which activity may even be related to one or more business areas, which area requires its own set of competencies (Bennour & Crestani, 2007). The identification of competencies is just as important for the operation of organisations as for higher educational institutions. Based on the review of key sources, the following competencies are the most crucial in HRM (Table 1).

The mentioned activities and consequently the importance of different competencies may differ from organization to organization.

Study by McLean et al. (2005) confirmed the suggestion that different groups of individuals perceive competencies differently and “ranking of competencies is more complex than previous studies have presented” (McLean et al., 2005, p. 162). Examining the importance of specific competencies from different points of view, using the Q-methodology to explore individual opinions, allows for a well-founded understanding of it.

2.3. Q-methodology description

Q-methodology could be a reliable research methodology in different research fields (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Studies on different fields e.g. nurse education research, (Hensel et al., 2022), (Tornwall & McDaniel, 2022); evaluating critical thinking competency (Gyenes, 2021); teacher evaluation (Rodl et al., 2020) have examined the importance of competencies by using Q-methodology. Competency research based on Q-methodology might answer the question how academics can redesign the curricula (Aldamen et al., 2021). Using Q-methodology for ranking competencies, in contrast to the self-assessment method, could bring more reliable results. Moreover according to Chen et al. (2015) Q-methodology can be better used to generate new ideas than testing hypotheses.

Q-methodology discovers the main attitudes among participants, compares these different opinions and finds differences between them in order to divide these opinions into categories. According to Exel van and Graaf de (2005, p.3) “an important notion behind Q-methodology is that only a limited number of distinct viewpoints exist on any topic ... any well-structured Q-sample, containing the wide range of existing opinions on the topic, will reveal these perspectives”. Q-methodology is the combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, moreover this four-phase process is about the revelation of subjective viewpoints of the participants in order to find qualitative evidence behind the underlying viewpoints by factor analysis (Brown, 1993; Morea, 2022; Watts & Stenner, 2012).

The first step of conducting Q-methodology is the concourse which is compiled based on the statements that are formulated from various standpoints (e.g. interview, relevant literature) and cover as many sub-topics as possible. After the concourse the clarification of the statements is the next step, called Q-set or Q-sample (Coogan & Herrington, 2011). The carefully selected representatives are asked to sort the Q-sample based on their own perspectives (Lee, 2017). At the end of the process factor-analysis needs to be conducted in order to find a reasonable number of attitudes (factors) among the participants.

Validity, reliability and generalizability are important in every methodology; in case of the Q-methodology we need to consider these conditions the following way. Content validity of the Q-sample is addressed by literature review and by obtaining expert advice, while face validity is ensured by editing the statements slightly and item validity means that it does not apply subjectivity (Valenta & Wigger, 1997). According to Thomas and Baas (1992) in connection to the reliability, findings of Q-methodology were consistent when it was used to different person samples, and even when different Q-samples and person samples were used. The generalizability of Q-methodology studies occur rarely (Amin, 2000) because of the explanatory nature of the research questions. Therefore it is not designed for large nonrandomized participant samples (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

The above discussions indicate that Q-methodology could be an appropriate answer to the questions of what competencies HRM graduates need to possess and what are the main angles behind these different competency rankings' perspectives.

3. Methodology

Having discussed the necessity of the exploration of HRM competencies from different points of view, the following section addresses the specific development of the methodology. The current study aimed to identify HRM competencies and to discuss Q-methodology that could be used to verify the set of competencies that HRM higher education should aim to develop. We followed the recommended steps of Q-methodology by Paige & Morin (2016) (Table 2).

Table 1
HRM competencies.

Author	Key HRM competencies
Jamshidi et al. (2012)	empowering and delegating, team working, impact and influence, communication, leadership, building trust, HR proficient knowledge, strategic thinking, self-awareness, change management, conflict management
Schutte et al. (2016)	professional behaviour and leadership (i.e. leadership-personal credibility, organisational capability, solution creation, interpersonal communication, and citizenship); service orientation and execution (i.e. talent management, HR governance, analytics and measurement, and HR service delivery); and business intelligence (i.e. strategic contribution, HR business knowledge, and HR technology)
Latukha et al. (2018)	communication competence, HR acumen, and relationship management
Hirudayaraj and Baker (2018)	knowledge and skills in instructional design, training delivery, learning management systems, and learning technologies, adult education, strategic planning
Van Den Berg et al. (2020)	contextualising human resource information and data, including knowledge of the business and the business context, knowledge of IT technology, knowledge of digitalisation, data analysis and interpretation, continuous learning, ability to be agile and adaptive, resilience, critical analytical thinking. Stakeholder relationship management, including verbal and non-verbal communication, organising skills, monitoring wellbeing and culture, protecting privacy
Bogdány et al. (2021)	stress handling, administrative skills, time management, critical thinking, analytical skills, logical thinking, system and process thinking, positive attitude, commitment, patience, kindness, practical approach, dynamic approach, flexibility, creativity, adaptability, emotional intelligence
SHRM (2022)	behavioural competencies: leadership, interpersonal, business; HR expertise (HR knowledge)

Source: Own editing (2022)

Table 2
The flow of Q-methodology.

The flow of Q-methodology	
Development of Concourse	The process how Q-sample was created: Content analysis of Hungarian educational requirements Content analysis of job adverts, O*NET portal Focus group interviews
Compilation of Q-Sample (Q-Set)	40 competency definition were compiled
Selection of P-Sample (P-Set)	Selection of the sample of respondents
Q-Sorts (Pilot)	Participants sorting the definitions according to the importance
Further development	Analysis and interpretations before final sorting

Source: Own editing (2022)

The following sections present the different steps of the applied Q-methodology. Section 3.1 describes how the concourse was established, explaining the different methods used during the development of statements. Section 3.2 introduces the detailed process of the Q-Set compilation, and section 3.3 demonstrates the selection principles of the P-Set. Finally, section 3.4 presents the Q-Sorting process and the method of pilot testing.

3.1. Methods used during the development of the concourse

3.1.1. Content analysis

The Hungarian educational competency requirements defined for the HRM higher education was the starting point of the content analysis. Altogether 27 competencies were identified, grouped into the OECD categories.

In order to reveal required competencies of graduated HRM students, job advertisements were extracted from several Hungarian job portals between January and April of 2021. Altogether 65 different job advertisements were collected, which encompassed 12 various junior HRM positions, like HRM specialist, HRM assistant, HRM coordinator, recruiter, etc. In case of each job advertisement, we gathered the required competencies defined by employers and compiled a summarized list of competencies (992). We deleted repeatedly occurring competencies and drew together similar expressions referring to the same competency. As a result of data filtering, 65 different competencies were identified, based on which a frequency analysis was carried out.

Beside job ads, data of the international online database Occupational Information Network (O*NET) was also studied, to reveal requirements across an international basis. The database contains standardized occupation-specific descriptions. On the website of O*NET (www.onetonline.org) we selected such HRM specific occupations, where a Bachelor degree was required (e.g. HRM Assistant, HRM Specialist etc.). Similarly to the analysis of job advertisements, we listed the expected skills, knowledge and abilities in case of relevant occupations. After deleting repetitions and merging competencies with the same meaning we identified 36 relevant competencies.

3.1.2. Focus group interviews

To gain a deeper understanding of the expectations of the labour market, focus group interviews were conducted with HRM professionals, representing both public and private sector organisations. During the selection of the participants we were conscious about the size of the organization as HRM tasks may be significantly different in micro- or small organisations and in large multi-national corporations. Before the interviews, participants were asked to list the five key competencies they deemed important for a graduate in an HRM job, and to identify the three most important competencies according to the three groups distinguished by the OECD definition. These lists provided the basis for the discussion in the focus group interviews. Altogether 13 participants shared their views, identifying 22 competencies.

3.2. Compilation of the Q-sample (Q-set)

The rigorous process of the compilation of the Q-set is depicted in the workflow below (Fig. 1). We applied the relevant criteria of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Shamseer et al., 2015); (Moher et al., 2015) and Assessment and Review Instrument for Q-methodology (ARIQ) (Dziopa & Ahern, 2011).

We carried out an integrative content analysis in order to define valid and measurable items for a quantitative analysis, where the Q-methodology would be applied. Based on competency clusters of Hungarian educational competency requirements we have clear definitions on knowledge, skills and attitudes developed by higher education programmes. The O*NET database also provides detailed descriptions of required competencies. Competency requirements mentioned in the focus group interviews needed to be integrated.

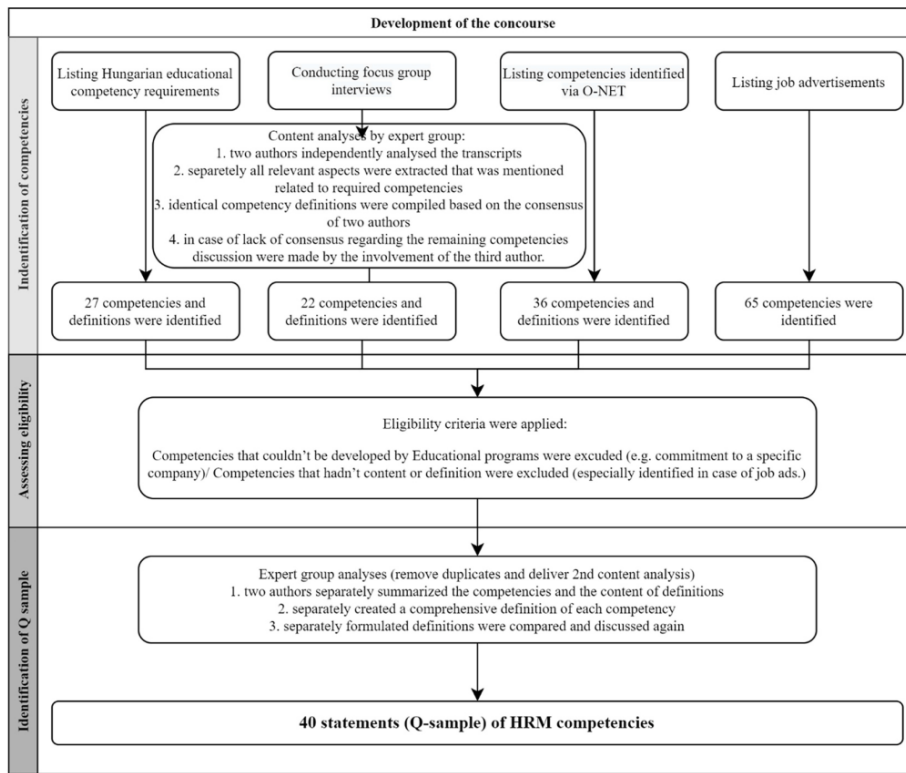


Fig. 1. The process of the compilation of the Q-set. Source: Own editing (2022).

First, two authors independently analysed the transcripts of focus group interviews. They extracted all relevant aspects related to the required competencies and based on those formulated a unique definition for each competency. Afterwards, the separately formulated definitions were compared and discussed in two steps. In the first step, identical competency definitions were compiled by two authors. In the second step, the third author was involved in cases of lack of consensus regarding the remaining competency definitions.

After agreement on competency definitions based on the focus groups, we started to compile the specifications gathered from the Hungarian education and outcome requirements, O*NET database and focus group interviews to formulate integrated definitions of competencies. During this process we followed the same rigour as applied for the analysis of focus group interviews, augmenting the process with the three authors checking that the integrated definitions preserve all relevant aspects of the previous definitions. Following this rigour, the validity and reliability of competency definitions is well-founded.

3.3. Selection of the P-sample (P-set)

Significant characteristic of the Q-methodology is that only a few respondents need to be involved in order to identify preferences behind the different responses (Akhtar-Danesh et al., 2008). Brown (1993) indicated that 40–60 participants is appropriately enough to conduct the analyses.

The present study aimed to test Q-methodology as a process for HRM competency evaluation, therefore the study demonstrates only the pilot results of Q-sorts, and the experiences based on these results. Aligned with the aim of the study, the following selection criteria were applied for the selection of P-set: HRM professionals from different functional areas with different previous experiences, from 1 year to several years of professional experience.

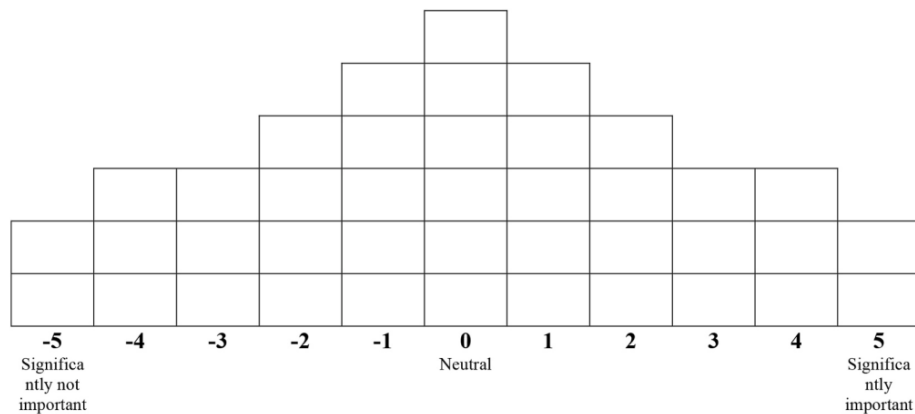


Fig. 2. The Q-sorting diagram. Source: Own editing (2022).

For the evaluation, it is essential to classify the entire list of competencies into given categories, therefore only the fully completed questionnaires (20 questionnaires from the 52) were used for the analysis. The majority of the respondents (16) work at the operational level of HRM, while a smaller part (4) have a managerial position within the company. HRM professionals at operational level are employed as HR specialists, HR coordinators, HR assistants, training specialists or recruiters, with 1–3 years of professional experience.

3.4. Q-sorts and pilot testing

Data were collected using an online questionnaire compiled in LimeSurvey. The questionnaire contained three distinct sections: 1) general demographic questions (such as age, gender, level of education); 2) questions exploring professional experience (current job and position, years of experience in HRM); 3) statements of HRM competencies that needed ranking according to their importance (Q-sample). Due to the length of the questionnaire (by applying Q-methodology ranking method) and because of the complexity and inter-correlated link between competencies, filling in the questionnaire requires careful consideration. The approach used to sort the statements is Q-sorting whereby the method applies a large list of statements (ideally between 30 and 90, but it can be less or more), and predefined steps help respondents in the process of ranking (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Based on the compilation of the Q-Sample we identified 40 statements that contain the HRM competencies' name and definitions. Participants were asked to rank statements between -5 (significantly not important) and +5 (significantly important), whereby the importance of competency meant that it is essential for the successful completion of the given tasks of the given job, moreover in terms of the frequency of its appearance, it is necessary for the performance of everyday tasks completion.

The first step is to arrange the statements into three groups according to whether they belong to one of the two endpoints of the scale or are in the neutral category. The second step is to fill the spaces at the two endpoints of the scale. Finally, for each value on the scale, as many statements as there are places for that value must be classified step by step. For example, looking at Fig. 2, there are 3 statements in category -3, and this process must be continued until all statements have been classified. The sequences (individual Q-sorts) thus formed, that reflect the individual opinions of the participants.

According to Paige and Morin (2016) pilot ranking support researchers to ensure that every participant understands the instructions and the statements, the time to complete the ranking is enough, and to gain insight from participants impressions of sorting, as it could lead to the modification in procedures or in course. The sample testers (P-Set) were able to test the questionnaire and to give feedback about the procedure. To investigate the pilot results, we applied One-Sample T-test using the SPSS statistical program. By applying One-Sample T-test, competency differences (means) were compared to a predetermined value (competency means evaluated as neutral, test value = 0) to determine if the mean of the competency evaluations is significantly higher or lower than the test value.

4. Findings

4.1. Development of HRM Q-set

Based on a comprehensive data collection we identified competencies, that are on one hand determined for higher education degree

Table 3
Identified HRM competencies from different perspectives.

	Hungarian competency requirements	O*NET and job ads	Focus group interviews
Knowledge	Personnel and Human Resources	Personnel & Human Resources	Personnel and Human Resources Personnel and HR system Personality Types HR Laws
	Foundations of Business and Economics Mathematics and Statistics Methodological Knowledge Computer (program) Knowledge		HR Specific Software Digital Systems
Skills, abilities	Rules of Team Work CSR and Business Ethics Foreign Language	English (German) Language Customer & Personal Service Administration & Management Clerical	English
	Communication	Reading, Written & Oral Comprehension Speaking & Speech Clarity Writing, Written & Oral Expression Active Listening & Speech Recognition Critical & Analytical Thinking Problem sensitivity & Complex Problem Solving Judgment & Decision Making	Communication Complex Problem Solving
Attitudes and values	Active Listening Critical Thinking Complex Problem Solving Decision Making Team Work, Cooperation Coordination, Creativity Leadership Application of HR Development Knowledge Application of Laws Digital Skills	Cooperation Coordination, Creativity	Cooperation
	Integrity Independence Openness (to new things) Initiative Responsibility	Digital skills Category Flexibility Information Ordering Deductive & Inductive Reasoning Near Vision Time Management Active Learning Service Orientation Monitoring Integrity Independence Initiative/Dynamism	Digital skills Information Ordering
		Attention to Detail Dependability Persistence Concern for Others Adaptability/Flexibility Stress Tolerance Self Control Social Orientation & Social perceptiveness Achievement/Effort/Result orientation Leadership Innovation Positive attitude	Integrity Openness Initiative Dependability Concern for Others Adaptability/Flexibility Stress Tolerance Social Perceptiveness
			Tolerance Commitment

Source: Own editing (2022)

programmes (Hungarian educational and outcome requirements), and are on the other hand required by workplaces (job advertisements, O*NET database, focus group interviews). After the identification of the 40 most relevant competencies (Q-set), we formulated integrated definitions for each competency.

4.1.1. Identification of HRM competencies from different perspectives

The results of the different perspectives are represented in Table 3, summarizing the Hungarian educational competency requirements in the first column, the identified competencies by job portals in the second column, and the competencies identified by focus group interviews in the last column. Competencies where the name or the definition of the competency were similar, were listed in the same line.

As the first column of Table 3 depicts, knowledge-type competencies are fundamental for HRM professionals, including various areas of HRM, as well as computer knowledge, CSR and business ethics, and the knowledge of foreign languages. Slightly more competencies are listed in the skills and abilities category, referring to the ability to apply the specific knowledge, and soft skills such as critical thinking, complex problem solving, digital skills and team work. Such attitudes and values are listed as independence, openness and responsibility.

In order to reveal the importance of the identified job advertisements competencies, we carried out frequency analysis. The most frequently required competencies were communication skills, IT skills, English language, attention to detail, independence and cooperation. In terms of frequency – after the previous mentioned competencies – the so called future work skills occurred the most frequently, like initiative, problem solving, social orientation, coordination, flexibility and dependability. Surprisingly, competencies that are important from the organisational point of view, like compliance, knowledge sharing, responsibility, commitment and conflict management, were less emphasized in the analysed job advertisements.

We collected workplace competencies for HRM graduates required at international level based on the integrated data of O*NET portal. In the O*NET collection, required skills are categorised as knowledge, skills and abilities, work values and styles, which is compatible with the OECD competency classification. Within the category of knowledge the most common required competencies were personnel and human resources, customer and personal service knowledge, administration and management, and English language. In the category of workplace skills and abilities, skills relating to communication, critical thinking, complex problem solving, active learning and coordination appeared most frequently. Within work values and styles category such characteristics were identified as cooperation, attention to detail, dependability, integrity, flexibility and empathy. Competencies identified by job advertisements and O*NET database were listed in the same column because both represent the job search market.

The focus group participants representing different type and size organisations highlighted numerous competencies that graduates would need to possess in various HRM positions. Specific knowledge related to different areas of personnel and human resources were mentioned alongside the knowledge of English and digital systems. As for skills and abilities, cooperation, complex problem solving, communication and digital skills were listed frequently. It must be noted that the practicing professionals emphasized the importance of attitudes and values, including tolerance, flexibility, stress tolerance and especially concern for others, which is a key requirement in HR positions.

4.1.2. Formulation of integrated statement definitions

After determining the 40 most relevant competencies, the integration of statement definitions was carried out. Table 4 presents this process through the example of complex problem solving competency.

Table 4
Formulating the definition of Complex Problem Solving.

Definition of Complex Problem Solving			
Hungarian competency requirements	ONET	Focus group interviews	Integrated definition
Identifying facts and fundamental relationships, systematizing and analysing, drawing independent conclusions and critical remarks, preparing suggestions for decision-making, making decisions in routine and partially unfamiliar, national as well as international environment, by applying the acquired theories and methods.	Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.	Recognition of problems, situations different from usual; unfolding the fundamental reasons of the problem, based on the gathered information formulating professionally adequate suggestions to solve the give problem.	Ability to identify problems, to unfold the main reasons of the problem by complex analysis of relevant information and facts, to formulate rational alternatives and to make grounded decisions.

Source: Own editing (2022)

4.2. Q-methodology ranking

This section will clarify the main results regarding to the ranking of the participants. Firstly we summarized the rankings based on the means and the Std. deviations. Table 5 presents the means of the different competencies based on the different Q-sorts.

Results indicated that based on the means mainly knowledge type competencies were sorted into the not important categories, besides resilience and commitment. In case of resilience we have experienced that besides the nearly neutral evaluation, participants had definitely consistent thinking (based on the range) about this competency. Few knowledge elements were evaluated by the participants significantly more important, such as foreign language, rules and processes of team work/cooperation, computer (program) knowledge, personnel and human resources. Despite these elements being significantly important for the participants, the range

Table 5
Ranking of HRM competencies. Source: Own editing (2022).

Means				
-5 (Significantly not important)	-2,40	Mathematics and Statistics		
	-2,20	Social Responsibility		
	-2,05	Transdisciplinarity		
	-1,85	Business Ethics		
	-1,35	Foundations of Economics		
	-1,30	Rules of Team Leadership		
	-1,10	Leadership		
	-0,60	HR-Related Cooperation and Knowledge Sharing	Technology Usage, Data Analysis	Resilience
	-0,40	Self Awareness		
	-0,20	Commitment		
	-0,15	HR Organizational and Information Systems	Coordination, Cooperation	
	0,05	Laws and HR policies	Creative Thinking	
	0 (Neutral)	Functional Areas of Personnel and HR	Decision Making	Application of Laws
	0,05	Application of HR Development Knowledge		
0,10	Foreign Language			
0,15	Rules and Processes of Team Work/Cooperation	Effective Team Work		
0,20	Concern for Others			
0,25	Stress Management			
0,35	Complex problem solving	Critical Thinking		
0,45	Ability to Learn	Integrity		
0,55	Digital Communication			
0,60	Initiative			
0,80	Responsibility	EQ		
0,95	Openness			
1,25	Computer (program)knowledge	Time Management		
1,30	Personnel and Human Resources			
1,50	Independence			
1,75	Assertive communication			
1,80	Basic Communication			
5 (Significantly important)				
Legend:				
Knowledge	Skills	Attitude, value		

Table 6
One-sample t-test.

Test Value = 0	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Foundations of Economics	-2377	19	0,028	-1,35000	-2,5386	-0,1614
Mathematics and Statistics	-4091	19	0,001	-2,40000	-3,6280	-1,1720
Rules of Team Leadership	-2436	19	0,025	-1,30000	-2,4169	-0,1831
Social Responsibility	-4819	19	0,000	-2,20000	-3,1555	-1,2445
Business Ethics	-3000	19	0,007	-1,85000	-3,1409	-0,5591
Basic Communication	3327	19	0,004	1,80000	0,6678	2,9322
Assertive Communication	2907	19	0,009	1,75000	0,4898	3,0102
Transdisciplinarity	-4017	19	0,001	-2,05000	-3,1180	-0,9820
Time Management	2156	19	0,044	1,25000	0,0364	2,4636
Independence	3210	19	0,005	1,50000	0,5218	2,4782

p = 0,05

Own editing (2022).

and the std. deviations are scattering. Also we can highlight that altogether skills were evaluated more significantly important than knowledge elements. Assertive and basic communication skills were significantly important based the evaluation of participants.

In order to find out which competencies' evaluations were significantly differing from the neutral rankings one-sample *t*-test was conducted. Table 6 presents competencies evaluations that significantly differ from 0 (e.g. neutral).

The mean difference presents that the calculated mean of the sample deviates from the value we provided previously in the following cases: foundations of economics, mathematics and statistics, rules of team leadership, social responsibility, business ethics and transdisciplinarity were significantly rated below, while basic communication, assertive communication, time management and independence were significantly rated above than 0.

5. Discussion

Based on results of competency hierarchy applying Q-methodology, most preferred competencies are communication, professional HR knowledge and usage of computer programs and digital tools. These findings reinforce the results of previous studies (Bogdány et al., 2021; Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018; Jamshidi et al., 2012; Van Den Berg et al., 2020). At the same time, several other competencies (mostly attitude) are required by employers that have not often been identified by researchers. Necessity of time management, responsibility and stress management was demonstrated by Bogdány et al. (2021); that of digital communication and ability to learn was revealed by Van Den Berg et al. (2020); while importance of openness, emotional intelligence and critical thinking was reinforced by both studies. On the other hand, further competencies, like independence, initiative, integrity and complex problem solving appeared as new requirements. Independence and initiative are so called key competencies in terms of employers' hierarchy and *t*-test as well. Workplaces want to employ HRM graduates who are able to accomplish professional assignments independently, dare to initiate, formulate their own ideas and suggestions, and can implement them if necessary.

As one of the participants stated: "Working independently is one of the most basic competencies, so that the person can build up the system and can see the system within the information acquired". A similar view from another participant referred to "the need for independence when facing a situation where even a tiny decision needs to be made, to ensure the person can decide amongst alternatives and can also justify that decision". Yet another focus group participant remarked that "It is important that a person can deal with situations, digs into things, and even if he does not succeed at first attempt, still tries to accomplish the task, as best as he can based on his abilities or the instructions provided."

Employers consider several knowledge or skill competencies not relevant in workplaces, like mathematics and statistics, social responsibility, transdisciplinarity, business ethics, foundation of economics and rules of team leadership. In the literature only some of these competencies were mentioned. Based on the article of Van Den Berg et al. (2020) knowledge of HR information contextualising and business context, as well as data analysis and interpretation are important skills, however our results indicated less importance of these competencies. In contrast to the study of Jamshidi et al. (2012), Schutte et al. (2016), and SHRM (2022), based on our outcomes neither leadership knowledge, nor application of leadership skills is required from HRM graduates. This inconsistency could be generated by the different target groups. The previously mentioned studies analysed the competencies of HR managers and professionals, while we focused on the identification of competencies of HRM graduates.) In case of group leadership skills, knowledge and consideration of comprehensive organisational and business context cannot be expected.

Comparing the results of the Q-methodology competency ranking with the Hungarian educational requirements for HRM programmes we can state that professional knowledge in personnel and human resources and computer (program) knowledge are considered the most important knowledge type competencies, confirming research findings by Hirudayaraj and Baker (2018) and Van Den Berg et al. (2020). Furthermore the knowledge of a foreign language and the rules and processes of team work were also ranked as somewhat important. However, knowledge in the areas of mathematics and statistics, business ethics and economics were regarded as not important, even though these are core areas of HRM higher education. In the case of skills and abilities type competencies the research showed that basic and assertive communication were ranked as key competencies (Latukha et al., 2018), and digital communication, complex problem solving and the application of HR development knowledge were listed amongst the important competencies (SHRM, 2022). However, further skills such as stress management, as pointed out by Bogdány et al. (2021), and the ability to learn also emerged amongst the important skills, while these are not incorporated in the competency list of the Hungarian educational and outcome requirements. When assessing the attitude and values type competencies, we can observe an almost complete overlap. Four out of the five key competencies listed by the Hungarian educational requirements: independence, openness, initiative and responsibility were ranked amongst the most important skills, and integrity was also considered almost as important. It must be noted that less competencies are listed in this category, hence the probability of an overlap was higher. Interestingly, concern for others is not incorporated into the Hungarian educational requirements, but the respondents ranked this skill amongst the important ones.

Ranking competencies by using Q-methodology previously were applied in different fields (Hensel et al., 2022; Tornwall & McDaniel, 2022), but research where HRM competencies were ranked in order to find answer how to diminish the competency gap on the labour market was not conducted. As Chen et al. (2015) stated Q-methodology is a good solution to generate new ideas therefore the compiled HRM competencies are well used to further research after some considerations. The Q-methodology has a number of advantages (mixed method, reliable compilation of concourse, few participants (Exel van & Graaf de, 2005; Watts & Stenner, 2012; Morea, 2022) that a higher educational institution could utilize to understand the stakeholders viewpoint on expected competencies. As Aldamen et al. (2021) mentioned it could be useful to redesign curricula. The ARIQ (Dziopa & Ahern, 2011) as a tool provides for discussion of the Q-sort creation but does not specifically address the compilation of concourse. Moreover Paige and Morin (2016) mentioned it is beneficial to conduct a pilot Q-sample, the rank-ordering procedure with potential participants. In case of our research, the pilot was very useful, partially because of the specification of the competency names, e.g. the name and the definition of

Transdisciplinarity was not comprehensive, therefore we needed to be changed, and partially to realise the time spent with completing the questionnaire was more than expected.

6. Conclusion, research implications

The current paper discusses the results and experiences of the pilot research, aiming to identify HRM competencies and to rank their importance using the Q-methodology.

The first phase of the research involved the identification of the key HRM competencies, based on the content analysis of the Hungarian competency requirements for HRM higher education, the American O*NET job portal and Hungarian job adverts for junior HRM positions, as well as focus group interviews with HRM professionals. Some notable differences in competency requirements have emerged during this phase: while HR professionals emphasized the importance of tolerance, flexibility, stress tolerance and concern for others, these competencies are not incorporated into the Hungarian competency requirements. Furthermore, competencies that are important for the operation of an organization, such as compliance, knowledge sharing, responsibility, commitment and conflict management, were less emphasized in the job advertisements.

The 40 competencies that were identified during the first phase formed the input for the competency hierarchy ranking applying Q-methodology, which revealed that the most required competencies are communication, professional HR knowledge and usage of computer programs and digital tools. Skills such as stress management and the ability to learn have also emerged amongst the important skills, while these are not listed in the Hungarian educational and outcome requirements. Furthermore, knowledge in the areas of mathematics and statistics, business ethics and economics were regarded as not important, even though these are core areas of HRM higher education.

The use of the Q-methodology has delivered the desired results. Even though the method is more time-consuming than we have envisaged, including both time spent with compiling the Q-set and with filling in the questionnaire, the results provide a clear picture of the hierarchy of competencies.

In conclusion, the research has identified the gaps between the competency requirements of the labour market and the competencies Hungarian HRM higher education develops according to the national regulations, therefore the results can be utilised by the educational policy makers to ensure a better match of developed and required competencies and by universities to incorporate further competency development oriented tasks into their extra-curricular activities within their remit. The Q-methodology proved to be a useful tool for the identification and ranking of competencies, and will be used for similar research in other areas of business higher education in the future.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Eszter Bogdány: Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Data curation. **Gabriella Cserháti:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Methodology. **Ágnes Raffay-Danyi:** Writing – original draft, Methodology, Writing – review & editing.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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Are we there yet? An analysis of visitor attitudes towards sustainability awareness raising initiatives

ÁGNES RAFFAY-DANYI*  and KATALIN FORMADI 

Institute of Business, University of Pannonia, Veszprem, Hungary

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable practices aiming to reduce environmental impacts have become key guiding principles of events, but initiatives focusing on the economic impacts and on supporting the local economy and society are also gaining more emphasis in event planning and management. Music festivals attracting larger audiences are becoming especially aware of the importance of sustainability as well as of their role in the process of raising participants' awareness of it. The paper aims to assess the initiatives of the Street Music Festival in Veszprém, Hungary, one of the flagship events of the city, from both the participants' and the organisers' perspective. For the investigation of participant attitudes, a questionnaire survey was conducted, while the organisers' views on sustainability were sought through interviews. The findings show that although respondents rate the importance of sustainability as very high, their contribution to responsible consumption is far from what could be considered sustainable, therefore better communication of the initiatives or stricter rules need to be introduced. The interviewees revealed that organisers consider economic sustainability just as important as the environmental issues, and gave an insight into the rationale behind sustainability enhancing initiatives, some of which have a marketing function as well as protecting the environment.

KEYWORDS

sustainability, events, awareness raising, visitor attitude, European capital of culture

1. INTRODUCTION

Although sustainable practices aiming to reduce the negative environmental impacts have been prevalent at events for over a decade now (Mair – Laing 2012; Mair – Smith 2021), initiatives

* Corresponding author. E-mail: raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu

focusing on the economic impacts as well as supporting the local economy and society are also gaining more emphasis in event planning and management (Moscardo 2008; Andersson et al. 2015; Perry et al. 2020). Getz (2010) points to the role festivals play in the regional development of an area. Studies by Mair and Laing (2013) and Ye et al. (2020) have established that music festivals attracting larger audiences are becoming especially aware of the importance of sustainability as well as of their role in the process of raising participants' awareness of it. There is a growing interest in the social impacts of festivals as well, assessing how they impact on the everyday life of residents (Theodorakis et al. 2015), and how events can strengthen local pride and patriotism and enhance community spirit (Formádi – Hunyadi 2019).

The paper aims to investigate the sustainability related initiatives of the Street Music Festival in Veszprém, Hungary, assessing the attitude of festival visitors to sustainability at festival, as well as the rationale behind the sustainability-focussed initiatives proposed by the organisers. The festival is part of Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture (hereon in ECoC) Project, which places special emphasis on sustainability as one of three horizontal goals, which also include barrier-free and child-friendly programme development. The paper sets the scene first by discussing the three pillars of sustainability and presenting best practice examples of sustainability initiatives aiming to reduce the most common negative impacts and to promote responsible production and consumption at music festivals. Following this, the sustainability initiatives at the Street Music Festival will be analysed from both the participants' and the organisers' perspective.

The methodology is based on a questionnaire survey conducted during the festival in August 2020 assessing how participants rate the importance of sustainability measures and how they can contribute to sustainability. Semi-structured interviews conducted with the organisers provide further insight into the rationale behind their sustainable practices and awareness raising initiatives, as well as the challenges they face.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Environmental, economic and social pillars of sustainability

Sustainable practices aiming to reduce the negative environmental impacts have become key guiding principles of events (Mair – Laing 2012, Jones 2017). Besides the green practices, initiatives focusing on the economic impacts as well as supporting the local economy and society are also gaining more emphasis in event planning and management (Andersson et al. 2015).

2.1.1. Environmental sustainability. Although all three pillars of sustainability are equally important, the literature of sustainable events suggests that organisers put environmental considerations in the focus, trying to ensure the negative impacts caused by the event are reduced to a minimum, and quite often this effort is accompanied by the promotion of green actions and communicating the green aspects of the event. The rationale behind these considerations is easy to understand as the environmental impacts of (especially large-scale) events such as piles of litter or trampled on grass at festival sites are most visible. As Mair and Smith (2021) point out, in some research sustainability is often only concerned with environmental impacts, like Pernecky and Luck (2013), who refer to “the predominance of texts that assess environmental impacts and the need to green the events industry” (Mair – Smith 2021: 1740),



and in research by [Boggia et al. \(2018\)](#) where the terms sustainability and environmental effects are used interchangeably. Based on the focus of sustainable practices, a distinction can be made between organisations implementing green actions and organisations committed to all three pillars of sustainability in their management and operations ([Raj – Musgrave 2009](#); [Mair – Jago 2010](#)).

2.1.2. Economic sustainability. Besides the environmental aspects, organisers consider the economic ones as well, making sustainability equal to continuity, referring to guaranteed financial sources and income that ensures the event can be staged in the long run ([Zifkos 2015](#)). In the case of profit-oriented events, one of the key aims is to generate income as well as profit from the ticket sales and from sponsorship as well as fees the organisers can collect from service providers related to the event, such as rental fees of food stalls, etc. ([Choi – Sirakaya 2006](#)). However, economic sustainability has to be considered even in the case of non-fee-paying events as well, where the main objective of the event is other than generating revenue. As [Getz \(2010\)](#) argues, festivals are often featured in place marketing and tourism, therefore they can play an important role in regional development of the area that hosts them. He notes that economic development and impacts of events are frequent topics of articles focusing on event management and event tourism ([Tang – Turco 2001](#); [Moscardo 2008](#); [Perry et al. 2020](#)).

2.1.3. Social sustainability. There is a growing interest in researching the social impacts of the festivals, including how they impact on the everyday life of local residents and how they foster collaboration among various actors such as local residents, local NGOs and other stakeholders. Generally the music events bring enjoyment to the participants. A ‘feel-good factor’ refers to senses of feeling good, (communal) wellbeing and happiness as a result of participation. It is used alongside the term happiness, which can be defined as ‘a condition of psychological balance and harmony’ ([Theodorakis et al. 2015](#)). It is also noted that the events can lead to the strengthening of local pride and patriotism, and can enhance community spirit ([Formádi – Hunyadi 2019](#)).

The social impacts are measured mainly in three areas which are strongly connected to each other:

- *Locals’ participation:* the degree to which a festival stimulates locals’ participation (e.g. how it is integrated into the yearly calendar of locals). It can be as participant or as volunteer.
- *Attitudes and beliefs:* the degree how the festival influences people’s beliefs, attitudes, norms and values (e.g. pride, happiness, feeling good).
- *Social cohesion and cooperation:* social cohesion is the ongoing process of developing the local community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunities, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity. Part of that the interaction occurs between individuals and stakeholders, e.g. local organisations, institutions, local businesses and entrepreneurs, local authorities. The event provides a platform to involve the community and strengthen social capital.

However, event organisers may encounter challenges in terms of implementing sustainable practices. Research by [Mair and Laing \(2012\)](#) concluded that besides the personal values of the festival organisers, the level of commitment of other stakeholders (local community, authorities, service providers, festival visitors, employees, performers, exhibitors, etc.) is also a decisive factor



whether the festival is really staged in a sustainable way or not. It must also be mentioned that lack of time and financial sources are also among the hindering factors that jeopardize sustainable implementation (Mair – Laing 2012).

2.1.4. Building on all three pillars - striking a balance. Although it is generally accepted that the three pillars are equally important, it poses a great challenge to event organisers to find the right balance. Getz (2009) argued that the supposedly “new paradigm [of sustainable and responsible events] is generating increasing pressure for the application of a [Triple Bottom Line] approach in which both the worth and impacts of planned events are evaluated with balanced measures reflecting economic social/cultural and environmental considerations” (Getz 2009: 64). Getz (2017) and Mair (2019) suggest adopting a new perspective and argue that the focus should shift from the intention of trying to run “sustainable events” to the assessment of how events can contribute to the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of the places which host them (Mair – Smith 2021). For the purposes of this research, the authors adopt Mair’s (2019) view on sustainable events as events that are key agents of fostering sustainable economic, social and environmental development in the host community.

2.1.5. Attitude of festival visitors to sustainability. The growing demand for sustainability on behalf of the participants has become a trend that facilitates, or even forces the implementation of sustainable principles at events (Ye et al. 2020). This demand can be traced back to the growing awareness of climate change and increasingly worrying lack of clear water and droughts in some places, and of extreme weather conditions that jeopardize the existence and staging of events.

Music festivals attracting larger audiences are becoming especially aware of the importance of sustainability as well as of their role in the process of raising participants’ awareness of it (Mair – Laing 2013; Ye et al. 2020). Festival visitors may play a significant role in the realization of sustainable principles. An increasing number of research focuses on awareness raising techniques that target festival visitors and the efficiency of sustainability centred educational programmes taking place at events (Mair – Laing 2013; Efeja et al. 2016; Tolkes - Butzmann 2018). Mair and Laing (2013) concluded that primarily those visited green and sustainable festivals whose way of thinking is based on sustainability, therefore participating in such events served as a positive reinforcement of their way of thinking and lifestyle.

The majority of awareness raising initiatives focus on environmental sustainability of events, however, quite often an environmentally conscious solution also relates to economic and socio-cultural factors. It is of utmost importance that awareness raising programmes are delivered in the spirit of edutainment to encourage visitor participation, for example through co-creation, joint search for solutions for sustainability related challenges, creative workshops, etc. (Efeja et al. 2016).

Not many people are aware what an enormous impact food has on the environment. Reports state that the food and agriculture sector is responsible for a significant proportion (around 25%) of global greenhouse gas emissions. Due to environmental concerns and a growing awareness of healthy lifestyle, eating habits have changed significantly in the 21st century. A reduction of certain food products, such as meat and dairy products, can be observed parallel with the growth of other types of products, such as vegetables, plant based drink, gluten free products. The growing demand for special diets has also got its roots in the growth of the



proportion of people suffering from certain food allergies or intolerances (Benedé et al. 2016). More and more festivals recognise the need as well as the business potential in providing catering options to satisfy the needs of visitors with special dietary needs and preferences (van Berkel 2014; Raffay-Danyi – Ernszt 2021). Besides the aim of serving a wider ranges of customers, providing environmentally healthy food, and sourcing them from ethical producers also serves the aspirations of festival organisers to become more sustainable. *The Good Food Guide for Festivals* (2012) compiled by the not-for profit organisation A Greener Festival, in cooperation with the Food Legacy programme and the Ethical Eats project, supports festival organisers in achieving their aims.

2.2. Initiatives aiming at enhancing sustainability at events

Most of the sustainability initiatives at festivals tend to focus on the environment, aiming to reduce and mitigate the potential negative impacts of the event (Paton – McCullen 2014). Research by Maung (2010) points out that for example at Glastonbury alone 54 tonnes of cans and plastic bottles, 9.12 tonnes of glass, 11.2 tonnes of tents and 193 tonnes of compostable material including food and paper cups were left behind in 2009. *Waste reduction* is a key concern, which can manifest in various forms, like in reducing the amount of rubbish generated at festivals and reducing the use of plastic wherever it is possible. Although it is possible to recycle plastic bottles, and even reuse them, by far the best option is not to have a disposable bottle at all. Many festivals aim to provide drinking water so that participants refill their own flasks and bottles instead of buying bottled water. In 2011, Limetree Festival in the United Kingdom set the target to go entirely plastic-free during the whole event, bottled water was not available at all, and with the help of Tapwater.org free tap water was made available on the festival site (Limetree Festival 2020). A similar initiative at Glastonbury Festival introduced in 2019 was described by Marsh (2019). Removing straws from festivals is also getting very common, and although some vendors still offer straws with drinks participants are encouraged not to ask for straws (for example at the Sziget Festival in Hungary), and the use of alternative cutlery and plates, as well as reusable glasses were also common initiatives. However, in 2020, single use items were encouraged once again to avoid the spread of Coronavirus, so this process has come to a, hopefully only temporary, halt.

Where the massive use of plastic (and other recyclable items such as glass or cans) cannot be avoided, *recycling bins* and points were installed to ensure that certain items get recycled and get a new life instead of ending up as landfill waste. It has become common practice at festivals to find various ways of encouraging festival goers to collect their recyclable items and dispose of them in the appropriate way and place. Many festivals exchange recycling for useful souvenirs such as free WIFI, t-shirts, rain poncho, etc. in a well worked out system where every item of recycling has a certain value (e.g. 15 cans for a rain poncho).

Other initiatives originating from environmental concerns address the issue of *CO₂ emissions*. Gray (2013) lists transport as a key damaging effect on the environment in case of festivals, while Atkinson (2010) points out that festival goers travelling to and from the festival site create the largest component of the impact. The most noticeable efforts manifest in encouraging visitors to use *environmentally friendly modes of transport* when approaching the festival site. For example, as one of the world's largest outdoor music festivals, Glastonbury Festival is totally committed to reducing carbon emissions and to raising awareness of what can be done to help



combat climate change. In this spirit, those arriving to the festival by public transport or bicycle are given a Green Traveller lanyard, which entitles them to get discounts on main meals and a festival t-shirt, and access to solar showers. Similarly, the Sziget Festival in Hungary also encourages participants to use bicycles between the festival site and the city centre, and provide a safe bicycle locker by one of the bridges of the island that serves as the festival venue.

Offering CO₂ friendly food is also a small but significant step towards reducing CO₂ emissions. The environmental considerations meet the trend of growing demand for more health-conscious dietary options, and to accommodate the demand for vegetarian and vegan dishes, some festival organisers started to rethink the food offer at their festivals by reducing or even removing meat from the offer. The Sziget Festival recommends festival goers to try some of the CO₂ friendly delicacies at the Mama Earth Eatery, while DGTL Festival in the Netherlands has completely removed meat from the menu, which as they claim has reduced CO₂ emissions and saved large amounts of freshwater and land (DGTL 2020; van Berkel 2014).

Some festivals are also concerned about the social impacts events can have on the local community as well as festival goers. It can manifest in the promotion of *local, organic and fair-trade products* at the events, such as the Sunrise Festival in the United Kingdom, where the organisers have established a site-wide organic policy for all food and drinks, including alcohol, and encouraged traders to use local suppliers – which also aims to minimise the environmental cost of transporting goods (The Good Food for Festivals Guide 2012).

Social impacts can also be addressed by *presentations on climate change issues, environmental protection*. As part of the Love Revolution campaign launched by the Sziget Festival in 2017, Jane Goodall, the world-renowned ethologist and United Nations Messenger of Peace, held a presentation on the main stage at the Sziget Festival to draw attention to the importance of respecting human rights and protecting the environment. A Dutch example is presented by van Berkel (2014), describing Lab Vlieland Festival's initiative to involve festival goers, students and progressive manufacturers into a think-tank where creative sustainable ideas for dealing with energy and (re)using resources at festivals are discussed.

3. PLACE OF THE VESZPRÉM STREET MUSIC FESTIVAL IN THE HUNGARIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL LANDSCAPE

Hungary has a well-established place in the European pop music festival circuit, largely due to the Sziget Festival which attracts a significant international audience to Budapest every year. Some other festivals have a significant place in the Hungarian festival calendar, such as Balaton Sound (one of the largest electronic music festival in Europe) hosted in Zamárdi until 2019 (the festival will move to a different site in 2022), the Telekom Volt Festival in Sopron, the Campus Festival in Debrecen and the EFOTT by Lake Velence, just to name some of the most popular ones. These festival are fee paying events, staged in fenced off festival sites, mostly campsites.

Unlike these festivals, the Veszprém Street Music Festival takes place on the open streets of the historic city centre of Veszprém, and is a free event that has entertained tens of thousands of visitors a year since 2000. The event is staged in the third week of July from Wednesday to Saturday, when from mid-afternoon until early evening previously selected street musicians compete for the professional award and the audience prize, while late in the evening they are followed by international artists and acknowledged Hungarian street musicians.



Since 2015, the Street Music Festival has been accompanied by a gastronomic event as well, the Food Truck Show, which first appeared outside of Budapest in Veszprém. The Food Truck Show aims to present mobile food trucks serving high quality dishes and drinks in a short period of time and concentrated to a reasonably small area. Festival visitors can enjoy craft beer and juices, spirits and wines and food produced from a varied range of ingredients.

Until 2020, the festival also offered various additional activities. A ferriswheel towering above the Óváros Square of the town offered extra entertainment one year; for many years fun and environmental awareness raising activities were organised for kids and families by the local communal services provider in association with the festival organisers, and the University of Pannonia was also present with games to entertain the audience. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staging of the event remained an open question until the last minute. Although with a significantly reduced content, the Street Music Festival and the Food Truck show was staged at the end of August, complying with the strict pandemic regulations. Twenty street musicians entertained the audience on four stages, the reduced programme concentrated only to the main hub, Óváros Square and the surrounding streets.

Since 2020, the Street Music Festival is part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture project, which has put sustainability as a key guiding principle on their flag. The programmes organised under the umbrella of the ECoC project are encouraged and supported to implement sustainability goals. Even though sustainability is not a new concept for the organisers of the Veszprém Street Music Festival, the special emphasis on sustainability related to joining the ECoC project provided the key motivation for conducting the research on sustainability awareness at this event.

4. METHODOLOGY

The current research aims to assess participants' attitude to sustainability as well as their consumption at the Veszprém Street Music Festival, and also the rationale behind the sustainability-focused initiatives proposed by the organisers. The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

- Q1: How important do festival visitors rate sustainability measures?
- Q2: To what extent is the visitors' consumption at the festival site sustainable?
- Q3: What does the concept of sustainability mean to the organisers?
- Q4: What kind of initiatives have the organisers introduced and with what intention?

Within the framework of a project focusing on circular economy and aiming to investigate the sustainability issues of festivals, a questionnaire survey was conducted during the Street Music Festival in Veszprém in 2020. The respondents were chosen randomly at the festival site where festival volunteers recorded responses on the paper-based questionnaires during the four days of the event, and the questionnaire was also available online on the www.veszprembalaton2023.hu website. The questionnaire was developed within the framework of the above mentioned project specifically for events, primarily to assess visitor attitude towards sustainability at events organised or supported by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture project.



The questionnaire contained demographics related questions to assess the profile of the festival goers, and specific questions regarding mainly the environmental and socio-cultural pillars of sustainability, impacts of events, as well as sustainable consumption, with special emphasis on food and drink consumption, based on the key findings of the literature on potential impacts of events, behaviour of event visitors, sustainable festivals and visitor attitudes towards festival sustainability. Environmental sustainability was measured with indicators such as means of transportation used and distance travelled by the visitors to the festival, and by attitude statements to outline the visitors' food and meat consumption during the festival as well as their attitude towards recycling and access to drinking water. Socio-cultural sustainability was addressed with attitude questions aiming to map the visitors' interest in the local characteristics of the festival, and to investigate how important the event is for them as a social gathering and how much they are attached to the festival. Furthermore, a set of statements about general sustainability issues aimed to assess how these are perceived at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. An even number (4 points and 10 points) Likert-scale was used to measure the attitudes regarding the various issues of sustainability. Altogether 403 participants' responses were evaluated. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with the two organisers of the festival to provide further insight into the rationale behind their sustainable practices and awareness raising initiatives, and to establish the challenges they face in terms of sustainable implementation of their event.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Results of the questionnaire survey

The Veszprém Street Music Festival attracts young and middle-aged people primarily, the majority of the respondents were between 18 and 49, 55% of the respondents were female and 45% male. Almost half of the respondents have higher education qualification, and a further 35% have completed secondary education. As Fig. 1 depicts, the respondents are mostly local, 24% live either in Veszprém or close by, 45% within 10 km from the city, and only 4% of the participants have arrived to the festival from more than 200 km. The average distance travelled is 44.6 km.

The sustainable production and consumption related questions focused on food and beverage consumption, specifically also about tap water consumption, on waste recycling, on interest in the local character of the event and on the potential sustainability issues that need addressing.

The first food related questions aimed to map the respondents' dietary preferences on average weekdays and during the festival. As Fig. 2 shows, there are hardly any differences between the eating habits of the two scenarios, and most of the respondents have a mixed diet. The proportion of those eating reduced amounts of meat is between 6 and 8%, and 10% of the participants consume meat with every meal, while the proportion of the vegan and vegetarian respondents is just a few percent in the overall sample, which equals to 6 and 7 people respectively.

The survey also aimed to assess how often participants buy food products to consume at the festival site. The results show that a quarter of the respondents does not buy any food at all, while a third of them have one smaller meal (snack) and one main meal during the festival.



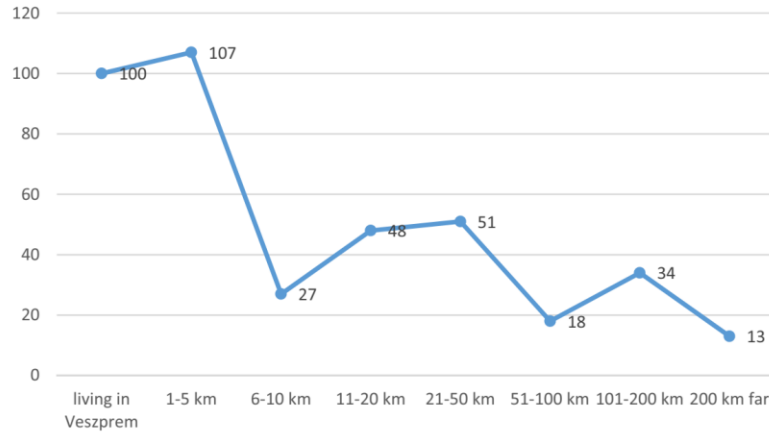


Fig. 1. Festival visitors' place of residence (number of persons)
 Source: authors.

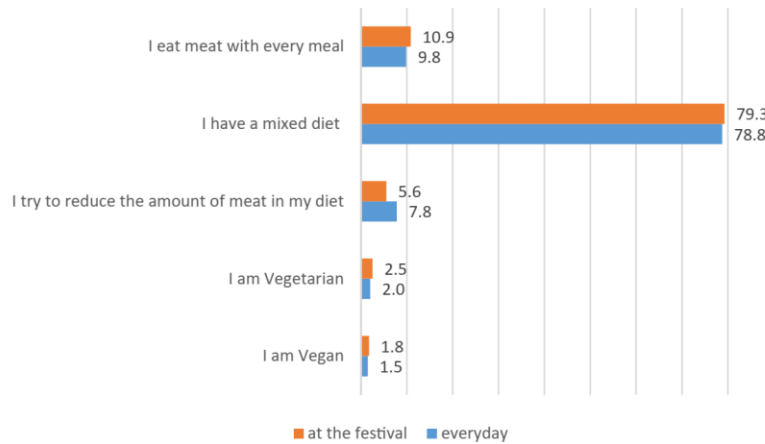


Fig. 2. Dietary preferences of festival visitors (%)
 Source: authors.

The survey revealed that 15.2% of the respondents have some sort of food allergy. When asked to what extent respondents were satisfied with the range of food on offer in relation to their preferences, the average response was 3.2 on a scale of 1–4 where 4 is completely satisfied. However, respondents indicating a vegan diet were less lucky to find a suitable offer during the event. Figure 3 indicates the average responses according to the different food preferences/diet of respondents.

The majority of the respondents consider it very important to have tap water available at the festival (Fig. 4), rating it 3.3 on a scale of 1–4, where 4 is very important.



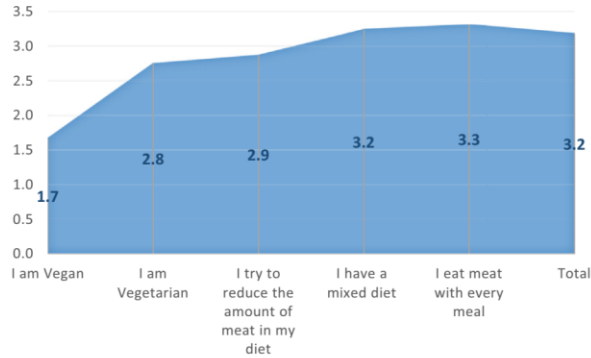


Fig. 3. Satisfaction with the food offer at the Veszprém Street Music Festival
 Source: authors.

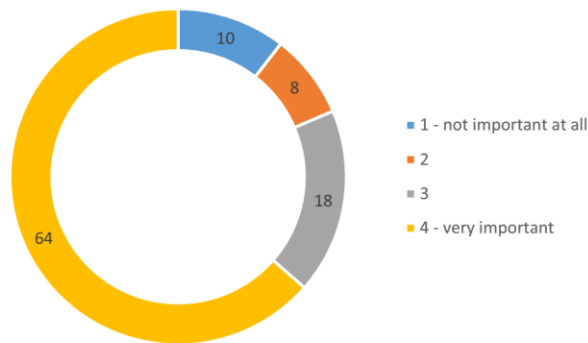


Fig. 4. Importance of available drinking water at the Veszprém Street Music Festival
 Source: authors.

However, only a third of the participants declared that they refill their flasks at the festival site, while 41% buy bottled water. This finding indicates a significant gap between the attitude and the action of festival visitors, as even though they consider it important to have access to drinking water at the festival site, the majority still opts for bottled water. Those buying bottled water would purchase 1.8 bottles on average (80% suggested buying one or two bottles). Participants under 18 are most environmentally conscious, they are more likely to refill their flasks, but there was no difference to be detected in case of gender or educational qualification of the respondents in terms of buying bottles or refilling flasks.

The question of buying bottled water relates to the amount of waste produced as well as recycling. Respondents were asked whether they had come across recycling containers at the festival site and if so, had they used them. More than 67% of the respondents had noticed the recycling bins, and 53% of the participants had already used them, and 32% of them claimed they would use them once necessary but it was not the case thus far (Fig. 5). In general, 80% of



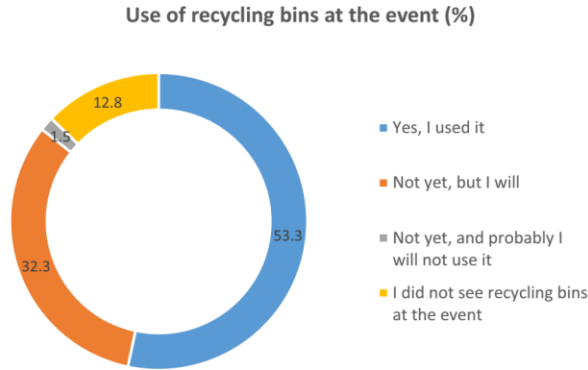


Fig. 5. Use of recycling bins at the festival
 Source: authors.

the festival goers argued that it is very important to ensure recycling at a festival site, the average response rate was 3.8 on a scale of 1–4, where 4 is very important.

The survey also aimed to assess some of the social impacts of festivals. Various questions were posed to map if the participants were interested in local programmes, local customs, local attractions, local crafts produce, local food and the lifestyle of the local people (Fig. 6). As the survey was conducted at a music festival, not too surprisingly respondents were mostly interested in local programmes, 57% of them indicated they were very interested, local attractions were the second most popular item on their list (45% marked these as very important for them), while participants are least interested in the lifestyle of the local people (20% of them were not interested at all). This indicates that festival visitors at the Veszprém Street Music Festival are less committed to the socio-cultural pillar of sustainability, as they are less interested in some of the factors through which the festival may have a positive social impact on the local residents' everyday life.

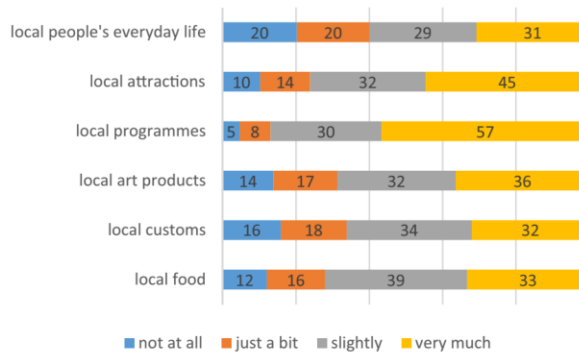


Fig. 6. Level of interest in the local characteristics of the festival (%)
 Source: authors.



One of the complex questions was designed to assess the perceptions of respondents regarding certain selected sustainability issues. Respondents had to rate them on a scale of 1–4 where 1 indicates these issues are not present at all at the festival, and 4 means they cause significant problems. As Fig. 7 indicates, the use of single use plastic was perceived as the most significant problem, however it must be reinforced that the survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when single use items were reintroduced in many places to minimise the risk of contamination. Interestingly, the issue of noise was perceived as the least of the problems, even though the participants of a music festival formed the audience of the survey.

We used data reduction, specifically principal component analysis, to highlight the latent correlations between the perceived problems. We managed to elaborate two main factors: one major factor relates to the waste problems (including the garbage problem, use of throw-away plastic products), the second group relates to traffic and parking related sustainability problems.

The questionnaire also contained a question about the importance of the sustainability of the festival. Respondents could rate the importance of sustainability on a 1 to 10 scale where 10 indicated high importance. 45% of the participant rated it 10 out of 10, and 8.8 was the overall average of the responses. The respondents over the age of 50 rated it higher than the average (9.2), and those with lower educational qualification indicated slightly lower rates for importance than the average (8.4).

One of the most significant social impacts of the Veszprém Street Music Festival is that it creates an opportunity to meet up and hang out with friends, therefore as an added value it also helps to strengthen relationships. It plays an important social role in the annual calendar of the local residents, they are looking forward to participating in it and have strong attachment to the festival. The bonding index is 7.7 (average) on a 1 to 10 scale, and the closer the respondents live to the festival, the stronger their attachment is to the festival. Furthermore, the more attached respondents are to the festival, the more important they rate sustainability at the event.

5.2. Interview findings

As the coin has two sides, it was important to investigate what constitutes sustainability for the organisers and what considerations led to the sustainability enhancing initiatives and measures that visitors could experience at the Veszprém Street Music Festival.

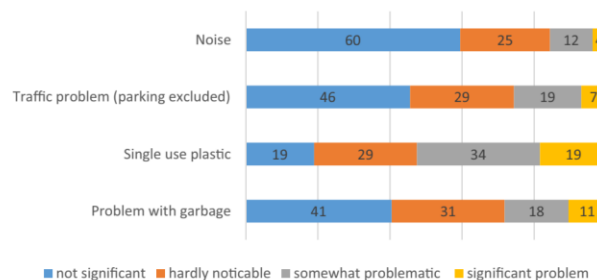


Fig. 7. Perceived sustainability problems at the Veszprém Street Music Festival (%)

Source: authors.



The interviews with the organisers of the festival revealed that all three aspects of sustainability must be considered. The main organiser of the event referred to the long-term viability of the festival as an indicator of sustainability: "It is sustainable if it is financially sustainable as well, if it can operate in the long run. If you do something only once or twice, it takes more energy altogether than running the festival for years, so you leave a bigger ecological footprint. You need to achieve that there is demand for the festival, then it becomes sustainable." The other person in charge of organisation referred to environmental and the social pillars of sustainability primarily, claiming that a festival can be considered sustainable if it does not leave a trace on the environment, so the environmentally friendly activities are most important, but it must be good for the people as well. Both respondents emphasised the advantages of sustainable implementation of events. "One of the great *advantages of sustainable events* is that they are more likeable for the audience. It is a sort of requirement now from festival goers, so being sustainable may create a competitive advantage." This was confirmed by the respondents of the questionnaire survey, who rated the importance of sustainability 8.8 on a 1 to 10 scale where 10 indicated high importance. Sustainability has a strong image building role. "First it was only trendy to be green or sustainable, nowadays it is embarrassing if you are not. Also, if an event is viable (economically sustainable), you can attract more sponsors as well. If you operate in the long run, you can learn from your mistakes."

When asked about *actions to reduce waste*, the responses were referring to the good collaboration with the local communal service provider, which is responsible for collecting and removing litter during the night, "so by 6am there are no traces of the party the night before." To tackle the problem of waste management, recycling bins were also introduced at the festival. Interestingly, roughly a third of the festival goers did not notice the recycling bins at the festival site, but the majority of the respondents (80%) considered it very important to ensure recycling at the festival. However, both organisers hinted at the obstacles that hindered them in being more environmentally friendly, partially due to the coronavirus pandemic "We have operated with reusable glasses before but unfortunately we had to reinstate plastic cups because of COVID-19 so it is a step back unfortunately." This was reflected in the questionnaire survey results as well, the respondents identified single use plastic as the most significant sustainability problem. The organisers also pointed out that it is an open festival, not controlled by barriers or fences: "Litter collection is also a difficult question, as the festival normally uses the whole city centre, therefore we cannot stop people from throwing litter away." Furthermore, the latter circumstance also jeopardises enforcing sustainable initiatives such as avoiding the use of plastic: "As it is an open festival (staged in an open space), we cannot force anything on the service providers."

The organisers are keen on providing *drinking water* and refilling bottles. They have designated a drinking water tap in the Castle area but they acknowledged that there is need for more refilling points at the festival site. This initiative seemed to have little impact on the visitors' attitude as 41% of the survey respondents claimed to have bought bottled water.

As for *awareness raising educational programmes*, the organisers used to cooperate with the local communal service provider company and the University of Pannonia to run programmes, primarily for children. Although these were successful based on the feedback from the participants, such activities did not get incorporated into the 2020 programme due to the strict regulations, especially regarding limited visitor numbers.

The Street Music Festival places *significant emphasis on the gastronomical offer*. Although defining the concrete range of food and drinks is beyond the competence of the festival



organisers, they have defined taking the food preferences and needs into consideration: serving a wider audience is one of the requirements towards the service providers. As food allergy is a key problem of our age, everyone has to pay attention to it. "There is a growing demand to serve the needs of visitors with special dietary requirements. Furthermore, as you can sell such products at higher prices, the market is also motivated to satisfy the special needs. The communication of every event has to emphasise the options they offer to vegetarians, vegans and people with food allergies or intolerances." Admittedly, it is also trendy to have vegan food on offer so they are aiming to attract a vegan truck every year. They have also confessed that from the organisers' point of view it is easier to select catering providers that specialise on certain diets than prescribing to each and every service provider to respond to special needs as well. The efforts to find the right dietary solutions for a wide range of the audience seems to have paid off: respondents were satisfied with the food offer at the festival, rating the satisfaction 3.2 on a scale of 1-4. Vegan respondents were less pleased with the range of food, rating the offer 1.7, but their proportion at the festival was very low so these responses do not reflect the views of most festival visitors.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Based on the results, it can be concluded that 'we are not there yet', audience awareness does not yet translate into action at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. The findings of the survey showed that although visitors rate the importance of sustainability as very high, their contribution to responsible consumption is far from what could be considered sustainable. The most striking gap between awareness and action relates to water consumption: although the majority of the respondents consider it very important to have tap water available at the festival, only a third of the participants refill their flasks at the festival site, while 41% buy bottled water. As for food consumption habits, even though the organisers place emphasis on providing meat free options, there is no significant demand for meat free food, only a minority of respondents follows a vegan or vegetarian diet, and reduced meat consumption is not typical at all. Based on these findings, the festival food trends discussed in the literature review are not prevalent at the Veszprém Street Music Festival. Furthermore, visitors of the Veszprém Street Music Festival are less interested in the local character of the festival, the respondents indicated only low level of interest in local arts, and local people's habits and lifestyle. The picture is more positive in the case of waste reduction and recycling: more than 67% of the respondents had noticed the recycling containers placed at regular intervals at the festival site, 53% of the participants had used them, and 32% of them would use them later during the event. In general, 80% of the festival goers argue that it is very important to ensure recycling at a festival site, the average response rate was 3.8 on a scale of 1-4, where 4 is very important.

The interviewees revealed the rationale behind their sustainability enhancing initiatives and pointed out the challenges that influence the implementation of these. The restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic were regarded as the greatest challenge, on the one hand related to visitor numbers and with that the significantly reduced range of programmes, and on the other hand the introduction of single use items in order to avoid potential contamination. Furthermore, the organisers referred to the lack of power to impose sustainability measures on the service providers as the festival takes place in the open streets of the city centre and it is beyond



their control what the service providers do who are not part of the Food Truck Show offer. A way forward would be to empower the organisers to control sustainable production, which in turn may also foster more sustainable consumption as well.

The results imply that the concept of sustainability is important to festival visitors, however, only a few initiatives are successful and are reflected in the attitude and actions of visitors (such as using recycling bins), others are unnoticed or do not create the intended effect (such as using tap water). It points to the need for better communication, to ensure that the initiatives are visible to festival goers and their awareness is raised. The limitations of the current research include that it assesses only the attitude of visitors towards sustainability; it would be worth comparing this with the attitude of the service providers as well. Furthermore, the analysis was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic which made the implementation of certain sustainability measures rather difficult, therefore it would be worth repeating the research when the Street Music Festival is back to the normal. The authors plan to conduct a similar research in the coming years to monitor whether the awareness and the attitude of festival visitors is changing over time, and also to assess whether new initiatives and sustainability measures are introduced. Furthermore, a comparison with other festivals would also be beneficial to gain a better understanding of festival goers' attitude towards sustainability at music festivals.

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Can festivals bring social change in an ECoC city? Emotional intelligence and willingness to volunteer among university students

Edit Kóvári^a and Ágnes Raffay-Danyi^b

^aDepartment of Management, University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary; ^bDepartment of Tourism, University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary

ABSTRACT

Veszprém in Hungary was awarded the title of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in the year of 2023. The project aims to involve a wide range of audience, with special attention to younger people including university students, however, this depends on their willingness to be involved both as participants and volunteers. The current study aims to assess the willingness of university students to participate as volunteers in the ECoC programme. Furthermore it explains the factors that can influence students' willingness to volunteer, including their cultural consumption patterns, their cultural- and emotional intelligence levels. A survey on the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC project was conducted among Hungarian and international students of the University of Pannonia in 2018 to determine the factors influencing their intentions to participate in the programme. This was followed by a second survey in 2020, focusing on the influence of emotional and cultural intelligence levels of students on their willingness to volunteer in events. The results reveal that the most popular events for both participation and volunteering are pop- and rock concerts, sport and travel programmes, and motivations are stronger when programmes bring mutual benefits to organisers and volunteers. There is a significant positive relationship between cultural intelligence levels as well as emotional intelligence levels of university students and their participation in community leisure activities and cultural events. However, emotional intelligence is not significantly related to willingness to volunteer.

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Introduction

Veszprém was awarded the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title for 2023 in December 2018; the announcement crowned the significant efforts the project team put into the city's bid by involving a wide range of stakeholders. The mission of the ECoC proposal is to go 'beyond' the traditional way of thinking, the boundaries and the comfort zones so

CONTACT Edit Kóvári  kovari.edit@gtk.uni-pannon  Department of Management, University of Pannonia, Veszprém 8200, Egyetem u. 10, Hungary

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that there would be no more boring Tuesday evenings in Veszprém. This mission focuses on five aspects: community building, volunteering, tradition, innovation and sustainability. With these focal values the ECoC2023 Veszprém programme aims to become a catalyst for social change in the city and the region. One of the key success factors and catalysts is seen in the establishment of a reliable volunteer base that will provide assistance during the run-up years and in the year of 2023.

The current study aims to assess the cultural consumption patterns and the willingness of university students to participate as volunteers in the ECoC programmes, as well as the factors that can influence their willingness to volunteer. This study aims to examine the factors motivating and hindering volunteering for students, and analyses the impact of cultural and emotional intelligence levels on their cultural consumption and their willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes. We focus on the potential involvement of university students as volunteers in the project, primarily because the younger generations are more open to new initiatives and change, which the ECoC title is hoping to bring to the city, and also because of the strong engagement of the University of Pannonia in the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 ECoC project. This study is based on an extensive survey of university students studying in Veszprém, and therefore provides a detailed picture of their engagement with the event.

The University of Pannonia has been part of the Veszprém-Balaton ECoC project since the bidding phase, with experts helping to shape the strategies, being part of the Presentation Team and the Jury Visit Team, undertaking research and helping to establish the profile of volunteers. One of the studies the University carried out in 2018, before winning the title, aimed to gain an insight into the university students' cultural consumption patterns as well as their attitude to volunteering. The current paper will utilise some of the findings of the study conducted in 2018 to examine changes in attitudes over the course of the ECoC process.

Both the ECoC project host, the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Joint Stock Company and the University of Pannonia have established a volunteer framework to ensure the potential involvement of younger people, especially students. The Veszprém-Balaton 2023 project team launched the volunteer programme 'Shine' in 2020, with the aim of helping people 'be part of the European Capital of Culture family and contribute to bringing about a fascinating and unforgettable thing (...) here back home in the Veszprém-Balaton region.' (<https://veszprembalaton2023.hu/en/page/volunteer>). In cooperation with the VEB 2023 project team, the University of Pannonia has also set up a volunteer programme:

CoolLaunch is the operating youth institution of the University of Pannonia, a creative workroom, which supports the implementation of the young adults' ideas in the field of cultural and social affairs. We have been established with the aim of inspiring the young generations to actively participate in the Veszprém-Balaton 2023. European Capital of Culture project as converging community. (<http://www.coollaunch.hu/home/>)

The first part of the paper will establish the theoretical background that formed the basis of the questionnaire surveys, reviewing the literature on the European Capital of Culture initiative and research on volunteering, as well as cultural and emotional intelligence. The second part of the paper provides insights into the first results of a study into the university communities' cultural and emotional attitudes conducted in 2020, by the

ECoC Research Group established at the Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Pannonia. The research is supported by the Research Centre (PE-GTK-GSKK A095000000-3 sz.) at Faculty of Business and Economics of University of Pannonia (Veszprém, Hungary). The 2020 research focussed on three distinct university communities: (1) students, (2) lecturers/researchers and (3) other university staff. The current study reports on the results drawn from the student respondents. The students group incorporates bachelor, master and doctoral studies students, both in full-time and part-time education.

Literature review

The European Capital of Culture initiative

The European Capital of Culture (ECoC) Programme is one of the most successful cultural initiatives of the European Union (Lőrincz, 2017). It is designed to showcase the diversity of European culture and the common cultural characteristics within Europe in order to foster and promote closer coexistence and better mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe (Lőrincz & Raffay, 2019):

The title of European Capital of Culture was initiated more than 30 years ago by Melina Mercouri, a Greek-born actress and Minister of Culture, and has been one of the most important projects of the European Union's cultural policy ever since. The title is awarded by the EU's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, in order to highlight the cultural richness of its Member States. (https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en.)

Veszprém and the surrounding Lake Balaton region bid for the 2023 ECoC title in 2017. As a result of a long bidding process, on 14th December 2018, Veszprém city was announced as the winner of the title. The Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Joint Stock Company (hereinafter: Jsc.) is now responsible for the general coordination, the programming, and the realisation of cultural and artistic projects of the ECoC, with the help of cultural, civic and market-oriented organisations. (BidBook, 2018) Based on the research findings of Lőrincz and Raffay (2019), the main goals of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture (hereinafter VEB 2023 ECoC programme) are to stimulate mobility, increase the volume of cultural tourism and to put the Veszprém-Balaton region on the European map of tourism and culture. 'The ECoC project is looking for answers to real-life questions such as how to ease seasonality by the Balaton region, how to widen cultural consumption while also strengthening economic and social sustainability and fostering regional cooperation.' (Lőrincz & Raffay, 2019, p. 19). As Palonen (2010) also noted, the ECoC title is a powerful tool for regions to get to some extent out of the breach of the national framework and to achieve regional pride. Veszprém and the Balaton region are hoping for similar achievements, where the individual settlements can shape and enhance their image through the ECoC process.

Although a framework for volunteering has been established in the ECoC programme, the success of the initiatives partially depends on the local communities' willingness to volunteer, especially that of younger people living and studying and Veszprém.

Volunteering and motivations to volunteer

Volunteering has been popular since the nineteenth century in various countries of Europe, however, in Central and Eastern countries the idea of volunteering was (re)introduced only in the post-communist era, and volunteering has becoming increasingly popular since the 1990s (Bartal, 2011). Research on volunteering has also grown significantly (Clary et al., 1998; Fényes & Kiss, 2011; Wilson, 2000). In Hungary, volunteering started to flourish in 2001, since the International Year of Volunteers was declared by the United Nations (Bartal & Kmetty, 2011). The parameters of volunteering were codified in 2005 in Hungary, and volunteering becoming more widespread in Hungary with the designation of 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering by the European Commission. This aimed to foster more and more regular volunteer activities, and raise awareness of the social values inherent in volunteering (Farkas et al., 2012).

Volunteering in ECoC cities has become popular since the Liverpool 2008 ‘Liverpool Welcome’ programme, and following their example, every subsequent European Capital of Culture has introduced a formal volunteering system. To name some of the most successful examples, Aarhus introduced the ReThinkers volunteers in the ECoC year 2017, who continued to work with the Visit Aarhus tourism board after 2017, and volunteers in Matera and Plovdiv (both ECoC cities in 2019) also remained active after the ECoC year and assisted in cultural, sport and public events.

The motivation of volunteers can be manifold. Research by Adongo et al. (2019) suggests that although volunteers are thought to be altruistic people, their motivations can vary on a scale between altruism and self-interest (Adongo et al., 2019, p. 42). Their motivation can range from helping others and thereby feeling a useful member of society to being amongst people, getting to know new people, gaining professional or other experience to getting close to celebrities or one’s sports idols (at events).

Clary et al. (1998) linked the motivations of volunteers’ personal development and identified six fundamental categories, presented in Table 1.

It must be noted that someone can be motivated by several or even all of these functions at the same time, but to varying degrees. Pólya and Martos (2012) argue that it is important to be aware of their motivation when employing volunteers. It must also be acknowledged that volunteer motivations may change over time, and they may have different motivations when applying to volunteer and when they decide to stay on as volunteers with an organisation (Managing Volunteers – A Good Practice Guide, 2012). In the case of cities where the volunteers stay on after the ECoC year, the main motivation of volunteers may change from an initial focus on the value function to the enhancement

Table 1. Motivational functions of volunteering.

Values function	The person is volunteering in order to express or act on important values, such as humanitarianism and helping the less fortunate.
Understanding function	The volunteer is seeking to learn more about the world and/or exercise skills that are often unused
Enhancement function	The individual is seeking to grow and develop psychologically through involvement in volunteering
Protective function	The individual uses volunteering to reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or to address personal problems
Career function	The volunteer has the goal to gain career-related experience through volunteering
Social function	Volunteering allows the person to strengthen one’s social relationships

Source: Own editing based on Clary et al. (1998).

function, when volunteers anticipate their personal growth as the primary benefit of undertaking volunteering activities.

Emotional intelligence and volunteering

The concept of emotional intelligence in relation to volunteering emerged mainly in the past 10 years, therefore the number of experimental studies is limited, especially in the field of event and tourism management.

The concept of emotional intelligence itself came to the forefront in the workplace more than 20 years ago as a result of the studies of Daniel Goleman (1996). In the last 20 years, research (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Hill, 2010; Lopes et al., 2006) demonstrated the importance, impact, and correlations of emotional intelligence e.g. with performance, study, culture that have made economic, social, and scientific actors interested in the concept (Cleveland et al, 2007).

Emotional intelligence can be measured with various tests, based on ability and personality traits. These tests highlight different drivers of emotional intelligence, however, David et al. (2014), found that generally people with higher emotional intelligence are more active in social and cultural life, have more friends and better relationships, and communicate and negotiate better and with different problem-solving approaches. This may have significant implications for the Veszprém ECoC project, which relies on the involvement of the local communities in the cultural life of the city and aims to facilitate social change as well.

Petrides and Furnham (2001) reviewed theories and measurement tools related to emotional intelligence, identifying three approaches to emotional intelligence as a concept in the literature: (1) emotional intelligence based on mental ability (cognitive-emotional ability); (2) (personality) trait-based emotional intelligence (emotional personal effectiveness); (3) mixed (ability and personality trait-based) emotional intelligence.

If we consider tools for measuring emotional intelligence, these can be divided into two groups, based on ability and personality traits. Tests developed based on a mixed perspective (such as Bar-On's EQ-I test) are classified as personality tests (Pérez-González & Sanchez-Ruiz, 2014). These tests are reliable, instrumentally and theoretically valid, and well understood in terms of content and structure. Of the ability-based emotional intelligence tests, the most common are the MEIS and MSCEIT tests (reliability $\alpha > 0.80$) developed by Mayer et al. (2011). Of the personality trait (including mixed) type tests, three methodologically thorough and reliable ($\alpha = 0.85$) tests are worth highlighting in terms of predictive validity: Bar-On EQ-I, SUEIT, and TEIQue. The latter examines emotional intelligence through four dimensions: Well-being, Self-Control, Sociability, and Emotionality. For the purposes of the research, the TEIQue test will be used as the test fits the aims of the research and is available in Hungarian as well.

Assessing emotional intelligence is relevant from the point of view of volunteer satisfaction as well. The literature on volunteer satisfaction reveals a cognitive appraisal explanation of how volunteers experience and positively or negatively perceive the volunteer activity. Individual factors such as personality, motivation, emotional and cultural intelligence influence volunteers' behaviour, performance and perception (Qi et al., 2018). According to Fee and Gray (2011) volunteering helps in developing skills to manage emotions. Vveinhardt et al. (2019) suggest that volunteer-receiving organisations

should provide training to develop employees' emotional intelligence, because volunteers with high emotional intelligence can establish stronger relationships and have better performance.

Cultural intelligence and volunteering

While emotional intelligence (EQ) helps us recognise, understand and potentially influence our own and other people's emotions, cultural intelligence (CQ) goes a step further by placing every situation in a cultural context helping us to understand these situations (Pásztor, 2020a).

Vveinhardt et al. (2019) assessed the emotional intelligence of volunteers and concluded that emotional intelligence is the mediator between the volunteer's intercultural competence and work productivity. Another study by Qi et al. (2018) states that cross-cultural volunteer experience can develop the individual's cultural intelligence (CQ). Higher emotional intelligence seems to affect intercultural competence positively and this can also positively influence the level of cultural intelligence (Vinickytè et al., 2020).

Studies on cultural intelligence refer to two main processes. Our own culture becomes part of our lives unnoticed through the process of *enculturation* (Berry et al., 1988). When we work in a culture different from ours, cultural differences may become apparent and cause difficulties both in communication and integration processes (Pásztor, 2020b). The process of getting to know, accepting and integrating into another culture is referred to as *acculturation*. Various tools have been devised which aim to measure the success of acculturation; one of the most widely known of these is cultural intelligence, first mentioned in the literature of intercultural psychology, of management and of communication. Cultural intelligence can be measured with the *Cultural Intelligence Scale* consisting of 20 questions (Ang et al., 2007), which can be reduced to four dimensions (Earley & Ang, 2003):

- (1) *Motivation*, which reflects the level of the individual's interest and confidence in how much the individual could cope in intercultural situations.
- (2) The *Cognitive dimension* indicates the level of knowledge the individual has regarding cultural differences.
- (3) The *Metacognitive dimension* shows the level of awareness and the ability to plan.
- (4) *Behaviour* reflects on the ability to adapt in intercultural situations.

Individuals with a high level of behavioural CQ can adjust their verbal communication (pace of speech, intonation) to the situation and can also apply the nonverbal signs appropriately. Motivation is the foundation for gaining and organising the necessary knowledge, and later it manifests in appropriate behaviour in intercultural situations. Hence, motivation is a desire to gain knowledge, the cognitive dimension refers to knowledge, the metacognitive dimension is the strategic planning and application of this knowledge and behaviour is how it translates into action. Volunteers with high metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural intelligence are likely to behave more appropriately in a new cultural setting (Qi et al., 2018). Research by Hamidi et al. (2013) on sport event volunteers indicated that amongst the dimensions of cultural intelligence, motivational cultural intelligence was the first priority, while cognitive cultural

intelligence was the least significant. Additionally, the metacognitive cultural intelligence was significantly higher for those who had volunteering experience lasting over a year. A recent study (Vinickytė et al., 2020) carried out in Kaunas, Lithuania, which will be an ECoC city in 2022, revealed that those who have higher emotional intelligence and higher intercultural competence show more effectiveness in volunteering.

Research methods

The study presents the key findings regarding volunteering of two separate investigations (Table 2): the 2018 study on the willingness of the students of the University of Pannonia to become volunteers in the event that Veszprém won the European Capital of Culture 2023 title; and the results of the 2020 survey focusing on students’ cultural and emotional attitudes, local identity and quality of life. As the results of the 2018 study were used in developing the hypotheses of the 2020 research, we find it important to discuss both studies in the current paper.

Study on willingness to volunteer conducted in 2018

A study was carried out as part of the Veszprém-Balaton European Capital of Culture 2023 project bid to investigate the role of the university communities in the project, with special attention to willingness to volunteer.

The research consisted of two parts:

- (1) A questionnaire survey was conducted among the Hungarian and international students to identify the kinds of programmes they are interested in, the sources of information they use to find out about programmes, as well as the factors that influence their attitude and potential willingness to volunteering during the implementation of the ECoC project. The online questionnaire survey was available for students to fill in between 1st June and 1st August 2018, via the website and the Facebook page of the University of Pannonia, and the link was also sent out to all students using the official university e-mail system. The survey was completed by 374 Hungarian and 51 international students, coming mostly from African and Asian countries, mainly China. As some of the questionnaires were not fully completed, we analysed the responses to all the questions individually.

Table 2. Research themes of the two studies.

	Time frame	Respondents	Themes
Study on willingness to volunteer	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Lecturers/ researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural consumption patterns • Willingness to volunteer
Research on cultural and emotional attitudes	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Lecturers/ researchers • Other staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and emotional attitudes • Local identity • Quality of life

Source: Own editing.

- (2) Two focus group interviews were conducted in July 2018 involving 11 participants, including Hungarian and international students, lecturers/researchers, including key decision makers (people in management positions including deans and the rector of the university), with the aim to investigate their willingness to volunteer during the ECoC project and their attitude towards the Campus Ambassador role related to the project.

The current research discusses only the results of the questionnaire survey conducted amongst students.

2020 research on cultural and emotional attitudes

The 2020 research aimed to assess the university communities' cultural and emotional attitudes, local identity and quality of life. In the current paper we focus on the impact of cultural and emotional intelligence on cultural consumption as well as the influence of the emotional intelligence level on the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes, on the student community.

The hypotheses were based on an extensive literature review and previous research results. Concerning EQ and CQ, the discrimination analysis of the two types of intelligence (Lin et al., 2012) proved that the two types of intelligence have very different structures, one incompatible with the other.

Research carried out among Veszprém citizens (Komlósi, 2014) indicated that those who were active members of a special interest group (e.g. sport-, environmental protection club or association) had higher global emotional intelligence scores compared to non-members. Those locals who actively employed and were members of any local community group have the highest emotional intelligence averages globally and also on factor levels (well-being, emotionality, sociability and self-control).

The study carried out in 2018 indicated that the willingness to volunteer among students depends on their mood and the attitudes of their peers. Furthermore, Kruppa-Jakab's (2020) study indicated that local residents who were more interested in the proposed Veszprém-Balaton 2023 ECoC events, were more likely to volunteer as a host in Veszprém-Balaton 2023 ECoC Volunteering and were also more willing to remain volunteers until 2023 and beyond.

Based on the above, the following hypotheses were developed for the quantitative research conducted in 2020:

H1: There is a positive relationship between cultural consumption and the level of cultural intelligence (CQ) of the members of the university communities.

H2: There is a positive, significant correlation between the factors of cultural consumption of members of the university communities and their level of emotional intelligence (EQ).

H3: There is a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of the members of the university communities and the willingness to volunteer.

The current study assesses the hypotheses only in relation to the university students, examining the relationship between their cultural consumption and cultural and emotional intelligence, and the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' willingness to volunteer.

The questionnaire comprised several validated questionnaire blocks, including sections examining cultural consumption clusters, sections measuring cultural intelligence (CQS) and emotional intelligence (TEIQue), and general demographic questions. The questions related to cultural consumption were based on the categories suggested by the Hungarian National Statistical Office. To measure culture intelligence, the 20 statements of the *Cultural Intelligence Scale* (Ang et al., 2007) were used, which was adapted to Hungarian in 2011 (Balogh, 2011) and has the highest face reliability among CQ measurements. For assessing the general emotional intelligence level, as well as four key components of emotional intelligence, which are (1) Emotionality; (2) Sociability; (3) Well-being and (4) Self-control, the 30 statements of the validated TEIQue test were used. According to Anastasi and Urbina (1997), for individual testing the minimum Cronbach alpha accepted for reliability is 0.80. TEIQue has higher convergent and discriminant validity (0.9) and shows the highest correlation with the Giant Three (extraversion, neuroticism and psychometrics) and Big Five (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) which are dimensions used to describe human personality. Furthermore, TEIQue has been proved to have the highest loading with multi-level personality hierarchies and is therefore considered a substitute for general factors of personality (Pérez-González & Sanchez-Ruiz, 2014).

The final survey included 38 question groups and took about 20–25 minutes to complete. The questionnaire was tested with the help of eight volunteers from the student and lecturer/researcher groups, and after making the necessary corrections, the final questionnaire was sent on paper to University of Pannonia lecturers/researchers and other staff, and the online version created in the LimeSurvey platform was distributed to students. The data collection took place between 1st April 2020 and 31st July, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic and digital education, difficulties with data collection meant the number of respondents were lower than expected.

Presentation of the sample

The total responses included 542 individuals (317 students), but the present study only analyses data from respondents who fully completed both EQ and CQ blocks. The valid sample size is 196 student respondents, of whom 28.6% are men and 71.4% were women. The high number of female participants is due to two facts: the representation of female students at the university is more 50%, and the willingness to be involved in the research was also higher in the case of women. 55.6% of the respondents are students (Age = 24.98, min = 19, max = 53, SD = 7.34). It must be noted that part-time and PhD students were included in the sample, which explains the relatively high average age and maximum age as well. It is important to note that the sample is not representative as the research used convenience sampling. Data analysis was performed with SPSS 20 statistical software.

Results

2018 study on willingness to volunteer – before winning the ECoC title

Veszprém was amongst the three cities that were shortlisted in the competition to win the ECoC title for 2023 in February 2023 so another phase of intensive research related to the potential ECoC title was carried out in Veszprém, including the research on how the

university students and university management see their role in the process in the event that Veszprém won the title.

The results of the survey carried out in 2018 amongst the students revealed that 78% of the Hungarian respondents had heard about the ECoC initiative but only 52% were aware that Veszprém was bidding for the title for the year 2023. Interestingly, the international students were far less aware of the initiative (74% has never heard of it), and 78% were not aware that Veszprém was bidding for the ECoC title. Regardless of their nationality, students gained information about the project primarily on Facebook (31%), from friends and relatives and different websites (16% each), and from the Veszprém 2023 official Facebook profile (8%).

One of the key aims of the 2018 study was to assess to what extent the city could rely on the university students as volunteers in case Veszprém won the title. The survey delivered the pleasing result that 56% of the Hungarian and 75% of the international students would be happy to become a Veszprém 2023 volunteer. Those who indicated willingness to volunteer would like to be involved primarily in music events, followed by sporting events, then children's programmes and artistic events.

We also found it important to find out what might hold students back from volunteering, in case training or awareness raising activities in the run-up year can help them to overcome the obstacles. The international students listed the lack of their Hungarian knowledge as the key obstacle, and some of them also referred to their perception of being considered as 'foreigners' as a reason why they would potentially not become volunteers. The Hungarian students indicated the lack of time (family duties, work commitments, living elsewhere) as the main hindering factors. Obviously, we cannot question the truth of their statements, however, blaming lack of time for not volunteering may simply be a convenient excuse for not wanting to volunteer.

As for their motivation, both Hungarian and international students indicated that feeling a useful member of the community would be their primary motivation for volunteering, which is closest to the *enhancement function* where 'the individual is seeking to grow and develop psychologically through involvement in volunteering' based on the categories suggested by Clary et al (1998). International students also added that they have more free time than their Hungarian peers as they do not have their families around them and do not travel home on a regular basis during the term.

2020 research on cultural and emotional attitudes

The research aims to assess the university students' willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes, by trying to unveil their cultural and emotional attitudes that would influence whether they would volunteer and if so, what types of activities would be close to their interests. The first hypothesis assumed a relationship between the consumption of cultural activities and cultural intelligence, whereas the second hypothesis suggests significant correlation between the factors of cultural consumption of students and their level of emotional intelligence (EQ).

Cultural intelligence and cultural consumption

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between factors of cultural consumption and the level of cultural intelligence (CQ) of students.

The quantitative analyses with SPSS Anova indicate a positive relationship between cultural consumption and CQ. The cross-tabulation and correlation analyses indicate that attendance at sporting events, watching TV, surfing the Internet, hobbies, and playing sports are not correlated with CQ levels. The strongest significant relationship was with leisure community activities ($r = .302, p < .01$), attending cultural events ($r = .292, p < .01$), reading ($r = .254, p < .01$) and listening to music ($r = .179, p < .05$).

Examining the individual dimensions of CQ, it can be seen that the frequency of community leisure activities is most strongly related to all the dimensions of CQ and is also most closely related to the total score itself. The Metacognitive dimension has the most connections, the more often someone attends cultural events ($r = .339, p < .01$), and the more time they spend reading, the stronger the cognitive dimension of their cultural intelligence, i.e. the more information they have about other cultures and the more aware they are of their own thought patterns, on the basis of which they make judgments about others in a different cultural situation. Social activities such as leisure programmes ($r = .244, p < .01$), and excursions ($r = .213, p < .01$); as well as listening to music ($r = .162, p < .01$) are weaker but significantly related to the Metacognitive dimension of CQ. A similar pattern can be observed for the Cognitive dimension of CQ, the only difference compared to the Metacognitive dimension is in practising religion, which is also related to the level of the Cognitive dimension ($r = .172, p < .05$). The Behaviour dimension is stronger in the case of those who spend more time with leisure community activities ($r = .302, p < .01$) and reading ($r = .182, p < .05$). The Motivation dimension is related to the frequency of active programmes, and those who indicate higher Motivation CQ spend more time with leisure community activities ($r = .237, p < .01$), attending cultural events ($r = .197, p < .01$) and excursions ($r = .172, p < .05$). Overall CQ shows small and medium strength significant relations to most of the cultural consumption elements.

EQ and culture consumption

H2 suggests: There is a positive, significant correlation between the factors of cultural consumption of students and their level of emotional intelligence (EQ).

The correlation matrix of EQ and its dimensions as well as leisure-related variables are presented as follows. Attending sports events, watching TV and video and hobbies (gardening, pets) show no correlation with the level of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, the higher one's emotional intelligence, the more time one spends in the company of others ($r = .275, p > .01$), playing sports ($r = .219, p < .01$), reading, ($r = .223, p < .05$), hiking ($r = .215, p < .01$) and attending cultural events ($r = .176, p < .05$). Those with high cultural intelligence spend more time on community leisure activities, attending cultural events, reading, listening to music and hiking. If we examine each dimension of emotional intelligence, we can see a different pattern. The frequency of community leisure activities is also significantly related to the Well-being dimension ($r = .341, p < .01$), Emotionality ($r = .238, p < .01$) and Social Propensity ($r = .190$) dimensions. Reading is significantly related to the ability of Self-Control ($r = .265, p < .01$), and listening to music is related to the Dimension of Emotionality ($r = .203, p < .01$). Social inclination as an emotional intelligence factor is also related to excursions and sports ($r = .209, p = .01$, in the case of sports $r = .224, p < .01$) and can be related to community leisure activities ($r = .190, p < .01$), as well as to hobbies ($r = .152, p < .05$).

It can be concluded that within cultural consumption, outdoor activities undertaken in company indicate higher level of relation to EQ than indoor individual activities.

EQ and volunteering

H3: There is a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of students and their willingness to volunteer.

The main aim of the study is to assess the relationship between EQ and willingness to volunteer. Surprisingly, only 27.9% of the students involved in the 2020 study indicated they would participate in the ECoC programmes as volunteers (compared to 56% in the study conducted in 2018). It must be noted that only Hungarian students were involved in the first round of the survey of the 2020 research, and we found during the research that international students have a higher level of willingness to volunteer (75% compared to 56% of the Hungarian students), as well as more free time to undertake volunteering activities, and the culture of volunteering in which Hungary does not have a long tradition yet.

Hypothesis 3 expected a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of students and their willingness to volunteer. The SPSS ANOVA analyses indicated that participants' responses do not show significant correlation with the level of emotional intelligence on a general factorial level. As Table 3 demonstrates, the emotionality and sociability factor means are higher in the case of those respondents who would volunteer, thus with the EQ self-control and well-being factors this is reversed. One of the reasons could be that sociable, expressive and empathetic people are more willing to volunteer.

Regarding the original hypothesis we can conclude that the results do not indicate a significant relationship between EQ and willingness to volunteer as summarised in Table 4.

The rejection of H3 was surprising, as students with higher level of emotional intelligence were expected to show more willingness to volunteer, as was indicated in previous research by Kruppa-Jakab (2020). However, it is an important finding regarding the attitude of students in a university ECOC city, where the ECOC organisation expects to recruit 600 volunteers in 2023. Insights into the willingness of younger people and their motivation can contribute to the planning of the volunteering strategy of the ECOC management.

Conclusion

The two surveys conducted amongst students showed different results regarding the willingness to volunteer in the ECoC programmes, though it has to be acknowledged that the

Table 3. Relationship between willingness to volunteer in cultural events and emotional intelligence factors, comparing volunteers and non-volunteers.

Form of participation in cultural events		EQ_Emotionality	EQ_Self_control	EQ_Well_being	EQ_Sociability
Spectator	Mean	40.00	32.00	42.00	19.00
Volunteer	Mean	43.035	26.12	33.55	27.93

Source: Own editing.

Table 4. Relationship between EQ and volunteering at cultural events.

		ANOVA				
		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
EQ_Emotionality	Between groups	9.105	1	9.105	0.237	.628
	Within groups	3264.895	85	38.411		
	Total	3274.000	86			
EQ_Self_control	Between groups	34.220	1	34.220	1.171	.282
	Within groups	2484.837	85	29.233		
	Total	2519.057	86			
EQ_Well_being	Between groups	70.640	1	70.640	2.077	.153
	Within groups	2891.314	85	34.015		
	Total	2961.954	86			
EQ_Sociability	Between groups	78.832	1	78.832	2.490	.118
	Within groups	2691.581	85	31.666		
	Total	2770.414	86			
EQ_Total	Between groups	84.898	1	84.898	0.214	.645
	Within groups	33,724.849	85	396.763		
	Total	33,809.747	86			

Source: Own editing.

two samples are not fully comparable. The first research conducted in 2018, including both Hungarian and international students, indicated that international students show more willingness to volunteer as they have more time during term time than their Hungarian counterparts who claim to have less free time due to work or family duties. As for their motivation, both Hungarian and international students indicated that feeling a useful member of the community would be their primary motivation for volunteering. Those who indicated willingness to volunteer would like to be involved primarily in music events, followed by sporting events, then children’s programmes and artistic events. The results of the 2020 research involving only Hungarian students indicated a much lower level of willingness to volunteer, which may be explained by the lack of a long tradition of volunteering in Hungary. However, when comparing the responses of Hungarian students participating in the 2018 study with the 2020 survey results, a drop in the willingness level can be observed, which could be a reason for major concern as the aim is to engage Hungarian students as well. The reasons for not wanting to volunteer were not sought in the questionnaire, therefore it is difficult to tell whether the observed reduction in willingness to volunteer is a ‘side effect’ of the pandemic situation or whether other reasons are in the background. It must be noted that some of the students of the University of Pannonia did voluntary work during the first lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hungary, helping people in need with various activities, ranging from doing the shopping for the elderly to helping pupils with their studies during online teaching. The university rewarded such voluntary activities with extra credits. It is hoped though that the volunteer organisations ‘Shine’ and ‘CoolLaunch’ set up for the ECoC project will help to find ways of encouraging students to become volunteers in the ECoC events.

The testing of the hypotheses generated some surprising results. The analysis confirmed the first hypothesis that there is a positive significant relationship between factors of cultural consumption and the level of cultural intelligence (CQ). The strongest significant relationship was detected with leisure community activities, attending cultural events as well as with reading and listening to music. Similarly, the second hypothesis was confirmed: there is a positive, significant correlation between the factors of cultural

consumption of university students and their level of emotional intelligence (EQ). The higher one's emotional intelligence, the more time one spends in the company of others (community leisure activities), with sports, reading, hiking and attending cultural events. Assessing the four dimensions of emotional intelligence, we can observe the following pattern: the frequency of community leisure activities is significantly related to Welfare, Emotionality and Social Propensity; reading is significantly related to the sense of Self-Control; while listening to music is related to the Dimension of Emotionality. Social inclination as an emotional intelligence factor is also related to excursions and sports, and can be related to community leisure activities as well. The assessment of the third hypothesis, looking at the relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to volunteer, surprisingly did not reveal any significant relationship between the two factors.

The rejection of testing H3 may reflect the *limitations of the research*. The questionnaire used in the 2020 research was only available in Hungarian, therefore excluding the international students who showed a higher level of willingness to volunteer in the 2018 survey. Also, the number of respondents who indicated willingness to volunteer was much lower compared to those who show no interest in volunteering, which might have influenced the results as the sample was too small to detect significant relationships. Furthermore, the survey was conducted before the volunteering frameworks 'Shine' and 'CoolLaunch' were set up, therefore the respondents had less (recent) opportunities to volunteer in programmes in the city, so it will be interesting to see if the willingness to volunteer grows now that the opportunities for volunteering are given. Last but not least, another limitation of the research relates to the sample comprising only the students of one university, in one ECoC city.

The research programme on the ECoC will continue with the involvement of international students as well, therefore with higher number of responses more reliable results can be gained, and further analyses can be done comparing the EQ and CQ levels as well as attitudes of Hungarian and international students. The differences found between the Hungarian and international students in the current study suggest potentially interesting avenues for future research. In particular, it would be interesting to study the influence of different national cultures on willingness to volunteer, and compare the relationships between emotional and cultural intelligence and volunteering for different nationalities. This could be particularly interesting for major international events where volunteers are drawn from many different cultures. It would also be interesting to consider how the 'international culture' created by major events such as the ECoC affects this relationship.

With the advance of the ECoC year in 2023 we hope to see a change of attitude among the university students, and to experience the social change they may bring to the city of Veszprém through volunteering. The Veszprém-Balaton ECoC team should aim to engage young people first in programmes close to their interests, which according to the 2018 survey include music festivals, sporting events, children's programmes, and artistic events in the run-up years. If volunteering through the frameworks CoolLaunch and Shine ensures a rewarding experience for the young volunteers, the city can establish a significant volunteer base which may be sufficient to serve the increased demand in the ECoC year, and potentially in the years beyond 2023. Besides the tangible benefits for the

ECoC programme, engaging younger generations in cultural programmes may serve as audience development as well, which is usually a key issue on the cultural agenda of event organisers. Furthermore, engagement in cultural and other programmes can enhance the quality of life of younger people (including university students) well as their attachment to the city where they live and/or study.

The key contribution of the paper can be seen in the demonstration of what can motivate university students to undertake volunteering activities, and how emotional and cultural intelligence can impact on their cultural consumption.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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8. Appendix – Co-author statements

Társszerzői nyilatkozat (PE GSDI habilitációs pályázathoz)

A Pannon Egyetemen gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudományokban indított habilitációs eljáráshoz alulírott, **Dr. Bogdány Eszter**, mint társszerző kijelentem, hogy a **Dr. Raffay-Danyi Ágnes kérelmező** habilitációs téziseiben új tudományos eredményként bemutatott – közösen publikált – eredmények elérésében a kérelmezőnek meghatározó szerepe volt, ezért ezeket a dr. habil cím megszerzését célzó minősítési eljárásban mint saját új tudományos eredményeket használhatja fel.

Dátum: 2025. 11. 24.

A társszerző aláírása:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bogdány Eszter', written over a dotted line.

A közös publikáció adatai: Bogdány, Eszter; Cserhádi, Gabriella; Raffay-Danyi, Ágnes:

A proposed methodology for mapping and ranking competencies that HRM graduates need, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION 21 (2023) 100789, 12 p. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2023.100789>

Társszerzői nyilatkozat (PE GSDI habilitációs pályázathoz)

A Pannon Egyetemen gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudományokban indított habilitációs eljáráshoz alulírott, **Dr. Cserháti Gabriella**, mint társszerző kijelentem, hogy a **Dr. Raffay-Danyi Ágnes kérelmező** habilitációs téziseiben új tudományos eredményként bemutatott – közösen publikált – eredmények elérésében a kérelmezőnek meghatározó szerepe volt, ezért ezeket a dr. habil cím megszerzését célzó minősítési eljárásban mint saját új tudományos eredményeket használhatja fel.

Dátum: *Veszprém, 2025. 11. 24.*

A társszerző aláírása:

Dr. Cserháti Gabriella

A közös publikáció adatai: Bogdány, Eszter; Cserháti, Gabriella; Raffay-Danyi, Ágnes:

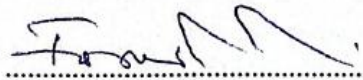
A proposed methodology for mapping and ranking competencies that HRM graduates need, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION 21 (2023) 100789, 12 p. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2023.100789>

Társszerzői nyilatkozat (PE GSDI habilitációs pályázathoz)

A Pannon Egyetemen gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudományokban indított habilitációs eljáráshoz alulírott, **Dr. Formádi Katalin**, mint társszerző kijelentem, hogy a **Dr. Raffay-Danyi Ágnes kérelmező** habilitációs téziseiben új tudományos eredményként bemutatott – közösen publikált – eredmények elérésében a kérelmezőnek meghatározó szerepe volt, ezért ezeket a dr. habil cím megszerzését célzó minősítési eljárásban mint saját új tudományos eredményeket használhatja fel.

Dátum: 2025.11.25.

A társszerző aláírása:



A közös publikáció adatai: Raffay-Danyi, Ágnes; Formádi, Katalin:

Are we there yet? An analysis of visitor attitudes towards sustainability awareness raising initiatives, SOCIETY AND ECONOMY 44 (1) (2022), pp 102–118 DOI: 10.1556/204.2022.00003

Társszerzői nyilatkozat (PE GSDI habilitációs pályázathoz)

A Pannon Egyetemen gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudományokban indított habilitációs eljáráshoz alulírott, **Dr. Kővári Edit**, mint társszerző kijelentem, hogy a **Dr. Raffay-Danyi Ágnes** **kérelmező** habilitációs téziseiben új tudományos eredményként bemutatott – közösen publikált – eredmények elérésében a kérelmezőnek meghatározó szerepe volt, ezért ezeket a dr. habil cím megszerzését célzó minősítési eljárásban mint saját új tudományos eredményeket használhatja fel.

Dátum: 2025. 11. 24

A társszerző aláírása:



A közös publikáció adatai: Kővári, Edit; Raffay-Danyi, Ágnes:

Can festivals bring social change in an ECoC city? Emotional intelligence and willingness to volunteer among university students, JOURNAL OF POLICY RESEARCH IN TOURISM, LEISURE AND EVENTS 14:3, pp. 279-295, (2023)
DOI:10.1080/19407963.2022.2087663