

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND CULTURE STUDIES
RESEARCH MASTER IN MUSICOLOGY

"Rock May Not Be Ruining the Planet, but It's Certainly Not Helping"

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
AT DUTCH MUSIC VENUES

ELINE DUIJSENS

Student number: 8781087

Supervisor: Dr. Rebekah Ahrendt

Second reader: Prof. Em. Jeff Todd Titon

June 15th, 2022

ABSTRACT

In recent years, musicians and music industry professionals have become aware of the environmental impact of the live music sector. Since the decline of record sales due to streaming, tours have taken over as the primary income source for musicians. Therefore, the global live music sector continues to grow in revenue—27 billion USD in 2019—, but also emissions. The enjoyment of live music continues to have a negative impact on the environment in terms of emissions and physical waste.

In this thesis, I address the environmental impact of live music with special attention to the role of venues. My focus is on the Netherlands because of its significant live music scene, but also due to the unique legal hierarchy of the nation that places international treaties above domestic law. The now-famous climate case of Stichting Urgenda has shown that the Dutch government has been neglecting its duty to reduce emissions economy-wide as set out in the 2016 (ratified) Paris Agreement. The thesis considers the steps taken—or not—by Dutch law and policy aimed at reducing the environmental impact of music venues, as received and enacted by the venues themselves. Through semi-structured interviews with employees of five Dutch popular music venues I establish the obstacles and motivations for the venues to take environmental action. I then analyze Dutch local and national policy regarding sustainability following Thomas Birkland's methods for policy process analysis, demonstrating the gaps between policy and practice.

In Chapter One, I define sustainability. In Chapter Two, I establish the environmental impact of concerts. In Chapter Three and Four, I elaborate on the Dutch policy context and plastic policies. In the three final chapters, I present the findings of the interviews and highlight relevant policies.

The findings of this thesis support the conclusion that sustainability policies for arts and culture, and in particular the live music sector, need improvement. Financial support for the sustainable development of the live music sector lacks and resources related to subsidies and sustainable development in general are not sufficient. Additionally, the venues studied here demonstrated that single-use plastic regulations are unnecessarily loose and may in fact be counterproductive. Ultimately, the government needs to step up their economy-wide sustainable policy *and* collaborate with the music sector to effectively and quickly make enjoyment less harmful to the environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I hereby would like to thank you,

My interviewees, for their generosity, time, and knowledge.

Dr. Rebekah Ahrendt, for her guidance and support.

My partner, for letting me go on and on about this thesis for months and always giving me new perspectives.

Professor Emeritus Jeff Todd Titon, for being kind enough to take his time to read all these pages.

My colleagues, friends, and fellow Musicology students as well as the faculty members that helped me shape my interests.

The rest of the people in my life, for letting me rant about policies and the environment for months.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
GHG	Greenhouse gasses
NGO	Non-governmental organization
EU	European Union
Ministry of OCW	Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (Dutch: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur, en Wetenschap)
Ministry of IenW	Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (Dutch: Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat)
DG	Directorate-General
DG IenW	Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (Dutch: Rijkswaterstaat)
ILT	Supervising body of the Ministry of IenW (Dutch: Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport)
SUP	Single-use plastic
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
CUP	Creative Europe Programm
CUD	Creative Europe Desk

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Eva van de Vlasakker. Programmer of Paradiso. Interview held on March 17, 2022, at Paradiso.

Mijndert Rodolf. Head of Marketing and Communications of 013. Interview held on March 18, 2022, online.

Aerd de Boode. Manager Hospitality of TivoliVredenburg. Interview held on March 23, 2022, online.

Katharina Schoemaker. Human Resources Advisor and Office Manager of Patronaat. Interview held on March 30, 2022, online.

Stephan Maaskant. Programmer of Rotown. Interview held on April 1, 2022, at Rotown.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2021, British band Massive Attack released a report in collaboration with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Research containing a roadmap to reducing the environmental impact of the live music sector in the United Kingdom as a free resource.¹ The collaboration resulted from an urge to find a better solution to the music sector’s negative contribution to climate change that would ultimately require Massive Attack to stop touring completely. Massive Attack realized that removing one band from the road would not make a significant difference to reduce the sector’s environmental impact. Massive Attack member Robert Del Naja states that the action that they take will be useless, “unless our industry moves together” and by creating systemic change.² The roadmap contains clear and measurable targets that actors in the live music sector can adopt to be part of this change.

Other bands have shown similar interest in environmental action. For example, British band Coldplay announced in 2019 that they would stop touring until they figured out how to make tours carbon neutral, and preferably climate positive. In 2021, Coldplay announced their tour for 2022.³ While this tour is still not carbon neutral, the band and their team have developed new techniques to reduce the use of fossil fuels and new resources including a special “kinetic floor” that lets concert attendees create energy by jumping and dancing.⁴ Simply playing fewer shows in a tour will not necessarily make the tour more environmentally friendly. That is because audience travel is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions of concerts and festivals. If a famous band plays fewer shows, fans will merely travel from farther away. While in most scenarios public transport or car is the standard mode of transportation, concerts further away from home

¹ Chris Jones, Carly McLachlan, and Sarah Mander, “Super-Low Carbon Live Music: A Roadmap for the UK Live Music Sector to Play Its Part in Tackling the Climate Crisis” (Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, June 2021), <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=56701>.

² Robert Del Naja, “We’ve Toured the World for Years. To Help the Planet We’ll Have to Change,” *The Guardian*, November 28, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/nov/28/tour-world-massive-attack-band-climate>.

³ BBC News, “Coldplay to Pause Touring until Concerts Are ‘Environmentally Beneficial,’” November 21, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-50490700>.

⁴ Ben Beaumont-Thomas, “Coldplay Pledge 50% Lower CO2 Emissions on 2022 World Tour,” *The Guardian*, October 14, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2021/oct/14/coldplay-pledge-50-lower-co2-emissions-on-2022-world-tour>.

often require the use of airplanes, which produce significantly more emissions. This brief example demonstrates the complexity of climate change and the many factors that need to be considered when reducing the environmental impact of concerts.

Thus far, most research into sustainability and music covered one of the following three topics: the notion that music has the power to make a difference in society, the use of music in environmental activism, and sustainable practices of music festivals and musicians. An adequate discussion of environmental sustainability of the live music sector and in particular live music venues is still lacking in scholarship, despite concerts being more harmful to the environment in comparison to festivals and the live music sector being more polluting than the recorded music sector. In this thesis, I examine the Dutch environmental and cultural policy conditions of concert production at Dutch popular music venues and how venues and their employees take on issues of sustainability. With the thesis, I not only fill the gap in scholarship, but by relating proven environmental concerns to current venue practices and personal experiences of venue employees I highlight systemic issues that make sustainable development such a complex task. The addition of the discussion of Dutch environmental and cultural policy environment demonstrates the importance of effective and urgent policies for combating climate change in the music sector. In my conclusion, I give recommendations for the different parties involved in the environmental damage of music—both governments and music sector businesses—on how they can and need to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable live music sector. In the following section I provide a brief overview of prior related literature in order to demonstrate the gap in literature and thereby establish the significance of this thesis. But first, I will briefly explain what sustainability means in the context of this thesis.

DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this thesis, I dive into various aspects of sustainability in connection to the live music sector. However, the term sustainability is not that clear cut. The initial definition of sustainability was first provided in 1987 by the United Nations Brundtland Commission as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”⁵ This definition focuses on the needs with regards to the environment and welfare of different

⁵ United Nations, “Sustainability,” accessed April 11, 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>.

generations. More recently, the term sustainability is used to address economic, social/cultural, and environmental longevity and developments. In academia, and especially within the humanities, the cultural aspect is most commonly referred to when defining the term sustainability.⁶ For example, sustainability is often synonymous with cultural heritage management and the preservation of culture. I use the term sustainability as originally defined by the Brundtland Commission with the focus on environmental sustainability. Moreover, terms environmentally friendly, environmental, and “green” are occasionally used as synonyms of sustainable, as these terms are found in webpages and articles I reference. Finally, in Chapter One, I elaborate on the development of the definitions and provide a more thorough description of sustainability.

CAN MUSIC MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The role of music in society is heavily discussed in scholarship. Many scholars have made the assumption that art and music “seem able to provoke and inspire reactions, values, and practices.”⁷ For example, Thomas Turino explains that “the arts are a special form of communication that has an integrative function—integrating and uniting the members of social groups but also integrating individual selves, and selves with the world.”⁸ Moreover, research has suggested that music has an important role “in establishing and maintaining connectivity at inter- and intra- personal levels,” and it plays an important role in the process of identity shaping.⁹ That is, music is even used as a tool to bring people together. As such, both political leaders have used music in conflicts, but music is also used in “peace-making efforts¹⁰ and in social movements for empowerment. Rob Rosenthal and Richard Flacks emphasize that there is often confusion about whether music has a reflective or a causal role in social movements. Rosenthal and Flacks focus on the effects that music can have on human action and how music can be a resource in social movements. According

⁶ Matt Brennan and Kyle Devine, “The Cost of Music,” *Popular Music* 39, no. 1 (2020): 44, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143019000552>.

⁷ Diana Liverman, “Seeking Inspiration: A Scientist Turns to the Cultural Sector,” in *Long Horizons* (London: British Council, 2010), 27, quoted in Sara J. Wolcott, “The Role of Music in the Transition Towards a Culture of Sustainability,” *Empowering Sustainability International Journal* 3, no. 1 (February 2016): 6, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4vx624mc>.

⁸ Thomas Turino, “Introduction: Why Music Matters,” in *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 3.

⁹ Wolcott, “The Role of Music,” 4.

¹⁰ Wolcott, 4.

to them, music can “create, sustain, and alter social reality,” but it can also reflect it, sometimes even simultaneously.¹¹ Nevertheless, the social impact of music is immeasurable.

Scholars have also suggested that, given its supposed possible positive influence on society, music can be used in raising awareness and action for global climate change. Sara Wolcott states that sustainability is not just an issue of science, but is rather related to culture and the worldviews and values of the dominant cultures. According to Wolcott, we would need to start “recognizing the ways in which art and music perpetuate non-sustainable social formations.”¹² But Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison suggest that “music could provide an important vehicle for the diffusion of movement ideas into broader culture.”¹³ Diego Galafassi et al. demonstrate the role that arts can play in the “integration of knowledge, emotions, and moral judgement” in support of global climate change.¹⁴ Tyszczyk and Smith as well as Galafassi et al. highlight the importance of incorporating human dimensions to climate change research and debates, such as extending engagement to disciplines such as philosophy and musicology, which are underrepresented so far.¹⁵ Despite that arts and the humanities cannot make immediate change in the climate crisis, Tyszczyk and Smith argue that arts and the humanities open up a deeper understanding of climate change, not just physically, but also culturally.¹⁶ Galafassi et al. also mention this shift in discourse. As they state, there is a limited knowledge on how to stimulate change related to climate change on a cultural level, but also that scholars have been supporting the idea of a ‘cultural turn’, meaning to integrate social sciences and the humanities in environmental research.¹⁷ Galafassi et al. also emphasize the discourse about the ‘humanistic climate response’, which believes humans and human experience to be the solution to climate change.¹⁸

¹¹ Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8.

¹² Wolcott, “The Role of Music,” 2.

¹³ Eyerman and Jamison, *Music and Social Movements*, 1.

¹⁴ Diego Galafassi et al., “‘Raising the Temperature’: The Arts on a Warming Planet,” *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 31 (2018): 77, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2017.12.010>.

¹⁵ Renata Tyszczyk and Joe Smith, “Culture and Climate Change Scenarios: The Role and Potential of the Arts and Humanities in Responding to the ‘1.5 Degrees Target,’” *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 31 (2018): 58, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2017.12.007>.

¹⁶ Tyszczyk and Smith, 57.

¹⁷ Galafassi et al., “‘Raising the Temperature,’” 72.

¹⁸ Galafassi et al., 72.

The field of ecomusicology, on the other hand, is directly concerned with “the study of music, culture, and nature in all the complexities of those terms.”¹⁹ Ecomusicology is thus the field that examines the relation between music and the environment. However, while the effects of recorded music have been discussed by authors such as Kyle Devine, the negative effects of live music on the environment have been left aside for the most part.²⁰

RESEARCH ON SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN THE MUSIC SECTOR

Matt Brennan explains that, the negative environmental impact of music, both from the recorded and live music industries, should not be ignored in light of these positive abilities of music.²¹ Brennan quotes Shain Shapiro stating:

*“Music,” he said, “makes cities, towns and places better. Music makes cities wealthier. Music makes cities more vibrant. Music creates jobs and skills. Music promotes social inclusion. And music is everywhere.”*²²

As such, concerts are important drivers for music tourism.²³ People travel to other cities in their country, but also internationally to see their favorite musicians perform live. Also Paul Lathan of promoter Live Nation who states that for the live music industry it is “about the ability of live shows to unite and uplift people.”²⁴ While this may be true, this discourse relies on the assumption that music is inherently positive. Brennan emphasizes that we need to start considering systems and practices in the music that have thus far gone unnoticed but may in fact be harmful.²⁵ Matt Brennan also explains that the underlying structures that make it more difficult for the live music

¹⁹ Aaron S. Allen, “Ecomusicology,” *The Grove Dictionary of American Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2240765>.

²⁰ More information on ecomusicology may be found in Aaron S. Allen and Kevin Dawe, eds., *Current Direction in Ecomusicology: Music, Nature, Environment* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016). Or in Alexander Rehding, “Ecomusicology between Apocalypse and Nostalgia,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 409–14, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2011.64.2.409>. Or in Mark Pedelty, *Ecomusicology: Rock, Folk, and the Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012).

²¹ Matt Brennan, “The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music,” in *Audible Infrastructures*, ed. Kyle Devine and Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 119.

²² Shain Shapiro, quoted in Brennan, 119.

²³ Brennan, 128.

²⁴ Brennan, 119.

²⁵ Brennan, 120.

sector to become more sustainable.²⁶ Brennan concludes that, in order for music to become more sustainable, every key player in the sector, from artists to audiences, and from promoters to governments, have a role and responsibility in making more sustainable choices. Ultimately, Brennan argues, there needs to be a collective action to change the infrastructures around which the live music sector is built to infrastructures that consider the environmental as well as the social, cultural, and economic impact of music.²⁷ More research is also required to establish how exactly these infrastructures are built up and how to change them to incorporate more sustainable practice.

Some prior research has discussed sustainable practices in the live music sector, but there is still a lot of space for more research. As such, musicians have not only attempted to raise awareness through their music, but some have taken matter in their own hands by changing their practices to be more sustainable. British band Massive Attack has collaborated with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research to create a “Live Music Roadmap.” The band and Tyndall Centre have measured and researched greenhouse gas emissions on Massive Attack’s tour and developed a roadmap for the live music sector to tackle the climate crisis. In the report, it is emphasized that, in order to meet the requirements set out by the Paris Agreement, the live music sector should “adopt to play a leading role.”²⁸ The report provides concrete targets related to various harmful practices of the sector, including energy use, travel, and non-energy consumables (catering, set design, etc.) as well as recommended strategies to achieve these targets.²⁹ The release of the roadmap has gained much media traction which all British national newspaper, and prominent international music outlets to cover and discuss the findings.

Other previous research has also discussed sustainable practices of music festivals. Judith Mair and Jennifer Laing studied obstacles and motivations of already established sustainable festivals. This study inspired the last part of the thesis in which I examine obstacles and motivations as well as environmental action of concert venues. That is because research about sustainable practices of venues in particular has not yet been done, while concerts at venues have a larger environmental impact than festivals and thus should receive more attention in scholarship.

I chose to focus this thesis on *Dutch* venues for two reasons, the first being that my knowledge of the Dutch music sector and Dutch language give me a better starting point for

²⁶ Brennan, “The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music.”

²⁷ Brennan, 131.

²⁸ Jones, McLachlan, and Mander, “Super-Low Carbon Live Music,” 3.

²⁹ Jones, McLachlan, and Mander, 7.

research conducting interviews. Additionally, the Dutch hierarchy of rules of law which places international law and treaties above national law, and court case with Stichting Urgenda puts Dutch climate policy in a unique position for analysis. A more detailed description of the policy context can be found in *Chapter 3 Dutch policy context*.

METHODOLOGY AND CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This thesis focuses on Dutch popular music venues from different cities and provinces. All venues have room capacities between 200 and 3000 audience members. This capacity range has been chosen as many venues contain multiple rooms ranging between these capacities. Moreover, it has been a deliberate choice to exclude venues of capacities above this range as the production practices of both individual shows and tours vary too greatly. Logistically and financially, but also environmentally, these shows differ too much from each other to cover all in this thesis.³⁰ Popular music venues have been chosen deliberately to narrow the scope of the research and due to the familiarity of the researcher with the venues.

In this following section, I provide a brief overview of the methodology and the content of the chapters. Then, I provide more thorough methodologies at the start of the individual and relevant chapters.

POLICY ANALYSIS

First off, a policy is: “a statement by government of what it intends to do such as a law, regulation, ruling, decision, order, or a combination of these. The lack of such statements may also be an implicit statement on policy.”³¹ For the analysis of the public policies, Thomas A. Birkland’s *An Introduction to the Policy Process*³² is held as a guide. Public policies are the policies that are intended

³⁰ A logistical example of sustainable practice differences would be changing from single-use to reusable plastic cups. At smaller venues reusable cups can more easily be stored and washed on-site, whereas venues of a capacity of 18000 people would find more logistical problems with this which already begins with the collection of the cups. Environmentally, larger shows are more likely to see pyrotechnics and large-scale stage productions.

³¹ Thomas A. Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy*, Third Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 9.

³² Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*.

to solve “some sort of problem,” in favor of the general public, made by the government, but interpreted by both public and private actors. The method that is adopted for this analysis is policy process analysis. The analysis is based on the stages model of the policy process. This means that each stage of the policy process is examined. Though laws and regulations related to sustainable development and live music are essential to assess, how these regulations are enforced and evaluated as well as the difference between what the government chooses to do and, sometimes more importantly, what it chooses *not* to do are all key elements to a complete policy analysis.

The different stages of the policy process stages model are:³³

1. Issue emergence;
2. Agenda setting;
3. Alternative selection;
4. Enactment;
5. Implementation;
6. Evaluation;

It is important to note that the process is not linear, but that it is often a cycle that repeats. On other occasions, not all stages will be reached. The policy process is also sometimes examined based on the most simplistic input-output model. This means that there are inputs such as issues, pressures from public opinion and elections results, and media coverage, and outputs such as laws and regulations.³⁴ In this thesis, I follow a combination of the stages and input-output models. That is, the order of the thesis chapters is largely based on the stages model, but I discuss relevant input and outputs for the different stages where they are relevant.

In the first chapter, I lay the foundation of the thesis by dedicating it to establishing the definition of sustainability. As I explained, the term sustainability is widely adopted, but can take on many different meanings, making policies confusing to researchers as well as the general public. In the first chapter, I explain where the term originates from, how its definition developed, and how I adopt it in this thesis.

In the second chapter, the problem of live music’s environmental impact is investigated further to highlight the importance thesis and the urgency of climate policy and cultural policy that

³³ Birkland, 26.

³⁴ Birkland, 26–27.

considers sustainability. This is done based on the synthesis of various reports and studies on the different aspects of environmental impact of the live music sector. I examine the environmental impact in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and physical waste. I additionally discuss food and beverage related environmental impacts as this is both an issue related to emissions and physical waste, and deserve separate attention. Lastly, I briefly discuss the effects of Covid-19 on the physical waste from the live music sector. With this chapter, I demonstrate where action needs to be taken in order to further grow environmental sustainability in the live music sector.

The third chapter focuses on the policy context of climate and cultural policies. This is an important aspect of policy analysis as this ultimately demonstrates the directions and goals of the policies within which the Dutch venues need to operate. I examine the policy context by analyzing the policy environment: I elaborate on various inputs from the structural and political policy environments that influence the agenda of policy makers.³⁵ Inputs include the unofficial actors and public opinion in the policy process. Official actors—legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government—are sanctioned by law to be involved in the policy process. Unofficial actors are, for example, interest groups. Unofficial actors do not have a legal duty to take part in the policy process, but nevertheless play an important role. Interest groups are not sanctioned by law to participate, but they effectively represent the interest of the general public.³⁶ By protecting and promoting these interests, they become an essential part of the policy process. I also examine the outputs of the policy environment by discussing the contents of current environmental and cultural policies.

In the fourth chapter, I discuss the alternative policy selection, enactment, implementation, and evaluation of waste and plastic policies. How results of policies are evaluated, but also the oversight of the policy prior to the evaluation influence the success of the policies. That is, if single-use plastic cups are prohibited by law, but it is known that police will not monitor this at venues, then venues are not forced to make the change. Especially when the new alternative is more expensive—which is often the case for sustainable practices—, the law does not accomplish what it intends. Waste and plastic policy deserve their own chapter as there are policies specific to venues and similar businesses. For emissions this is not the case. Therefore, I have not dedicated a chapter to emission policies. This does not mean that emissions policies are perfectly sufficient

³⁵ Birkland, 27.

³⁶ Birkland, 93.

as they are right now. Instead, by elaborating on policies and policy tools such as subsidies I discuss alternative ways in which the government can push for and regulate emission decreases.

The last chapters contain the findings of the semi-structured interviews with five employees of Dutch concert venues. In Chapter Five, I elaborate on the interview and survey methodology. Then, in Chapter Six, I examine the obstacles that venues encountered in their sustainable development, and in Chapter Seven, I examine motivation and types of environmental action that venues took. In these chapters, I discuss various specific policy outputs and how these positively or negatively affect the obstacles, motivations, and actions of venues. The policy tools, or instruments, are the “elements in policy design that cause agents or targets to do something they would not do otherwise or with the intention of modifying behavior to solve public problems or attain policy goals.”³⁷ Common examples of policy tools are laws, taxes, and subsidies that incentivize sustainable development or disincentivize unsustainable practices. The findings from the interviews highlight what environmental action venues have taken thus far, where policies are aiding venues’ environmental action, where policies are hindering sustainable development, and where improvements can be made by national and location governments as well as venues themselves.

In the conclusion, I summarize my findings and offer a new focus for sustainable development of the live music sector, in which I emphasize on the role of the government as well as the responsibilities of the various industry players involved in the process of making the music sector more sustainable. Finally,

THE POSITION OF THE RESEARCHER AND HOW THIS THESIS TOPIC CAME ABOUT

The idea of this thesis came forth from a continuous interest in sustainability. While I never intended to study a program purely focuses on sustainability and science, it has been a passion of mine for many years. While studying for my Bachelor’s degree and starting to become actively involved in the music industry, I realized I could combine my passions for music and the environment by working in position in which I could make more sustainable decisions. When it

³⁷ Anna Larason Schneider and Helen Ingram, *Policy Design for Democracy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 93.

came to studying this Master's program, I realized I could take this a step further by developing this passion into a thesis on which I solely focus for several months. The final decision to elaborate on venues and live music came from my professional background working part-time at a booking agency. I am more familiar with the live music sector than the recorded music sector and my prior connections to venues would benefit the interview process for the research.

As both a Research Master student in musicology as well as a music industry worker am I continuously reflecting on both of these positions. I especially reflect on the ways in which I can make a difference from these two positions and, more so, how to combine my two positions and perspectives to create one valuable new perspective. From my position as an industry worker I have seen the waste problem first hand, causing guilt for my contribution to the problem, but also a growing passion to change this. While only being at the start of my professional career, to whichever part of the music industry it takes me I strive to contribute to making the music industry a healthier and more sustainable industry. Meanwhile, as a Research Master student I aim to use my acquired knowledge and skills from the academic world to improve my own work and this contribution. I incorporate discourses that are critical and applied to both sides of the issue at hand—the music sector and the governance sector. I hope and strongly believe that a background of mixed perspectives adds value to this research by revealing information to one side that is unknown to the other.

I see it as both my personal, academic, and professional goal to educate the music industry and relevant outside actors on the importance of sustainable development and environmental action of creative industries such as music. This thesis is my first big step in this process. Lastly, I hope that this thesis will inspire people from both sides to take responsibility, collaborate, and take action towards a more sustainable live music sector and, ultimately, planet.

CHAPTER 1 DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

The term sustainability can be interpreted and applied in a variety of ways: in everyday life, ecological or environmental sustainability is well discussed due to the ongoing attention to the global climate crisis. In both humanities scholarship and in policies, on the other hand, the term sustainability differs in use and often requires contextualization in order to understand which type of sustainability is discussed—social/cultural, economic, or environmental. This is a hurdle in policy analysis and can be confusing to the reader. Therefore, in this chapter, I examine the definitions of sustainability and establish the definition that will be used throughout this thesis. First, I provide an overview of the various definitions, including the initial definition as stated by the United Nations Brundtland Commission, developments of this definition, and a critique and new proposal for the definition of sustainability., I conclude by defining how I apply the term sustainability in this thesis.

INITIAL DEFINITION AND WELL-BEING

The United Nations Brundtland Commission first defined sustainability in 1987 as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹ According to this definition, the environment is an important concern, but welfare is more important. Since 1987, the development has taken place that sustainability is interpreted to have not two, but three dimensions: economic, social/cultural, and environmental. The definition of sustainable development according to the United Nations is as follows:

“Development is a multidimensional undertaking to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development.”²

¹ United Nations, “Sustainability,” accessed April 11, 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>.

² United Nations General Assembly, “Agenda for Development,” October 15, 1997, 1–2, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/188719?ln=en>.

Some definitions have added cultural and/or political dimensions to sustainability as well. Tom Kuhlman and John Farrington question these newer developments in the terminology.³ Kuhlman and Farrington explain that the three pillars of sustainability stem from the Triple Bottom Line concept. However, this concept originates in the field of management science. There, the three bottom lines stand for people, planet, and profit and is regarded as a management style that aids corporate social responsibility. Though these are good goals for running businesses, Kuhlman and Farrington state that this is very different from public policy. They explain this by stating that wanting to increase profit maximally may be logical for a business, but not for a government. Therefore, profit is often expressed as the gross domestic product (GDP). GDP is also considered a measure of welfare, which is a term used in sociology as well as economics. Often when policies provide environmental benefits, these come at the cost of (short term) welfare, which would be considered in both the social and the economic dimension of sustainability. In the three-dimensional approach, then, sustainability receives less weight than the social and economic dimensions and is thereby often disregarded. In a two dimensional—socio-economic and environmental—approach to sustainability and policy making the environmental decision stands a fair chance in being seriously considered. Additionally, UNESCO explains that sustainability is used to thinking about the future in which “environmental, societal and economic considerations are *balanced* in the pursuit of an improved quality of life.”⁴ Thus, according to Kuhlman and Farrington, this would not apply. This would completely go against the requirements that the Brundtland Commission set, that development should not be at the expense of future generations.

Moreover, as Kuhlman and Farrington state, “socio-economic aspects are mostly about the well-being of the present generation and the environmental ones are about caring for the future.”⁵ Kuhlman and Farrington propose to replace the social and economic dimensions by the “well-being” dimension. As they propose to view happiness as the basic goal of human behavior, but happiness cannot be a goal for policies, Kuhlman and Farrington equate happiness with ‘subjective well-being’, with well-being referring to “objective conditions that help to make people

³ Tom Kuhlman and John Farrington, “What Is Sustainability?,” *Sustainability* 2, no. 11 (2010): 3438, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su2113436>.

⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, “Sustainable Development,” UNESCO, accessed April 13, 2022, <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development/what-is-esd/sd>. Emphasis added.

⁵ Kuhlman and Farrington, “What Is Sustainability?,” 3439.

happy.”⁶ As a policy goal, however difficult to measure, well-being would incorporate needs that are intangible such as freedom, education, security, democracy, and justice. Even better, well-being should be separate from (environmental) sustainability as a policy goal, which together must be in balance. According to Kuhlman and Farrington, this would enhance transparency of the policy process.

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

The emphasis that sustainability is an issue that involves both science and society⁷ and that “sustainability transformations ... require radical, systemic shifts in values and beliefs, patterns of social behavior, and multilevel governance and management regimes.”⁸ That is because the “current system of non-sustainability” stems from the worldviews and values that have dominated Western culture, which itself has governed/controlled most of the global worldview and values.⁹

In academia, sustainability is rarely discussed on the basis of environmental sustainability. Especially in the studies of arts, and in this case music, management of cultural heritage is what is mostly meant when discussing sustainability, which is concerned with the preservation of and adding value to music and musical traditions (or other forms of culture and art) as a piece of cultural heritage.¹⁰ Brennan and Devine explain that most applied ethnomusicological research involved social or economic sustainability of musical traditions, while ignoring the environmental aspect of sustainability.¹¹ Moreover, cultural heritage management also includes the “creation of heritage spaces” by which Titon refers to spaces such as theaters, festivals, and museums. Heritage spaces are thus the spaces where culture is mediated—in the case of music, this is mostly where

⁶ Kuhlman and Farrington, 3440.

⁷ Sacha Kagan and Volker Kirchberg, “Music and Sustainability: Organizational Cultures towards Creative Resilience - A Review,” *Journal of Cleaner Production* 135 (2016): 1488, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.05.044>.

⁸ Per Olsson, Victor Galaz, and Wiebren J. Boonstra, “Sustainability Transformations: A Resilience Perspective,” *Ecology and Society* 19, no. 4 (2014): 1, <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-06799-190401>.

⁹ Sara J. Wolcott, “The Role of Music in the Transition Towards a Culture of Sustainability,” *Empowering Sustainability International Journal* 3, no. 1 (February 2016): 2, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4vx624mc>.

¹⁰ Jeff Todd Titon, “Music and Sustainability: An Ecological Viewpoint,” *The World of Music* 51, no. 1 (2009): 120, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41699866>.

¹¹ Matt Brennan and Kyle Devine, “The Cost of Music,” *Popular Music* 39, no. 1 (2020): 44, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143019000552>.

music is performed (for audiences).¹² Titon deliberately does not elaborate on the heritage spaces, as these are too complex to discuss in his paper. However, the complexity of venues, especially the structures of the system in which and how they function, needs to be examined. That is because venues are need to undergo sustainable development given that most of the impact stems from these spaces, but current practices of music venues have a large dependency on the standard practices of entire music sector.

Kagan and Kirchberg's literature review of music and sustainability demonstrates that, at the time of publication in 2016, on Scopus, Elsevier's abstract and citation database, a minimal number of hits were found for the words "music" and "sustainability" (12 hits) and "sustainable development" (0 hits). At the same time, studies about music and its social role, and effects on individuals, culture, and politics can be found easily.¹³ This indicates that there is a serious gap in research that is yet to be filled and that prior research has focused on the filling other gaps thus far. The few researches about music and environmental sustainability can be found mostly outside of academia. While some researches are collaborations with research and academic institutions, (non-profit) organizations such as Julie's Bicycle put in most of the effort when it comes to sustainability and music. These organizations not only research the environmental impacts of the music industry, but they also provide resources and information for people within the music industry as well as promote sustainable development on a national and international levels. As Julies Bicycle states, "a shift in cultural attitudes, narratives and practices is needed" in order to create a consensus for environmental action.¹⁴ They also mention the connection of sustainable development to both science and society by emphasizing the importance of scientific research which underpins most of their work and by elaborating on the social role of music.

CONCLUSION

In this first chapter, I provided a brief overview of the definition of sustainability throughout the years. The core idea of the term has first been defined in 1987 by the UN Brundtland Commission as not compromising the needs of future generations, with an emphasis on environment and

¹² Titon, "Music and Sustainability," 120.

¹³ Kagan and Kirchberg, "Music and Sustainability: Organizational Cultures towards Creative Resilience - A Review," 1488.

¹⁴ Julies Bicycle, "About Us." Accessed 7 February 2022. <https://juliesbicycle.com/why-we-exist/about-us/>.

welfare. Gradually the definition of sustainability became more economic, slowly disregarding the environmental aspect. In academia, few studies have connected music to environmental sustainability and instead focused on cultural and economic sustainability. In scholarship about music, cultural sustainability is most commonly discussed in the form of cultural heritage management.

In this thesis, when using the term sustainability or sustainable, I refer to environmental sustainability, unless specified otherwise. On occasion, I use other terms with similar definition such as green or environmental/environmentally friendly when a cited source uses those terms instead of sustainable. The terms green and environmentally friendly also have varying definitions. I use the terms as follows: green is anything that benefits the environment, environmentally friendly is anything that does not harm the environment, and sustainable is an overarching term that considers long-term green and environmentally friendly practices.

CHAPTER 2 THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF LIVE MUSIC AND VENUES

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the ways in which the live music sector has a negative effect on our planet's environment. In the introduction, I have already emphasized why music matters in the discussion around climate change, and the potential influence of music and musicians on public opinion. When examining the policy process, this chapter elaborates on the first stage—issue emergence—by evaluating the current environmental impact of live music. I explain the problem at hand for which policies have been and need to be put in place. First, I provide a breakdown of greenhouse gas emissions of the entire music sector to indicate that the live music sector and venues require more urgent action and sustainable policies than the recording industry. The impact of emissions and physical waste is calculated and examined based on the synthesis of prior research on these topics. As most previous research has consisted of broad research into emission and waste in the entire music sector, I continue the rest of the chapter by focusing on the role of venues in particular, I also separately discuss the impacts of plastic cups, food and beverages, and the Covid-19 pandemic. This chapter offers a clear demonstration of the ways in which venues negatively impact the environment and where action needs to be taken.

From 2009 until 2011, renowned Irish rock band U2 toured around the world for the release of their new album *No Line on the Horizon*. With this tour a large production was built that followed the band wherever their shows took place. With a total of 110 shows, the production was shipped to North and South America, South Africa, Europe, and Oceania, including several back-and-forth shipments between the continents. This production included a steel structure of over 45 meters tall creating a “massive stage with rotating bridges.”¹ For each show this structure and all other production elements were assembled before the show, disassembled directly after the show, and moved to the next location. David Byrne in *New Musical Express* estimated that 200 semi-trucks were required to move just this steel structure alone.² This means that the tour requires a large crew to travel along as well, all of whom will need flights and buses. Moreover, other elements

¹ U2 Station, quoted in Mark Pedelty, *Ecomusicology: Rock, Folk, and the Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012), 1. Complete original citation missing from Pedelty.

² Pedelty, 1.

for the production that had to be brought along could have included lighting rigs, pyrotechnics, confetti guns, and similar added show features.

The U2 tour led to protests in Dublin about the “artistic overkill”—as Mark Pedelty calls it—, and the carbon footprint was estimated to require at least twenty thousand trees to offset the emission.³ U2’s guitarist the Edge, stated “I think anybody that’s touring is going to have a carbon footprint,” in response to the backlash.⁴ That does not mean, however, that an ecologically damaging production as this one should be allowed. Since the criticism, U2 has invested into lessening the environmental impact of their tour and tours in the future.

Some of the action that U2 has taken includes changing items on their hospitality rider⁵ to more sustainable alternatives, such as reusable water bottles, and reducing and composting crew food and incentivizing ridesharing among fans.⁶ US also offset the carbon footprint of the tour and reduced the number of trucks needed for the production. Despite U2’s initial ecological blunder, the band has demonstrated initiative for change. Moreover, they have shown that even small changes can make a difference. But it is not up to artists alone to make the music sector a more sustainable industry. That is, venues host the concerts for these tours multiple times per week every week of the year. As I explain in this chapter, venues are in control of a large portion of a tour’s environmental impact and therefore also have to take responsibility to change.

Recorded music used to be a primary source of income through the sales of physical records. However, digitalization the rise of streaming platforms has heavily decreased the potential revenue of an album, making recorded music a less viable income stream.⁷ That is, from the three of the most popular streaming platforms (Amazon Music, Apple Music, and Spotify) the artist would earn between \$0.01 and \$0.0037 per stream. This means that an artist needs approximately 150,000-400,000 streams *monthly* to make minimum wage (according to United States averages; for

³ Pedelty, 1–2.

⁴ Pedelty, 1.

⁵ A hospitality rider is a list of requests and demands of the artist for the day of the show to be fulfilled by the venue and/or promoter. A hospitality rider often includes foods and beverages, towels, local transportation, and accommodation.

⁶ Pedelty, *Ecomusicology*, 2.

⁷ Fabian Holt, “Introduction: The Social Study of Musical Performance Institutions,” in *Everyone Loves Live Music: A Theory of Performance Institutions*, Big Issues in Music (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2020), 1.

a solo artist).⁸ The sale of physical records, on the other hand, generates approximately 10-20 percent of the retail price of the record worth of revenue for the artist. The exact revenue that is generated by both record sales and streams still depend on the type of deal between the record label and the artist, but it is definite that physical records are more profitable. Thus, since the artists' profit from their recorded music declined significantly due to the increasing popularity of streaming platforms, live shows have become a vital source of income for artists. In 2008, the United Kingdom's live sector outperformed the recording sector and, in 2019, the global value of the live sector was estimated around 27.9 US Dollar.⁹ A research conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers demonstrates a continuous growth in the global live music sector. Though the Covid-19 pandemic took a large hit on the live music sector, it seems to be recovering and is planning to reach the same global revenue as 2019 in 2024, ready to further continue its growth in the years following 2024.¹⁰ This means that, if music is being assessed in the context of the climate crisis, it is important to examine the role of live music in particular given its increasing contribution to the crisis.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In 2007, Julie's Bicycle, a British non-profit organization that aims to mobilize "the arts and culture to take action on the climate and ecological crisis," commissioned a report on greenhouse gas emissions by the UK music industry.¹¹ The report was one of the non-profit's first large projects on a path to help the music industry reduce its carbon emissions and to thereby contribute to solving the larger issue of climate change.¹² The 2007 study collected data from over 100 industry sources and over 100 case studies of energy use, supplemented by interviews with chief executives

⁸ Daniel Sanchez, "How Much Artists Make Per Stream on Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon, YouTube, Pandora, More (Updated for 2022)," *Digital Music News*, accessed February 21, 2022, <https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2018/12/25/streaming-music-services-pay-2019/>.

⁹ Matt Brennan, "The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music," in *Audible Infrastructures*, ed. Kyle Devine and Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 117.

¹⁰ PricewaterhouseCoopers, "Perspectives from the Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2021-2025," 2021, 9, <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/entertainment-media/outlook-2021/perspectives-2021-2025.pdf>.

¹¹ Julie's Bicycle, "About Us," accessed May 23, 2022, <https://juliesbicycle.com/why-we-exist/about-us/>.

¹² Jazz Summers, "Forward," in Catherine Bottrill et al., "First Step: UK Music Industry Greenhouse Gas Emissions" (Julie's Bicycle, 2008), 2, https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/First_Step_UK_Music_GHG_Report_2008.pdf.

and key informants to provide a combination of qualitative and quantitative data.¹³ The resulting report helps to provide insight into obstacles and opportunities for environmental action.¹⁴ The research conducted by Bottrill et al. (2007) about the UK music sector can be deemed representative of that of most music sectors worldwide. That is, since music is a very international market, most practices are universal—at least in the developed world. Production methods for concerts and events all follow the same principles and structure: if every country had different practices, doing international business and worldwide tours would become very complicated. Nevertheless, the proportions can still vary slightly per country. These differences can occur because the popularity of different ways to access music can vary per country or region. Moreover, the emissions of equipment freight might be higher in the UK due to it being an island and air travel being more common than land travel.

The researchers calculated the total greenhouse gas emissions in 2007. Greenhouse gases are the gases in the atmosphere which re-emit heat and have led to rising temperatures globally.¹⁵ Some of the most common greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Greenhouse gases are natural compounds of the planet’s atmosphere, but human activity—such as the use of fossil fuels—has significantly increased the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The different gases all have a different global warming potential (GWP), which means that certain gases warm up the atmosphere more quickly than others. The GWP of a greenhouse gas is measured in comparison to carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) is used as a common unit for greenhouse gases and is calculated by multiplying an amount of a certain greenhouse gas by its GWP.¹⁶ However, not all studies include all greenhouse gases when calculating emissions. In many cases, only carbon dioxide is measured as this is in many industries the most common greenhouse gas. But this leads to drastic misinformation, since carbon dioxide has the lowest GWP. By ignoring the emission of other greenhouse gases, certain sectors can appear as much less environmentally harmful than they really are.

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard has classified greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of businesses into three scopes. Scope 1 emissions are “direct emissions from owned

¹³ Bottrill et al., 5.

¹⁴ Jazz Summers, in Bottrill et al., 2.

¹⁵ Matthew John Franchetti and Defne Apul, *Carbon Footprint Analysis: Concepts, Methods, Implementation, and Case Studies* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2013), 7–8.

¹⁶ Franchetti and Apul, 56.

and controlled sources.”¹⁷ Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions for generation of energy that is not owned or controlled by the business. Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions that have been generated elsewhere in the supply chain of a business.¹⁸ Greenhouse Gas Protocol explains that these scopes help businesses to reduce emissions. That is, by measuring emissions and dividing them into the three scopes, business can better manage the reduction of emissions as it is “based on facts rather than assumptions.”¹⁹ Though the adoption of these standards is completely voluntary, the scopes are a widely accepted standard in the measurement of emissions as it helps to identify the problem areas in the business’ practices.

The research by Bottrill et al. showed that in 2007, the music sector in the UK emitted approximately 540,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.²⁰ These emissions included the following data types:²¹

- Audience travel (43%)
- CD Lifecycle emissions (26%)
- Music venues (23%)
- Generators (4%)
- Equipment trucking (2%)
- Offices (1%)
- Tour buses (1%)

¹⁷ Greenhouse Gas Protocol, “Frequently Asked Questions,” 1, accessed May 24, 2022, https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards_supporting/FAQ.pdf.

¹⁸ Greenhouse Gas Protocol, 1.

¹⁹ Greenhouse Gas Protocol, 2.

²⁰ Bottrill et al., “First Step,” 5.

²¹ Bottrill et al., 6.

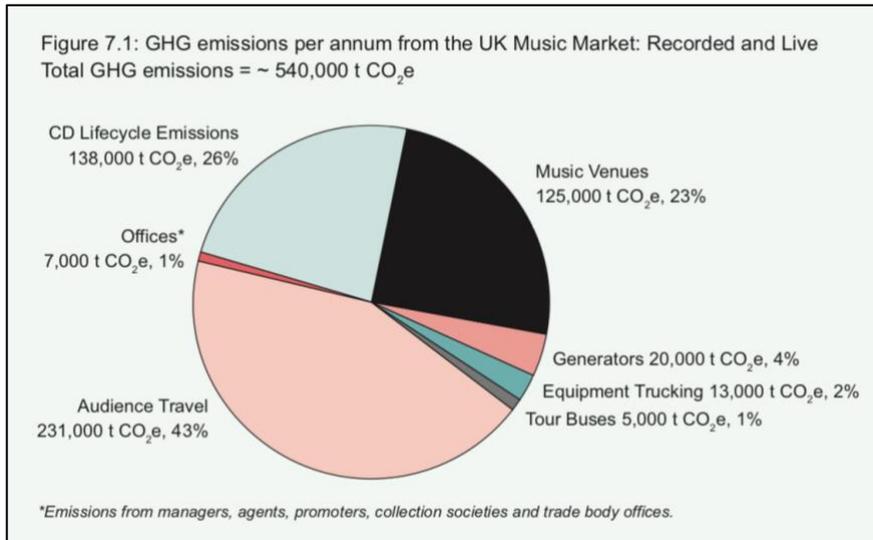


FIGURE 1: UK MUSIC MARKET EMISSIONS IN 2007. SOURCE: CATHERINE BOTTRILL ET AL., “FIRST STEP: UK MUSIC INDUSTRY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS” (JULIE’S BICYCLE, 2008), [HTTPS://JULIESBICYCLE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2019/11/FIRST_STEP_UK_MUSIC_GHG_REPORT_2008.PDF](https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FIRST_STEP_UK_MUSIC_GHG_REPORT_2008.PDF), 6. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION.

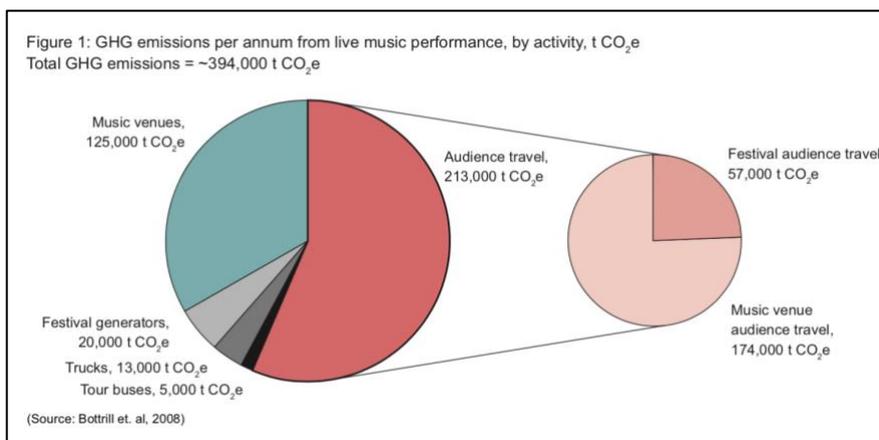


FIGURE 2: UK LIVE MUSIC MARKET EMISSIONS INCLUDING AUDIENCE TRAVEL BREAKDOWN. SOURCE: CATHERINE BOTTRILL ET AL., “FIRST STEP: UK MUSIC INDUSTRY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS” (JULIE’S BICYCLE, 2008), [HTTPS://JULIESBICYCLE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2019/11/FIRST_STEP_UK_MUSIC_GHG_REPORT_2008.PDF](https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FIRST_STEP_UK_MUSIC_GHG_REPORT_2008.PDF), 42. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION.

While these graphs likely miss some smaller sources of emissions, this breakdown demonstrates that live music causes the large majority (approximately 75%) of the total emissions of the music market.

Reducing emissions is often based on the three emission scopes. At venues the scopes consist of the following emission types and can be reduced accordingly. Common scope 1 emissions for venues can be gas heating and gas-powered vehicles. Emissions can be reduced by making the building more energy efficient through better isolation, or by reducing the use of the

vehicle or switching to an electric vehicle. Scope 2 emissions are from purchased energy. If a venue buys green or renewable energy, scope 2 emissions are reduced to zero. If that is not possible, it can be reduced by switching to energy saving devices such as LED lighting in venues. When it comes to sustainable development, the largest impact is made by improving and reducing emissions from scope 1 and 2. That is because these emissions are the most straightforward in terms of how they are generated, as they are directly in control of the venue. Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions, which for venues means emissions from artist and audience travel, food production and transport emissions, and so on. The reduction of the emissions is a complex process, as the generation of the emissions is not in direct control of the venue employees. However, emissions can be reduced by switching to more plant-based food on offer, or through incentivizing more sustainable alternatives. In the following section I elaborate on the largest contributor to a venue's scope 3 emission: artist and audience travel.

TRAVEL EMISSIONS

As shown in *Figure 2*, the majority of the live music sector's emissions back in 2007 stemmed from audience travel—scope 3 emissions—, most of which for normal concerts as opposed to festivals.²² At first sight, this might not seem like something where venues or EU- or national policies can make a significant change, but the opposite is true. According to Brennan, one of the co-authors of “Valuing Live Music,”²³ concerts are a driver of “music tourism,” as concerts are a reason to visit different places and cities.²⁴ Part of the research of “Valuing Live Music” consisted of asking musicians, audiences, and crew how far they travelled and with which mode of transportation. Brennan highlights that, even though this has been researched before, previous studies often did not discuss the emissions or the environmental impact of the travel and, instead, focused on the way in which live music promotes travel and tourism—and not the environmental

²² Catherine Bottrill, Stavros Papageorgiou, and Meegan Jones, “Jam Packed: Part 1: Audience Travel Emissions from Festivals” (*Julie's Bicycle*, May 2009), 11, https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Jam_Packed_Festival_Audience_Report_2009.pdf.

²³ Emma Webster et al., “Valuing Live Music: The UK Live Music Census 2017 Report” (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 2018), https://eprints.ncl.ac.uk/file_store/production/247959/FB952B84-8B8F-43C8-A3ED-4C3F08D73EEE.pdf.

²⁴ Brennan, “The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music,” 128.

costs of such activities.²⁵ However, the work of the “Valuing Live Music” project found that musicians and attendees do not always have sustainable options for travel to concerts: for musicians, a car or van is the primary mode of transportation due to the large amount of heavy equipment, and for concert attendees “insufficient late-night public transport” results in more car travel.²⁶ Due to the differences in infrastructure in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom some of the results may vary if a similar research would be conducted in the Netherlands. That is, in the Netherlands traveling by bicycle is more common, due better developed cycling infrastructure, shorter distances, and cultural embedding. Eva from Paradiso explained in her interview that it is obvious that most concert attendees and staff members either travel by bicycle or public transport. That is because parking near the venue in the city center of Amsterdam is both expensive and difficult to find. Public transport and cycling, on the other hand, are more accessible due to free and secured bicycle parking being widely available nearby as well as a wide variety of available public transport.

Nevertheless, festivals and venues—sometimes together with promoters and artists—can incentivize and disincentivize certain modes of travel. For example, charging extra for carparking disincentivizes traveling by car, which is often the less environmentally friendly option. On the other hand, venues can offer free secured bicycle parking. Moreover, venues can collaborate with local governments and municipalities to make sure public transport is still available by the time concerts have finished late in the evening. Another more complicated option would be for artists, venues, and promoters to offer ticket bundles that offer discounts on public transport tickets or bicycle parking in combination with a concert entry ticket.

PHYSICAL WASTE

The research of Bottrill et al. does not elaborate on the impact of the physical waste caused by the music sector. But this physical waste is also a problem that needs to be addressed. The physical waste in the recording industry does not only consist of the packaging of CD’s and other audio carriers, but the end of life of a physical recording should be taken into account. In his book *Decomposed: The Political Ecology of Music*, Kyle Devine elaborates on the environmental impacts of

²⁵ Brennan, 128.

²⁶ Brennan, 129.

shellac and CD's, as well as mp3-files.²⁷ *Decomposed* is a “patchwork” book that consists of research about the history of these different forms of recorded music. Devine thoroughly examined the environmental impacts of following aspects of the different stages of a recorded music items: the raw materials, the sourcing process of the material, the manufacturing process (e.g. energy requirements), the manufacturing waste (e.g. chemical waste), the distribution methods and waste (e.g. packaging), but also the end of the life cycle (e.g. impact on landfill and decomposition). As Devine already put a lens on the recording industry, and as he mentioned that the live music sector is both one of the largest revenue sources and one of the biggest polluters in the music industry,²⁸ the importance of this thesis' focus on live music is highlighted.

In live music, most of the physical waste that can be found are single-use plastic drink cups, but that is far from everything. At concert venues, the physical waste can also be found backstage through food waste, plastic bottles for drinks, and production materials as well as the trash fans leave behind when waiting in line to get into the venue.

PLASTIC CUPS

Plastic cups are the largest wasted items at concerts. In the UK, approximately three million people attend music festivals each year. These three million festival goers produce an estimated 23,500 tons of waste, which is mostly made up off plastic cups.²⁹ In the Netherlands, 2.9 million people attended 207 large concerts (concerts with more than 3,000 attendees),³⁰ who were most likely served their drinks in single-use plastic cups. A food and beverage manager who has worked at several popular music venues in the Netherlands explained to me that at regular concerts the expected average of drinks per attendee is 2.5-3 drinks and 4-5 drinks for all night or dance events. At these large events alone, this would result in a minimum of 7.25 million (assuming 2.9 attendees consume an average of 2.5 drinks) plastic cups per year, not counting all small concerts below 3,000 attendees.

²⁷ Kyle Devine, *Decomposed: The Political Ecology of Music* (MIT Press, 2019).

²⁸ Devine, 168.

²⁹ Isabelle Gerretsen, “How Not to Trash the Planet at a Music Festival,” *CNN Travel*, June 27, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/25/world/plastic-waste-emissions-music-festivals-intl/index.html>.

³⁰ Entertainment Business, “Aantal Bezoekers Concerten Stijgt Naar 2,9 Miljoen,” January 20, 2020, <https://www.entertainmentbusiness.nl/live/aantal-bezoekers-concerten-stijgt-naar-29-miljoen/>.

In 2020, The Life Cycle Assessment Centre published a study in cooperation with Kenniscentrum Afval Circular (Knowledge Centre Circular Waste Materials) and Plastic Promise as commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management).³¹ Plastic Promise is a Dutch platform that allows the event industry to share knowledge and ambitions about the reduction of single-use plastic.³² The study is comprised of a thorough breakdown of the difference in use between reusable hard plastic cups and the soft plastic cup (both from recycled and single-use plastic) at events. The breakdown includes logistical, financial, hygienic, material/chemical/production, and use and disposal comparisons between the two cup types. The environmental impacts were measured in terms of GWP, water usage, energy usage, and ReCiPe.³³ ReCiPe is a method for life cycle impact assessment in which the scores are based on so-called characterization factors.³⁴ This means that the comparison is also broken down into different cleaning methods, different types of plastics used for the production of the cups, and different loss rates of the cups. The different methods were tested at 78 events.³⁵ Considering the vast number of cup options for event organizers—including venues—this study offers guidance in selecting the most sustainable alternative for different types of events.

Though there are many factors that affect the environmental impact of both soft and hard cups, and despite the many advantages of soft cups over hard cups, hard cups—when used optimally—are preferred. Most importantly, the production of soft cups results in fewer emissions than the production of hard cups. However, the many cups cannot be or are not recycled, resulting in greater use of resources and fossil fuels. After a single-use, the cups break down very slowly and end up physically polluting the planet. Hard cups, on the other hand, can be used multiple times, and with a loss rate of 2% the use of hard cups has a lower environmental impact in terms of

³¹ Alan Campbell et al., “A Study of the Waste Free Cup System at Events as Commissioned by Rijkswaterstaat in Cooperation with Plastic Promise” (Beuningen: The LCA Centre, December 9, 2020), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ba204a73917ee401d7516af/t/6033c2768a8e7b157b8d8e59/1614004898021/LCA+STUDY+OF+WASTE+FREE+CUP+SYSTEM+AT+DUTCH+EVENTS+BY+THE+LCA+CENRE+v2A.pdf>.

³² Plastic Promise, “Plastic Promise,” accessed May 24, 2022, <https://www.plasticpromise.nl/en/home>.

³³ Campbell et al., “A Study of the Waste Free Cup System at Events as Commissioned by Rijkswaterstaat in Cooperation with Plastic Promise,” 22.

³⁴ National Institute for Public Health and the Environment - Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Sport, “LCIA: The ReCiPe Model,” RIVM, June 16, 2011, <https://www.rivm.nl/en/life-cycle-assessment-lca/recipe>.

³⁵ Campbell et al., “A Study of the Waste Free Cup System at Events as Commissioned by Rijkswaterstaat in Cooperation with Plastic Promise,” 74.

emissions than all tested soft cup alternatives.³⁶ This is under the condition that the cups are washed efficiently. Nevertheless, hard cups have the added advantage that they can be recycled into new cups when they have deteriorated in quality and have become unsuitable for drinking making them more suitable for a *more* circular economy and use of fossil fuels.

One possible reason for a high loss of hard cups at events is when they are specifically branded for the event. For venues, as the cups remain indoors, a 2% loss rate is not high. Not only does this mean that they can only be reused for this specific event in the future, but attendees are more likely to take them home as memorabilia. At concert venues, the threat of attendees taking venue branded cups is less likely, as the venue is only the location provider rather than the primary interest of attendees.

Regulations and laws about the use of single-use plastic and more specifically plastic cups will be discussed in *Chapter 4 Plastic policy*.

FOOD WASTE AND EMISSIONS

The environmental impact of food is another, yet much smaller, consideration for venues in their sustainable development. In live music food waste can be a large issue, but this would mostly be found at festivals, where people consume various meals during their stay. At concerts the most significant amount of food waste can be found in the catering for artists and crew. It is important to note that food consumption does not only result in food waste, but also emissions. This means that the choice of food affects environmental impact and that food choice is not only an ethical consideration. Despite much debate, research has shown that a plant-based diet requires less land use³⁷ and generates less emissions in the creation of the food compared to a diet that contains animal-derived foods.³⁸ Whether it should be up to the venue to decide what kind of food people eat can be debated. Nevertheless, venues can stimulate and favor more environmentally sustainable food and catering options, both in terms of diet and food suppliers. This can be done through

³⁶ Campbell et al., 81.

³⁷ Hannah Ritchie, “If the World Adopted a Plant-Based Diet We Would Reduce Global Agriculture Land Use from 4 to 1 Billion Hectares,” Our World in Data, March 4, 2021, <https://ourworldindata.org/land-use-diets>.

³⁸ Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser, “Environmental Impacts of Food Production,” Our World in Data, 2020, <https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food#carbon-footprint-of-food-products>.

financially disincentivizing less sustainable options, or by stating their clear preference for more sustainable options.

Research has demonstrated that 26% of global emissions comes from food systems.³⁹ Moreover, an additional 6% of global greenhouse gas emissions are a result of food waste, meaning food that is produced and transported without ever being consumed. Venues supplying catering can play a role reducing these amounts. Part of this waste is from the consumer side, but the majority is lost in supply chains. Environmental impact related to food and beverage comes in many different forms, some of which are the following:⁴⁰

1. Packaging material and recyclability of packaging. The recyclability depends on local infrastructure for recycling as well as whether the material or producer of the packaging allows for accessible recycling methods;
2. Land use for the production of the food and beverages;
3. Agricultural processes, including but not limited to fertilizers and pesticides, methane from cattle, water use, and fuel from farming machinery;
4. Transport emissions;
5. Retail.

Beverages such as sodas are consumed in large amounts at concerts. However, packaging and recycling methods vary largely. Venues can either opt for post-mix soda, which is soda syrup that is watered down and carbonated at the venue—and thereby reducing transport emissions—, but there are also other options, such as bottled sodas in plastic or glass. Plastic bottles can often be recycled, but the same goes for glass. With glass, however, the recycling method contributes greatly to the environmental impact of the packaging. If the glass is broken, molten, and reshaped into new glass bottles, the heating process causes emissions leading to more environmental damage than the recycling of plastic bottles. Nevertheless, plastic is made from fossil fuels and can only be recycled a limited number of times, whereas glass is in theory infinitely recyclable. One final method for sodas is opting for brands that thoroughly wash their bottles, rather than melt and remold glass from broken bottles. Since the largest percentage of glass bottle emissions is a result of the heating and melting process of the glass, simply washing the bottles can reduce the emissions

³⁹ Hannah Ritchie, “Food Production Is Responsible for One Quarter of the World’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” *Our World in Data*, November 6, 2019, <https://ourworldindata.org/food-ghg-emissions>.

⁴⁰ Ritchie and Roser, “Environmental Impacts of Food Production.”

drastically. Which option is a better fit depends on environmental impact, but may also be affected by logistics, which options the building or the location of the venue permits, and the availability of suppliers. The large number of considerations for the choice of sodas alone demonstrates the complexity behind making environmentally conscious decisions for an entire concert venue and all its operations.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC, LIVE MUSIC, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Covid-19 pandemic has also negatively impacted the ways in which concerts must be produced. For example, facial masks, which are often for a single use, have been mandated at concerts in several countries. Regular Covid-19 self-tests and PCR-tests have been mandatory by both touring and local crew members which again leads to more waste. Even emissions have increased in live music. Social distancing measures allowed fewer people to fit in a venue. This resulted in more production emissions per audience member as the emissions increase when the production size increases. If a show for 200 people would normally fit in a room for 200 people, this now had to be moved to a room for perhaps 600 people. These bigger rooms required a larger sound system, more lights, and more heating in winter or air-conditioning in summer to name some instances of emissions that increase depending on room size, and not depending on audience size.

Moreover, many tours have been cut short due to Covid-19 infections and regulations. Traveling back to the home city and then returning to finish the tour at a later moment means that bands and their crew have to fly or drive twice as much for the same tour, thus resulting in more travel emissions.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have demonstrated what the environmental impact of live music—and venues in particular—consist of and where action needs to be taken to reduce the negative contribution of concerts and venues to climate change. First, the 2007 study by Bottrill et al. has established that the live music sector has a significantly larger impact on the environment than the recorded music sector when it comes to emissions. Though festivals have received more attention from both

media and academia, concerts at venues result in more emissions. The emissions from concerts at venues can be broken up into three scopes, the first two of which are under direct influence of the venue and the third more indirectly. That is, venues can reduce their own emissions (scope 1 and 2) by reducing energy consumption and switching to greener energy. Scope 3 emissions, including emissions from food production, and audience and artist travel, can only be partially affected by a venue's sustainability policy. For scope 3 emissions, incentivizing more sustainable options and disincentivizing less sustainable options allows venues to reduce the emissions.

But emissions are not the only way in which concerts negatively impact the environment. Physical waste at concerts can be found in large amounts. The majority of the physical waste from concerts consists of plastic cups. The study from The LCA Centre provided a breakdown of the differences in environmental impact between hard cups and single-use soft cups. The low loss rate allows hard cups to have a more energy efficient production method in the long term. The long-term use and recyclability of hard cups combined with the significantly smaller amount of physical waste compared to single-use soft cups, demonstrates that the use of hard cups at concerts are the most sustainable option.

The beverages and food themselves that are served at concerts also leave behind an ecological footprint. Production, packaging, and transport result in both emissions and physical waste. Both the amounts of emissions and waste can differ depending on food and beverages choices made by venues. Other forms of physical waste can be found in, for example, show production materials and, more recently, safety measures related to Covid-19 such as mask and test materials.

CHAPTER 3 DUTCH POLICY CONTEXT

In the previous two chapters I established the definition of sustainability as applied in this thesis and demonstrated the negative contribution of concerts and venues to the environment. The issue emergence is the first stage in the policy process as I outlined in the introduction. This third chapter frames the research of the environmental impact and sustainable actions of Dutch popular music venues within its policy context.

Since there are many issues that governments need to resolve simultaneously, the next stage is agenda setting.¹ In the agenda setting stage, policy makers choose which policies to develop and why. In addition to the stages model of the policy process, another way of looking at the policy process is through systems thinking. The systems model of the policy process in its most simplistic form consists of inputs and outputs. Inputs are both official and unofficial actors, with the official actors being the policy environment, such as pre-existing laws and regulations.² Unofficial actors discussed are public opinion, interest groups and movements, and their protests and actions. Outputs can be laws, regulations, and the use of policy tools. Various forms of outputs are discussed in the succeeding chapters.³ The policy environment affects all parts in this system. The policy process is a product of a system that influences and influenced by its environment.⁴ And a systems approach helps us isolate important aspects to study.⁵

In this chapter, by combining the concepts of the systems model and the stages model, I provide background information about several inputs within the structural and political policy environment and how these inputs may have affected or will affect policies related to sustainability and/or the live music sector. A separate discussion of the economic environment of sustainable policies is left out as economy-related topics such as the Covid-19 pandemic are also discussed sporadically throughout this chapter in various sections. Moreover, considering the complexity of the economic policy environment as well as the outweighing importance of the structural and

¹ Thomas A. Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy*, Third Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 25.

² Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 49.

³ Birkland, 53.

⁴ Birkland, 27.

⁵ Birkland, 27.

political environments in the policy analysis for sustainability and venues, the focus is on the structural and political environments.

Lastly, I briefly examine how sustainability is reflected in policies of the Dutch government by providing a general overview of the Dutch climate policy and cultural policy. Here, both English and Dutch webpages and official government documents are examined as these often differ from each other. Since there are many documents that discuss climate and cultural policies I have chosen two primary documents and the policy overview pages on the government website per policy topic. For climate policy I examine the National Climate Agreement⁶ and the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan⁷ as these most clearly define the goals and reasoning behind the policy. For cultural policy I examine two documents from the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science about the cultural policy themes as discussed in the coalition agreement from 2017 published in a report in 2018⁸ and the final policy principles for the period of 2021-2024.⁹ Together, these four documents and related web pages give an impression of the direction and goals of the Dutch national policies in relation to sustainability and the cultural sector.

STRUCTURAL ENVIRONMENT

This section provides a brief overview of the structural environment of Dutch environmental policies. The structural environment involves the rules that are in place that explain how the government functions. First and foremost, it is important to highlight the separation of powers in the Dutch government. The Dutch government is divided into three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. These three branches of the government supervise each other and hold

⁶ Government of the Netherlands, “National Climate Agreement”, The Hague, June 28, 2019, <https://www.government.nl/documents/reports/2019/06/28/climate-agreement>.

⁷ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, “Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030,” November 2019, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-03/nl_final_necp_main_en_0.pdf.

⁸ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Cultuur in een Open Samenleving” (The Hague: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, March 12, 2018), <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/kunst-en-cultuur/documenten/rapporten/2018/03/12/cultuur-in-een-open-samenleving>.

⁹ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Uitgangspunten Cultuurbeleid 2021-2024” (The Hague: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, June 11, 2019), <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/kunst-en-cultuur/documenten/beleidsnota-s/2019/06/11/uitgangspunten-cultuurbeleid-2021-2024>.

each other accountable. The importance of this separation becomes clear in the following elaboration of the governmental structure and the various inputs that have affected environmental policy.

DUTCH LAW, EUROPEAN UNION, AND INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

According to the Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, international treaties¹⁰ have direct effect when ratified by the state. Direct effect is a principle of European Union law that states that EU member states are to recognize and enforce international law. Additionally, for all international laws, article 94 of the Dutch Constitution states that “statutory regulations applicable within the Kingdom do not apply if this application is not compatible with provisions of treaties and decisions of international law organizations.”¹¹ This article means that the Dutch state is required to modify its national legislation in order to comply with ratified treaties and other international law.¹² In *Treaty Law and Practice in The Netherlands*, Brouwer explains that there are no exception to the modification of Dutch national or municipal law “in its widest connotation.”¹³

In other words, treaties and other international law are on the top of the hierarchy of rules of law in the Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which is highly unusual, if not unique. This also means that municipal law is subordinated to international law.¹⁴ The fact that, for example, treaties and EU law top the hierarchy in the Dutch Constitution also means that individuals can “take advantage of these rights and directly invoke EU law before national and European courts, independently of whether the national law test exists.”¹⁵ With regards to

¹⁰ Other names for treaties include, but are not limited to, (international) agreement, protocol, and convention.

¹¹ Grondwet voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden van 24 augustus 1815, Hoofdstuk 5, Paragraaf 2, Artikel 94. Accessed: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0001840/2018-12-21/#Hoofdstuk5_Paragraaf2_Artikel94. Dutch: Binnen het Koninkrijk geldende wettelijke voorschriften vinden geen toepassing, indien deze toepassing niet verenigbaar is met een ieder verbindende bepalingen van verdragen en van besluiten van volkenrechtelijke organisaties.

¹² Rijksoverheid, “Obligations When a Treaty Enters Force,” accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.government.nl/topics/treaties/obligations-when-a-treaty-enters-force>.

¹³ J.G. Brouwer, “Treaty Law and Practice in The Netherlands” (s.n., 2002), 18, <https://pure.rug.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/26651991/TREATYLAWANDPRACTICE.pdf>.

¹⁴ Brouwer, 6.

¹⁵ Publications Office of the European Union, “The Direct Effect of European Union Law,” EUR-Lex, accessed May 19, 2022, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A114547>.

environmental policy, this has been done by the Dutch NGO Stichting Urgenda, which has sued the Dutch government for their lack of environmental policy. A full discussion of this case and its significance can be found below.

Since the previous century, the Netherlands has signed and ratified several international treaties with the goal to combat climate change. These include the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992, UNFCCC), The Kyoto Protocol (1997)¹⁶ and the Paris Agreement (otherwise known as the United Nations Climate Agreement, 2015), which are both ratified by the Dutch parliament as well as the European Union, have been used to form the basis of Dutch climate policies.¹⁷ Moreover, the Netherlands has committed to more treaties that included climate action including the Stockholm Convention (2001),¹⁸ and the Montreal Protocol (1987).¹⁹

The most recent treaty for climate action is the Paris Agreement, which was adopted in December 2015 by 196 parties and ratified by the Dutch state in November 2016.²⁰ According to article 2 of the agreement, the agreement aims to “strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change.”²¹ All parties agreed to contribute to this goal by acting in three essential ways:²²

1. By holding the global temperature increase to less than 2—preferably less than 1.5—degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels, as this would reduce risks of climate change significantly;
2. “By increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development;”

¹⁶ United Nations, “Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,” 1998, <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>.

¹⁷ Government of the Netherlands, “Dutch Vision on Global Climate Action,” accessed April 11, 2022, <https://www.government.nl/topics/climate-change/dutch-vision-on-global-climate-action>.

¹⁸ United Nations Treaty Collection, “Stockholm Convention of Persistent Organic Pollutants,” May 22, 2001, https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=XXVII-15&chapter=27&clang=_en.

¹⁹ United Nations Environment Programme, “About Montreal Protocol,” accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.unep.org/ozonaction/who-we-are/about-montreal-protocol>.

²⁰ United Nations Treaty Collection, “Paris Agreement,” December 12, 2015, https://web.archive.org/web/20220406141002/https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=_en.

²¹ United Nations, “Paris Agreement,” 2015, 3, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.

²² United Nations, 3.

3. And to work toward lower greenhouse gas emissions and “climate-resilient development.”

Moreover, Article 4.4 clearly states developed country parties are obliged to take the lead by “undertaking economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets.”²³ The Netherlands and the European Union have both signed and ratified the Paris Agreement and have therefore committed to these goals. There are several articles that are worth highlighting when assessing Dutch policies in the live music sector and sustainable development thus far:

1. Article 7.2 states that adaptation to limit climate change is a global challenge that needs to be faced on every governmental level including national and regional.²⁴ The challenge also needs to be faced through cooperation, as mentioned in Article 7.7. This cooperation is meant for sharing information, strengthening institutional arrangements and scientific knowledge, as well as assisting developing countries.
2. Article 6.4 states that parties are (a) “to promote the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions while fostering sustainable development,” and (b) “to incentivize and facilitate participation in the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions by public and private entities.”²⁵ But also Article 6.8(b) states to enhance public and private participation in the implementation of nationally determined contributions.”²⁶

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

As I have discussed in the previous section, the Dutch government has already committed to develop its environmental policy due to the structural environment of the Dutch policy process including the automatic inclusion of international treaties and EU laws and regulation. In policy process analysis, the political environment includes what the policy makers have to consider when assessing “political and policy options”,²⁷ which largely includes public opinion. Policy makers often do this based on public opinion polling. On occasion, however, the public makes its voice

²³ United Nations, “Paris Agreement,” 4.

²⁴ United Nations, 9.

²⁵ United Nations, 7.

²⁶ United Nations, 8.

²⁷ Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 36.

heard in other ways. In this section, however, I examine two unofficial actors: global climate movements and Dutch NGO Stichting Urgenda.

GLOBAL CLIMATE MOVEMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND SUPPORT

Global climate movements put pressure on governments as well as polluting sectors to act to prevent further climate change. These social movements have done so through various activities. Some of these activities include protests and demonstrations, spreading information about causes and impacts of climate change, and addressing politicians and polluting industries to demand change. Some examples of global climate movements and organizations that are also active in the Netherlands are Extinction Rebellion, Greenpeace, and Fridays For Future/School Strike for Climate (FFF) initiated by Swedish high school student Greta Thunberg.

Letters and statements of support from scientists have confirmed that the movements' concerns are "justified and supported by the best available science."²⁸ These scientists and scholars emphasize that almost every country has signed and ratified the Paris Agreement and has therefore committed to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. Moreover, they recognize that many solutions already exist and that "young people rightly demand that our society should prioritize sustainability."²⁹ The scientists see it as their "ethical obligation to raise our voices to warn about the dangers of climate change."³⁰

Also within politics, climate movements have received support. The new pan-European political party Volt Europa (Volt) has shown significant support by sharing all demands published by FFF in April 2019. The Dutch subsidiary party of Volt has gained two seats in the national government as well as seats in several municipal elections. Nevertheless, GroenLinks (English: GreenLeft), and the Partij voor de Dieren (English: Party for the Animals) the Netherlands' green and left-oriented parties have only seen a very slow increase of popularity over the last two decades.

²⁸ Gregor Hagedorn et al., "The Concerns of the Young Protesters Are Justified: A Statement by *Scientists for Future* Concerning the Protests for More Climate Protection," *GALA - Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society* 28, no. 2 (January 1, 2019): 79, <https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.28.2.3>.

²⁹ Hagedorn et al., 80.

³⁰ Hagedorn et al., 84.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION

In November 2019, the European Parliament declared a climate emergency.³¹ Declaring a climate emergency is done by governments and scientists and means that they acknowledge the emergency for humanity. The European Parliament stated that they want the European Commission to ensure that all proposals for new regulations will be in line with the aim of limiting global warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. As of April 2022, over 2000 local governments and 34 countries have declared the emergency.³² The Dutch national government, while represented in the European declaration of emergency, has not declared it as such. Several Dutch municipalities, including the municipality of Amsterdam, have declared a climate emergency. Once a climate emergency has been declared, governments make plans to mitigate climate change, including creating policies to reduce greenhouse gas emission to limit the global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius. By declaring a climate emergency, governments are not only acknowledging that climate change is real, but also that it is a large problem that humanity is facing. More importantly, the declarations mean that the governments acknowledge that previous measures have not been sufficient to combat climate change. Thus, the Dutch national government is not acknowledging the urgency and seriousness of the climate crisis.

In November 2021, Greta Thunberg started filing a petition with other climate activists to the United Nation asking it to declare the climate crisis a level three climate emergency. A level three emergency is the highest possible category, similar to the Covid-19 pandemic. This would mean that it would receive similar action and response as the Covid-19 pandemic.³³

³¹ Thomas Haahr, “The European Parliament Declares Climate Emergency,” *News European Parliament* (blog), November 29, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20191121IPR67110/the-european-parliament-declares-climate-emergency>.

³² Climate Emergency Declaration and Mobilisation in Action, “Global Council and Government CEDs,” CEDAMIA, accessed April 22, 2022, <https://www.cedamia.org/global/>.

³³ Miranda Bryant, “Youth Activists Petition UN to Declare ‘Systemwide Climate Emergency,’” *The Guardian*, November 10, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/10/youth-activists-petition-un-to-declare-systemwide-climate-emergency>.

URGENDA CLIMATE CASE

Stichting Urgenda is another prominent climate organization. Stichting Urgenda is a Dutch NGO that strives for sustainability and innovation.³⁴ One of their goals is for the Netherlands to use completely sustainable energy by 2030. Stichting Urgenda realizes its goals by creating sustainable innovation projects and by lobbying for sustainable action. Despite being an unofficial actor, as an interest group, Stichting Urgenda plays a large role in the policy process. That is because interest groups magnify the power of individuals and are an effective way for “people to collectively express their desires for policy.”³⁵ Stichting Urgenda has done so on a large scale. One of its largest achievements has been the Climate case against the Dutch State. Stichting Urgenda and the more than 800 ordinary citizens were able to sue the Dutch government for failing to reduce the country’s contribution to climate change. The separation of powers has allowed the judicial system, the Dutch court, to rule over the Dutch legislative and executive powers. Moreover, in the Dutch judicial system, citizens have the right to sue an ineffective government, when it is not doing enough to prevent a dangerous situation or is contributing to it. In this case, Stichting Urgenda, together with 886 citizens, sued the Dutch government for not meeting its human rights obligations by not urgently and drastically reducing its emissions, despite the Government having “a legal duty to prevent dangerous climate change.”³⁶

The Climate case started in 2013. A first ruling by the Dutch court in 2015 found that the Dutch government was required to “take more effective climate action to reduce the Netherlands considerable share in global emissions.”³⁷ This ruling was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, where a final ruling in 2019 found that that the Dutch government was obliged to lower the emissions of greenhouse gasses by 25% of 1990 by the year 2020. This would ensure that the temperature rise would stay below two degrees Celsius.³⁸ Since there was only one year between the ruling of the Supreme Court and the deadline to reduce emissions, the Government was forced

³⁴ Stichting Urgenda, “Missie en Werkwijze,” Urgenda, accessed May 9, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/over-urgenda/missie-en-werkwijze/>.

³⁵ Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 93.

³⁶ Stichting Urgenda, “Landmark Decision by Dutch Supreme Court,” Urgenda, accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/en/themas/climate-case/>.

³⁷ Stichting Urgenda, “The Urgenda Climate Case against the Dutch Government,” accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/en/themas/climate-case/>.

³⁸ Stichting Urgenda, “Klimaatzaak tegen de Staat,” Urgenda, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/themas/klimaat-en-energie/klimaatzaak/>.

to take immediate action. Though this already was too unrealistic, policies that have been put in place thus far have not demonstrated the results as requested by the Supreme Court. That is, not through policy, but rather by coincidence the Dutch State met this goal.³⁹ Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, air travel and the use of airplanes decreased drastically.⁴⁰ This, paired with a mild winter and low gas prices, led to lower greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. Without any other coincidences, the goal of 25% less emissions compared to 1990 will not be met until 2025, meaning that there would be four more years of non-compliance with the ruling of the Supreme Court.⁴¹

In 2021—while the Covid-19 pandemic still restricted movement and activity for a large period during the year—, the emissions of the Netherlands were again higher than the court ruling allowed.⁴² During this same year, at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, the Netherlands agreed to reduce emissions with 65% by 2030 (the Dutch government officially stated a goal of a 55% reduction).⁴³ At the current pace of government regulations this goal will also not be met. Stichting Urgenda is planning on speaking with the relevant ministers about this issue and to help the ministers reach the set goals. Especially the reduction of fossil fuel use—starting with that coming from Russia—will be a topic of discussion.

The Climate Case of Stichting Urgenda and over 800 Dutch citizens against the Dutch State has been an important unofficial actor in environmental policy development. The case had gained international traction and media coverage for being one of the first cases of its kind, which won rulings against the Dutch State three times. The three rulings as well as the Dutch State's ongoing failure to comply with these rulings have demonstrated that the Dutch State itself is undermining its own rule of law.⁴⁴

³⁹ Stichting Urgenda, “Na 6,5 Jaar Vonnis bij Toeval Gehaald; Het wordt Tijd voor Echt Beleid en Actie!,” Urgenda, February 9, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/na-6-5-jaar-vonnis-bij-toeval-gehaald-het-wordt-tijd-voor-echt-beleid-en-actie/>.

⁴⁰ Ram L. Ray et al., “What Is the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Global Carbon Emissions?,” *Science of The Total Environment* 816 (April 10, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.151503>.

⁴¹ Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving, “Klimaat- en Energieverkenning 2021” (The Hague: Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving, 2021), 12, <https://www.pbl.nl/sites/default/files/downloads/pbl-2021-klimaat-en-energieverkenning-2021-4681.pdf>.

⁴² Stichting Urgenda, “CO₂-Uitstoot weer Omhoog; Urgenda-vonnis niet Nageleefd,” March 16, 2022, <https://www.urgenda.nl/co2-uitstoot-weer-omhoog-urgenda-vonnis-niet-nageleefd/>.

⁴³ Stichting Urgenda.

⁴⁴ Stichting Urgenda.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL POLICY

In this section, I explore the governmental goals, directions, and themes for both environmental and cultural policies. This will lay the foundation for the following chapter, in which I analyze plastic policies and venue action. As the venues operate in the context of the country they are directly influenced by the national government and policies. By briefly examining the directions of the policies, I demonstrate how the government is aiding—or hindering—the sustainability efforts of venues.

For an overview of the Dutch environmental policy, I examined the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP, 2019)⁴⁵ from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and the National Climate Agreement (2019).⁴⁶ The NECP contains the priorities of climate and energy policy for the period of 2021-2030 and is based on the National Climate Agreement. The primary goal of the Agreement is to reduce GHG emissions by 49% compared to 1990 levels by 2030, which, as the Agreement states, “will affect everyday life.”⁴⁷ The Agreement emphasizes that the changes that have to be made as a nation concern “how we live, our mobility, our food and diet, what products we buy and how we earn a living,” and that “these will not always be easy choices.”⁴⁸

The 49% reduction by 2030 will ensure a 95% reduction by 2050, which is required to limit global warming by 1.5 degrees Celsius. Within the context of the European Union, the Netherlands is advocating to raise this bar by aiming for a 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emission by 2030.⁴⁹ In the NECP, the position of the Netherlands as an advanced country in terms of economy and innovation is highlighted and taken pride in,⁵⁰ yet the government still does not manage to reduce emissions as obliged by the Urgenda Climate Case ruling by the Supreme Court.

According to the NECP report, climate change has divided society with on one side citizens calling for urgent action from the government and on the other side strong opposition

⁴⁵ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, “Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030.”

⁴⁶ Government of the Netherlands, “National Climate Agreement.”

⁴⁷ Government of the Netherlands, “National Climate Agreement,” 5.

⁴⁸ Matt Brennan, “The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music,” in Audible Infrastructures, ed. Kyle Devine and Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 119.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, “Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030,” 7.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, 6.

against sustainable development and policy. Nevertheless, the NECP report is clear in stating that significant action is required to limit global warming and climate change.⁵¹ While the Dutch government might still be lacking in their execution of the policies, the Climate Agreement and NECP report suggest that there is a level of commitment to combat climate change and that the government takes the climate crisis seriously. However, the Climate Agreement and NECP report contain contradicting statements regarding the focus of climate policy. On the one hand, significant policy programs are needed to ensure a transition to a circular economy, while on the other hand, these policy documents focus mostly on energy use and disregard physical waste reduction, which is an important aspect of a circular economy. The Climate Agreement and NECP also do not discuss the role of creative industries, despite an emphasis on the need for economy-wide changes. The role of the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science has only been mentioned in relation to education and science.

For cultural policy, I analyze two documents: a report about the themes discussed in the coalition agreement from 2017 published in 2018⁵² and a report about the main principles of cultural policy for the period of 2021-2024.⁵³ I analyze these reports as these are the most prominently mentioned documents on the website in the arts and cultural policy section.⁵⁴ Both reports are made by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science and provide overviews of the cultural policy and the budgets set out to support the policy. The report from 2021 is built upon, or at least, heavily influenced, by the report 2017. As a proof of that, the main principles listed on the government website under the section for arts and cultural policy are extracts from the coalition agreement from 2017. The principles from 2021 are only provided as supplementary material. This is not surprising, because the 2021 report lays out many of the same principles as shown in *Figure 3: Main principles of cultural policy*. As there are no significant changes between the reports between 2017 and 2021, this suggests that the government seems to be satisfied with the results of previous cultural policy and aims to continue along the same direction.

⁵¹ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, 6.

⁵² Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Cultuur in een Open Samenleving.”

⁵³ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Uitgangspunten Cultuurbeleid 2021-2024,” 5.

⁵⁴ Rijksoverheid, “Kunst- en Cultuurbeleid,” accessed February 28, 2022,

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/kunst-en-cultuur/kunst-en-cultuurbeleid>.

Principles of cultural policy in coalition agreement from 2017 ⁵⁵	Principles of current cultural policy for the period of 2021-2024 ⁵⁶
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Culture creates curiosity; 2. Space for new artists and culture; 3. An environment with character; 4. Culture is borderless; 5. A strong cultural sector.” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Expansion and innovation; 2. A strong cultural sector; 3. Culture from and for everyone; 4. Culture is borderless.”

FIGURE 3: MAIN PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL POLICY

As the table demonstrates, the principles for cultural policy have remained similar in the last six years. Not only are these terms vague, but the explanations remain broad and unspecific. This seems partially to be due to the generalization of all culture and arts, encompassing theater to literature, fine arts, dance, music, sports and more. Though this is not necessarily a critique to the report, a report that aims to discuss the principles of the entire cultural policy of a country in 35 pages is likely to lack depth. Therefore, much of the principles and policy is up to interpretation. First, I provide a brief overview of the four main principles that the current cultural policy is based on.

The principle “expansion and innovation” stands for making culture more accessible, both in terms of accessibility to new generations and the availability of different types of culture and art. The ministry aims for a more varied availability to culture by providing an increasing number of spaces for festivals and spaces for development.⁵⁷ The principle of “a strong cultural sector” seems straightforward given the Covid-19 pandemic. Where it is expected to discuss recovery funds for the sections of the cultural sector that have been damaged by the pandemic, this principle is about ensuring fair wages for employees in the cultural sector. “The goal is to stimulate growth and innovation in the performing arts and to allow producers to take more risks and experiment with new work, new makers, and new approaches.”⁵⁸ “Culture is from and for everyone.” This principle focuses on cultural participation and education as the amount of participation and experience of culture still varies largely. This principle is a focus for municipalities and provinces

⁵⁵ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Cultuur in een Open Samenleving,” 2.

⁵⁶ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, “Uitgangspunten Cultuurbeleid 2021-2024,” 2.

⁵⁷ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 6.

⁵⁸ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 8–9 Dutch: “Doel is groei en innovatie in de podiumkunsten te bevorderen en producten in staat te stellen meer risico’s te nemen en te experimenteren met nieuwe wwerk, nieuwe makers, en nieuwe publieksbenaderingen.”

as they have to develop opportunities for their local communities.⁵⁹ The final principle of the Dutch cultural policy is “culture is borderless”. This principle aims for greater development of Dutch talent in the international market as well as stimulation of collaboration with other countries—and the European Union in particular.⁶⁰ The ministry also emphasizes that it wants to use culture to connect the international profile of the Netherlands to social matters and diplomacy as well as human rights work.

All in all, the report consists of buzzword after buzzword. Terms such as innovation and development are used constantly without clear explanations about the specific meaning of the words. The introduction to the report sets the tone already with phrases such as “culture does something to you,” “it touches you and makes you think,” “culture stimulates the imagination,” and “culture connects.”⁶¹ These are statements that have long been attributed to culture and its role in society, whether they have been proven or not. In this context, however, the phrases are used merely to catch attention and have nothing to do with the policy principles discussed in the report.

The term sustainable or sustainability, on the other hand, is barely mentioned—three times in total. Though it is not mentioned explicitly, sustainability as a value in fashion would suggest environmental sustainability. The other two uses of the term sustainable—in connection to accessibility and management of digital culture—indicate a reference to economic and cultural sustainability. Why environmental sustainability is only an issue that concerns the fashion industry remains uncertain. In today’s climate, the environment is an issue that concerns nearly every sector and should therefore also be represented in policies. But when it comes to arts and cultural policy, environmental sustainability seems to be a low priority, despite the cultural sectors’ importance in issues such as the climate crisis. The overview of the budget for performing arts also refers to no separate budget for sustainable development. A more thorough analysis of subsidy options for venues is discussed in Chapter Six.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, venues and similar cultural institutions including theaters and museums lost almost all sources of income, while still having to maintain all regular expenses. For some venues this has led to financial insecurity, and letting go of large amounts of staff members was not unheard of. For many of these live music sector workers that have been laid off,

⁵⁹ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 10.

⁶⁰ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 14–15.

⁶¹ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2.

it meant that they started considering more secure and stable jobs in other sectors that were not as affected by Covid-19 as music as the live music sector. During the Covid-19 recovery period this means that venues are often still working with reduced budgets while also having to search for many new employees of which there are fewer and who also increased their salary requirements. Given the impact of the pandemic on the live music sector, the discussion of sustainability in music and cultural policy almost always refers to economic sustainability and security. This is reflected in long term policy plans as discussed above, but also in funding and subsidies, parliamentary letters, and other governmental documents, which I discuss in the following chapters. A letter from September 2021 from the former minister of Education, Culture, and Science states that the cabinet aims to “develop a recovery plan for the cultural and creative sector to strengthen/reinforce them sustainably.”

CONCLUSION

First, the fact that the Dutch government is divided into three separate branches—legislative, executive, and judicial—is an essential structural element to the environment of sustainability policies. That is because it has allowed NGO Stichting Urgenda together with over 800 ordinary citizens to sue the Dutch government for undermining the Dutch rule of law by creating insufficient policies to combat climate change. The division of the government makes this possible since the Dutch court and Dutch parliament are considered separate from each other. Stichting Urgenda claimed that the Dutch government was not complying to its own regulations and laws. That is, the government signed and ratified the Paris Agreement which states to keep global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. According to Dutch law, international treaties and European Union law are at the highest sources of law, meaning that prior Dutch laws and policies need to be amended in order to comply with international treaties such as the Paris Agreement. This agreement was signed and ratified by 196 parties, which agreed to limit global temperature increase, to promote and foster climate resilience and to lower greenhouse gas emissions across their *entire economies*. Developed countries such as the Netherlands are also obliged to take the lead in this and to support developing countries. The Dutch Supreme Court ruled in favor of Stichting Urgenda’s claim and thereby confirmed that the government needed to take more and better action and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2020 compared to 1990. This goal was met, but only due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the significant drop of emissions caused by this. In 2021, there were again more emissions than the court ruled.

In addition to international law and the court case with Stichting Urgenda, other prominent actors and inputs for sustainable policy in the Netherlands are global climate movements and support from opposition parties and scientists. The climate movements, mostly led by young protesters, have been demanding more environmental action from governments all over the world. Greta Thunberg even started a petition demanding the United Nations to declare the climate crisis a climate emergency on the same level of the Covid-19 pandemic. This would mean that it needs to receive similarly strong responses from governments. While many governments (local and national) have declared the climate emergency, the national government of the Netherlands has not done so. Nevertheless, some political parties do prioritize environmental actions and policies. In the Netherlands specifically, these parties are—on average—growing slowly in popularity. New party Volt Europa has shown support for the climate movements by adopting the demands of the movements into their political agenda. Moreover, scientists have shown tremendous support for the movements. Where these movements often demanded politicians to listen to science, scientists everywhere have acknowledged that the concerns of the protesters are completely valid.

Overall, the Dutch government seems to lack direction in their policies. On the one hand, an urgency for environmental action and policies is emphasized in the National Climate Agreement, while on the other hand, the national government has not yet declared the climate emergency. Moreover, according to the Paris Agreement economy-wide measures need to be taken, but cultural policy documents completely disregard environmental concerns. The Dutch government requires more accountability in order to comply with the Supreme Court ruling of 2019, international agreements, and its own rule of law.

CHAPTER 4 PLASTIC POLICY

At the end of a night at a venue the dance floor is covered in plastic cups. This used to be a common sight, and is still often the case. Only when the audience leaves, the large amounts of plastic cups become visible and the venue crew needs to scrape together all the plastic into containers to be collected the next morning. Though the number of plastic cups varies depending on music genre, audience type, and the time span of the event, there will almost always be some containers filled to be sent off to waste management facilities where the cups may or may not be recycled. But there is one important exception: when venues use reusable cups, the dance floor might be covered in cups, but they will not leave the perimeter and they will not end up in landfill.

As demonstrated in Chapter Two and illustrated by this short example, physical waste is a large contributor to the environmental impact of concerts. Compared to plastic waste, food and catering only makes up a small amount of this waste. Therefore, there are no specific regulations about reducing food waste or emission targeted at the events industry, and especially not for venues. Since plastic waste, primarily from the use of single-use plastic cups, is the most common form of physical waste, this chapter focuses on policies around plastic use. I discuss European Union and Dutch policies for single-use plastics at different stages of the policy process. I elaborate on the problem and the reasons behind the policies, but also the implementation and enforcement of these policies including recent developments on all of these topics. But first, I provide a brief overview of national policies relating to separating and recycling trash, since these affect other plastic policies. As a result of this waste and plastic policy analysis, I demonstrate how the Dutch policy system functions when it needs to solve a problem and I highlight the flaws in this system.

SEPARATING AND RECYCLING TRASH

According to the Dutch Government website, the goal for 2020 was to have 75% of all waste (both household and corporate) separated. Because of this, businesses also need to separate their waste. However, the page is outdated, stating: “Approximately 60% of all household waste is now separated. The government wants to increase this to 75% in 2020,” meaning that this webpage

dates back to at least 2019 or earlier.¹ This led me to have a phone call with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management for clarification on the current status of waste management and policy. I spoke to a Senior Policy Officer of Circular Economy who explained how waste is managed and processed in the Netherlands.² The officer first emphasized that in the Netherlands, waste management regulations are different from EU regulations. So-called ‘city waste’ in the EU is one category, whereas the Dutch government divides waste into household and corporate waste. She explained that, for household waste, though the goal of 75% separated waste and 100 kilograms of residual waste per person per year was set for 2020, in 2021 the goal had not been reached yet. In 2021, 60% of all household waste was separate and there was still approximately 180 kilograms of residual waste per person. The officer explained that this lack of progress has made the ministry strategize in the sense that they will focus more on quality of recycling rather than quantity of separation and recycling. For corporate waste, the Dutch government put different policies in place. One primary goal was to reduce residual waste by 50% by 2024 compared to 2014. This goal has almost been reached with a 48% reduction by 2021. The officer added that this goal is due to the EU regulations which aim for a 55% reduction of residual waste by 2025. This percentage is also set to increase by 5% every 5 years. The officer also directed me towards VANG Buitenshuis. VANG Buitenshuis means From Waste To Resource (Dutch: Van Afval Naar Grondstof) Outdoors (or outside of home). VANG Buitenshuis is the program by the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management³—the executive body of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management that ensures policy implementation⁴—that assists the office-, shop-, and service sectors in reducing residual waste in order to recycle more and reduce the use of new resources as a way of working towards a circular economy.⁵ The website of VANG Buitenshuis provides practical resources for waste reduction and management at

¹ Rijksoverheid, “Huishoudelijk Afval Scheiden en Recyclen,” accessed April 21, 2022, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/afval/huishoudelijk-afval>. Dutch: “Ongeveer 60% van al het huishoudelijk afval wordt nu gescheiden. De overheid wil dit verhogen naar 75% in 2020.”

² Phone call with the Senior Policy Officer Circular Economy of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management on April 26, 2022.

³ Dutch: Rijkswaterstaat

⁴ Government of the Netherlands, “Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management: Organisation,” accessed April 26, 2022, <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-infrastructure-and-water-management/organisation>.

⁵ Rijkswaterstaat, “Programma,” VANG Buitenshuis, accessed April 26, 2022, <https://vangbuitenshuis.nl/programma/>.

businesses, but it also contains a database with information about policies and regulations. The information provided on the website is also categorized by sector — e.g. festivals and events, education, office, transport, retail, health care, and so on.⁶ This means that venues employees can easily access information about relevant policy developments as well as resources for sustainable development that are specific to the festivals and events sector by clicking on that corresponding tab on the website.⁷

The waste management strategies also differ per municipality, meaning that different municipalities ask corporations to recycle different kinds of waste. In various municipalities of large cities such as Rotterdam and Amsterdam, general waste is not picked up separately from plastic or organic waste. In these municipalities, plastic will be separated from the other waste at waste management facilities. The issue is that all this waste, and especially organic waste, can contaminate large amounts of plastic that is found in the same containers. But in order to recycle plastic—as well as paper—it cannot be too contaminated.⁸ But the officer explained that in cities often the quality of the organic waste is so low that it is not suitable anymore to become compost. Paper and glass are picked up separately in most municipalities including Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

Getting physical waste collected for businesses costs more money when there is more waste to be collected. Besides this, municipalities and the national government are not actively disincentivizing the reduction of physical waste. On the national government webpage about physical waste, the emphasis is put on household waste and new regulations. Though these new regulations cover mostly corporate waste, most of the costs related to these new regulations are put on the shoulders of the consumers, resulting in less responsibility for the corporations.

But waste in general is a problem as most physical waste is not separated and ends up in landfill. Here, the decomposition of organic waste that is not separated emits greenhouse gases as byproducts. These greenhouse gases from organic waste decomposition are called landfill gases (LFG) and contain approximately 50% methane and 50% carbon dioxide. As explained in chapter

⁶ VANG Buitenshuis, “Kennisbibliotheek,” accessed May 26, 2022, <https://vangbuitenshuis.nl/kennisbibliotheek/>.

⁷ VANG Buitenshuis, “Festivals en Evenementen,” accessed May 26, 2022, <https://vangbuitenshuis.nl/branches-0/cultuur-sport-recreatie/branches/festivals-evenementen/>.

⁸ Milieu Centraal, “Papier En Karton,” accessed May 18, 2022, <https://www.milieucentraal.nl/minder-afval/afval-scheiden/papier-en-karton/>.

Two, the global warming potential of methane is much higher than that of carbon dioxide.⁹ More separation of organic waste in addition to more efficient recycling of waste can reduce GHGs. Additionally, waste can end up in places different than landfill, such as in nature, oceans, and among wildlife. More so, the fact that it is waste means that there have been resources that have been used for manufacturing. Though some of these resources are renewable, many are not, such as plastics. Even the manufacturing process itself in many cases causes greenhouse gas emissions. This means that there is an urgent need for a reduction of waste in general, but more specifically for the manufacturing of products from newly sourced fossil fuels.

CURRENT POLICY FOR PLASTIC (CUPS)

As discussed in Chapter Two, for concerts in particular, plastic cups are the most significant source of physical waste.¹⁰ Although all interviewees stated that they are using hard cups or are in the process of switching to hard cups as they too have found this to be more sustainable, many venues in the Netherlands are still using single-use plastic cups as this remains the most cost-efficient option.

While many plastics for food and beverage consumption are prohibited for use, plastic cups have limited restrictions. For example, plastic plates, straw, and cutlery are not allowed to be sold any longer, since July 3, 2021.¹¹ This is according to the European Union's single-use plastic (SUP) directive, which the Netherlands is therefore also required to adopt. Until early January of 2023, cups only need to be properly marked, stating that they include plastic, how to dispose of them, and that they harm the environment. From January 5, 2023, producers of cups have the responsibility to pay for and collect the waste caused by the cups they produce.

⁹ United States Environmental Protection Agency, "Basic Information about Landfill Gas," EPA, accessed May 26, 2022, <https://www.epa.gov/lmop/basic-information-about-landfill-gas>.

¹⁰ Manchester City Council, "Reusable Cups at Events: Why It Matters and How to Do It: A Guide for Everyone Involved in Organising Events," October 2021, 7, <https://www.vision2025.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Reusable-cups-guide-why-and-how.pdf>.

¹¹ Kamer van Koophandel, "Ban on Single-Use Plastics from 2021," accessed May 9, 2022, <https://www.kvk.nl/english/rules-and-laws/ban-on-single-use-plastics/>.

The European Union’s SUP directive states that their European Strategy for Plastic is an important step towards a circular economy.¹² For the EU, a circular economy means to fully re-use, repair and recycle plastic products and develop and promote more sustainable materials. The directive also emphasizes that the reason for implementing the directive is the “*significant* negative environmental, health and economic impact” that plastic products cause.¹³ Though the directive does not state exactly how plastics can have a negative effect on human health, it mentions several instances in which human health and the environment are impacted negatively. An example of this is marine litter containing plastic products mentioned in Articles 6 and 25.¹⁴ Especially microplastics that enter our bodies from the packaging of the liquids we drink and the foods we eat, but also chemical additives that are used in plastic product manufacturing have a risk of negatively impacting our health.¹⁵

Despite the human health risks of plastic products and the emphasis on the risks by the European Union’s SUP directive, the Dutch government does not discuss this. The government’s webpages and many related policy documents about waste and plastic barely mention negative health impacts of plastic. This thesis focuses on the environment. But perhaps if the emphasis in policy making is put on the health of humans rather than the health of the planet, policies may be more effective. Though there is no guarantee of success, it is an approach worth trying to take. In the end, only the *results* matter in reducing waste, not *how* we achieved these goals.

ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport (ILT) is the supervising body of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, which means that they supervise and enforce the single-

¹² European Parliament and Council of the European Union, “Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the Reduction of the Impact of Certain Plastic Products on the Environment” (Official Journal of the European Union, June 5, 2019), 1, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L0904&from=EN>.

¹³ European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 1.

¹⁴ European Parliament and Council of the European Union, “Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the Reduction of the Impact of Certain Plastic Products on the Environment.” Articles 6 (p. 2) and 25 (p. 6).

¹⁵ Plastic Health Coalition, “Microplastics & Pathogens,” accessed May 19, 2022, <https://www.plastichealthcoalition.org/microplastics/>.

use plastic regulations in the Netherlands.¹⁶ In an interview with Amsterdam newspaper *Het Parool* in July 2021, the ILT spokesperson stated that the ILT will not be fining non-complying businesses just yet and that there is no special unit that checks corporations' compliance with the regulations. First, they added, the ILT wants to inform everyone and only after a warning, fines will follow.¹⁷ To me, this raised multiple questions about the enforcement of the single-use plastic regulations. As I am writing this report, the first regulations have been in place for over nine months. The question is whether the ILT is already fining companies for non-compliance with the regulations, or when the fining would start. Because of these questions, I contacted the ILT and was put in touch with the senior inspector in charge of the enforcement of the plastic ban. He explained that since the article in *Het Parool*, the ILT now has a task force of 8 employees (not all full-time) who are working on the enforcement of the Single-Use Plastic Directive.¹⁸ He added that the ILT does not actually fine businesses where prohibited plastic products are used. Instead they fine the party that introduces the plastic products to the Dutch market. This can be a producer of plastic products in the Netherlands or the business that imports the products, whether this is a restaurant, venue, or a catering wholesaler. This is called the Producer Responsibility¹⁹ and this is what the ILT focuses on. The procedure of the checks goes as follows: first, various catering and event (e.g. restaurants, venues, festivals) establishments are visited by the ILT and checked for prohibited plastics. In the case of prohibited plastics, the ILT requests the purchase invoice to trace the business that supplied the plastic products. This is repeated until the party is found that first sold the product in the Netherlands. Once the manufacturer or importer have been traced back, the ILT checks the following items:

- Are the products allowed to be sold, or is it forbidden?
- Are the products labelled with the correct markings?
- Are the products sold with deposit money²⁰?
- Are the products completely free of plastics?

¹⁶ Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport, “Home | Inspectie Leefomgeving En Transport,” accessed April 21, 2022, <https://www.ilent.nl>.

¹⁷ Sanne Schelfaut, “Het Afscheid van Plastic Rietjes en Wattenstaafjes Valt Nog Niet Mee,” *Het Parool*, July 5, 2021, <https://www.parool.nl/nederland/het-afscheid-van-plastic-rietjes-en-wattenstaafjes-valt-nog-niet-mee~b809e039/>.

¹⁸ Email conversation from the inspector, April 19, 2022.

¹⁹ Dutch: “ProducentenVerantwoordelijkheid”

²⁰ Dutch: statiegeld

The inspector emphasized that this last question is extremely important. That is, for example, many paper straws that are sold actually contain a thin layer of plastic, which is still not allowed.

At the first sight visit, non-complying businesses are informed of the misconduct. At the second visit, the business will receive a warning, and at the third visit, the business will be fined. It is possible for organizations as well as individuals to notify the ILT of possible non-compliance to the regulations.²¹ That means that customers themselves can notify the ILT that a venue they have visited might be using plastic products that are not allowed. This can help the ILT trace back more businesses that are breaking the law.

The fact that only the first party in the Netherlands that handles the plastic products is fined, means that establishments such as venues are not held accountable for their use of these prohibited plastic products. Why the regulations do not target these establishments is unclear. This is problematic, since these are the places where the plastic products reach the general public. With their current protocols, the ILT is now doing exactly what the regulations require. However, it is unclear whether this action is enough to significantly reduce the amount of prohibited plastic use as the regulations are too recent to demonstrate significant results. More so, since venues and similar establishments are not held accountable, the demand for the prohibited plastic products remains. If in addition to the supply, the demand is also actively reduced, the supply may decrease more rapidly. It is also possible that non-compliance with the regulations is more financially beneficial for manufacturers or importers. That is because production, operations, or sales of currently sold plastic products may financially outweigh the costs of a fine. Assistant law professor at University of Wisconsin and Postdoctoral at the ETH Zurich Center for Law & Economics Nathan Atkinson, self-published a paper examining the costs and benefits of non-compliance with environmental laws in the United States.²² In his study, Atkinson examines the harmful emissions by businesses and related United States laws. The concept of breaking the law for higher profits is comparable to other environmental laws. Atkinson concludes that since corporations' primary goal is to maximize profit, if breaking the law will result in higher profits, corporations are likely to do

²¹ Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport, "Eenmalig gebruik Kunststofproducten (SUP)," accessed April 21, 2022, <https://www.ilent.nl/onderwerpen/eenmalig-gebruik-kunststofproducten-sup>.

²² Nathan Atkinson, "Do Corporations Profit from Breaking the Law? Evidence from Environmental Violations" (Self-published, June 25, 2020), <https://nathanatkinson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Atkinson-2020-Corporate-Environmental-Violations-1.pdf>.

so.²³ This is because penalties for non-compliance evaluated in Atkinson’s study cost the corporations far less money than compliance to the laws, meaning that non-compliance is more financially beneficial. Atkinson does add that non-compliance may be both an active choice or by mistake,²⁴ but because of this the ILT first makes sure to inform non-complying businesses once more before penalizing them. Moreover, although breaking the law may sometimes be more profitable, it may also negatively affect a customer’s view of the business, resulting in a loss of customers, which would lead to a long-term loss of income and profit. The size of the penalties and whether the penalties and fines for the plastic ban in the EU and the Netherlands are significant enough for businesses to comply with the regulations will need to be evaluated by the EU and the Dutch government. This evaluation step is essential to the policy process, but since the regulations have only been in place for little less than one year at the time of writing, there is no information available. This evaluation would then also need to include a review of previously fined businesses to see whether they changed their operation or not despite a penalty in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the penalty.

FUTURE POLICY FOR SINGLE-USE PLASTICS AT THE PLACE OF CONSUMPTION

On March 29th 2022, the Dutch state secretary of infrastructure and water management Drs. Heijnen informed the House of Representatives about a new development in single-use plastic regulations.²⁵ The new regulations are put in place to be more in line with the EU SUP directive.²⁶ These regulations mean that for consumption on location—such as at offices, restaurants, festivals, and thus also venues—items such as cups and plates that are made completely or partially from single-use plastics will not be allowed.²⁷ Packaging that is made from only cardboard is allowed. Moreover, plastic packaging that is suitable for “high quality recycling” is allowed as long

²³ Atkinson, 23.

²⁴ Atkinson, 24.

²⁵ Vivianne Heijnen, “Kamerbrief over Ministeriële regeling kunststofproducten voor eenmalig gebruik,” March 29, 2022, [https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/vivianne-](https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/vivianne-heijnen/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/03/29/ministeriele-regeling-kunststofproducten-voor-eenmalig-gebruik)

[heijnen/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/03/29/ministeriele-regeling-kunststofproducten-voor-eenmalig-gebruik](https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/vivianne-heijnen/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/03/29/ministeriele-regeling-kunststofproducten-voor-eenmalig-gebruik).

²⁶ Heijnen, 1.

²⁷ Heijnen, 2.

as businesses collect the minimum amount back for the plastic to be recycled. In 2024 this needs to be 75% and in 2027 this needs to be 90%. According to Heijnen, this would still ensure a circular economy without excessively limiting businesses.

These regulations were originally planned to be put in force in 2023. This was announced in a so-called internet consultation in October 2021. Internet consultations allow the ordinary citizens as well as institutions and businesses to respond to bills. The responses to the internet consultation about the SUP regulations, have resulted in the start of the new regulations for consumption on location to be moved to January 1st 2024. This decision was based on the responses claiming that “many business owners/entrepreneurs requested more time in order to comply with the regulations.”²⁸ The union Koninklijke Horeca Nederland (KHN) that represents over nineteen thousand catering establishments explains that the extra time is mostly required to build up the funds to pay for alternatives to the plastic products.²⁹ That is because the companies do not receive additional funding for this and, especially due to extra financial problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to KHN, these companies do not yet have the cash flow they need to make the necessary changes. This lack of financial aid is also a present hurdle specifically for venues and event caterers. However, whether Heijnen and the ministry have examined the claim of requiring more time to adjust not stated or clarified in the letter. There is also no differentiation between types of businesses for the deadline of January 1st 2024. The extended deadline means that *all* these businesses including venues are able to create more plastic pollution for an extra year as a result of inadequately researched bills and policy plans.

In the letter, Heijnen emphasizes that stricter local regulations (Algemene Plaatselijke Verordening, APV) from municipalities would overrule the national regulations.³⁰ That is, if a municipality prohibits all options except the use of hard cups at events, this will be regarded as a higher source of law. In the municipality of Tilburg (North-Brabant), similar regulations for events are already started on May 1st 2022, and since the regulations are stricter—in the sense that the deadline for making the switch is earlier than those announced by the state secretary—the national

²⁸ Heijnen, 2. Dutch: “Verder vroegen veel ondernemers meer tijd om te kunnen voldoen aan de eisen uit de Regeling.”

²⁹ Dirk Beljaarts, “Internetconsultatie ‘Ministeriele regeling kunststofproducten voor eenmalig gebruik’” (Koninklijke Horeca Nederland, December 2, 2021), 6, <https://www.khn.nl/nieuws/plastic-wegwerpbekers-en-maaltijdverpakkingen-in-de-ban>.

³⁰ Heijnen, “Kamerbrief over Ministeriële regeling kunststofproducten voor eenmalig gebruik,” March 29, 2022, 2.

regulations are overruled.³¹ This does indicate that some municipalities may feel a stronger urge to environmental action than the national government.

According to the inspector of the ILT, for these new regulations about single-use plastics for consumption on location in particular the establishments such as venues are held accountable as opposed to the older and current regulations. This means that venues can receive a penalty for using single-use plastic cups that are not well or not at all recyclable as of January 2024. The enforcement of these new regulations will follow a similar protocol to that of current regulations for single-use plastics. Nevertheless, venues and similar establishments will only be held accountable two and a half years after the introduction of the European Union's Single-Use Plastic Directives.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, by analyzing waste and plastic policies, I demonstrated how Dutch policies are formed, implemented, and enforced. By doing so I highlighted important steps in the policy process for plastic policies as well as points of negligence of policymakers.

By 2022, the goal set for 2020 to limit residual waste per person per year to 100 kilograms and have 75% of all waste separated is far from being achieved. With still 180 kilograms of residual waste per person and only 60% of all waste being separated by 2021, the Dutch government is way behind on its own goals. The EU set a goal for 2024 to have all residual waste reduced by 50%. The Netherlands has reached a 48% reduction by 2021, indicating good progress on this front.

Current policy for plastic states that SUP products such as plates, straws, and cutlery are prohibited from July 2021. As this is stated in the SUP-directive from the EU, this automatically applies to the Netherlands as well. Plastic cups are allowed to be sold under the condition that they are marked according to EU guidelines. The SUP-directive also emphasizes that the responsibility is on the plastic manufacturing and importing companies, and not on the final users of the plastics such as restaurants or venues. The SUP-directive has been created due to negative environmental and health impacts of plastic. However, human health reasons are neglected as an

³¹ Gemeente Tilburg, "Checklist Evenementenvergunning," accessed April 6, 2022, <https://www.tilburg.nl/ondernemers/evenementen/checklist-evenementenvergunning/>.

argument to push for stronger action. The enforcement of the regulations is carried out by the ILT. In the first months after the introduction of the new regulations, the ILT did not fine non-complying business yet. Instead, they focused on correctly informing the businesses on the new regulations. In 2022, the ILT has a task force that investigates which company manufacture or import the prohibited plastics to the Netherlands. These companies are traced back by requesting purchase invoices from businesses where prohibited plastic products are found. Non-complying manufacturers and importers will then receive a fine after a warning has been shown ineffective. Businesses such as restaurants and venues, however, are not currently held accountable for the use of prohibited plastics. A fine may also not suffice to prevent the company from continuing in their non-compliance. Some companies, given the low material and production costs of single-use plastic, may find it still more financially beneficial to continue producing or importing plastic production despite paying the fines. Since the regulations have only been introduced recently, the size and success of the fines is not clear yet. The EU and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management will need to evaluate the effectiveness of the current enforcement system and fines.

A recent development in the single-use plastic regulations is the letter to the House of Representatives from Dutch state secretary of infrastructure and water management Drs. Heijnen. The letter from March 2022 introduces new regulations for venues, restaurants and similar establishments. Heijnen states that as of 2024, businesses such as venues are not allowed to use single-use plastic cups for consumption on location — including drinks during concerts — unless they can ensure 75% will be recycled at high quality. For this regulation, these businesses are held accountable in contrast to the current regulations. Initially these new regulations were planned to be put in force in 2023, but after an online consultation, this date has been pushed back. The results of the consultation stated that businesses required more time to comply with the regulations. Pushing back the commencement of the regulations will allow businesses to unnecessarily pollute the planet with more plastic.

All in all, Dutch waste management and plastic policies are not yet sufficient to combat climate change and the negative impact of plastic on our own health and that of our planet. Policies are too loose to push businesses into changing their practices to make significant differences in terms of sustainability. The Dutch government needs to do more to reduce plastic use and waste, and needs to evaluate more critically about effectiveness of current and future policies. Especially single-use plastic policies in the Netherlands need to follow the EU SUP Directive more closely by implementing regulations that are stricter and come into force sooner.

CHAPTER 5 VENUE EMPLOYEE INTERVIEWS

In the previous chapters I have established the problem at hand—the environmental impact of live music and concerts—and provided an overview of the Dutch environmental and cultural policy context. The various aspects of the environmental impact of live music are in the hands of several—one may say all players—of the music industry. In the next two chapters I focus on the venues, where much of the waste and emissions of a concert or tour are generated. Little prior research has been done on obstacles and motivations for environmental action. The prior research—studies by Bottrill et al. (2010)¹ and Mair and Laing²—was either outdated or did not cover the exact same questions as I do in this thesis.

In Chapter Six, I focus on the obstacles that venues face in their journey to become more sustainable. In Chapter Seven, I elaborate on the motivations behind the venue’s environmental action and their sustainability statements. But first, I will explain the methodology of the interviews and the survey.

INTERVIEW AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

To find out more about current sustainable practices of Dutch popular music venues, five staff members of popular and internationally well-respected Dutch venues have been interviewed with regards to these practices.³ I initially contacted approximately ten Dutch venues scattered around the country that fit three requirements. First, I choose the venues based on their size—capacities ranging from 200-3000 people—as this would limit the scope of the research and because business

¹ Catherine Bottrill, “Moving Arts: Managing the Carbon Impacts of Our Touring: Volume 1: Bands” (Julie’s Bicycle, June 2010), https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/MA_Vol1_Touring_Bands_Report_2010.pdf.

² Judith Mair and Jennifer Laing, “The Greening of Music Festivals: Motivations, Barriers and Outcomes. Applying the Mair and Jago Model,” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20, no. 5 (January 5, 2012): 683–700, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.636819>.

³ The venues of which employees participated in the interviews are mostly well-known and have good reputations among international touring and live music professionals in the network of the researcher. The venues also have a large number of international artists visiting.

and production practices at venues with a larger capacity can differ too much from smaller venues. I also wanted to focus on popular music venues to help limit the scope of the research and I am mostly familiar with this part of the live music sector. Lastly, I wanted to interview venues that regularly host internationally touring artists as artist travel is an important factor in calculating emissions. The last requirement indirectly affected the location of the venues that I contacted as most venues with a large number of international artists are located in cities rather than towns. Venues I contacted are located in cities all over the country, but the venues that participated are located in the Randstad and nearby. The Randstad is the conurbation of the largest cities in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht) and all cities and towns in between. The Randstad is the most densely populated area in the country and therefore has slightly better public transport infrastructure and overall contains the majority of popular music venues. The interviewees were recruited in part through my previously established professional contact and in part by contacting general business email addresses of the venues found on their websites. In my initial emails I briefly explained the topic of this thesis, the purpose of the interviews, and what kind of information I was expecting to discover in the interviews. The professional contacts as well as general email addresses have then forwarded my request for interviews to the person at the venue whom they found most suitable and who had time in their schedules.

Some of the venues I contacted did not reply and were also not part of my prior professional network. Two venues were not able to take part due to time constraints and lack of staff members. Finally, the five venues that participated are Paradiso, TivoliVredenburg, 013, Patronaat, and Rotown from five different cities and four different provinces, which allows for a thorough comparison in local policy analysis. It is important to acknowledge that the answers about obstacles and motivation may only portray one side of the live music industry. All these five venues have been working on sustainability, which might be a reason they accepted my invitation to interview them. That is, venue staff who are aware that their venue has not taken much environmental action, might be hesitant to discuss this topic. Here is a brief overview of the venues that participated.



IMAGE 1 MAP OF THE NETHERLANDS WITH PARTICIPATING VENUES. BLIND MAP FROM D-MAPS.COM, LOCATION TAGS ADDED SEPARATELY.

- **Paradiso** is one of the Netherlands’ most well-regarded popular music venues. Located in the city center of Amsterdam in an old church building, the venue has hosted concerts of numerous famous national as well as international musicians and bands. Paradiso has two rooms, the small room with a capacity of 200 people and the large room with a capacity of 1500 people, but they also outsource concerts to venues Bitterzoet, and Paradiso Noord. From personal experience, for its relatively small size, this venue is well-known among international touring artists and crew for its ambience thanks to the church building and production quality. I interviewed Eva van de Vlasakker who is the programmer at Paradiso.
- **013** has the largest rooms from all participating venues with two rooms with capacities of 700 and 3000 people. 013 is located in Tilburg, and is thus the only venue of the five outside of the Randstad. Though Tilburg is not far from the Randstad, its location may be less accessible than venues in Amsterdam or Utrecht. Nevertheless, people from all over

the Netherlands travel frequently to Tilburg to enjoy concerts at 013. In addition to concerts, 013 organizes and hosts Roadburn, a heavy music festival. I interviewed Mijndert Rodolf, head of Marketing and Communications.

- **TivoliVredenburg** in Utrecht is the venue with the most rooms, six in total. The popular music concerts are mainly hosted in the 3 largest rooms (large room (max. 2000 people depending on lay-out), Ronda (2000 people), and Pandora (675 people)). After reaching out to TivoliVredenburg I was put in touch with Aerd de Boode, hospitality manager of TivoliVredenburg, who initiated the sustainable development at the venue. Similar to Paradiso, TivoliVredenburg has a large number of international concerts.
- **Patronaat** in Haarlem has three rooms, with capacities of 100, 350, and 995 people. The variety in capacity allows for the venue to host bands of various stages in their careers. Patronaat also outsources concerts to nine external locations. On recommendation of Van de Vlasakker from Paradiso, I reached out to Patronaat, as she explained that Patronaat has a reputation for being very successful in their sustainable development. I spoke to Katharina Schoemaker, the venue's Human Resources Advisor and Office Manager, about their progress.
- **Rotown** in Rotterdam is the smallest venue of the five. With a capacity of 250 people, Rotown hosts concerts for upcoming artists. Most famous Dutch bands played some of their first shows in Rotown and many international acts stop by at Rotown during their European tours. Since 2020, Rotown also has been sharing its building with the Vegan Snackbar, a restaurant that—as the name states—sells vegan junk/fast food. Rotown also organizes Left of the Dial, a city-wide festival for upcoming alternative music bands. I interviewed Stephan Maaskant who is the programmer at Rotown.

Prior to the interviews, informed consent forms stating the purpose of the interview and the use of the information from the interviews were sent to and signed by the interviewees. I audio recorded the interviews and transcribed these recordings, after which I sent the transcriptions to the interviewees. The interviewees then could then mark sections with various degrees of anonymity. Anonymity could be full, partial, or non-existent. Parts that could be anonymized are the name of the interviewee, name of the venue, city or region of the venue, capacity of the venue. The different sections and anonymity degrees will be used while referencing the interviews in the thesis. Neither the recordings nor the transcriptions are in the appendix or publicly available. That is, after completion of the thesis the recordings and transcriptions have been deleted permanently to ensure the privacy of the interviewees. The interviewed venue employees were very open in their responses and only wanted a few sentences to be anonymized.

The most important topics that were discussed in the interviews are motivations and obstacles for environmental action. Little research has been found about obstacles and motivations in the live music industry. The 2010 study by Bottrill et al. about environmental impacts of touring and the 2012 study by Mair and Laing about sustainable development at festivals are the key studies that have been examined critically and formed the base of the survey. This survey was made online with Google Forms and sent to interviewees by email prior to the interviews. The survey included questions about obstacles and motivations for environmental action and provided quantitative data that was used to establish the majority of the leading questions for the interviews. I also asked what type of action venues have taken thus far and how important sustainability is in the decision-making processes at the venue. A complete overview of the survey questions and answers can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.

For the interviews, a semi-structured approach has been chosen.⁴ This approach, which is a combination of the structured and unstructured approach allows for both an exploratory and explanatory outcome resulting in a phenomenological interview. While a structured interview allows little flexibility for questions and answers in order to gather precise data, the unstructured interview is used to understand complex phenomena.⁵ The semi-structured approach means that the interviewee will be speaking the majority of the time, but also that the interviewee is guided with a few starting questions. This is supplemented by the researcher (or interviewer) who then asked additional follow-up questions as they arose for both clarification and detailed examples. The continuous back-and-forth creates “an active, emergent process”, but this is also different per person, situation, and time.⁶ Fontana and Frey discuss several key elements of an unstructured interview. Most of these also apply to the semi-structured interview. In the following section, a brief overview of these elements is provided including an explanation of these elements in the context of the interviews held for this research.

Most importantly, the interviews have been designed with a focus to “*understand* rather than to *explain*.”⁷ This means that the questions are centered around gaining an understanding of the

⁴ Alan Bryman and Edward Bell, “Interviewing in Qualitative Research,” in *Social Research Methods*, Fifth Canadian Edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2019), 241.

⁵ Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey, “The Interview: From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 2nd edition (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000), 653.

⁶ Fontana and Frey, 654.

⁷ Fontana and Frey, 654. Emphasis from original source.

interviewees position, actions, and thoughts, instead of me explaining them my own view. That is, only through understanding the interviewee's situation, the interviews find themselves in the position to add value to the policy analysis, as they demonstrate the real-world results of the policies.

“Access the setting.”⁸ Interviews were held both online as video calls and on site depending on the preference and time schedules of the interviewees and location of the venues. I ended up meeting Van de Vlasakker and Maaskant in person at their places of work. The other three interviews were conducted as video calls and were as successful as the in-person interviews. This is likely thanks to the fact that people haven't gotten used to online work because of the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore did not negatively impact the results of the interviews.

“Understanding the language and culture of the respondents.”⁹ This element is essential to avoid miscommunication and therefore also misinterpretation by both interviewee and the interviewer. Items to consider are jargon, taboo topics of conversation or other cultural specificities present in the live music sector. This has not been an issue as I have worked in similar positions and with people in similar positions at venues in the past and am therefore more than familiar with the relevant cultural norms.

“Gaining trust” and “deciding on how to present oneself.”¹⁰ Both trust and how I have presented are important to establish a comfortable environment in which the interviewee feels free to say and discuss anything that is relevant to the research. With regards to trust, part of this is ensured by the use of ethical consent forms, which the interviewees signed prior to the interview. However, both of these elements have also been established by the communication and professional connections to some of the interviewees prior to the interviews.

⁸ Fontana and Frey, 654.

⁹ Fontana and Frey, 654.

¹⁰ Fontana and Frey, 655.

CHAPTER 6 OBSTACLES TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, I establish the obstacles based on the survey and interviews with Dutch popular music venue employees. The survey provides raw data about the obstacles, and the interviews allow a chance for explanation and elaboration of the obstacles and personal experiences of these employees. This provides a realistic overview and understanding of the processes at these cultural institutions. The studies by Bottrill et al. (2010)¹ and Mair and Laing² served as a starting point for the questions for the survey and interviews. Based on the obstacles discussed in the interviews, I gain more insight into which aspects of Dutch policy need research and refinement. That is because the obstacles highlight difficulties and often also how the government may be able to assist venues in sustainable development. When addressing the various obstacles that venues have encountered, relevant policy topics come to light. For example, when discussing financial difficulty, I elaborate on the policy tools subsidies and funding and how these relate to the obstacle.

In the 2010 report *Moving arts: Managing the carbon impacts of our touring: Volume 1: Bands* from Julie's Bicycle, Bottrill conducted a research into emissions of live concerts.³ The first two parts of the reports contain recommendations for sustainable development and obstacles and barriers to environmental action for different players in the live music sector. These obstacles have been established through interviews and focus groups.⁴ The obstacles are noted per participant group, distinguishing between artists, managers, agents, promoters, artist/lighting directors, production/tour managers, venue managers/programmers, technical suppliers, logistic suppliers,

¹ Catherine Bottrill, "Moving Arts: Managing the Carbon Impacts of Our Touring: Volume 1: Bands" (Julie's Bicycle, June 2010), https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/MA_Vol1_Touring_Bands_Report_2010.pdf.

² Judith Mair and Jennifer Laing, "The Greening of Music Festivals: Motivations, Barriers and Outcomes. Applying the Mair and Jago Model," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20, no. 5 (January 5, 2012): 683–700, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.636819>.

³ Bottrill, "Moving Arts."

⁴ Bottrill, "Moving Arts," 23.

and trade and membership organizations. The obstacles are also divided into creative, financial, and operational obstacles. Identifying these obstacles, as Bottrill explains, can help the participants “understand where they could focus to make their actions more effective.”⁵ A few obstacles and types of obstacles stand out in the long list provided. Though this research is focused on live music venues, some obstacles of the other groups are discussed to identify the largest and sector-wide obstacles. Almost all parties named obstacles similar to the following four:

1. Responsibility

Multiple obstacles refer to another participant or party that is holding them back from environmental action. For example, under the manager’s financial obstacles we find “can present artist with information and recommendations on how to reduce environmental impacts, but ultimately [the] decision lies with the artist.”⁶ At the same time for venues, a financial obstacle is that it “cannot undertake major changes in building operations for single artist tours.”⁷ This also demonstrates a supposed lack of necessity to act for the venues.

2. Resources

A common operational obstacle is “lack of accessible information”. For managers, it is a lack of accessible information “on measures to reduce the environmental impact of touring,” and for agents, it is a lack of accessible information “on the relatively few venues with good environmental credentials.”⁸

3. Financial constraints

Another common obstacle is the issue of costs of sustainable development. As such, venues have mentioned that many “green” alternatives are more expensive than the currently used version.

4. Priorities

Lastly, many of the obstacles are not concrete obstacles. Most are excuses to push the responsibility away, such as for a production or tour manager that they are “likely to have a tour project immediately before and after.”⁹ The obstacle of “limited interest” would fit

⁵ Bottrill, 13.

⁶ Bottrill, 13.

⁷ Bottrill, 15.

⁸ Bottrill, 13.

⁹ Bottrill, 14.

this category as well. These obstacles indicate the individual's or company's priorities with regards to climate change.

It is important to acknowledge that the 2010 report by Bottrill only covered headline tours and shows. Concert tours are the tours that consist of individual concerts and are thus different from festival performances. That is, as an artist or band performing at a festival, the artist likely has no influence on sustainable practices at the festival, unless the headline act—the main act of the night and/or festival—advocates for and pushes for environmental action.

Judith Mair and Jennifer Laing, on the other hand, researched the motivations, obstacles, and outcomes of sustainable development at music festivals.¹⁰ In order to create an understanding of the role of sustainability in event management, Mair and Laing interviewed (sustainability) managers from six festivals from the United Kingdom and Australia that won awards for their sustainable practices. A need for this understanding, according to Mair and Laing, stems from the size of the festival industry, the popularity of festivals, and their “potential to negatively affect communities and the environment.”¹¹ Despite this thesis being focused on music venues, this study by Mair and Laing should be taken into account. That is because these festivals have already demonstrated willingness and action towards environmental action, meaning that their obstacles are truly obstacles. Moreover, it is important to remember that the music industry still consists of businesses that need to make profit—or break even in the case of a not for-profit/non-profit organization—and that therefore certain obstacles cannot be overcome by simply ‘changing the mindset’.

The primary obstacles for festivals were the following:¹²

- Financial costs/lack of financial or other support from stakeholders;
- Lack of time;
- Lack of control;
- Availability of sustainable suppliers.

Based on the findings of Mair and Laing as well as Bottrill et al. the survey question about the venue's obstacles for environmental action was formed. The question was “If you/your venue

¹⁰ Mair and Laing, “The Greening of Music Festivals.”

¹¹ Mair and Laing, 683.

¹² Mair and Laing, 690.

have encountered obstacles to environmental action, in which categories do these fit best? Tick all boxes that apply.” The different options were:

- Lack of financial support
- Lack of resources (information)
- Lack of resources (available supply/suppliers)
- Lack of interest
- Lack of staff
- Logistical difficulty
- Other: ...

The answers to this question were as follows:

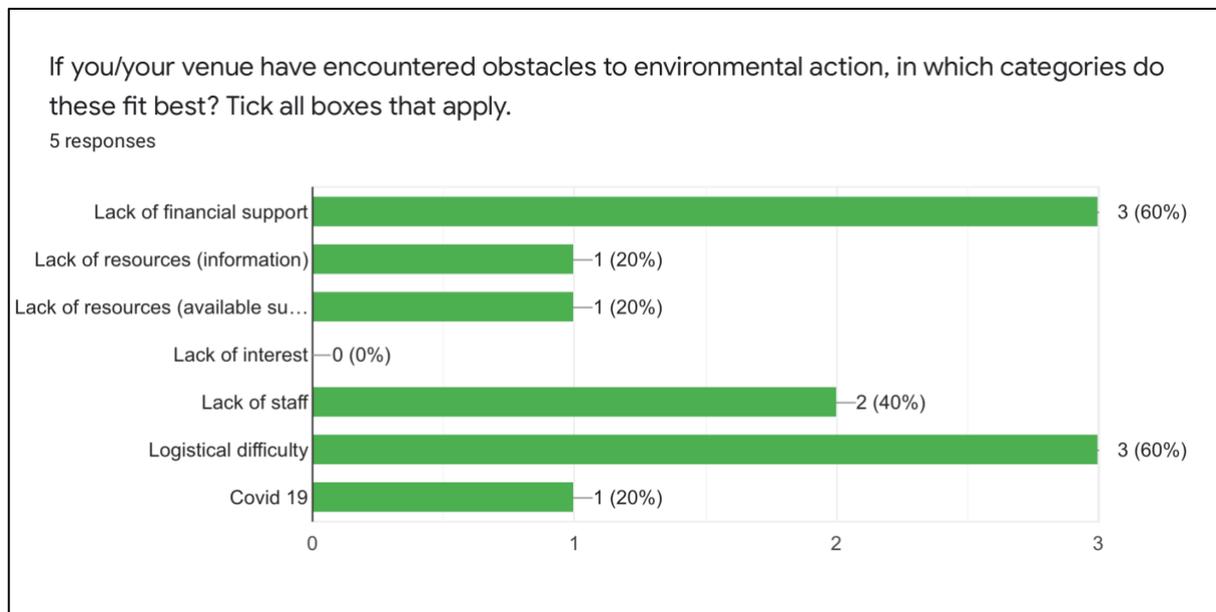


FIGURE 4: SURVEY RESULTS VENUE OBSTACLES TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Below is a brief summary of the interviewees’ explanations of their answers about the obstacles they have encountered for environmental action:

LACK OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Most sustainable alternatives are more expensive than the less sustainable previous industry standard. This can relate to energy providers, artist hospitality riders, or switching to green alternatives of the single-use plastic cup. Though it is a misunderstanding that all green alternatives

are more expensive, some of the alternatives do require an initial financial investment in order to make the switch — such as reusable plastic cups or installing solar panels — and some alternatives are unfortunately more expensive. Moreover, large improvements to buildings that would save energy require large logistical adaptations, such as switching all lights to LED, which save energy and thus results in lower energy bills. Not only can the financial costs build up rapidly, but this can also get in the way of income as construction will require shows to be put on hold for a period of time. The process of switching to sustainable alternatives also requires time and staff, which adds to the costs. De Boode clarified that for a venue the size of TivoliVredenburg, local and national funding is available, but these do not make a notable difference in these costs. Some interviewees of Mair and Laing mentioned similar explanations.¹³ Mair and Laing mention responses from their interviewees who stated that “the really big things that would make a difference” are not feasible as a business, and that government support of any kind for what [they] do” was non-existent.¹⁴

At Rotown, it seems, finances are viewed slightly differently than at other venues. As a small venue (capacity of 250 people) that also outsources shows at slightly larger venues in Rotterdam, Rotown has positioned itself as a venue whose primary focus is promoting and growing talent. When asking about subsidies and lack of financial support as an obstacle, Maaskant, Rotown’s programmer, first discussed how the artists could get more income, instead of mentioning how the venue itself could possibly use more money. As Maaskant mentioned, most bands that come to Rotown are either local Dutch bands or they have never been to the Netherlands, and often not even to Europe before. Especially for those non-European bands, mostly the emissions of flying to the Netherlands are what cause the largest environmental impact. But because the bands do not have large audiences yet, they might only come to Europe for a show or two. This may also be because small bands still work day jobs besides their starting music career which means that they cannot easily take multiple weeks off for tour. According to Maaskant, if more subsidies were available for small bands or for venues to be able to pay small bands better fees, these bands are more likely to take more time off from their regular jobs, make a longer lasting tour worth it, and thereby making those flight emissions worthwhile.

SUBSIDIES

De Boode from TivoliVredenburg, which has multiple concert hall of capacities ranging from 400 to 2000 people, states that, though cash flow was not a risk/issue during the Covid-19 pandemic,

¹³ Mair and Laing, 694.

¹⁴ Mair and Laing, 694.

any of the available subsidies would be far from enough to make significant developments when it comes to sustainability. Other venues had more difficult times staying afloat without income and therefore took their priorities off of sustainability. One solution for venues to afford more sustainable options is a subsidy focused on sustainability. Subsidies can be found on every governmental level: the national government, provinces, and municipalities offer wide ranges of subsidies, also for arts and culture as well as sustainability. Crossover subsidies that focus on environmental sustainability for arts and culture, and especially live music, however, are rare. Currently, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there are extra subsidies available for venues and similar establishments. Nevertheless, these are not necessarily aimed at sustainable development, but rather on financial recovery for the live music sector. Non-governmental funding is available for sustainable development in the arts and culture sector including for venues. However, since this thesis focuses on official policy, these private funds are left aside, but they remain a possible extra source of income for venues and should — in practice — not be disregarded and forgotten.

NATIONAL SUBSIDIES

Fonds Podiumkunsten offers national subsidies for performing arts on behalf of the Dutch Government.¹⁵ Fonds Podiumkunsten also offers subsidies for concert venues¹⁶ for their programming or to cover losses from the Covid-19 pandemic. The distribution and allocation of the various subsidies is carried out by advisory committees in coordination with staff and secretaries of the Fonds Podiumkunsten. The website of the Fonds provides brief curriculum vitae of the approximately 150 advisory committee members.¹⁷ The members have widely varying professional backgrounds related to performing arts. Little to none of the curriculum vitae, however, have indicated any interest or priority to the environmental practices within the performing arts sector.

The conveniently navigated website of the Fonds makes it easy to find which subsidies would fit your needs. It also clearly states requirements that need to be met in order to apply and qualify for the different subsidies. However, upon close examination of the subsidies that are available for venues, it becomes evident that there are no subsidies available specifically for

¹⁵ Fonds Podiumkunsten, “Over het Fonds,” Fonds Podiumkunsten Performing Arts Fund NL, accessed March 9, 2022, https://fondspodiumkunsten.nl/nl/over_het_fonds/.

¹⁶ Dutch for concert venue: (pop)podium.

¹⁷ Fonds Podiumkunsten, “Adviseurs,” Fonds Podiumkunsten Performing Arts Fund NL, accessed March 9, 2022, https://fondspodiumkunsten.nl/nl/over_het_fonds/adviseurs/.

sustainable development at venues. Moreover, none of the subsidies available for venues have requirements related to sustainability or environmentally friendly practices at venues.

The national government does, however, offer general subsidies and tax arrangements and benefits for businesses that work on reducing their environmental impact. As such, with the “energy-investment deduction”¹⁸ (EIA) a venue can deduct extra money from their taxable income if it has invested in energy saving or more sustainable energy methods.¹⁹ These methods include but are not limited to improvements on the building’s isolation, the purchase and installment of LED-lighting to replace halogen and other more energy consuming alternatives, or the purchase and installment of solar panels to generate green energy on location.²⁰ More general benefits and subsidies are available.

PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL SUBSIDIES

The province of North-Holland, which includes Amsterdam and Haarlem and thus many concert venues, is offering subsidies specifically for sustainable development of cultural institutions, including but not limited to concert venues.²¹ The subsidy from North-Holland is worth 2 million euros, handing out between 5000 and 300,000 euros per institution. Like this province, other provinces and municipalities are offering extra financial support for venues and similar establishments to become more sustainable. However, most provinces and municipalities do not offer funding specifically for cultural institutions, but, similar to the national government, general subsidies for companies to work on sustainability.

According to Schoemaker and De Boode, the municipalities of Haarlem and Utrecht have specific funds for sustainable development. These municipalities decide themselves how to distribute this. This subsidy can come directly from the municipality or through organizations that receive money from the municipality to help companies work on sustainable development. The subsidy that Patronaat received for sustainable development had to be invested in a visible change.

¹⁸ Dutch: Energie-investeringsaftrek (EIA)

¹⁹ Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, “Energie-investeringsaftrek (EIA) voor ondernemers,” February 7, 2017, <https://www.rvo.nl/subsidies-financiering/eia/ondernemers#voor-wie%3F>.

²⁰ Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, “Energie-investeringsaftrek (EIA) Energielijst 2022,” December 2021, <https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2022/02/BrochureEIA-Energielijst2022.pdf>.

²¹ Provincie Noord-Holland, “Verduurzaming Culturele Instellingen Noord-Holland, Subsidie,” accessed April 29, 2022, https://www.noord-holland.nl/Loket/Producten_en_Diensten/Producten_op_alfabet/V/Verduurzaming_culturele_instellingen_Noord_Holland_subsidie.

That means that the sustainable development had to include something that the general public and concert attendees could see. Patronaat thus decided to change the faucets in the (public) bathrooms to sensor-based faucets. This reduces the water use significantly and is right in front of the eyes of the public. Now, it is questionable whether the municipality took the correct approach here and what its reasoning was behind the requirement of visible change. Nevertheless, Patronaat received financial support for sustainable development.

Maaskant mentioned that Rotown has a multiple year-long subsidy from the municipality of Rotterdam. He explained that sustainable practices or development are not requirements to receive this financial aid, but he is expecting that to become the case soon — “the sooner the better if it’s up to me” he quickly added²² —, and that, even though it is not necessary, it is probably appreciated. Maaskant added that he believes that Rotown, especially as a company in the cultural sector, has a responsibility to work on sustainability.

EUROPEAN UNION SUBSIDIES

Besides funding and subsidies from The Netherlands, concert venues do have the possibility to reach out further up the ladder, by applying for funding from the European Union. MusicAIRE, a project that is supported by the Creative Europe Programme to further develop their Music Moves Europe initiative,²³ offers funding for the music sector as a Covid-19 pandemic recovery fund. MusicAIRE acknowledges that, though the music sector is one of the sectors that is most affected by the pandemic, while rebuilding the sector, it is also important to foster “the sustainability of the music ecosystem.”²⁴ Therefore, in their call for proposals, MusicAIRE states that applicants “need to provide strategies, methodologies, and actions” to address one of three topics: a green recovery, a digital recovery—related to development of digital music technology—, and a just and resilient recovery—with an emphasis on inclusivity, solidarity, and community.²⁵ The green recovery is meant to increase “ecological awareness” and has a focus on the live music sector. MusicAIRE states that the music sector still has many opportunities to improve its environmental impact, not only directly, but also indirectly by reaching audiences, “to convey messages and to be the bearer of identity and meaning.” Through these capabilities of music, the

²² Dutch: “En hoe eerder, hoe beter wat mij betreft.”

²³ MusicAIRE, “In a Nutshell,” accessed May 9, 2022, <https://musicaire.eu/in-a-nutshell/>.

²⁴ MusicAIRE, “1st Call for Proposals Musicaire,” accessed April 15, 2022, <https://musicaire.eu/open-calls/musicaire-eac-2021-0090-1stcallproposals/>.

²⁵ MusicAIRE.

live music sector can be a part of the solution to the climate crisis. The call for proposals also provides examples of activities that could be included in the proposals.

The problem with MusicAIRE, however, is that it is unknown among those to whom it matters. Most interviewees had not heard of the funding options from the EU. The available budget, as estimated by MusicAIRE, suggests that they expected to award funding to approximately 18 organization. That the deadline for the call for proposals for MusicAIRE was extended, would indicate that not many institutions and organizations applied for it. The EU as well as the Dutch government could and should be doing more to inform venues about the available funds and subsidies. The Creative Europe Desk is an organization that advises on subsidies and regulations of the Creative Europe Programm of with MusicAIRE—among others—is a part. The Creative Europe Desk is a collaboration between the Creative Europe program headquarter in Brussels and national governments—in The Netherlands this is the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science.²⁶ It not only advises, but also offers guidance for subsidy applications, provides information about regulations, procedures, and other European funds and financial aids to the creative sectors. Through the search function on the website of the Dutch Creative Europe Desk, only two hits returned for ‘MusicAIRE’.²⁷ The first hit is a brief was about an information session about MusicAIRE which took place twee weeks prior to the original deadline. The second hit was about the deadline extension. This demonstrates that, even if venue staff is aware of the existence of the Creative Europe Desk, it is unlikely that they are well-informed about the possible funds and subsidies for their place of work.

LACK OF RESOURCES

At the venues, resources in terms of information have been an obstacle. Information about how to substantially and effectively make a venue more sustainable is not widely available. Much of this information requires prior knowledge about topics such as emissions and waste that is not necessarily present among venue employees. Though studies and reports have researched sustainable alternatives, the situation in every venue is different. As Rodolf stated, a “green” label

²⁶ Creative Europe Desk NL, “Over Creative Europe Desk NL,” accessed April 29, 2022, <https://www.creativeeuropedesk.nl/nl/over-creative-europe-desk-nl>.

²⁷ Creative Europe Desk NL, “Website search: Musicaire,” accessed April 29, 2022, <https://www.creativeeuropedesk.nl/nl/find-ced?search=musicaire>.

on an alternative might look promising, but extra internal research is almost always required. Not only whether this alternative is actually environmentally friendly, but also whether it is a logical option for the specific venue.

On the other hand, Van de Vlasakker explained that the lack of suppliers also prevents Paradiso from making certain changes. They would like to separate their plastic recyclables from the rest of their trash, but the municipality does not offer this option. More information on waste policy can be found in *Chapter 4 Plastic policy*.

Here again, organizations such as Creative Europe Desk need to put more effort in informing venues and similar establishments of ways to receive financial support. But these organizations and national and local governments also can and should do more in order to provide guides for venues to become more sustainable. Reports like the one by The LCA Centre about the use of different types of cups should be promoted more. While the research was a collaboration between The LCA Centre, Plastic Promise, and the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management, only The LCA Centre and Plastic Promise discuss and promote the research on their websites. Not only does the Directorate-General not mention the research on their website, but sustainability only has a small section of the website appointed to itself.²⁸ Moreover, the website does not provide much more inside than the national government website does.

STAFF: LACK OF INTEREST AND PEOPLE

Among the interviewed venues, a lack of interest was not an obstacle. The venues have found that many staff members have been interested in participating in the sustainable development of the venue and its practices. Nevertheless, there are other venues that have not stated on their websites that they are taking any or much environmental action. This can be due to a lack of interest. Further research could investigate the role of personal values of staff members in the sustainable development of businesses such as music venues, but this research could target broader sector-wide businesses as well. As I discussed briefly in the introduction, scholars have suggested that music has a social role in that it shapes identities and provides a space for sharing values. If venues

²⁸ Rijkswaterstaat, “Duurzaamheid en Leefomgeving,” accessed April 29, 2022, <https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/zakelijk/duurzame-leefomgeving>.

are such a space, the personal values and interests of staff would need to be considered in the role that a venue plays in society.

In general, sustainable development, as most processes in businesses, require staff. Staff to research and implement changes. This staff also needs extra hours to work on this extra job and need to be paid for their time. Since the lack of staff is largely caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, I elaborate on this issue later in this chapter.

LOGISTICAL DIFFICULTY

Though only two interviewees actually specified logistical difficulties in the survey, the interviews themselves showed that it was an obstacle for all venues.

Van de Vlasakker clarified that the building of Paradiso is a monument—an old church building—and is therefore protected under more regulations. She gave the example of wanting to install solar panels on the roof to reduce emissions from energy use. However, the municipality of Amsterdam does not permit this as it is a monument and it disrupts the cityscape. Moreover, even if that was allowed, the structure of the old roof could not support the weight of the solar panels. As a solution, Paradiso opted for completely Dutch wind energy, but this is more expensive than solar panels. As such, many venues encounter logistical difficulty due to various reasons. Most of these reasons are related to the building, the location, or regulations.

COVID-19

The pandemic has also introduced new obstacles in the sustainable development at venues. Though the pandemic directly resulted in less emissions and waste since there were no audiences traveling to venues or single-use plastic cups thrown on venue floors, much of the sustainable development was on hold. Van de Vlasakker explained that the process of sustainable development was slowed down due to the work-from-home regulations as this made communication and decision-making-processes more challenging. Another interviewee mentioned that, even though their venue developed ideas for sustainable development, there were few opportunities to try them out at events.

For planning the interviews alone, one of the largest obstacles caused by the Covid-19 pandemic became clear: the live music sector lost a large share of its workforce. Many venues are under staffed, which is evident from looking at the job openings on the websites of music venues. Though many venues and their staff were interested in participating in this research by being interviewed and talking about their sustainable practices, time and the increase of Covid-19 infections made the scheduling of the interviews complicated, as there were simply not many people available.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also been an obstacle for the venues in their process of becoming more sustainable. Not only has there been a lack in staff—as many live music sector workers have left the industry to find a more stable job elsewhere—, but also because this small number of staff members has to work harder than prior to the pandemic in order to catch up on the almost two full years of missed concerts. Some of the interviewees emphasized that making up for two years of shows has overloaded the few staff members they had left, which has led to them having to prioritize tasks. This sometimes meant that sustainability is overlooked if no sustainable alternative system was in place prior to this busy period. Especially in 2021, with Covid-19 regulations constantly changing, this added to the pressure on the venue employees. With the sporadically occurring periods where shows were allowed, employees needed to stay on top of their work at all times while many shows also had to be cancelled only adding to the workload and disappointment. Not to mention, from personal experience starting a new freelance job at a venue, employees or their family members catching Covid-19, especially during the recovery period in early 2022, when restrictions were lifted but many people contracted Covid-19 caused last minute cancellations from staff and thus, again, more stress and pressure on the rest of the employees.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I elaborated on the real obstacles that Dutch popular music venues face when becoming more sustainable. Through a combination of a survey and interviews with employees from five different venues in five municipalities and four provinces. The survey questions were based on two core studies conducted prior to this research: *Moving arts* by Bottrill et al. and “The Greening of Music Festivals” by Mair and Laing. These two studies summarized obstacles that different actors in the live music sector encountered. Some of these obstacles include lack of resources (in terms of knowledge) and financial constraints, but also abstract obstacles such as lack of responsibility and sustainability being low on the list of priorities. For festivals in particular

common obstacles were a lack of control (similar to a lack of responsibility), lack of time, and lack of available suppliers, which can be regarded as a type of resource. These various obstacles were synthesized in the survey in order to include all options that are open to a lot of interpretation. Finally, the two most common obstacles were a lack of financial support and logistical difficulties. These obstacles can be resolved largely through improvements of policies and policy tools.

Though it is true that many sustainable alternatives for businesses save money in the long-term, the initial investment is often very costly, such as the replacement of all lights with LED-bulbs. Not only does the actual purchase cost money, but also the time that the installment takes and the salaries of those involved in the sustainable development projects. Subsidies for sustainable development are available. But only very few are available specific for cultural institutions or the live music sector that are also focused on sustainable development. On a national level, tax benefits for sustainable practices for businesses are available, but the national subsidies for performing arts do not demonstrate a sign of priority for sustainable development. The European Union, on the other hand, has offered a subsidy specifically for the music sector and its recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the key requirements for applying to this funding is to demonstrate action for “green” or sustainable development. The issue with many of these subsidies is that the venues are not well-informed about these, despite there being designated organizations to provide support and advice.

The pandemic has added another obstacle for venues. Venues and the entire live music sector lost employees and income, which led to pressure and time constraints of the few employees left. Working from home also made it more difficult to try out sustainable alternatives as well as communication between employees, resulting in needing more time to make decisions and pull through with action.

Since the research by Bottrill et al. resources have improved. Enough suppliers are available to not be a major obstacle for development. However, logistical difficulties can sometimes come in the way of this, due to extra regulations or building complications. Resources in terms of information have also become more widely available. Nevertheless, this is also not actively promoted by the national government. What adds to this problem is that sustainable development can become complicated and scientific, which may—rightfully and logically so—not be the expertise of concert venue employees. That means learning about sustainable alternatives and practices will take extra time and staff.

Lack of interest has not been an obstacle for the venues of which I interviewed employees. However, that may as well have been because those who agreed to interview, agreed because they felt comfortable as they have been working on sustainability already. Venues that have not taken much action, might be more hesitant to agree to an interview, as they might worry about their image.

CHAPTER 7 MOTIVATIONS AND VENUE ACTION

Where in Chapter Six I discussed the obstacles that venues encountered and some of the policies related to these obstacles, in this chapter I focus on the (mostly) positive. Despite all the difficulties they faced, what pushed venues to environmental action? And what exactly did and does that entail for them? This chapter provides an overview of the venues' motivations and actions. As with the obstacles, the findings about venue motivations and actions are taken from the interviews and the survey responses. Again, the study by Mair and Laing formed the basis of questions about motivations to environmental action.

First, I discuss the action that the venues have taken thus far and what they are currently working on. This action can indicate where policies are falling behind. That is, if several venues specific sustainable developments are financially and logistically feasible, other venues should be able to do the same or should be pushed by policies to do so. But the types of action that the venues take and the method used also highlight their motivations. Second, I elaborate on the motivations of the venues. Why venues take environmental action and work on sustainability is an important question in the policy analysis, as this again suggests where policies can be stricter. Lastly, I take a look at the venues' sustainability statements on their websites—where applicable—with a brief discourse analysis.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND MOTIVATIONS

In Chapter Two, I described the various ways in which live music leaves behind a negative environmental footprint. In sum, the largest contributors are energy consumption and physical waste. Food can be regarded as a separate category because it fits under energy consumption (e.g. in terms of food production and transportation) as well as waste management (e.g. in terms of food waste and packaging). Moreover, because of the ongoing debate about the environmental impact and ethics of food choices, I felt the need to address this topic separately. Digital sustainability as well as water use were added as separate options as I came across these terms while researching sustainability as a personal interest prior to this thesis research. What environmental action at venues in terms of digital sustainability meant, however, was unclear until after the interviews. With regards to water use, the various adaptations that could be made to save

water were also discussed. The question became “Which aspects of sustainability has your venue been working on? Tick all boxes that apply.” The different options were:

- Energy consumption
- Waste management and plastic use
- Food / catering
- Digital sustainability
- Water use
- Other: ...

The answers to this question were as follows:

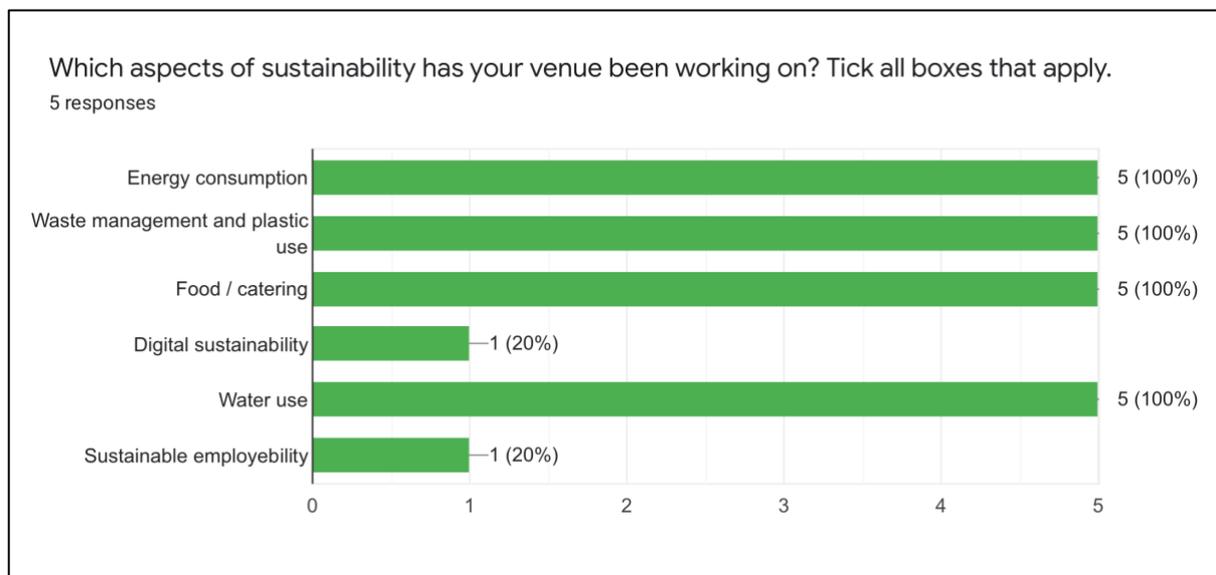


FIGURE 5: SURVEY RESULTS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AT VENUES

In addition to research about obstacles of sustainable festivals, Mair and Laing also asked the festival staff about their motivations. Mair and Laing explain that “most interviewees were also realistic and accepted that festivals generally have to be run as a business” and that they saw having sustainability credentials as providing them with a competitive advantage and thus making it a business decision.¹ Nevertheless, for most interviewees of Mair and Laing, the main drivers were organization and personal values, consumer demand, and desire to educate and advocate. Less

¹ Judith Mair and Jennifer Laing, “The Greening of Music Festivals: Motivations, Barriers and Outcomes. Applying the Mair and Jago Model,” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20, no. 5 (January 5, 2012): 691, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.636819>.

significant drivers besides competitive advantage were image, and financial benefits, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. According to one of the interviewees of Mair and Laing, the director of their festival was concerned about sustainability and found that music was a way of bringing people together for this purpose.² Some of these motivations overlap, such as image and competitive advantage as well as personal values and desire to educate and advocate. Therefore, some options were either left out or broadened more for the survey. The final question became: “What have been the motivations to environmental action? This also applies if environmental action or sustainable development has not taken place at the venue. Tick all boxes that apply.” The different options, based on the research of Mair and Laing, were:

- Personal values
- Organizational values
- Stakeholder values
- Financial benefits
- Competitive advantage
- National or local policy (this also includes meeting requirements for funding)

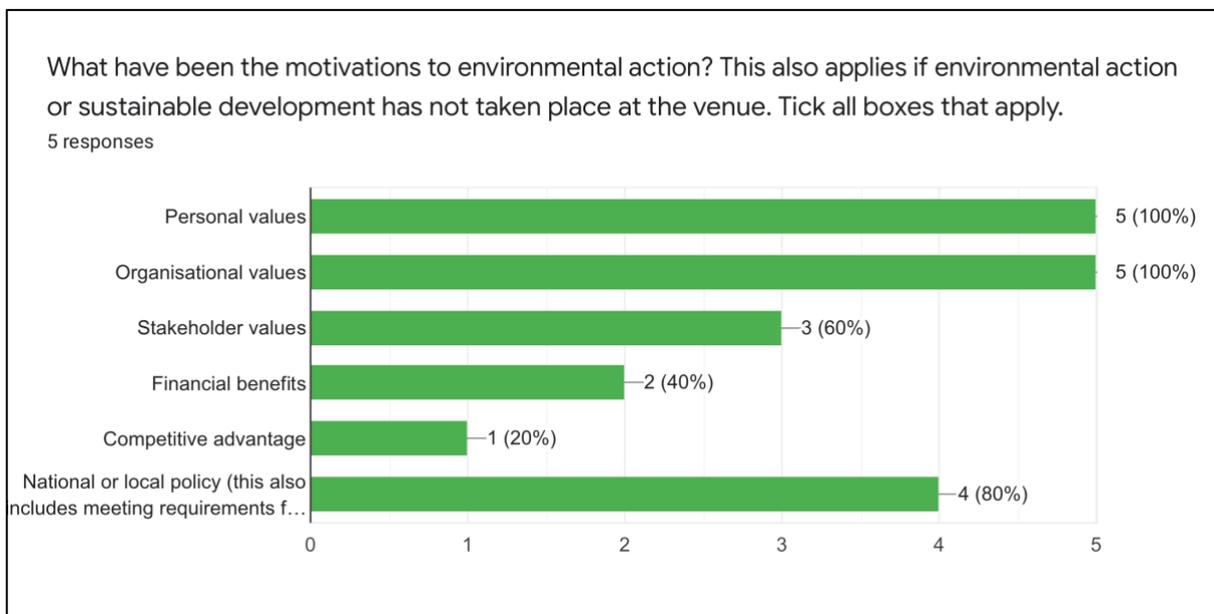


FIGURE 6: SURVEY RESULTS VENUE MOTIVATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

² Mair and Laing, “The Greening of Music Festivals,” 691.

As the chart above in *Figure 6: Survey results venue motivation for environmental action* suggests, nearly all interviewees (four out of five) indicated in the survey that national and local policies have encouraged their venues to take environmental action. The interviews, however, suggested that policies only resulted in minor developments. As demonstrated in Chapter Six, policies have more often been an obstacle than a motivation. On the other hand, both the survey and the interviews confirmed that personal values of employees, and thereby also organizational values, have led to most large changes to be implemented since the venues started working on sustainability.

The venue Paradiso in Amsterdam (hall capacities: 250 and 1500 attendees) has a sustainability committee. This committee consists of employees from all different departments from around the venue. Within the different departments, Van de Vlasakker explained, employees have been taking their own initiative to make sustainable changes. As such, the cleaning staff had opted for cleaning products that are less or not harmful to the environment. Similar to Paradiso, De Boode stated that TivoliVredenburg also has a task force consisting of employees from most departments. According to him, this allows them to quickly evaluate the feasibility of sustainable development in the different departments. These groups and committees do need a wide variety of employees to make this more successful and efficient. When asking Van de Vlasakker how Paradiso's sustainability committee came about, she stated:³

Van de Vlasakker: "It existed long before Covid-19, since you could not really go around it anymore."

Researcher: "Because of regulations?"

Van de Vlasakker: "No. ... Because of (personal) affinity. The regulations are not that significant. ... If only it were because of regulations, that would be nice, because then everyone would do something."

Van de Vlasakker explained that the organization and employees feel as though they (venues) are the only ones or some of the few organizations to work on sustainability, while it should be done

³ Translated from the interview. Dutch:

Van de Vlasakker: "En dat was dus al flink voor corona ontstaan. Je kon er gewoon eigenlijk niet meer omheen."

Researcher: "Door regelgeving?"

Van de Vlasakker: "Nee ... door affiniteit. Die regelgeving valt wel mee. ... Was het maar door regelgeving. Dat zou wel fijn zijn. Want dan deed iedereen het."

collectively. Van de Vlasakker and all other interviewees stated that they have not been pushed by artists, agencies, or attendees to become more sustainable, with very few exceptions. Artists and agencies, thus far, have only requested vegetarian or vegan catering and the refusal of plastic water bottles. These requests, however, are often some of the most early implemented changes and do not stimulate the venues to more action. Concert attendees also have not demanded any change. Nevertheless, the response to change has been almost completely positive.

Lastly, contrary to popular belief, sustainable development can create financial benefits. De Boode explained that, though the initial investment might be higher for more sustainable alternatives, it will be a financially beneficial decision long term. For example, changing all the lights in the building from halogen to LED will be costly, especially for large venues. Changing all the light bulbs can also take a full week at the interviewee's venue, during which no concerts can take place and thus business and money is missed out on. But once it is considered that LED light bulbs need to be replaced much less often and will save energy, it is only a logical decision to make the switch. Obviously, the venue does require the cash flow to actually make the investment, which may not be possible for every venue.

To summarize, the five interviewed venues have all been working on many areas of sustainability. All venues have implemented changes that have reduced energy consumption and from catering and food and beverages. Though the goal is the same, strategies may differ from focusing on direct emissions or physical waste.

ENERGY/EMISSIONS

Emissions are divided into three scopes, and not all scopes contain emission that venues have full control over. Venues have the most control over scope one and two emissions—the emissions directly generated on location and those generated one step away from the venue. Venues have reduced scope one and two emissions mostly by simply reducing their on-location emissions and by switching to more sustainable energy providers and sources.

All interviewed venues have replaced their lights in the building mostly or completely to LED and with other energy saving tools such as timers. In terms of overall energy consumption this has the largest impact. In addition to LED, some of the venues have been trying to make their own employees more conscious of their energy consumption. Examples of this are stimulating turning off lights when it is not necessary or when leaving a room. In the grand scheme of the total emissions at a concert venue, this will not make a significant difference in its reduction.

Instead, it is to change the mindset of the employees at the venues. Other small reductions of emissions can be done by implementing forms of digital sustainability. Digital sustainability is the use of technology to reduce the environmental impact of (everyday) processes. It also entails making current technological and online processes more (energy) efficient. At venues and many other businesses this can start small with sending and downloading fewer unnecessary files per email and cleaning up (cloud) data storage regularly as this all costs energy. But it can also mean providing tablets for the technician to view the technical riders to limit the use of paper and ink.

For the energy that is still needed, however, some of the venues have contracts for green energy such as Dutch wind energy, in order to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

WASTE

The venues are minimizing the use of plastic bottles. This is done mostly by incentivizing the use of reusable water bottles and strongly encouraging artists to bring their own bottles to make the plastic bottles obsolete. Patronaat even took this as far as handing out branded reusable water bottles to their visiting artist that they could then use on the rest of their tour as well. Schoemaker explained that occasionally this is still frowned upon by mostly non-European artists. That is most likely because they are not used to being able to drink tap water everywhere they go. In Europe, however, this is possible in almost every country. Therefore, bringing reusable bottles and Patronaat giving them away for free helps to reduce plastic bottle waste not just at one concert, but for the entire tour.

All venues have switched from single-use plastic cups to reusable hard cups. When the venues have implemented this change varies widely. For some this was the first step to becoming more sustainable, for others this has been a recent change from the last year. As explained in the second chapter, the use of hard cups at indoor concerts such as at venues results in significantly less waste, as single-use plastic cups are the most common form of waste found at concerts. Van de Vlasakker explained that at almost all concerts they use reusable hard cups. Only a few times per year their venue cannot use hard cups. At these concerts people drink such excessive amounts of beer that storing, picking up, and cleaning the hard cups is logistically impossible due to the large number of cups required. Maaskant explained that Rotown started with the most simplistic hard cups with the hopes that no visitor would feel tempted to take cups home with them. At the moment, Rotown uses hard cups that are marked with their logo and the logo of a beer brand. Still, the cups are rarely taken home or lost, which is likely due to it being indoors. “And if a student

comes in here and thinks ‘I’ll take one cup with me and use it [at home] ... As long as the product is used it should not matter to much,’ Maaskant added.⁴

013 in Tilburg has recently switched to hard cups and has decided to give their hard cups another purpose. That is, when attendees buy their first drink, they pay a small deposit for the cup. At the end of the night they can decide either to return the cup and get their deposit refunded, or to throw the cup in a large container for the venue to keep the deposit. The deposit of this latter group of returned cups will be donated to a rotating charity. Not only does this allow attendees and the venue to contribute to a social cause, but this hopefully increases the lifespan of the cups, since they are less likely to be thrown on the floor and stomped on, which could damage the cups more quickly. The venue is, however, still in their trial phase of the deposit and return scheme, but has a promising outlook.⁵

At Paradiso, during the first days of their sustainable development, the employees examined the trash found in the bin to find out more about the types of waste that is generated during the concerts. This was then used to make a plan of action to reduce this waste.

WATER

To reduce the water use, most interviewed venues have installed or are installing grey water systems. Grey water systems allow wastewater from sinks, dishwashers, and showers among others to be filtered and reused onsite.⁶ At the venues the grey water is mostly used for flushing toilets. In general, water use has been reduced by shortening the time that toilets can flush and faucets can run. Faucets run shorter either with sensors or push buttons.

⁴ Dutch: “Al er een student komt die denkt, ik neem die bekers mee en ik gebruik ze. ... Als het maar een gebruikt product is. Dan zou het in principe niet uit moeten maken.”

⁵ 013 Poppodium, “Genoeg Ge-waste! 013 gaat samen met bezoeker voor ‘een betere wereld,’” 013, May 25, 2022, <https://www.013.nl/nieuws/579/genoeg-ge-waste-013-gaat-samen-met-bezoeker-voor-een-betere-wereld-1>.

⁶ Toilet flushing water cannot be reused due to the fecal contamination. This is called black water. Grey water from showers will only contain very minimal amounts of this contamination. Especially at venue’s showers waste water only makes up a small amount of the total grey water supply.

Some of the venues, including Patronaat have also installed water tapping points for crew and artists for them to refill their own water bottles. This way, people can take exactly how much water they need and do not have to open a new plastic bottle for a few sips.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE / CATERING

There are several ways in which venues have reduced the environmental impact of food and catering. Venues are both reducing emissions and food waste. First, multiple venues have implemented vegetarian only dinners. This meant that at least no meat or fish was served as part of catering and stricter dietary restrictions are possible on request. Often this is not only chosen for environmental reasons, but also because meat often significantly increases the price of one dish.

Rodolf explained that their venue switched from buffet-style dinner to plated dinners. In their experience, buffet-style dinner has resulted in more food waste in the past than if separate plates were made for the exact number of people that required dinner. De Boode also mentioned that TivoliVredenburg switched from bottled soft drinks to post mix soda. Post mix means that the soft drinks arrive at TivoliVredenburg in concentrated syrups. Then on-location it is watered down and carbonated. This cuts down on emissions significantly as the weight of all the extra water in soda bottles now does not need to be transported and less packaging is required. This demonstrates that venues can in fact reduce the environmental impact of their food and beverage and catering without compromising quality.

AUDIENCE AND ARTIST TRAVEL

As explained in the second chapter, the travel of concert attendees and the performing artists makes up approximately one third of the emissions generated by concerts. However, these emissions are categorized as scope three emissions as the generation of the emissions are outside of direct control of the venue. That is because regardless the venue cannot force concert attendees and visiting and touring artists to take certain modes of transportation that are more sustainable. However, venues can incentivize the more sustainable alternatives and disincentivize less sustainable alternatives for both attendees and artists.

For concert attendees, some of the interviewees mentioned that they want to promote the more sustainable modes of transportation more. Rodolf explained that 013 used to promote

traveling by car by offering discounts on the parking garage near 013. Since then, 013 has changed their resources by promoting public transport more than car travel through their communication channels. For example, by displaying information about public transport as the first options on their website, which Patronaat has also done. 013 is also thinking about rewarding audience travel by bicycle and public transport, but this is still a work in progress. In this case, collaborating with local and national public transport companies to create ticket bundles with discounted transport tickets is one idea that 013 is looking into further. Venues can also work together with local transport companies and the municipality to make sure public transport is still available at night when large events end late in the night. Municipalities can and should also promote the collaboration between the venues and public transport companies.

Thus far, the venue employees have emphasized that influencing attendees is easier than influencing the artists. That is because artists simply need to travel with equipment, merchandise, crew, and personal belongings from show to show. This often requires large buses that run on fossil fuels and thus a lot of emissions. One aspect that makes this more complicated is that promoters and venues that do their own in-house promoting sometimes demand exclusivity. An exclusivity arrangement means that the artist will not play in the region of the venue (with an agreed upon distance radius) for a specified period.⁷ This would allow the promoter or venue to sell more tickets as they are not competing with other venues or festivals. Exclusivity arrangements also allow for the artists to receive higher fees, but this means that artists travel longer distances for each show. Maaskant explains that Rotown and the festival that they organize—Left of the Dial—do not include exclusivity arrangements in any of their deals partially because of this.

Moreover, venues generally do not want to refuse artists that travel with unsustainable modes of transportation. That would often mean that overseas artists would not be able to perform at one venue, meaning that they will simply perform at another venue. Venues can, however, offer deals for charging of electric vehicles—when the venues use green energy—, thus incentivizing artists to travel with electric vehicles whenever possible. This could work in various ways, including helping arrangements for parking or charging. Venues can also directly financially incentivize artists to travel with electric vehicles by offering parking or charging discounts or higher performance fees.

⁷ Matt Brennan, “The Infrastructure and Environmental Consequences of Live Music,” in *Audible Infrastructures*, ed. Kyle Devine and Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 122.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENTS

A sustainability statement is a mission statement focused on sustainable action, often in the form of a document, in which goals and strategies to meet these goals are described.⁸ Instead of these documents, I have decided to examine the statements about sustainability that are provided on the websites of the interviewed venues. That is because this is what is deliberately shown to the public, which would indicate what the venues find the most important information to share about their sustainable development. Most venues simply state that they are working on sustainability and provide a few examples of specific action that has been taken. Some venues have more elaborate explanations than others. In many of the statements, the term corporate social responsibility⁹ is coined. Several of the interviewees have mentioned that the organization of the venue has considered themselves to have an exemplary role in society as a cultural and art institution. Not only in terms of setting an example to similar institutions and companies, but also towards their artists and their audience to push new ideas, change mindsets, and demonstrate the possibilities and successes of more environmentally friendly concerts. The corporate social responsibility reaches further than only environmental sustainability. De Boode explained that at TivoliVredenburg they consider their employees the most important and valuable resources which you need to take care of diligently as you would with other resources. Though this goes beyond environmental sustainability it demonstrates the venue's overall motivations and values, which are to respect both the planet and its people.¹⁰

In their sustainability statement, Patronaat has presented their past results and future goals.¹¹ By clearly stating their goals—reducing CO2 emissions with 49% by 2030 compared to 2006 and being waste free by 2050—they hold themselves accountable for their actions. They have also provided data of the amounts of energy, water, and plastic saved to demonstrate that progress to meet these goals has already been made. TivoliVredenburg has a similar approach.

⁸ Bill Zujewski, "Sustainability Statements: How To Write One That Resonates with Employees and Customers," Green Business Bureau, August 19, 2021, <https://greenbusinessbureau.com/business-function/executive/sustainability-statements/>.

⁹ Dutch: maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen

¹⁰ TivoliVredenburg, "Duurzaamheid," accessed April 17, 2022, <https://www.tivolivredenburg.nl/info/duurzaamheid/>.

¹¹ Patronaat, "Welkom in Patronaat," accessed April 17, 2022, <https://patronaat.nl/over/>.

Venues also mention their collaboration and participation in programs and memberships at organizations such as those of Green Key and Green Stages. Green Stages is a covenant and project of Green Leisure Group that provides a space for cultural institutions such as venues and theaters to collectively become more sustainable.¹² They do so by sharing goals and information between the different institutions. A membership at Green Stages starts with a baseline measurement for aspects such as emissions and water use. Then, every year, new measurements are made to evaluate the progress and, collectively, build a new plan of action. Green Key, on the other hand, is an organization that offers an international quality mark for sustainability of corporations and organizations.¹³ Upon completing a long checklist of sustainable changes, companies, and in this case venues, can obtain the Green Key Certificate in bronze, silver, or gold, depending on the degree of sustainability. Patronaat currently holds the gold Certificate. Paradiso is working hard to obtain this as well by the end of 2022. As Van de Vlasakker explained, showing this certificate or showing that you have the certificate as a goal, can help with funding and subsidy applications. Moreover, it is a useful tool to track the company's progress as the checklist provides a clear overview of criteria and explanations of these criteria.¹⁴

Since they share their bar and café space with De Vegan Snackbar (a vegan 'fast/junk food' restaurant),¹⁵ it might be assumed that Rotown is automatically receiving more environmentally conscious customers. Despite their efforts to make the venue more sustainable, the organization of Rotown does not discuss sustainability on their website, as it, according to Maaskant, can often portray unrealistic image of the venue, by seeming more sustainable than they might be in reality: Rotown prefers to not discuss it, as discussing sustainability may come across as a marketing technique.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, based on interviews with Dutch venue employees, I have demonstrated what pushes venues to environmental action. The findings of the interviews suggest that, though

¹² Green Leisure Group, "Green Stages," accessed April 12, 2022, <https://www.greenleisure.nl/dienstverlening/green-stages/>.

¹³ Green Key, "Wat is Green Key," accessed April 12, 2022, <https://www.greenkey.nl/watishgreenkey>.

¹⁴ Green Key, "Waar Moet Mijn Bedrijf aan Voldoen?," accessed April 12, 2022, <https://www.greenkey.nl/normen>.

¹⁵ Rotown, "Rotown - De Vegan Snackbar," accessed May 2, 2022, <https://www.rotown.nl/vegansnackbar/>.

motivation is already present among venue staff and organizations, the Dutch government can aid the sustainable development of venues with better collaboration and stimulating policy tools and regulations.

First, the interviewed venue employees have indicated that they recognize several different motivating factors to take environmental action. At all venues, personal values of employees as well as organizational values have been the primary drivers to action, and in most cases also the values of stakeholder. These values were often reflected in individual actions in improving the sustainability of the venues. Some of the venues also saw financial benefits and competitive advantage in being more sustainable. Though many sustainable developments require initial financial investments, they would soon be saving money in addition to saving energy and water, such as switching to LED lights that are more energy efficient and have longer lifespans. National and local policy, while specified as a motivation for venues, has not been an effective motivation. Most action taken by the participating interviewed venues goes way beyond policy requirements. It is important to once again highlight that the interviewed venue employees work at venues that have taken environmental action and are thus not shy of talking about their progress. Motivations, obstacles, and action may be very different for venues that have not worked on sustainable development much.

The venue's strong motivations are largely reflected in their actions. While all venues still encounter the obstacles discussed in Chapter Six, the venues have been working on all different areas of sustainable development. In most venues, sustainability is an important decision-making factor in all departments around the venues such as the cleaning, programming, production, food and beverage and facilities departments. Emissions are reduced by switching to energy saving tools and green energy providers, but also through the more sustainable food and beverage and catering processes. Waste has been limited by all venues by using reusable hard cups for concert attendees and in some venues by the installation of water tapping points for crew backstage. In terms of water use and beverages, not only have many venues implemented grey water systems, but some venues have decided to donate the extra income from cup deposits and tap water to charities.

Finally, the sustainability statements have a lot of similarity. Even though Rotown does not have a statement on their website, the other four venues displayed their actions and motivations in similar ways. Mostly by mentioning their future goals and past achievements, the venues are demonstrating attention to the issue of their environmental impact.

CONCLUSION

As I am writing this conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic seems to maybe, finally, come to an end. While everyone is working hard trying to catch up on two years of lost tours, the upcoming summer and fall of 2022 may become some of the busiest months that concert venues, touring artists, and crew will encounter during their careers. Fans, artists, and crew have been waiting anxiously to go back to a life full of concerts, but to our planet's environment these concerts are more harmful than positive. Before we really return to 'normal' life, we all must reflect on the practices of the live music sector that might not be that positive.

In this thesis, I elucidate the connection between sustainability at Dutch popular music venues and climate and cultural policies. By examining policy goals, specific plastic policy for the catering and event industry, and personal experiences of venue employees, I explored how policies—both national and local—aid and hinder sustainable practices of venues. In this conclusion, I first sum up my findings and then propose a new outlook on sustainable development in the live music sector and the purpose of effective policies to support it.

In Chapter One, I laid the foundation of the thesis by establishing the definition of sustainability. As the term sustainability has changed in meaning over time, it can be interpreted in a variety of ways. While in humanities scholarship, sustainability often suggests a focus on cultural heritage management and sometimes economic longevity, in this thesis I emphasize the environmental aspect of sustainability as intended by the United Nations Brundtland Commission, which first coined the term in 1987.

Chapter Two elaborated the problem of the environmental impact of live music and concerts based on a synthesis of prior research. With this chapter, I aimed to emphasize the importance and urgency of research that focuses on the impact of live music and concert venues in particular as I found that the live music sector has an obvious negative contribution to the climate. The 2007 study by Bottrill et al. about greenhouse gas emissions of the UK music market demonstrates that the live music sector generates far more emissions than the recorded music sector. In the live music sector, the majority of the emissions are a result of concerts due to production emissions and artist and audience travel. Festivals, on the other hand, generate less emissions, but have received more attention in both scholarship and public media. In addition to the greenhouse gas emissions, physical waste is another major contributor to the harmful practices

that are ingrained in the live music sector. Especially the use of plastic cups for consumption of drinks at concerts results in significant amounts of waste and pollution.

In Chapter Three, I examined the policy context of Dutch climate and cultural policy, as these two policy topics ultimately influence the sustainable practices of Dutch music venues. I examined the policy context by analyzing the structural and political environments within which the policies are formed. The analysis found two features that makes the Dutch policy context unique from that of other countries. The first key element is the hierarchy of sources of law in the Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which places international law above Dutch law. This means that national and municipal laws need to be modified in order to comply with international law, including EU law and international treaties. Therefore, by signing and ratifying the Paris Agreement, the Dutch government agreed to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius, which it needs to achieve by drastically reducing emissions, which policies thus far have not achieved yet. The second key element is that, as a result of the separation of power in the Dutch government, NGO Stichting Urgenda, together with over 800 ordinary citizens, was able to sue the Dutch State for its failure to reduce the country's negative contribution to climate change. The Supreme Court ruling found that the Dutch State has not done enough to limit global warming and is required to "take more effective climate action," which it has not yet done. The ruling of the Supreme Court and the State's ongoing failure to comply demonstrate that the State is undermining its own rule of law. The analysis of primary climate and cultural policy suggest a lack of direction and accountability when it comes to policies that support sustainable development. Despite the fact that the government has been pushed to reduce its negative environmental impact from many different directions—the Supreme Court ruling, international law, social movements, and the scientific community—policies so far do not indicate any significant follow through. While climate policy documents highlight the importance and urgency of economy-wide action, considerations of sustainable policies are nowhere to be found in cultural policy.

In the fourth chapter, I zoomed in on plastic and waste policy as some of these policies are particular to the events and catering industries which venues are a part of. The introduction to the EU single-use plastic (SUP) directive led the Netherlands to adopt regulations to minimize the use of SUPs. First, it is important to note that the Dutch waste management system already exhibits some flaws. The goal of reducing rest waste per capita has not been achieved in the past years and the separation and recycling of other waste has not been as successful as the government planned. One method to increase success is an overall reduction of SUPs. Guided by the EU directive,

specific SUP items such as straw have been forbidden since 2021, but an examination of the implementation and enforcement of these regulations has indicated that the measures may not be effective yet. This requires evaluation of the success of the penalties and enforcement strategy at a later point when data can be gathered about the reduction of these SUP items. The primary problem with these regulations is that venues and restaurants are not held accountable for the use of SUPs, but only manufacturers and importers. The regulations on the use of SUPs for consumption of food and beverages on location introduced by Dutch state secretary Drs. Heijnen in March 2020 should change this, as these regulations mean that SUP cups at venues will not be allowed anymore and venues that use SUP cups will be held directly accountable. However, these new regulations only take effect in January 2024—instead of the originally proposed deadline of early 2023—, after complaints from catering and events business claiming that they require more time in order to adjust to and comply with the regulations. The letter from the state secretary explaining the regulations did not confirm whether these businesses actually require more time, but simply accepted the request with a full year extension. This is incredibly harmful to the environment as it allows businesses to pollute the planet with single-use plastic waste and generate more emissions for an extra year. Further research could focus on the evaluation of the recent SUP regulations and assess their effectiveness in reducing waste and concerts.

In the last three chapters, I examined the experiences of venue employees in their venue's sustainable development. Based on a survey and interviews conducted with five employees of Dutch popular music venues I established the current sustainable production practices that are present at these venues. I also discussed the obstacles the venues and employees encountered and the motivations they have to become more sustainable, as these obstacles and motivations underline where policy may be helping the process of sustainable development and where it may act counterproductively. All interviewees explained that their venue has been working on sustainability mostly driven by personal and organizational values. They found that it was their responsibility to take action as well as set an example, since policies have not been able to force environmental action. The venues have mostly worked on sustainability in terms of reducing their scope one and two emissions—the emissions that venues have direct effect on and can easily limit—by for example switching to LED lights or switching to greener energy providers. All venues have also switched from single-use to reusable hard cups for the consumption of drinks of the concert attendees. The venues represented in the interviews vary widely in capacity and their ability to switch to reusable hard cups suggest that the extension of the SUP policy is not necessary. More research is necessary to minimize the emissions resulting from audience and artists travel to concerts, as this large portion of the sector's emissions are generated out of direct control of the

venues. In addition to reducing emissions and waste, venues have been sharing information with each other to promote sustainable practices. Unfortunately, most of the motivation for environmental action comes from within the organizations. The venue employees explained that very few artists, agencies, or concert goers request any sustainable practices from the venues. Moreover, the interviewees stated that the government does not force sustainable development enough, both locally and nationally. Many aspects of sustainable development will turn out to be financially beneficial for venues, but the initial investment is often restraining them from taking action. A lack of financial support from the government, logistical difficulties, and few available resources hinder much wanted sustainable development.

“Rock may not be ruining the planet, but it’s certainly not helping. At least not yet.”

In his book *Ecomusicology: Rock, Folk, and the Environment*, Mark Pedelty makes this bold and painfully accurate statement. The music sector, as I have demonstrated in this thesis, is not all rainbows and sunshine. It has been suggested that music has a role in society as a tool that influences its audience, but the true social impact of music is immeasurable and the system that makes everyone enjoy music is contributing to climate change and slowly damaging our planet. Either way, by making the live music sector more sustainable, whether it positively influences the audience and society or not, is guaranteed to make a difference simply by reducing its direct environmental impact in terms of emissions and waste.

Limiting the environmental impact of the live music sector necessitates collective action, and, though this is definitely not only up to them, governments and music venues should take the lead. Concert attendees need to be more mindful of how they reach the places where they see their favorite musicians perform. Musicians, managers, agents, and promoters, ought to prioritize the environment in the planning and execution of their tours and they need to stimulate each other as well as the fans to make more sustainable choices. Nevertheless, local and national governments in the Netherlands need to take more responsibility to make sustainable development a priority economy-wide, including in the cultural sector. Current cultural policy still has a lot of space for growth to incorporate sustainability as a main principle. Stricter policies are required to ensure that

¹ Mark Pedelty, *Ecomusicology: Rock, Folk, and the Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012), 2.

sustainability becomes a top priority for all music venues. At the very least, as Maaskant predicted, subsidies and funding need to incorporate requirements for sustainability, which will stimulate sustainable development at venues as it becomes more affordable and therefore more accessible.

It is now up to governments to start taking the concerns of scientists about climate change more seriously, and must take drastic environmental action. Scholars, especially those in humanities, also need to start pressing for a focus on the environmental impact of the arts and culture we enjoy. The live music sector needs to reevaluate old practices and develop new practices that will make it return out of the pandemic as a healthier and more sustainable sector.

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APPENDIX 1 SURVEY

The research aims to examine Dutch policy around environmental sustainability and live music. As concerts have been proven to have a large environmental footprint in terms of waste and emissions, concert venues are assessed. This assessment is partially done by interviewing Dutch venue staff members about their sustainable practices, and motivation and obstacles for environmental action. The interviews are used to gain a deeper understanding of the position of venues in the debate around sustainable development and environmental action as well as the environmental impact of the live music industry. The interviews will be used to find gaps and flaws—and hopefully also successes—in Dutch policy around these same debates. Dutch policies will also be assessed through policy process analysis. The interviews will be used to locate and highlight topics of interest within the policy process analysis. This survey is used as a starting point for the interviews.

No external parties are funding the research and no external parties are involved in the research in any way.

The final master thesis will be in English according to academic standards. Therefore, this survey will be in English to avoid the need for translation.

This research and the interviews are conducted by Eline Duijsens. Eline Duijsens is a Research Master student in Musicology at Utrecht University. Email: eline.j.duijsens@gmail.com

Your email address, venue, and job title will not be shared in the thesis unless discussed otherwise.

1. Which venue do you work at?
2. What is your job title?
3. Does your venue have a sustainability statement?
 - Yes
 - No
4. Is your venue working on sustainable development?
 - Yes

- No – skip the next two questions
5. When did your venue start working on sustainability? This includes conducting research and not only the execution.
- In the last 2 years (during the Covid-19 pandemic)
 - 2-5 years ago
 - 5-10 years ago
 - 10-20 years ago
 - Longer than 20 years ago
6. Which aspects of sustainability has your venue been working on? Tick all boxes that apply.
- Energy consumption
 - Waste management and plastic use
 - Food / catering
 - Digital sustainability
 - Water use
 - Other: ...
7. If you/your venue have encountered obstacles to environmental action, in which categories do these fit best? Tick all boxes that apply.
- Lack of financial support
 - Lack of resources (information)
 - Lack of resources (available supply/suppliers)
 - Lack of interest
 - Lack of staff
 - Logistical difficulty
 - Other: ...
8. What have been the motivations to environmental action? This also applies if environmental action or sustainable development has not taken place at the venue. Tick all boxes that apply.

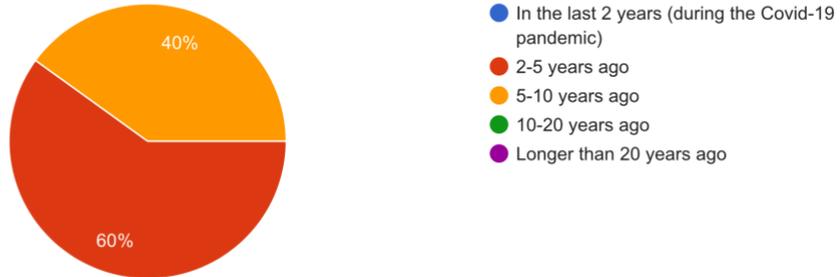
- Personal values
- Organisational values
- Stakeholder values
- Financial benefits
- Competitive advantage
- National or local policy (this also includes meeting requirements for funding)
- Other: ...

9. On a scale from 1 to 10, how much is sustainability taken into account into the decision-making process at the venue?

APPENDIX 2 SURVEY RESULTS

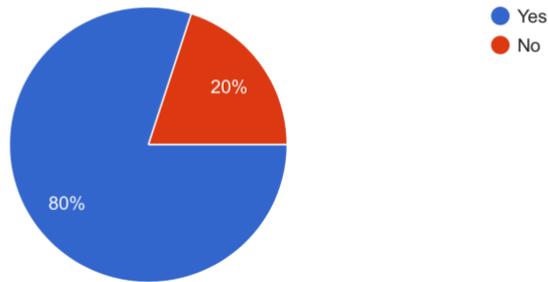
When did your venue start working on sustainability? This includes conducting research and not only the execution.

5 responses



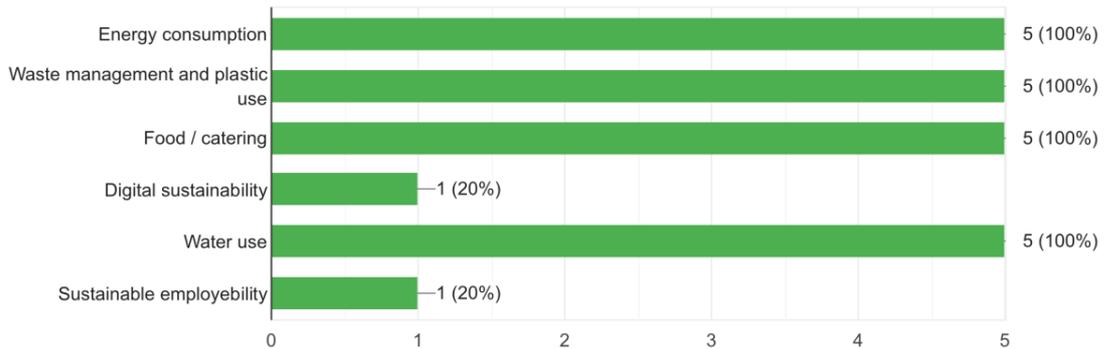
Does your venue have a sustainability statement?

5 responses



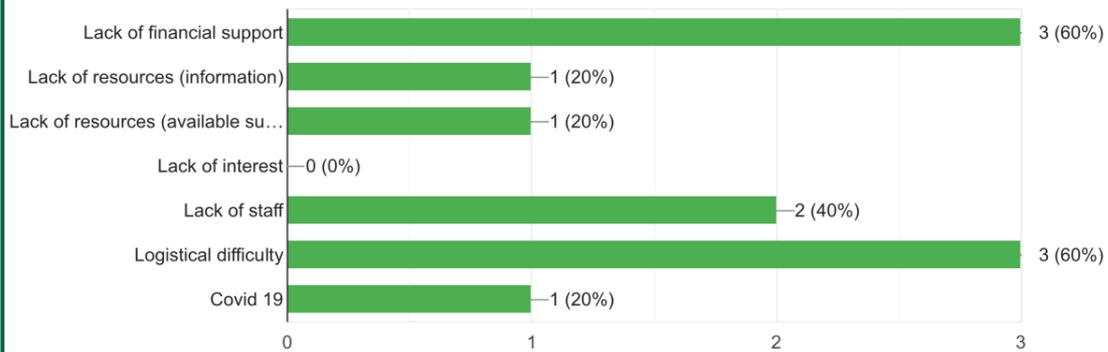
Which aspects of sustainability has your venue been working on? Tick all boxes that apply.

5 responses



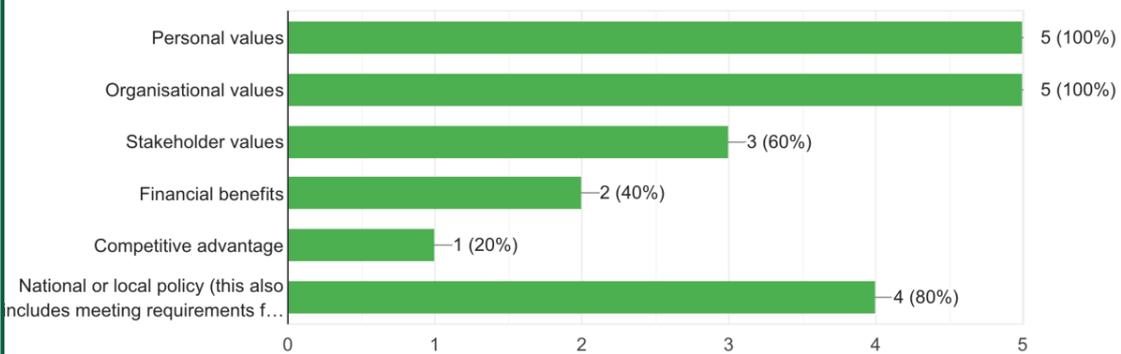
If you/your venue have encountered obstacles to environmental action, in which categories do these fit best? Tick all boxes that apply.

5 responses



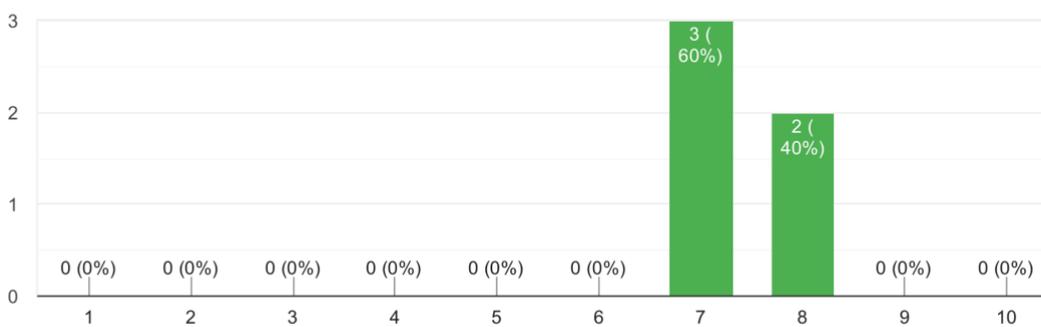
What have been the motivations to environmental action? This also applies if environmental action or sustainable development has not taken place at the venue. Tick all boxes that apply.

5 responses



On a scale from 1 to 10, how much is sustainability taken into account into the decision making process at the venue?

5 responses



APPENDIX 3 CONSENT FORMS



DECLARATION OF CONSENT for participation in:

Sustainability Policy and Popular Music Venues in The Netherlands [Working Title]

I hereby confirm:

- that I have been satisfactorily informed about the study through the information letter;
- that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and that any questions I asked have been satisfactorily answered;
- that I have had the opportunity to carefully consider participation in this study;
- that I voluntarily consent to participating.

I consent to the following:

- the data collected will be obtained for scientific purposes and retained as stated in the information letter;
- the collected, coded/anonymised research data (the transcription of the interview) will not be shared as part of the thesis;
- an audio recording will be made for this study only.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my consent to the use of data, as stated in the information letter.

Name of participant: Mijndert Rodolf

Signature: 

Date, town/city: 18 / 03 / 22, Tilburg

To be completed by the researcher carrying out the study:

Name: Eline Duijsens

I declare that I have explained to the above-mentioned participant what participation in the study entails.

Signature: 

Date: 08 / 06 / 22, Rotterdam



DECLARATION OF CONSENT for participation in:

Sustainability Policy and Popular Music Venues in The Netherlands [Working Title]

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- an audio recording will be made for this study only.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my consent to the use of data, as stated in the information letter.

Name of participant: Katharina Schoemaker

Signature: _____

Date, town/city: 28/03/2022, Haarlem

To be completed by the researcher carrying out the study:

Name: Eline Duijsens

I declare that I have explained to the above-mentioned participant what participation in the study entails.

Signature: _____

Date: 08 / 06 / 22, Rotterdam



DECLARATION OF CONSENT for participation in:

Sustainability Policy and Popular Music Venues in The Netherlands [Working Title]

I hereby confirm:

- that I have been satisfactorily informed about the study through the information letter;
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- an audio recording will be made for this study only.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my consent to the use of data, as stated in the information letter.

Name of participant:

A. de Boode

Signature:

Date, town/city:

28/3/2022

Utrecht

To be completed by the researcher carrying out the study:

Name: Eline Duijsens

I declare that I have explained to the above-mentioned participant what participation in the study entails.

Signature:

Date: 08 / 06 / 22, Rotterdam



DECLARATION OF CONSENT for participation in:

Sustainability Policy and Popular Music Venues in The Netherlands [Working Title]

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- an audio recording will be made for this study only.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my consent to the use of data, as stated in the information letter.

Name of participant: Stephan Maaskant

Signature: 

Date, town/city: 30 / 03 / 2023, Rotterdam

To be completed by the researcher carrying out the study:

I declare that I have explained to the above-mentioned participant what participation in the study entails.

Name: Eline Duijsens

Signature: 

Date: 08 / 06 / 22, Rotterdam



Universiteit
Utrecht

DECLARATION OF CONSENT for participation in:

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- the collected, coded/anonymised research data (the transcription of the interview) will not be shared as part of the thesis;
- an audio recording will be made for this study only.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my consent to the use of data, as stated in the information letter.

Name of participant: Eva v.d. Vlasakker

Signature: [Signature] Date, town/city: 22/3/2022

To be completed by the researcher carrying out the study:

I declare that I have explained to the above-mentioned participant what participation in the study entails.

Name: Eline Duijsens

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 08/06/22 Rotterdam