Under a grant awarded by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, a research team consisting of sociologists, economists and philosophers researched four largest outdoor festivals held in Lublin: The Night of Culture, East of Culture – Different Sounds, The Magicians’ Carnival and the Jagiellonian Fair. The researcher aimed at determining how the aforementioned events influence the social and economic development of the city. They explored whether the city, its residents and businesses benefit in any way from these events. In 2017 the pollsters appeared at each festival. Moreover, the researchers examined the strategies and promotional policies of the city, discussed them with local entrepreneurs, and conducted an internet survey for festival volunteers.

On February 1, 2018 the members of the research team presented their results to the public. The report titled “Wpływ lubelskich festiwali plenerowych na rozwój gospodarczy i społeczny miasta” (The influence of Lublin’s Outdoor Festivals on the Social and Economic Development of the City) delivered a number of valuable information regarding the benefits provided by the festivals to the city.

75 million Polish zloty is the total sum of expenses made by out-of-town attendees at the festivals. The money was predominantly spent on food at restaurants, pubs and sales points.

These figures are confirmed by the entrepreneurs in Lublin’s Old Town. Ninety percent of the surveyed admit that the festivals increase the revenue of their companies, even up to 63% in comparison to non-festival days. It is also worth mentioning that nearly all attendees coming from outside Lublin declare that they want to return to the city. This shows the importance of cultural and artistic events for the development of tourism in our city.

The festivals are not just for outsiders, they also provide an opportunity of celebration for the locals. The research shows that the city’s residents have a very positive attitude towards the festivals – they acknowledge their potential for attracting outsiders and the possibility to experience something interesting and unique. The festivals are an opportunity to meet up with old friends, boast about Lublin in front of individuals from other cities as well as to develop passions and discover new interests.

The festivals also change the perception of the public space. Not only do they get people out of their homes, but they also allow them to discover less frequented places and, finally, they show the city in an unusual, often very attractive way.

Interesting conclusions can also be reached from the surveys conducted among volunteers who worked at the festivals in the years 2011-2016. More than half of them declare that skills gained during the volunteer work are useful in their careers. Volunteers believe that they acquire qualifications that are desired on the job market, such as communication skills, team work ability and the ability to manage their own performance.

71% of volunteers working at the examined festivals believe that volunteer work has made it possible for them to gain valuable experience related to the organization of events. According to the survey, every one in five individuals claim that contacts established during this experience helped them find employment.

The research also provided a detailed profile of the festivals’ attendees. The results show that the dominant audiences of the four major festivals are predominantly individuals from the Y generation (20-36 years old) followed by people from Generation X (37-52 years old). They have completed university education and judge their financial situation to be good or very good. Consequently, it is possible to say that the festival audiences are predominantly well-to-do young and middle-aged people who have completed university education.
More importantly, the research has shown that the attendees positively evaluate the festivals. Nearly all participants declare that they will take part again and that they will recommend it to friends. A large part of the festival audiences attend the events every year, their source of information being the fact…that they know the festivals very well and remember about them.

The report has provided a detailed and in-depth insight about the four festivals. The report has been evaluated by scientists and researchers specialising in the researched area of expertise.

I perceive the information provided by the report as a significant contribution to decision-making processes of both festival coordinators who shape their form and programme as well as the city authorities responsible for creating long-term strategies of Lublin’s development and plans fostering the development of culture on an operational level. (…) The report is a publication of a high informative value and contains valuable suggestions for application, said Professor Magdalena Sobocińska of the Economic University of Wrocław.

A similar opinion was voiced by Professor Waldemar Cudny of the University of Łódź, who believes that the research conducted by the authors is a valuable and pioneering work in Poland. (…) The analysis provides very useful information for various institutions and serves as a basis for further research.

The research results have been commented on by the following experts: Edwin Bendyk (Polityka weekly), Prof. Tomasz Szlendak (Institute of Sociology, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), Prof. Magdalena Sobocińska (Institute of Marketing, Wroclaw University of Economics), Prof. Krystyna Mazurek-Lopacińska (Institute of Marketing, Wroclaw University of Economics), Agata Etmanowicz (Impact Foundation), Tamara Kamińska (Katowice – City of Gardens Cultural Institution), Prof. Jan Pomorski (Humanities Research and Implementation Centre, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University) and Kamila Kujawska-Krakowiak (Commitment to Europe Art & Business Foundation, co-author of the publication Sponsoring of Culture and Art in Practice). Their presentations related to many contexts and topics that were examined in the research and are discussed in the report.

The report is available online at www.warsztatykultury.pl/raport

The Workshops of Culture in Lublin, organizer of the researched festivals, would like to invite you to the 2018 summer season events, including: Night of Culture (2-3 June), East of Culture – Different Sounds (28 June – 1 July), Magicians’ Carnival (26-29 July) and Jagiellonian Fair (17-19 August). Admission to all the festivals is free.