

# Sustainability Report 2023

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**A TO JAZZ  
MUSIC FESTIVAL**



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# A TO JAZZ

# FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

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The A to Jazz Festival in Sofia, Bulgaria, is an expansive and celebrated annual event that has solidified its reputation as one of the country's foremost music festivals. With a rich history and a strong commitment to jazz and world music, the festival offers a diverse and culturally enriching experience. It features multiple stages and event areas, creating a dynamic and engaging environment for festivalgoers to explore.

Nestled in the South Park, the green heart of Sofia, the A to Jazz Festival capitalizes on its urban setting to deliver an unforgettable festival experience. This blend of open-air and indoor stages provides a unique and immersive festival atmosphere in the heart of the city.

Based on reports from festival management, A to Jazz Festival consistently draws a daily attendance of approximately 15,000 to 20,000 visitors. This notable turnout underscores the festival's widespread popularity and broad appeal, solidifying its position as one of Sofia's most significant cultural events.



An aerial night photograph of a festival site. The ground is covered with numerous small, colorful tents and structures, illuminated by warm yellow and orange lights. The surrounding area is dark, suggesting a forest or a large field at night. The overall scene is vibrant and busy, capturing the atmosphere of a large-scale event.

# PURPOSE & SCOPE

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The purpose of this sustainability report is to provide a comprehensive overview of A to Jazz's commitment to sustainable practices and environmental responsibility during the year 2023.

This report highlights our efforts to minimize the festival's ecological footprint, reduce environmental impact, and engage with our community to promote a greener and more socially responsible event.

This report encompasses a wide range of sustainability initiatives, including but not limited to energy management, waste reduction and management, sustainable transportation, local community engagement and social responsibility.



# ENERGY

**Effective Generator Usage:** The festival's main events occur predominantly during daylight hours, featuring a concise two-hour program on the main stage powered by generators operating at full capacity. Adhering to a precise schedule, the festival operates with meticulous planning, guided by a predefined timetable. The main generator supporting the main stage functions from 09:00 to 14:00 and 17:00 to 23:00, while the two additional generators servicing the bars are operational from 16:00 to 00:00. At the stroke of midnight, the entire festival area undergoes a comprehensive shutdown.

This systematic approach serves the dual purpose of assessing harmful emissions and effectively managing the overall costs associated with the festival.

**Light Management:** We are vigilant about turning off lights in unoccupied rooms, including production offices. Outdoor lights are reduced or turned off when areas are not in use. We also prioritize energy-saving bulbs and LEDs for various applications like stage and backstage settings, bars and other vendors.

**Kia Electric vehicles exhibition:** A sponsorship that promotes eco-electric vehicles which aims to encourage people to use sustainable means of transportation.

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## ENERGY CARBON FOOTPRINT:

3.5

tonnes of diesel  
used

3

generators

11.09

C0e tonnes



# COMMUNITY

**Free Cultural Event:** Our festival is designed as a free event for the entire community to enjoy, emphasizing inclusivity and access for all. We believe that culture, art, and music should be enjoyed by all, regardless of economic constraints

**A to Jazz Talks:** Empowering our music conference within our festival program. It fosters the growth of artists, cultural professionals, and industry experts by connecting them to voice their ideas and know-hows. This year's events comprises two main modules: artist-focused panels "How to Showcase" and "Go to Market" and industry-focused panel for "Ecology of Music Festivals", delves into crucial topics like waste reduction, circular economy, carbon footprint, and sustainability in cultural event management.

**Supporting Local Musical Talent:** At the heart of our mission is a commitment to fostering and championing our local music talent. By providing a platform for artists and bands from our community, we not only minimize the need for extensive travel but also help showcase the richness and diversity of our local music scene. Belonoga, EVDN, Funkilicious, Krista, YAVI, Clavexperience, and Bobo & The Gang are just a few of the remarkable talents we're proud to support, each contributing their unique sound to the vibrant tapestry of our local music culture.

**Supporting Local Artisans:** Through our Art Bazar, we aim to empower local artisans by providing them with a platform to exhibit and sell their handcrafted products and services, encompassing food, merchandise, printing, and much more.



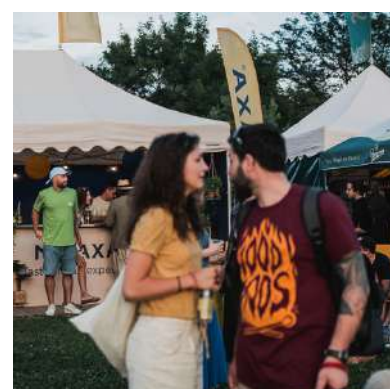
**Local crew:** We prioritize advertising temporary job openings locally and recruit a significant portion of our staff from our capital city, fostering economic benefits within the area.

**Nighttime Noise and Light Management:** We take pride in limiting nighttime noise and light pollution by concluding our concerts by 23:00, ensuring minimal disruption to the local environment.

**Complaints Response Channels:** We actively respond to concerns and complaints from neighboring communities via our social media channels. During the festival, we've established a dedicated phone line to address local issues, even though call volumes are generally low.

**Medical Care and Safety:** Adequate medical and security teams and designated locations for medical care are in place to manage crowds safely and address any health concerns promptly.

**Park Safety:** We prioritize road safety by deploying sufficient lighting. Continuous improvement in this area is a priority





# TRANSPORT

## Artist and guest transportation

**Accommodation:** Our careful selection of a conveniently located hotel, within easy walking distance from our festival venue, not only allowed our guests to seamlessly explore the city in their free time, but also minimize the need for long-distance travel. This choice not only enhances the overall convenience and efficiency of their stay but also contributes to our commitment to sustainable, eco-friendly event logistics.

**Remote Communication:** We encourage staff, crew, and performers to use phone or video calls for meetings and web conferencing, reducing the necessity for travel, where it is possible. Almost all our communication and logistics are communicated electronically.

**Local Musical Talent:** To reduce air travel emissions, we've prioritized giving the opportunity to develop our local talent whenever possible, minimizing the need for long-distance travel.

## Production side

**Sustainable Meeting locations:** When travel is unavoidable, we promote walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. Meeting venues are chosen based on their location to minimize travel distances or be easily accessible via public transport.

**Festival Grounds and Enclosed Performance Space:** During both the preparations and festival days, our crew and most of the guests utilized walking or biking as their primary means of transportation, navigating seamlessly within the festival grounds and between the outdoor and indoor venues.

**Local Material Procurement:** We prioritize purchasing and renting materials from local suppliers to decrease transportation-related emissions as much as possible.

## Visitor travel arrangements

**Festival Venue:** Our festival is situated in one of the biggest parks, close to the city center of the capital. Therefore it is easily accessible by various types of public transport, reducing the need for car travel among visitors.

**Festival map:** We provided clear site location information through a map, which is available both at the festival entrance and online through our website and social media channels. - Picture of the map

**Bike Parking:** To encourage sustainable transportation, we offered safe and secure bike parking facilities for up to 130 bikes, further reducing car use and emissions. - Picture of the bike parking

Festival visitors

**60k**

Walked to the fest

**30.4**  
per cent

Automobile&Taxi

**22.6**  
per cent

Used Public Transport

**43.3**  
per cent



# MATERIALS

**Electronic Communication:** We try to prioritize electronic communication with performers and conference speakers as much as possible. We try to reduce paper waste and be efficient.

**Festival cups:** In a pioneering move, we introduced a deposit cup system for the first time, resulting in the conservation of over 15,000 disposable beer cups. As of 2024, we aim to extend this practice across the entire festival, thereby preventing the use of 50,000 disposable cups.

**Banned single-use plastic products:** We have banned single-use plastic cups and difficult-to-recycle plastic products across all departments (particularly for traders, e.g. serveware, sachets, straws, coffee cups). Instead, our partners (food vendors and bar owners) use paper cups and biodegradable serveware.

**Festival merch:** We try our best to make our festival merch from sustainable materials - we have 100% organic cotton T-shirt and tote bags, reusable cups, metal bottles and much more.

**Stage Equipment:** All equipment (sound, light and more) used in the festival is rented from local production agencies and it's 80% energy efficient.





# WASTE MANAGEMENT

**Adequate Bins & Sanitation Facilities:** We have ensured that the number of bins and sanitation facilities matches the number of visitors, promoting proper waste disposal.

**Dedicated Waste Areas:** We provided dedicated areas for waste storage and segregation, ensuring easy access for waste management teams.

**Waste Collection:** During the festival hours, a dedicated cleaning team regularly checks sensitive areas, distributes rubbish collection bags, and encourages our audience to keep the festival site clean.

**Sanitation Maintenance:** To maintain hygiene standards, toilets, sinks, and drains are cleaned and unblocked regularly during the festival.

**Cleaning Teams:** We maintained an adequate number of cleaning teams to ensure continuous cleanliness and waste management throughout the festival.

**Waste Bins System:** We introduced a straightforward two-color scheme on-site - black bins for general and non-recyclable waste and yellow bins for recyclable materials, encompassing clean paper, cardboard, glass, and metal. To address various waste streams, we positioned 200 bins, each with a capacity of 140 liters, throughout the entire venue.

**Visual Instructions:** We have implemented very simple visual instructions for waste management systems that are easily understood and followed by our visitors.

**Recycling Promotion:** Recycling initiatives are communicated to the audience, crew, contractors, and performers through various channels, both before and during the event.

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## WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2023:

