

## Risk Management for Events and Festivals

Alexandrina Tenu<sup>1</sup>, Carmen Nadia Ciocoiu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bucharest University of Economic Studies, [tenu.alexandrina@yahoo.ro](mailto:tenu.alexandrina@yahoo.ro)

<sup>2</sup> Bucharest University of Economic Studies, [nadia.ciocoiu@man.ase.ro](mailto:nadia.ciocoiu@man.ase.ro)

**Abstract:** *The impact and probability of event and festivals risks has increased for several years. Also, the risk management in the event industry has an increasingly important role. Starting from these evolutions, the purpose of this research is to analyze the current situation of risk management in the festival industry and the most important risks faced by festival organizers. There are analyzed the risk management stages specific to the events and festivals industry. Also, there are presented the categories of risks that can be used in the event industry, types of risks whose probability has increased in recent years and new ways to reduce them, as well as a comparative approach between examples of good practice in the field and festivals in Romania. The results may be useful for festivals and events risk managers as well as for researchers in the field.*

**Keywords:** *event, festival, risk management.*

# Risk Management for Events and Festivals

Alexandrina Tenu, Carmen Nadia Ciocoiu

Bucharest University of Economic Studies

## I. Introduction

For the economic development of a country, it is important that the industries which had emerged in recent years should develop both nationally and locally. One of the industries of the future is the industry of events and festivals. The economic and social impact of festivals and events has been growing more pronounced in recent years. Profitable businesses have been built in Central and Western Europe, as well as in the U.S, businesses that are based on electronic music festivals. An example is the Coachella Festival, which in 2016 had an income of 704 million \$. 106 million \$ of that money was invested in the area where the festival is organized, and 3.18 million \$ came to the local budget just from the fees charged for tickets<sup>1</sup>.

In Romania, the festival industry is in development, but there are some major festivals that are known: Untold, Neversea or Electric Castle. The festival with the greatest impact on the community is the Untold Festival which is organized annually since 2015 in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Untold recorded over 20 million dollars for each edition<sup>2</sup>, and the allocated budget and earnings increased from year to year. Untold's role for the local economy is increasingly important and part of this money is redirected to the local budget. Even the industry of events and festivals is profitable, it involves a lot of risks at the project level and at the participants' level.

Starting from examples of good practice in other countries and taking into account that in recent years the number of festivals in Romania has increased, it is considered that a detailed study of what risk management involves in events and festivals can be useful for organizers, local communities and participants. It should be noted that the number of researches in the field that deal with the subject in the context of Romania is relatively small. Most studies focus on the economic or social impact of festivals and less on specific aspects of risk management. This is one more reason to realize a study about risk management for events and festivals, because it can be used as a starting point for other research.

The first part of the study presents the stage of research on risk management for events and festivals. There are presented the defining characteristics of event and

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<sup>1</sup> R. Faughnder, "Coachella by the numbers: a breakdown of the festival's \$700-million impact," *Los Angeles Times*, 2016.  
<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/cotown/la-et-ct-coachella-economy-by-the-numbers-20160420-story.html>

<sup>2</sup> R. Florescu, *Câte milioane de euro au cheltuit spectatorii la Untold Festival*, 2016.  
[http://adevarul.ro/locale/cluj-napoca/cate-milioane-euro-cheltuit-spectatorii-untold-festival-zece-beri-media-zilnica-meloman-1\\_57a89a4e5ab6550cb8949cb9/index.html](http://adevarul.ro/locale/cluj-napoca/cate-milioane-euro-cheltuit-spectatorii-untold-festival-zece-beri-media-zilnica-meloman-1_57a89a4e5ab6550cb8949cb9/index.html)

festival concepts, the types of events and festivals and the importance of studying them, the specific aspects of risk management in events and festivals and the specific risk categories. The second part presents the risk management for international events and festivals, and the third part presents the current situation in Romania. The study concludes with a set of conclusions about current situation of risk management for events and festivals and with a series of recommendations to improve it.

## II. The stage of research on risk management for events and festivals

The industry of events and festivals has grown considerably over the past decades. Local concerts, international music and film festivals, national festivals, sports events are just a few types of projects that have appeared on the market. Besides the economic importance and the financial and social benefits that events and festivals have, these involve many risks. The risks involved in project-related events organized under pre-established terms and conditions are a topic that has been increasingly debated lately. To maximize the probability of achieving predefined results, it is necessary to have a risk management appropriate to the context of the event or festival. The specialized literature proposes different models of risk management for events and festivals; the differences are the analysed risks, as are the common causes<sup>3 4</sup>.

### 1. Main features of events and festivals

Apparently similar, the terms of event and festival are treated differently in the specialty literature. There are authors who consider that the term "event" is synonymous with the term "festival", or that the first includes the second<sup>5</sup> and authors who consider that there is a difference between them at the level of periodicity or duration.<sup>6</sup>

Supporters of the first approach consider that events are phenomena that satisfy people's needs such as the need to celebrate, to spend their free time or to mark the importance of a fact by organizing a ceremony.<sup>7</sup> The main element that we could deduce from this definition is the need to satisfy a need. To complete the first definition, we can use the explanation provided by Silvers in his research "Risk Management for Meetings and Events,"<sup>8</sup> where the author says that events or festivals are phenomena where many people gather in a pre-set place to participate in planned activities. Thus, in addition to the primary need that lead people to participate in an event, we note that two other defining elements are mentioned: place

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<sup>3</sup> P., E. Tarlow, *Event Risk Management and Safety* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> D. Getz, "Event tourism: Definition, evolution, and research," *Tourism Management* 29 (2008): 403-428.

<sup>6</sup> H. Irshad, *Impacts of community events and festivals on rural places* (Alberta: Government of Alberta, 2011); J.M.H. Mogollón, J.A.F. Fernandez, P.A.O. Duarte, "Event Tourism Analysis and State of the Art," *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation* 5:2 (2014): 83-102.

<sup>7</sup> I. Yeoman, M. Robertson, J. Ali-Knight, *Festivals and Events Management. An international arts and culture perspective* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).

and planning activity. In this case, events must not have a continuity or a unique location. A meeting of a group of people planned in a determined day and in a determined place can be considered an event.

Contrary to the first approach, the supporters of the second approach consider that the festival is a phenomenon that happens every year during the same period and involves various types of entertainment activities: film, music, dance, etc.<sup>9</sup>. At the same time, the event is considered to be a phenomenon that does not have a certain continuity, and even it can be organized several times, it does not take place at the same location, at exact times, generally has a shorter duration<sup>10</sup> and may involve limited access.<sup>11</sup> Combining both approaches, we can say that the main features of a festival are: time delimitation, having a start date and an ending one,<sup>12</sup> the distinct location, involves the planning activity, involves the simultaneous execution of several types of activities, and they have an open character. Anyone can attend in a festival if they meet the conditions of access, such as the purchase of an entry ticket.<sup>13</sup>

Although the ephemeral character of both terms can be recognized,<sup>14</sup> because the event and the festival runs over a short period of time, we consider that a clear distinction should be made between these two terms and that the second approach is better to be used in the context of risk management.

## 2. Types of events and festivals and the importance of studying them

Studying events and festivals is important especially if we analyse the impact of these projects on the local economy and on the social-cultural development. Knowing the types of existing events is also useful for risk management; depending on the event - certain risks can be identified, risk management strategies can be applied, and stakeholders can be identified.

In her research on the event management industry, Silvers<sup>15</sup> divides the events into several categories. The author mentions nine types of events, including business events (e.g.: Gala Business Days), civic events (e.g.: participatory governance meetings), case-related events and organized fundraising (e.g.: Swimathon, Timotion), expositions and fairs (eg: Universities Fair, Comic Con), meetings and conventions (e.g.: annual meetings in corporations, conventions at the level of the European Union), entertainment and leisure events (eg occasional concerts), social and cyclical

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<sup>9</sup> H. Irshad, *Impacts of community events and festivals on rural places* (Alberta: Government of Alberta, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> H. Irshad, *Impacts of community events and festivals on rural places* (Alberta: Government of Alberta, 2011); J.M.H. Mogollón, J.A.F. Fernandez, P.A.O. Duarte, "Event Tourism Analysis and State of the Art," *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation* 5:2 (2014): 83-102.

<sup>11</sup> A-M Hjalager, G. Kwiatkowski, "Entrepreneurial implications, prospects and dilemmas in rural festivals," *Journal of rural studies* (2017): 1-12.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>14</sup> I. Yeoman, M. Robertson, J. Ali-Knight, *Festivals and Events Management. An international arts and culture perspective* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).

events (e.g.: The Bucharest Marathon), festivals (eg Untold, Electric Castle), sporting events (e.g. Olympic Games, European Cup)<sup>16</sup>. In this case the festivals are considered a distinct type of event, and the typology was created according to the type of dominant activities of the events. For risk management such typology can be useful when we talk about the types of encountered risks and ways to treat them. For example, for a sports event we will identify risks related to the security and safety of the participants,<sup>17</sup> risks that can also be identified and used for a music festival that runs on an arena and involves a large number of participants.<sup>18</sup>

Another typology is offered by Andersson and Getz,<sup>19</sup> where festivals are classified according to the type of organizer. There are mentioned: public events and festivals organized by public entities, private events and festivals organized by private agencies and non-profit events and festivals organized by associations, foundations and federations<sup>20</sup>. Although the authors do not mention a fourth category, they recognize the possibility of partnerships between the three entities. We could consider a fourth category - hybrid events and festivals. For risk management such typology is very useful, because the risk managers vary according to the type of organizer. A special case are the hybrid events and festivals where the responsibility for the existing risks is divided according to the contribution of each stakeholder. An example is the Untold Festival - 1st edition, which was organized by the Mayor's Institution of Cluj - a public entity, in partnership with a non-governmental organization - Share Federation. (according to "Financial Report of the Share Federation", 2016).

A third typology of events and festivals is provided by Muller,<sup>21</sup> which classifies the events into three categories: major events, mega-events and giga-events. Framing is based on cost, number of participants, coverage and impact on the environment and population. The author also creates a scale according to which he puts the most famous events of the world on different categories. He mentions that the Olympic Games can be considered a gig-event, the European Cup is a mega-event, and the events like European Culture Capitals or the European Youth Capitals are major events<sup>22</sup>. Considering that festivals are part of the events, we can say that the Untold festival is in the third category. Knowing the type of an event that is organized according to the Muller's typology, can be useful in the risk management process. If we want to make a classification in these three categories we must know certain series

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<sup>16</sup> J. R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> M. Muller, "What makes an event a mega-event? Definitions and sizes," *Leisure Studies* (2015): 627-642.

<sup>18</sup> P. E. Tarlow, *Event Risk Management and Safety* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002); J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> T. D. Andersson, D. Getz, "Tourism as a mixed industry: Differences between private, public and non-profit festivals," *Tourism Management* 30 (2019): 847-856.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>21</sup> M. Muller, "What makes an event a mega-event? Definitions and sizes," *Leisure Studies* (2015): 627-642.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem.

of data such as the number of participants, the budget, or the cost allocation and based on those data we can identify risks associated with the planned activities.

### 3. Specific issues of risk management for events and festivals

When we talk about risks, we understand a condition or phenomenon from the future, of which we are not sure it will appear, but if it becomes certain, it can have positive or negative impact.<sup>23</sup> This definition is one that can also be used for projects that have as result a festival or an event. As in most projects is, the risks involved in a festival affect the purpose, costs, time and quality of the project. Risk Management it's about good management meeting the deadlines imposed by those four. In the literature it is mentioned that the risks that affect the time are mainly found before the festival, as well as the risks related to the costs, as a rule, because of the poor risk management during the festival.<sup>24</sup> Most of the risks that affect quality are noticed during the festival when safety and security of the participants can be affected.<sup>25</sup> The risks related to the goal do not present a certain rule in terms of probability of occurrence.

#### 3.1. Phases of risk management specific to events and festivals industry

There are several opinions in the literature about the phases of risk management. For example, PMBoK mentions six general processes that any risk management involves: planning, identifying, quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis, developing responses and risk controlling<sup>26</sup>. Each step involves a focus on specific components of a project. Another example is the one offered by the PRAM guide, which mentions the stages of: definition, analysis and risk management.<sup>27</sup> Even they are different by number, both variants actually involve the same steps.

In the first part, planning or defining, we analyze how risk management will be performed and take into account all the important factors for an efficient process. Here we establish risk management objectives, roles and responsibilities of the risk team, as well as any.<sup>28</sup>

For good risk management, it's important to know all the stakeholders that are involved in organizing and running the festival. According to the literature, they can be: the management team and the technical team, the project manager, the sponsor, the client<sup>29</sup> the representatives of the administrative-territorial units where the festival run, the local police, the involved insurance companies, the partners of the event, the

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<sup>23</sup> PMI. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBok Guide)* Fifth edition (Pennsylvania: Project Management Institute, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> P. E. Tarlow, *Event Risk Management and Safety* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>26</sup> PMI. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBok Guide)* Fifth edition (Pennsylvania: Project Management Institute, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> C.N. Ciocoiu, *Managementul Riscului. O abordare Integrată* (Bucharest: Editura ASE, 2014).

<sup>28</sup> PMI. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBok Guide)* Fifth edition (Pennsylvania: Project Management Institute, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

representatives of the media<sup>30</sup> emergency service, the involved security firm and volunteers.<sup>31</sup> For each stakeholder we can assign possible risks. For example, the risk of not obtaining licenses for concerts can be correlated with the stakeholder - representatives of the local public administration. Risk management for events and festivals should be seen in conjunction with stakeholder management.

The planning phase ends with a risk management plan, which contains the risk management objectives as well as the project objectives, the team involved in the risk management process, mentioning the roles and responsibilities, the risk documentation part, the activities that risk management team have to do, including how to monitor and assess risks<sup>32</sup>. The risk management plan also includes the modalities of probability and impact measurement and scales used as well as the planning of response and risk response measures.<sup>33</sup>

At the risk identification stage, all the risks that may occur during the project are actually found. The identification phase corresponds to the project definition phase proposed by the PRAM guide. For the events and festivals industry, the number of risks is very high, from risks related to the project management to risks that may appear during the event or festival. The identification process involves creating a list of risks as well as their classification and description.<sup>34</sup> For good risk management, it is important to create a risk classification with which we will work or take one from the specialty literature. Such classification is presented in the next chapter.

In the risk analysis phases, the probabilities and impacts of previously identified risks are determined.<sup>35</sup> The scales established in the previous stages are used. For the festivals industry this stage, above all, involves taking into account previous experiences. Once realized, a festival can be the source of information for next editions. At the same time, in the process of risk analysis, it's necessary to take into account the socio-political context where the festival run, because depending on it some risks may be manifested with a higher probability. An example is the Coachella festival and the risk of terrorist attacks that have increased in recent years, which is why organizers have adopted new risk response measures and improved the monitoring process.<sup>36</sup>

After quantitative and qualitative risk analysis is the stage of finding solutions and answers for identified and analysed risks. As we can see from the example of the Coachella Festival, response measures are correlated with the probability of risk and the impact that risk may have.

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<sup>30</sup> P. E. Tarlow, *Event Risk Management and Safety* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).

<sup>32</sup> C.N. Ciocoiu, *Managementul Riscului. O abordare Integrată* (Bucharest: Editura ASE, 2014).

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>34</sup> PMI. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBok Guide)* Fifth edition (Pennsylvania: Project Management Institute, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>36</sup> B. Fessier, *Coachella using drones, security plans enacted after 9/11 to prevent Las Vegas-type incident*, 2018. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/music/2018/04/13/coachella-drones-security-plans/513940002/>.

The latest stage of risk management for events and festivals is the risk control and monitoring. This stage is important because at this stage there may be a need to update the risk management plan, which means that certain risks with low probabilities before, as a result of certain changes in the context of the project, are with a higher one, now. For the successful completion of the project and the good running of the festival, the risks need to be monitored continuously and the control process should be carried out in accordance with the required criteria.

### 3.2. Risk categories specific to the event and festivals industry

Risk categories of the events differs depending on the type of event. If we talk about a sport event there will be risks that involve the health and safety of athletes, risks that can be found in the festivals industry, at the level of artists, but with a lower rate of occurrence. As an example, at the Summer Olympics in the summer of 2010, there were 287 accidents, reported by a total of 2567 athletes.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, the number of accidents occurring at the level of a festival and involving artists is lower, which is why the risk management of a festival doesn't involve a distinct category related health and safety of performers.

Following the analysis of the research in the field, seven categories of risks have been identified that can be applied at any festival level, regardless of its type<sup>38</sup>:

- Administrative risks. This category includes the risks of the system management, time management, human resources, or procurement management. One example might be the lack of a minimum number of volunteers.
- Financial risks. Even if most authors classify financial risks as a sub-category of administrative risks, we believe that their impact is considerable, especially in the context of the event industry that is still in development in Romania. That's the reason they should be treated individually. An example of this may be the small amount of co-financing from partners.
- Marketing risks. Researchers include in this category the risks associated with sales, promotion and sponsorship. The risks of poor promotion or the adoption of a promotion inappropriate to the nature of the festival as well as.
- Institutional risks. This category needs to be included, especially for private and non-profit festivals. At their level there may be risks related to the obtaining of all licenses for running and performing concerts and entertainment activities. For example, for the Untold Festival, which runs in the centre of Cluj-Napoca, institutional risks may arise due to the impossibility of obtaining local government permits or obtaining them late.
- Risks related to mass management. In this category are included risks related to the comfort of participants as well as risks related to mass control. The risk

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<sup>37</sup> C. Watura, C. Barton, N. Webborn, N. Maffulli, D. Morrissey, "Sports Injuries at Olympics: a review of incidence related data from past games and the implications for future multi-sport events." *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 47:17 (2013).

<sup>38</sup> P.E. Tarlow, *Event Risk Management and Safety* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002); J.R. Silvers, *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Burlington: Elsevier, 2008).



of a small number of hygiene units and the risk of poor communication with the participants before, during and after festival are good examples for this category. These factors can lead to a loss of organizers reputation.

- Safety and security risks. The two terms are differentiated by the source of the risk or the factor that affects human life. Safety refers to the risks caused by non-human factors, while security refers to the risks caused by factors directly related to the humans<sup>39</sup>. Specialists include in this category all the risks that are caused by the inability to maintain safety during the festival: natural risks - earthquakes, unfavourable meteorological conditions, as well as those related to the human factor - fires, acts of terrorism.
- Other risks. This category may include risks that cannot be associated with the first 6 categories, such as the risks associated with bad site management or the risks that may arise due to changes in the mega and giga events market as well as risks arising from natural causes or adverse weather conditions.

As we mentioned, these categories can be modified, completed or combined, depending on the specificity of each festival and the context of it.

### **III. Risk management for international events and festivals**

In European countries, as well as on the two American continents, there are numerous festivals that have been popularized around the world. Oktoberfest, Burning Man, Carnival, La Tomatina, Coachella, Tomorrowland are just some of the most famous names of festivals organized around the world. Each has its own specificity, a clearly defined organization period and is remarked by the exclusive events that are organized at the project level. In order to improve the risk management experience in the Romanian events and festivals industry and, implicitly, to increase efficiency and performance in this field, it is useful to analyse the projects that can be considered examples of good practice. When we talk about examples of good practice for risk management for festivals, we are talking about how some organizers have managed the risks in those seven risk categories that are specific for this industry. Examples of good practice can be exemplified by how the organizers of the biggest festivals in the world manage the risks from seven categories: administrative risks, financial risks, marketing risks, institutional risks, mass-management risks, risks related to safety and security and other risks. Two examples of good practice are the Coachella festival and the Tomorrowland festival. The examples were chosen based on the similarity between these two and the Untold festival organized in Cluj-Napoca, the largest and most internationally recognized festival in Romania. Similar criteria refer to the type of festival, its specificity and its activities.

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<sup>39</sup> R. Prins, B. Van der Berg, *Security & Safety Challenges in a Globalized World* (Leiden: Universiteit Leiden, 2018).

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/security-safety-globalized-world/lecture/VXD42/what-is-safety-and-security>.

## 1. Examples of Good Practice for Marketing Risks

One of the most important stages in the festival projects organized under the pre-established terms and conditions is the promotion<sup>40</sup>. All the risks from the marketing risks category corresponds to this stage. The risk of poor promotion will mean a small number of participants and, implicitly, the failure to achieve the goal about a certain profit. In the case of festivals, the promotion can be done in several ways, but the one with the highest impact is online promotion<sup>41</sup>.

According to a survey conducted on a sample of 5000 participants at different festivals, 83% of respondents choose to go to a festival or not according to the recommendations they receive<sup>42</sup>. Social media and indirect promotion methods: Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and other social networks play an important role in achieving the goal of the number of predicted participants.

Giga festivals such as Coachella or Tomorrowland have a clearly defined strategy for promotion. Promotion plans are related to risk management and involve strategies to reduce the impact or the probability of poor promotion risks. For example, the Coachella festival organizers, alongside the artists who played during the 10 days of the festival, have allocated budgets to pay celebrities to be participants<sup>43</sup>. Contractual clauses in these cases involve the presence of the celebrity, an exact number of pictures posted by it on a social network, as well as other promotional activities.

Contracting the online influencers online is a recognized practice in the festivals industry and has as the effect a better promotion of the festival. An influencer chosen according to the niche for which the product is sold will have far better results than just a commercial spot on a television<sup>44</sup>. Promoting festivals with online influencers is a widely used practice, including on festivals like Coachella, Tomorrowland, Burning Man or Lollapalooza. For festivals in Romania, this practice is less common, and promotion is still being done with posters, billboards and advertisements. The Romanian festivals are further supported by classic promotion methods. We believe that if we want to increase the importance and role of the event industry in the economy it is necessary for the organizers to use new promotion methods, especially if it's intended to promote festivals outside the country.

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<sup>40</sup> J. Orchard, "Risk management considerations for ultra-endurance events and solo attempts," *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport* 15:1 (2012): S155.

<sup>41</sup> Eventbrite, *6 Simple Tricks for Increasing Your Event Ticket Sales*, 2016.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/blog/6-tricks-for-increasing-your-ticket-sales-ds00/>

<sup>42</sup> Eventbrite, *Festival Trends by the Numbers: 7 Stats to Know*, 2016.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/blog/festival-trends-by-the-numbers-7-stats-to-know-ds00/>.

<sup>43</sup> L. Rothman, *Celebrities Are Getting Paid to Go to Coachella*, 2014. <http://time.com/52404/coachella-pays-celebrities/>

<sup>44</sup> The Wharton School, *A New Marketing Royalty: Why Digital Influencers Are on the Rise* (Pennsylvania: University of Wharton, 2017).

<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/new-marketing-royalty-rise-digital-influencers/>.

## *2. Examples of good practice for risks related to safety and security of the participants*

Another category of risks is maintaining the safety and security of the participants. As we mentioned, safety and security refers to risks that may affect the health of participants and can be caused by the human factors and non-human factors. For big festivals, the risks from this category are strictly managed.

In the last 3 years, there have been 7 acts of terrorism during music festivals or individual concerts. The number of participants affected by these attacks ranged from 22 to 130 - deaths and from 39 to 368 people - physical injuries<sup>45</sup>. The increased probability of terrorist attacks and the very high impact of terrorist attacks have made the festival organizers pay special attention to its management.

To minimize the probability of occurrence, Coachella and Tomorrowland organizers have implemented during the years several plans and strategies in order to combat acts of terrorism, plans to prevent and reduce violent acts on the festival, emergency response and evacuation plans, access regulations for participants, as well as a series of targeted measures such as preventive campaigns that encourage participants to comply with access rules and inform on the actions to be taken in case of necessity. For example, Coachella's 19th edition organizers use a general plan to ensure safety and security in the project.<sup>46</sup> The plan details the methods of monitoring the activities during the festival, how to act and intervene and the access criteria for the festival.<sup>47</sup> Besides the classical methods of ensuring the safety and security of the participants, the organizers also came up with new monitoring methods - drones that fly above the entire perimeter where the festival is located, as well as in its neighbouring areas.<sup>48</sup> The security and safety plan of Coachella also involves guards who own automatic firearms as well as camouflaged firearms.<sup>49</sup> Coachella's organizers have increased security measures and are trying to respond to the high probability of safety and security risk, which has increased lately as a result of numerous acts of terrorism and violence on music festivals. We believe that the improving of the measures related to monitoring the situation and increasing attendance and observation are welcome actions in the current context of risk management in festivals.

Like the organizers of the Coachella festival, the organizers of the Tomorrowland festival have plans and strategies to maintain the security and safety of participants and artists. Moreover, Tomorrowland organizers publish annually a set of constantly updated rules addressed to the participants. Besides classical methods of ensuring the safety and security of the participants, the Tomorrowland's organizers collaborate not only with the local police but also with the Belgian Federal Police, which offers

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.iq-mag.net/2017/05/timeline-attacks-live-music-manchester-bombing/>.

<sup>46</sup> B. Fessier, *Coachella using drones, security plans enacted after 9/11 to prevent Las Vegas-type incident*, 2018. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/music/2018/04/13/coachella-drones-security-plans/513940002/>.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*.

them the possibility to increase the safety and security level during the festival, as well as after it.<sup>50</sup>

Unlike the examples from outside, in Romania, when we talk about risks related to the security and safety of the participants during festivals, the methods used are only the classic ones: verification at the entrance to the festival, partial supervision with the help of the cameras and the guards responsible for the insurance and maintaining order. Based on history, we believe that for the time being, the probability of emerging risks related to terrorism acts in Romania is lower compared to Central, North and West Europe. Meanwhile, in case of risk, organizers of a festival in Romania will not be able to combat this risk, to prevent or minimize the impact because the risk responses are not that efficient. The situation is also similar for cases of violence, theft or disaster that are independent of the human factor.

### *3. Examples of good practice for mass management risks*

Partially correlated with security and safety risks of the participants, the risks related to mass management can have as serious consequences as the previous category, which is why they are treated with great care by the organizers of the biggest festivals in the world. As we mentioned, the risks related to mass management involve risks such as: the small number of hygiene units, inadequate signage at the festival, poor communication with the participants during, before and after the festival.

For Coachella, the mass management risks are effectively managed by risk managers. There are guides for the public, urgent evacuation plans, quality assurance criteria and good communication criteria. Among the guides offered to the public include guide to festival access, accommodation guide, travel guide, guide for car drivers. In terms of good communication with the participants during the festival, Coachella organizers use direction indicators, information boards, informative points with specialized personnel, festival site, a dedicated chat site between participants - Reddit and audio ads made by the responsible staff. The organizers of the festival created an area of informative panels located on the edges of the perimeter where the festival is located and inside the location are direction indicators.

For quality assurance, Coachella organizers take into account any needs that participants may have, as well as the special needs of participants with disabilities, pet owners or people intolerant to certain foods. For locomotory disabled people are provided help services and information guides about how to access the festival, the accommodation area, the parking area, etc. We can say that the Coachella project team has provided response measures for a wide range of risks related to the mass management and has reduced the probability and impact of the risks.

Similar to the Coachella Festival, Tomorrowland's project management team offers a set of answers to the risks of mass management. For example, they have created information guides for participants about how to access the location, rules and recommendations during the festival and others (named „Practical”). The level

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<sup>50</sup> Tomorrowland. *Rules & Regulations*, 2018.

<https://www.tomorrowland.com/en/festival/practical/rules-regulations>.

of communication with the participants is lower than at the previous festival, the communications on the location are summed up with fewer informative guides, but a website dedicated to the discussions between the participants, in Tomorrowland, does not exist.

#### *4. Examples of good practice for administrative and financial risks*

In the literature, these two categories of risk are treated together, because financial risks are a subclass for administrative risks category. We thought that these two groups should be treated separately, especially for smaller festivals, such as those in Romania. The reasons for this may lie in the age of the festivals, their size, the number of participants, and the revenue they produce. But when we talk about examples of good practice, they need to be considered together.

For international festivals such as Coachella and Tomorrowland, the administrative risks like a small number of volunteers, of technical staff or of administrative staff are likely to be much lower compared to small festivals that are only on a second or a third edition. Moreover, the allocated budgets for the involved staff, which is considerably higher, and the experience gained from participating in the organizing of a festival can lead to an increased number of people willing to work and to volunteer. We can say that with the increase of the festival and the popularity of the name it has, the probability of certain administrative risks decreases.

The situation is similar for financial risks. Starting from the specifics of the festivals, the financiers and partners willing to get involved in big projects are more than for smaller festivals, such as the Untold Festival.

#### *5. Examples of good practice for institutional risks*

As we mentioned in the previous section, this category of risks is specific, especially, for the festivals that runs in the centre of the territorial administrative units. Also, starting from the level of public administration development in Romania and the high degree of bureaucracy that exists compared to other countries in Europe or in USA, we can say that the probability of institutional risks for the Romanian festivals is higher than it could be for big festivals such as Tomorrowland or Coachella.

The Coachella Festival runs annually in the Coachella Valley desert in California. The risks involved in a city festival, such as a public peace disorder, do not exist. Also, the risks involved in obtaining operating licenses from the local government are in a smaller number compared to a festival that runs in a city. The main risks of the institutional risks category are the provision of firefighters, medical assistance and police during the festival. Because of location, there is a risk that the involvement of authorities may take longer. That is why any edition of the Coachella festival runs under the supervision of police officers, doctors and firemen who are present at the festival.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> R. Winton, *Coachella 2018: Police using drone army for security*, 2018. <https://gulfnews.com/life-style/music/coachella-2018-police-using-drone-army-for-security-1.2205671>.

In the case of the Tomorrowland festival, which runs annually in De Schorre Province, Boom in Belgium, the risks of obtaining permits are more likely to occur. At the same time, the actual location is not in the city, but it's in the park, which reduces the risk of noise pollution or public peace disruption. We also notice that for this category of risks, the organizers of festivals manage to provide adequate response measures and to avoid the risks or to reduce their impact.

To increase efficiency, quality and, implicitly, to increase the profit obtained from festivals, Romanian companies from the field could use the examples of good practice mentioned above. The risk response adopted by the organizers of the biggest festivals in the world can also be useful for festivals in Romania, with the indication that they should be adapted to the local context.

#### **IV. Risk management for events and festivals in Romania**

In Romania, the industry of events and festivals is on the rise. At present there are many festivals that runs annually and have gone beyond the national level and are also known outside the country. Among the festivals in Romania we can name: Untold that runs in the city of Cluj-Napoca, Summer Well from Știrbei Domain Buftea, Electric from Bonțida, Cluj county, Gârna Jazz Festival in Caras-Severin, Neversea on the seaside in Constanta and others. Competition in industry is manifested at these festivals as well as at the level of festivals in the rest of Eastern Europe. For example, the Untold Festival, alongside of leading competitors such as Electric Castle or Jazz in the Park, competes with other festivals in neighboring countries, such as the Sziget Festival, which takes place annually in Budapest. Sziget Festival has been organizing since 1993, has several editions behind, and has managed to achieve significantly higher turnover than Untold<sup>52</sup>. We can consider it the main competitor of the Untold Festival.

Starting from the growing competition, the level of quality of a festival must be in line with the expectations of the participants and the quality can be ensured by adequate risk management.

It is important for festival organizers in Romania to pay greater attention to all risk categories. The practice involving the insurance contracts, that is, actually, the transfer of risks is not enough. It's required to implement new response measures to mitigate the probability or impact, measures that are in line with new technologies and the new risks that may arise.

An important aspect of the Romanian situation regarding risk management is cooperation and coordination with local authorities. For example, if a festival runs in an administrative-territorial unit, it's necessary for local authorities to take into account the risks involved in such activity and to analyse them and to find risk response measures. The measures must be easily found in the local risk analysis and coverage plan.

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<sup>52</sup> G. Mulholland, *Sziget festival: in search of Europe's fields of dreams*, 2011.

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2011/may/12/sziget-festival-european-festivals>.

Unfortunately, in Romania there is a strong need for cooperation between the Local Public Administration and the private agencies that organize festivals. For example, the largest festival on the Romanian coast - Neversea, is not mentioned in the local risk plan as a factor of local development, nor as a factor favouring the development of tourism in Constanta nor as a risk factor that must be treated independently. Although the first edition of Neversea Festival brought 155.000 tourists in the three days of the festival<sup>53</sup> at first edition, the administration did not take into account the risks that this number implies, nor did it consider that the festival, once realized, should be treated as a factor of local economic development. In Cluj-Napoca the authorities have begun to recognize the events and festivals industry an independent one, that should be treated independently by the tourism industry. But for now, the Untold festival and the other festivals that run in the city: Jazz in the Park, Street Food Festival or Rock in the City are not mentioned in the local plan for risk which is approved by the local council.

Lack of cooperation between the Mayor's Office, the Local Council and the organizers of the festivals in Romania can generate loss of the quality, causes disaffection among locals and reduces the level of their gains and the positive impact. In the future, however, such a situation could have far more serious negative effects, especially with regard to people's safety and security and mass management that have grown as a probability in recent years. Under these conditions, the responsibility for the risks of the festival is held by the private agents.

Creating a risk management plan for events with a large number of participants is a common practice in other countries that can also be taken over by the Romanian authorities.

## V. Conclusions

Following the study, it was found that the number of risks faced by economic agents in the events and festivals industry is growing. The competition in this area is constantly developing which requires a major focus on risk management.

Considering that the number of works in the field which offers a perspective on the risk management situation of festivals in Romania is limited, this research offers a first perspective on the level of development of the field.

This study may be useful to members of the management team of the festivals in Romania, but can also be used as a source of information for future research regarding risk management.

It has been found that research in the field offers different perspectives on what the event and festival are, and on the types of existing events and festivals. However, following an analysis of existing studies, a possible classification of risks in events and festivals has been achieved. Using the seven risk categories: administrative, institutional, financial, marketing, mass management, safety and security for

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<sup>53</sup> D. Moldoveanu, *Festivalul Neversea la final*, 2017. <https://www.ziuaconstantia.ro/in-constantia/evenimente-in-constantia/festivalul-neversea-la-final-zeci-de-mii-de-participanti-au-dansat-pe-muzica-artistilor-preferati-634572.html>

participants and others, risk management teams can manage the existing risks more easily.

It has been observed that the gap between the level of development of the industry abroad and the level of national development is decreasing. Traditional festivals and with a large number of participants, such as Coachella or Tomorrowland, offer models of good risk management that can also be applied at Romanian festivals. Methods like promotion with online influencers or the use of drones for monitoring are solutions that can be applied in festivals in Romania.

Following the analysis, it was found that a lot of the critical risks are related to the safety and security of the participants. In the current context, when acts of terrorism and violence caused by participants during festivals are more common, these results are of particular importance at the industry level. Also, the risks associated with good promotion are likely to occur. For both of them, the first and the second example, new combat methods similar to those presented in the examples of good practice, can be applied.

Unfortunately, in Romania, institutional risks continue to be relatively high. There is a great need for cooperation and collaboration between the local public administration and the organizers of the biggest festivals. Good cooperation between these two actors will lead to shared risk management, increased risk management efficiency and a number of other long-term benefits such as tourism growth or the economic and social development of the administrative-territorial unit.

The risk management specific to such events is still in the development phase, it is estimated that the industry of events and festivals is one of the industries of the future that can generate many beneficial effects at the level of the economy; therefore research in this field should be continued. They could be improved by presenting other perspectives beyond the one of the researchers, such as the private sector agents or local authorities.

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