

SMA!

STUDY VISIT REPORT

Halderm Pop Festival, Germany

11-13, August 2022

DISCLAIMER

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Introduction

The SMA! (Small Festivals Accelerator) project aims to create a sustainable development model for small and medium-sized festivals in peripheral Europe. In 2022, the consortium conducted three study visits to the festivals, partner of the project, in Germany, North Macedonia, and Italy to identify best practices and challenges.

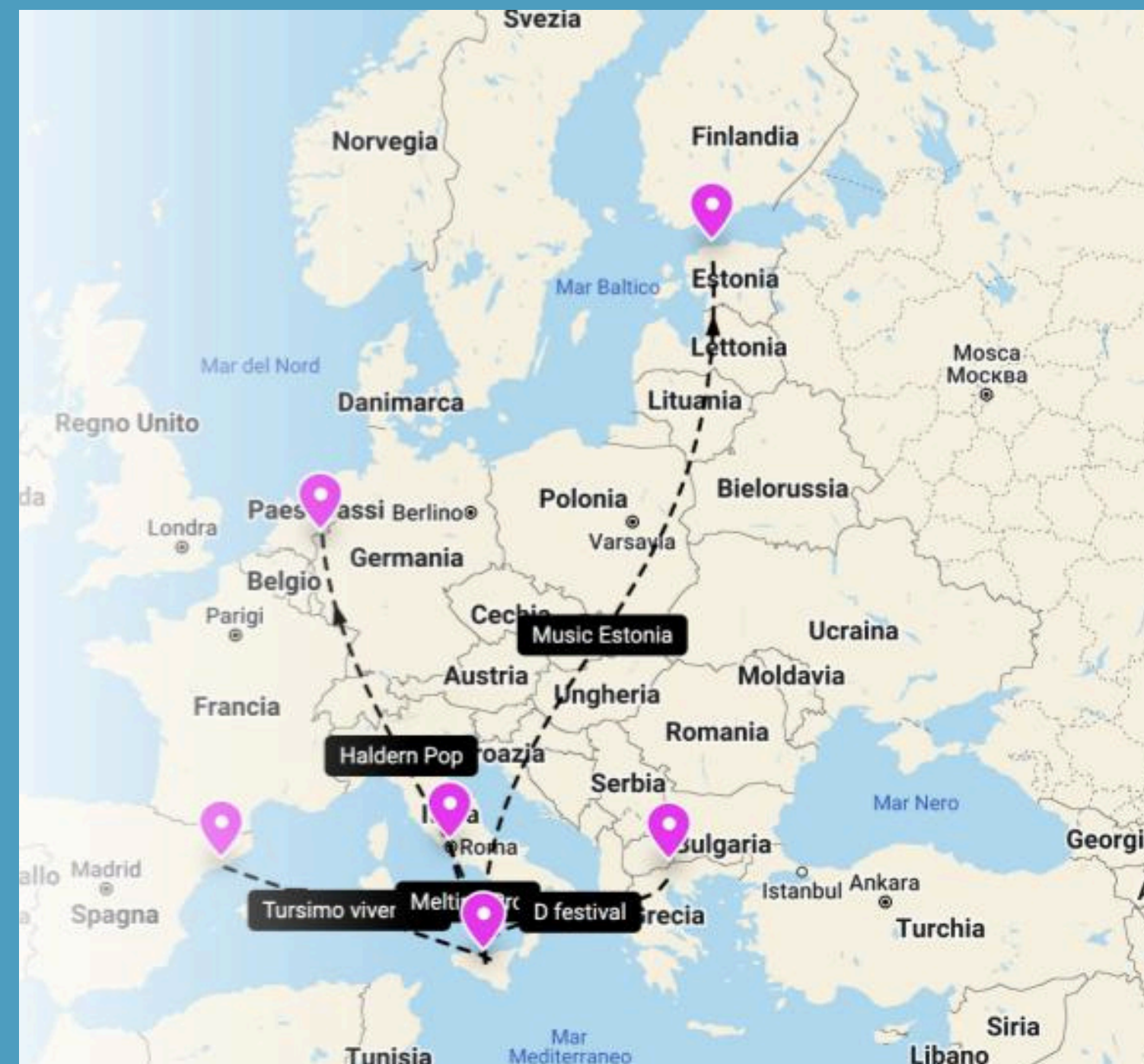
These visits provided insights into innovative strategies for community engagement, environmental sustainability, and enhancing local identity.

The findings contribute to a transferable business model that supports festivals and fosters socio-economic growth in their regions, as summarized in this report.

Haldern Pop: Overview and Context

Haldern Pop Festival, established in 1984 in Rees-Haldern, Germany, began as a local initiative organized by altar boys from the village.

Over time, it has evolved into one of Europe's most celebrated boutique music festivals, maintaining its charm and authenticity by limiting its audience to 7,000 attendees. The festival stands out for its commitment to community engagement, innovative programming, and fostering emerging musical talent.



Over 60 acts play across six unique stages, including the 1000-capacity Spiegel tent, a mirrored wooden dance tent from the 1920s.

As a result, the unassuming village of Haldern is transformed into a melting pot of music, with a broad and eclectic mix of genres and international and domestic talent

39.
**HALDERN POP
FESTIVAL**
11.-13. August 2022
Rees-Haldern am Niederrhein

Volkswirtschaft
DAWOS weiter geht ...



1000 ROBOTA (DE) AARON SMITH (GB) ANAÏS MITCHELL (US) ANNA CALVI (GB) ANNE MÜLLER (DE)
BADBADNOTGOOD (CAN) BETTINA BRUNS (DE) BLACK COUNTRY, NEW ROAD (GB) BLACK MIDI (GB)
BUNTSPECHT (AT) CANTUS DOMUS (DE) CHARTREUSE (GB) CURTIS HARDING (US) DRY CLEANING (GB)
ELI SMART (US) ELLIE DIXON (GB) EMILIE ZOË (CH) ERDMÖBEL (DE) ERIC PFEIL (DE) ETAOIN (IRL)
ETHAN P. FLYNN (GB) EXTRALISCIO (IT) FAMOUS (GB) FRIEDBERG (AT,GB) FRUIT BATS (US)
GEESE (US) GHUM (GB) GILLA BAND (IRL) GLAUQUE (BE) GRACE CUMMINGS (AUS) GUSTAF (US)
HATIS NOIT (IT) HORSE LORDS (US) HUSTEN (DE) KAE TEMPEST (GB) KATHRYN JOSEPH (SCO)
KING HANNAH (GB) LONEY DEAR (SE) MESKEREM MEES (BE) MID CITY (AUS)
NILÜFER YANYA (GB) PARQUET COURTS (US) PITS FEAT. JAN BRAUER (UKR,DE)
ROBOCOPRA QUARTET (IRL) SERATONES (US) SHAME (GB) SHORTPARIS (RUS)
SINEAD O'BRIEN (IRL) SONS OF KEMET (GB) SPORTS TEAM (GB) SQUID (GB)
STARGAZE (AUS) TEKE::TEKE (CAN) TERRA PROFONDA (IT) THE LOUNGE SOCIETY (GB)
THE PHYSICS HOUSE BAND (GB) THUMPER (IRL) THUS OWLS (CAN) TOM JAHN (DE)
VASCO BRONDI (IT) WET LEG (GB) WU-LU (GB) YARD ACT (GB)

Gefördert von:



www.pop-tickets.de



Haldern Pop: Unique Value proposition

Haldern Pop Festival emphasises community engagement and hospitality as its core values. The festival is unique due to its line-up, story, accessibility, and overall experience.

They maintain a strong relationship with their audience, which helps them understand audience preferences without relying on formal analysis. They aim to create trust in society by bringing together people from different generations, nationalities, and music genres.

The festival hosts around 100 events year-round at the local village bar, which helps to engage the community, especially young people. This approach makes the festival appealing to tourists from Northern Europe, who are attracted to its unique format.



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Haldern Pop Details

Interviewee: Stephan Reichman, director

Location: Haldern, Rees-Haldern

Nearest international airport: Dusseldorf, Weeze, Cologne or Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Main Transport: Train/car

Website: <http://haldernpop.com/info/>

First edition: 1984

Capacity (tickets on sale): 7.000

Facilities: Camping

Organised by: Raum3.



Best practices observed: Volunteer Management System/ Community-Centered Approach:

Haldern Pop relies on a well-structured volunteer system with around 400 volunteers. These volunteers are organized into 18 "families" within the community, each comprising approximately 30 individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The "families" meet regularly to discuss festival plans and address community questions. Their role includes spreading festival-related information and ensuring that the entire community is engaged and informed.

Volunteers participate in discussions about reinvesting festival profits to benefit the local area, fostering a sense of trust and shared purpose.



Volunteers at
HALDERN POP,
North
Rhine-Westphalia

Best practices observed

Volunteers are motivated by shared values, such as love for music and a commitment to their community. The festival offers meaningful roles to volunteers, from managing logistics to hosting bands and technical support

Strong volunteer retention rates are attributed to the festival's respectful treatment and the sense of belonging it fosters

The festival fosters a strong sense of local ownership, with families and residents actively contributing to its planning and operations. This involvement strengthens intergenerational ties and creates a lasting bond between the festival and the community



Best practices observed

Cultural Impact

Preserving Local Identity:

Haldern Pop celebrates and reinforces the cultural identity of its host village by integrating local venues, traditions, and people into the festival's framework. Venues like the St. Georg Church and the Spiegel Tent enhance the unique atmosphere, blending tradition with innovation.



Best practices observed

Platform for Emerging Talent:

The festival is recognized as a trendsetter in the European music scene, having supported early performances by artists such as Mumford & Sons, IDLES, and Sam Smith. It continues to be a launchpad for new talent, drawing international attention

Eclectic Artistic Programming: By curating a genre-diverse lineup, the festival fosters a broader appreciation of music, spanning from experimental metal and jazz to classical and folk. This inclusivity resonates with a wide range of audiences

Artist Experience:

The intimate and welcoming environment allows artists to connect deeply with audiences. The festival's hospitality is a significant draw for performers, often compensating for lower fees, the backstage is a safe space for artists.



Best practices observed

Community and Social Impact

Social Trust and Cohesion:
Organizers emphasize authenticity, trust, and storytelling as key elements, enhancing the social fabric of Haldern. The festival's inclusive ethos promotes unity among diverse groups of people, from local residents to international visitors



Best practices observed

Economic Impact

Boosting Local Economy: Haldern Pop attracts audiences from across Europe, benefiting local businesses such as accommodations, restaurants, and shops. The festival also supports regional producers and artisans through merchandising and partnerships

Year-Round Benefits:

Revenue generated by the festival is reinvested into the community through social projects, infrastructure improvements, and cultural programs. This approach ensures that the economic impact extends beyond the event itself



Best practices observed

Local Branding and Identity:

Haldern Pop is not only a festival but also a symbol of the village's identity and a key driver of its cultural branding. It attracts international audiences while maintaining a distinctly local feel, showcasing the region's charm, hospitality, and creativity.

The festival serves as an ambassador for the Lower Rhine area, promoting regional products, traditions, and natural beauty. This boosts local businesses and reinforces Haldern's identity as a cultural destination



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Best practices observed

Environmental and Sustainability Impact Sustainable Practices:

The festival actively works to minimize its environmental footprint through waste management and eco-friendly initiatives. Organizers aim to inspire audiences and partners to adopt similar practices



Challenges

COVID-19 Impact:

The pandemic significantly affected Haldern Pop, leading to reduced ticket sales and disrupting festival operations.

It posed challenges in maintaining community engagement and volunteer coordination during lockdowns

Generational Transition:

Ensuring a smooth transition of roles and responsibilities to younger generations is crucial for sustaining the festival's long-term viability.

Engaging younger volunteers and fostering leadership within the community is an area requiring focused effort.



Challenges

Environmental Practices:

While there are efforts to integrate sustainability, logistical limitations, such as energy sourcing and waste management, present ongoing difficulties

Implementing eco-friendly alternatives, like reducing reliance on diesel generators, requires additional support and innovation.



Voices from the Field

Halder Pop is regarded as a model festival, especially for boutique and peripheral events. Its focus on creating an intimate, trust-based experience for attendees, alongside its community-first ethos, sets it apart as an inspiration

Partners learned the importance of embedding a festival within its local context, using Halder Pop as a benchmark. For example, the intergenerational involvement and the sense of shared ownership were seen as practices to emulate

Halder Pop is praised for its deep integration with the local community. Partners highlighted its unique "family system," where local families and residents actively manage festival operations, such as backstage areas and logistics. This approach strengthens the bond between the festival and the community, making it a sustainable model for generational involvement. While the festival's intergenerational model is celebrated, ensuring a seamless transition of leadership roles and maintaining youth engagement remain ongoing challenges that have been noticed.

Voices from the Field

The festival's desire to maintain an intimate, community-focused atmosphere while attracting a global audience poses a challenge.

Appreciated the stage and artistic management at Haldern Pop and how it has the capability of being a festival for everyone

Partners noted the difficulty in scaling operations without compromising the festival's unique charm



Conclusion

The study visit to Haldern Pop provided valuable insights into the operations, challenges, and best practices of a boutique festival deeply embedded in its local context. Key takeaways are summarized below:

Community-Driven Success Haldern Pop's integration with the local community is central to its sustainability and uniqueness. Its "family system" of volunteer management fosters ownership, intergenerational involvement, and a shared sense of purpose. This approach serves as a model for festivals aiming to strengthen ties with their local communities while ensuring operational efficiency.

Haldern Pop demonstrates that a festival can simultaneously promote its local heritage and attract global audiences, a lesson in cultural branding for festivals in peripheral areas. The importance of a place active all the year and all the week, where people can keep in touch, especially the younger ones.

Generational Transition

Ensuring continuity of leadership and engaging younger generations in volunteer and management roles are crucial for the festival's future. Haldern Pop's model of nurturing intergenerational involvement offers a roadmap for other festivals to build resilience and longevity. Stressed out that the real challenge for the next year is to maintain a young audience



Conclusion

While the festival is committed to eco-friendly practices, logistical and infrastructural constraints, such as reliance on diesel generators and limited recycling facilities, highlight the need for further investment in sustainable solutions.

Addressing these challenges would strengthen Haldern Pop's alignment with global sustainability trends and enhance its long-term viability.



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Halder Pop festival team



SMALL FESTIVALS
ACCELERATOR



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PARTNERS