

## **Eurovision 2023**

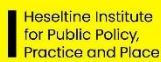
A narrative synthesis of the  
evidence from the  
Eurovision 2023 evaluation

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October 2023

# A narrative synthesis of the evidence from the Eurovision 2023 evaluation

## WITH THANKS TO...



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## Foreword

The port city of Liverpool has a long tradition of welcoming visitors from around the world and facing challenges with creativity, togetherness, and hope. It was therefore natural for Liverpool to step up and offer to host Eurovision 2023 for Ukraine. This evaluation shows the City's vibrant cultural economy and the City Region's residents stood side-by-side with Ukrainian partners and co-delivered an outstandingly successful Eurovision 2023 with the BBC.

After a century of extreme prosperity, and the transit of millions, including nine million emigrants, Liverpool's port-based economy declined from the 1930s. But these comings and goings of people from around the world shaped a remarkable culture that shone through hard times in wars, economic shocks and most recently the Covid-19 pandemic. Expression through music, especially song, has been characteristic of Liverpool. From classical choral venues founded in prosperity to the Merseybeat and Beatles poverty-defying post-war fizz of the 1960s, this has long been a city of song.

Today, visitors fuel almost half of Liverpool's economy, and musical cultural attractions are key to many visits. In the 1980s, the Merseyside Development Corporation converted decaying docks into visitor attractions and attracted events such as the International Garden Festival. In 2008, Liverpool became European Capital of Culture and the visitor economy continued to grow. In 2020-21, when Covid-19 lockdowns closed much of this economy, Liverpool rose to the challenge and safely reopened the mass cultural events sector as a national research initiative with an international audience and responsibility.

In 2022, when the BBC visited Liverpool to evaluate it as a potential host for Eurovision 2023, it found mature facilities, capable teams, and infectious civic pride and warmth. This evaluation shows the BBC's faith in Liverpool to co-deliver Eurovision 2023 with them on behalf of Ukraine was justified. Furthermore, impacts were almost universally positive across cultural, economic, social and wellbeing aspects. The full legacy will emerge over time but the short to medium term findings of this evaluation show that impacts exceeded reasonable expectations.

We recommend any Eurovision host city to make the most of the opportunity to come together as a community of culture, with civic pride and inclusive partnerships, especially with its residents.

*Councillor Liam Robinson, Leader of Liverpool City Council*

*Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor of Liverpool City Region*

*Professor Tim Jones, Vice Chancellor of The University of Liverpool*

## **This report**

This independent report was commissioned by Liverpool City Council (LCC) through a multi-stakeholder steering group (see page 30).

The Liverpool civic ethos is to build evaluation into event delivery from inception, learning from every stage of planning and operation, co-produced with stakeholders. Eurovision 2023 had only seven months' notice for planning, but the civic partners had worked successfully at pace before, most recently in the UK Events Research Programme for Covid-19 recovery.

Stakeholders in delivering, experiencing and evaluating Eurovision 2023 were convened to develop an evaluation plan. The group began identifying and establishing evaluation work streams and securing associated funding. A multi-agency evaluation steering group comprising academic partners, and representatives from the BBC, Department for Culture Media and Sport, and the British Council was convened.

The steering group worked collaboratively to design and produce the evaluations, sharing data and methodologies wherever possible. This approach avoided the inefficiency and pitfalls of siloed working, delivering a strong body of work with civic cohesion.

As evaluations progressed, it became clear from their complex nature and breadth of scope that a synthesis of the different evaluation strands would enable the collective findings to reach a wider audience. As a result, the steering group commissioned the University of Liverpool to pull the findings of the strands together.

This report is published by the Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place, an interdisciplinary research institute focusing on the development of sustainable and inclusive cities and city regions.

## **Authors and sources**

### Synthesis

#### **A narrative synthesis of the evidence from the Eurovision 2023 evaluation.**

University of Liverpool: K. Scott, T. Arnold, S. Jarvis, I. Buchan

From the following evaluation strand reports:

### Economic Impacts

*Surveys, interviews, and on-site observations, gathering responses from event attendees, visitors, and local residents. Plus ticketing data, mobile phone data, official reports, and economic indicators reflecting spending, events, tickets, footfall, mobile phone usage, transport movements, and tourism.*

#### **Economic Impact of Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool**

Amion Consulting: G. Russell et al.

### Cultural Relations

*Tracker survey of international viewers across five European countries; literature review; interviews with the Eurovision Song Contest production team, Liverpool City Council, Culture Liverpool, the BBC, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the European Broadcasting Union, Liverpool's cultural sector, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Spirit of 2012, Ukraine's public service broadcaster Suspilne Ukraine, the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ukrainian Institute Kyiv, OGAE UK – the UK branch of the international Eurovision fan network OGAE, and a range of UK and Ukrainian artists and producers.*

#### **Eurovision 2023 and cultural relations: snapshot to 22 September 2023**

University of Hull: C. Baker, D. Atkinson, G. Burgess, A. Curran, A. Daupare

University of Brighton: B. Grabher

University of Glasgow: M. Howcroft

Royal Holloway, University of London: B. O'Loughlin

Tracker survey conducted by Information By Design

### Community and Wellbeing

*Pre- and post- event household surveys exploring personal, subjective and community wellbeing as well as civic pride, tolerance of diversity and local to global sense of citizenship; events feelings questionnaire; focus groups and interviews with representatives from organisations commissioned to run linked events; analysis of evaluations from community groups who benefitted from EuroGrant.*

#### **Eurovision 2023 Evaluation: Community and Wellbeing Strand**

University of Liverpool: R. Corcoran, H. Page, R. Warsaw, K. Zhuk, I. Buchan

Recruitment of survey participants by M.E.L. Research.

## Nightlife

*Face-to-face surveys in Liverpool City Centre over four nights (16:00 – 01:00).*

### ***Celebrating Together: Views and Experiences of Nightlife and Entertainment Users during the Eurovision Song Contest***

#### ***Liverpool 2023***

Liverpool John Moores University: C. Wilson, Z. Quigg, R. Bates, N. Butler, E. Hearne, C. Montgomery, M. Bellis

## Multi-agency Working

*Sampling individuals involved with the planning and delivery; field observations; online survey; interviews and focus groups*

### ***Eurovision 2023: Exploring Liverpool's Multi-Agency Approach to a Large-Scale Event***

Edge Hill University: M. Smith, B. Phythian, L. Swan-Keig, L. Forrest

# LIVERPOOL CALLING

## AND THE RESULTS ARE IN

### EUROVISION HOST CITY 2023 IN NUMBERS



## £54.8M

net economic boost to Liverpool City Region



## 473K

Venues welcomed 473,000 attendees for Eurovision events



## 2M

2M people reached through the education and community programmes



## 328K

328,326 people engaged with the 2-week EuroFestival



## 96%

96% of participants in Eurovision nightlife would recommend Liverpool as a destination



## 99%

99% of the OGAE's - the official Eurovision Fan Club - loved the undeniable festival atmosphere and city welcome



## 162M

162M viewers globally over three live BBC shows



## 280K

>280,000 pieces of global news coverage



## 175K

175,000 city centre hotel rooms were sold in May - the best month on record since 2018 (STEAM Data)



## 475

475 volunteers contributed to 12,000 hours of Eurovision activities



## 87%

87% of people thought the Eurovision Song Contest promoted positive feelings across the countries involved



## Executive summary

**Liverpool City Council and its partners commissioned a wide-ranging evaluation of Eurovision 2023.** The evaluation comprised a set of studies of the economic, cultural, social and wellbeing impacts of Eurovision 2023 through surveys, one-to-one and group interviews, which were project managed via a multi-agency evaluation steering group. The studies revealed how those outside Liverpool viewed Eurovision 2023 and the city, assessed the potential value of such events, and aimed to understand what made the event a success and where we can learn in the future. This report is a summary of these evaluations, highlighting the short-term effects on Liverpool and the Liverpool City Region, and the long-term legacy of Eurovision.

**“No other city in the UK puts on a show like Liverpool.”** This quote from Liverpool’s bid to host Eurovision 2023 is at the heart of Liverpool’s Eurovision 2023 success. Liverpool has extensive experience of hosting major events, and in 2021 had safely reopened large cultural events with the world watching as we emerged from Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. The learning that comes from evaluating these past experiences enabled the city to successfully pick up the Eurovision baton on behalf of Ukraine. The people of Liverpool were proud of winning the bid and gaining the opportunity to show off the city whilst simultaneously celebrating Ukrainian culture. The news that Liverpool was to host the event positively affected wellbeing, as residents anticipated the event.

**Liverpool rapidly rose to the challenge of delivering this complex event.** This is the first time the previous year’s winning nation has been unable to host due to war. The unavoidable delay to find an alternative host left Liverpool with only seven months to prepare for Eurovision 2023. Rapid delivery was possible thanks to Liverpool’s ‘ready-made’ infrastructure developed from investment in previous cultural activities and large events, particularly since Liverpool’s year as European Capital of Culture in 2008.

**Trust, relationships and communication were critical to effective multi-agency working.** A shared location for the Joint Command Centre and dedicated time and space for multi-agency meetings were important for fostering good working relationships. In particular, co-location of leaders from different agencies allowed rapid response to any arising challenges.

**Eurovision 2023 brought £54.8 million net additional spending to Liverpool City Region.** This benefit arose through a combination of visitor spend (£43 million net) and organiser expenditure in the region (£11.7 million net). This significant direct boost in economic activity was focused largely in the accommodation,

hospitality, and retail sectors. This economic impact is likely to grow further in these sectors over time, with increased visitor numbers an anticipated ripple effect of Eurovision.

**Eurovision 2023 had an enormous reach.** 162 million people globally watched the contest over its three live TV shows. In addition, the BBC social media campaign generated 245 million global video views. The largest platform was TikTok, accounting for 60% of social media activity. Eurovision's official digital platforms also saw record engagement, with 40% more views than in 2022. More than 300,000 additional visitors came to Liverpool during the two weeks of the EuroFestival.

**Liverpool created volunteer and employment opportunities with potential for longer-term impact.** Eurovision recruited 475 volunteers, including 30 Ukrainian volunteers and 29 students taking Prep For Life courses at Wirral Met College, which equip those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities for work and independence. Volunteers interviewed on their Eurovision experience collectively rated the experience 9.3 out of 10. They highlighted how the event gave them confidence, a sense of purpose and the drive to take similar opportunities when offered in the future. Eurovision had a similarly positive effect on the 145 Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts students or recent graduates employed as performers and in behind-the-scenes roles. The opportunities bolstered their CVs and raised their confidence as they apply for other roles. Activities included a Eurovision jobs fair strategically linked to the event's official planning and branding launch. 6,000 job openings were advertised, leading to 394 jobs being offered on-the-day, and 3,216 individuals advancing to second round interview.

**Liverpool delivered on its pledge to tell an authentic story of Ukraine, with Ukraine - from the inception of the bid to handover.** The evaluation shows that Liverpool forged a strong partnership with Ukraine to deliver an outstanding Eurovision 2023. Eurovision activities connected the people of Liverpool City Region with citizens of Ukraine, whilst also being sensitive to the backdrop of war. Collaborations ranged from the design of the iconic beating heart logo to live shows featuring UK and Ukrainian talent with equal prominence. 19 of the 24 commissions at EuroFestival (a two-week programme of events around Eurovision) were UK – Ukrainian collaborations. These efforts resulted in most surveyed overseas viewers considering the event as delivered 'on behalf of' or 'jointly with' Ukraine.

**Liverpool 2023 delivered on Eurovision's potential to be a positive force for cultural relations.** Eurovision creates opportunities for participants and hosts to broadcast narratives about their city and country to a large international

audience. The majority of Liverpool citizens surveyed after Eurovision thought that it promoted positive feelings across the countries involved (87.3%). Investment in activities around the main Eurovision event, such as EuroVillage, played an important role in maximising the cultural value of Eurovision. EuroStreet and EuroLearn took the spirit of Eurovision into communities, and communities in turn shared their enthusiasm with visitors. Eurovision 2023 raised the global profile of Liverpool and we anticipate strong ripple effects on tourism.

**Eurovision 2023 entertainment events and nightlife were inclusive and safe.**

Liverpool ensured a safe and welcoming atmosphere in Liverpool for all, through a dedicated programme of volunteer and employee training. The evaluation showed that the city successfully created safe spaces for marginalised groups, and there was hope that this would continue as a legacy of Eurovision. The vast majority (87.2%) of those surveyed considered Liverpool a safe place to go for a night out, and 95.9% said they would return to Liverpool's nightlife. Attendees came from a wide variety of socio-demographic backgrounds, representing a range of age groups, nationalities and identities. Consumption of alcohol and drugs and levels of antisocial behaviour were lower than would have been expected based on previous evaluation of similar-sized events. The creation of a strong 'community' spirit at Eurovision likely contributed to the safety, promoting positive bystander behaviour.

**Liverpool engaged LGBTQ+ communities across the breadth of its Eurovision offering.**

Eurovision events attract a strong presence from the LGBTQ+ community. A quarter of survey respondents in Liverpool during Eurovision identified as LGBTQ+, and this proportion rose to a third at the nightlife venues studied. Work by LGBTQ+ artists featured prominently as part of the cultural programme, raising the profile of local talent.

**Eurovision enhanced the view of Liverpool and the UK.** In addition to the positive views of visitors, wave one of the tracker survey of 5,000 participants outside the UK indicates that Eurovision fostered a positive view of Liverpool and highlighted the city as an attractive place to visit. Three in ten people who watched Eurovision this year, and even one in ten of people who did not watch it, said that Liverpool hosting Eurovision had made them more likely to visit the city.

## **1. Introduction: building on Liverpool's experience of hosting major events**

Eurovision is not 'just' a song contest. It is a city-wide festival incorporating nine live shows and a glittering array of associated activities (*Table 1*). Eurovision is the most-watched live cultural event in Europe, attracting visitors from across the host country and around the world. As part of its commitment to learning and building on its experience of hosting major events, Liverpool City Council and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority alongside partners in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the BBC and the Arts and Humanities Research Council, commissioned four in-depth evaluations. These evaluations aimed to understand the impact of Eurovision 2023 on Liverpool and the surrounding regions, and on visitor and viewer perceptions of the UK. They considered: social and economic impacts;<sup>1</sup> influence on cultural relations;<sup>2</sup> impact on wellbeing in Liverpool and the surrounding communities;<sup>3</sup> and visitor experiences including nightlife.<sup>4</sup> In parallel, a fifth evaluation explored how different agencies came together to deliver the event.<sup>5</sup> The BBC has also provided access to its end of show report, currently in development. Five months on from Eurovision 2023, these evaluations clearly show the many positive short-term impacts of the event. Longer-term impacts will be further explored as the evaluations extend into next year. This report summarises the key findings of these evaluations.

As captured visually in our summary infographic (Page 7), the evaluations find that Eurovision 2023 was a success. The achievements are particularly remarkable in light of the limited time between selection of Liverpool as host and the event. This delay was due to the unprecedented situation of the previous year's winner Ukraine being unable to host due to Russia's invasion and the ongoing war. As a result, Liverpool had only seven months to deliver this complex event. The city has risen to similar challenges before, including the world's first realistic experimental reopening of mass cultural events after Covid lockdowns. The roots of Eurovision 2023's success lie in the city's strong history of investment in cultural activity combined with 'a ready-made' infrastructure and extensive expertise in delivering high-quality mega events. Core Eurovision events were held on the Liverpool waterfront. Here the interconnected arena, convention centre and exhibition centre have hosted numerous large-scale and high-profile events since Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture in 2008. The location inspired delegates across production teams: visiting Eurovision in Liverpool was exciting to some because of their musical memories of the city. Liverpool's musical heritage and the visual appeal of the waterfront also fired the imaginations of the BBC creative team.<sup>2</sup>

<b>Event Type</b>	<b>Date/s</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Delivery partner</b>
Live Shows	9 to 13 May	Liverpool Arena	ACC Liverpool / BBC / European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
Eurovision Village	5 to 13 May	Pier Head	Culture Liverpool
National Lottery Big Eurovision Welcome	7 May	St George's Hall	National Lottery / Culture Liverpool
EuroFestival	1 to 14 May	Various inc. Tate Liverpool, Liverpool Cathedral, National Museums Liverpool, Blue and Yellow Submarine Parade	Culture Liverpool and Liverpool Arts Community
EuroLearn	5 to 13 May	Various schools	Culture Liverpool
EuroStreet	5 to 13 May	Various community groups	Culture Liverpool
EuroClub	5 to 13 May	Camp & Furnace	Camp and Furnace informed by the Eurovision Fan Club (OAGE)
General City-Wide Activities	5 to 13 May	City Centre and venues hosting Eurovision activities	Various including Liverpool Arts Community

Core Eurovision events took place in the city, with the M&S Bank Arena, a 10,000 capacity Eurovision Village and EuroClub hosting events throughout the week, and an Official Welcome at St George's Hall. The location of these official venues within walking distance in the heart of the city stands in contrast to some previous Eurovision host cities where the arena was in an outlying district and visitors had to journey between the sites by public or private transport. This co-location enhanced the Eurovision atmosphere and contributed to positive perceptions of Liverpool.<sup>2</sup> Because many visitors stayed in accommodation in the city centre, thousands of participant journeys were made on foot, instead of by car or minibus, contributing towards the sustainability of the event.<sup>2</sup>

No matter how attractive the location, people are at the heart of delivering any successful event. Field observations during event planning and delivery showed

that trust, relationships and communication between partners were critical to success.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, 'existing relationships' and 'building relationships' have both emerged as themes in interviews evaluating multi-agency working. Established ways of working were considered important for the rapid mobilisation of operational teams, successful integration of new partners and effective co-working. In the survey of 29 practitioners actively involved in Eurovision planning and organisation, 82.8% of respondents agreed that working with partner agencies went 'very well' or 'well'. Meetings were strongly felt to foster a sense of connection (65.5% of respondents) and solidarity (58.6%), with in-person meetings felt to be particularly effective.<sup>5</sup> These findings were echoed in the Community and Wellbeing report, where group interviews highlighted the success of strategic partners' meetings and their potential for initiating relationships that will exist beyond Eurovision.

*"The stakeholders meetings worked really well [...] incredible to hear all the different projects [...] to be at those Stakeholder meetings and be able to make the link of, ohh, they're doing something similar. Can we join up?"*

#### **Group interview participant for the Community and Wellbeing Report**

Similarly, community event organisers commented that, whilst challenging, the compressed timetable and sense of urgency motivated rapid and effective formation of new networks for delivering Eurovision events, with strong communications.<sup>3</sup> Information sharing was also highly effective across organisation and delivery, facilitated by co-location and clearly defined protocols for moving data between agencies with different security formats (see full economic impact report for description of organisational structure).<sup>5</sup> 96.6% of survey participants reported that the multi-agency approach to Eurovision was a success. Areas for learning and development will be more clearly defined in the final multi-agency evaluation report, however initial interview analyses suggest that there is some scope for specific refinements. These include developing a training guide explaining *why* particular timeframes and regulatory processes are in place, strengthening processes to avoid existing relationships leading to bypassing of traditional lines of command and control, and balancing the need to have experienced staff in role whilst simultaneously developing future leaders and building resilience. Overall, 86.2% of survey respondents felt that their working relationship with other agencies had improved as a result of working together for Eurovision 2023.

## **2. Ukraine and Liverpool: working hand-in-hand throughout Eurovision 2023**

Liverpool 2023 was delivered not just 'on behalf of' Ukraine, but with Ukrainian participation embedded throughout the live shows' production and cultural programme. Effort was made to ensure Ukrainian culture was being represented authentically and in an up-to-date way which accounted for Ukraine's regional diversity and showcased contemporary Ukrainian cultural production. This united effort was visible to viewers overseas: of those surveyed who watched at least one live show (n=3,135 out of n=5,000 total) almost two-thirds described Eurovision as an event hosted by the UK on Ukraine's behalf (46.3%) or a joint UK/Ukrainian event (18.9%).<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the vast majority (92.9%) of the 646 people who responded to the follow-up community and wellbeing survey were pleased with the way that Liverpool had hosted Eurovision 2023 on behalf of Ukraine.<sup>3</sup>

*"It was great to be part of the musical legacy in Liverpool. I moved from Ukraine because of the war and studying music in Liverpool was the best place for me and the music spirit and the live music scene. People are able to do the things they love and cherish and it's amazing."*

### **Performing artist from Ukraine that received support from EuroGrant, June 2023**

Passion to represent Ukraine sensitively and authentically, and a sense of solidarity with Ukraine, extended well beyond the live shows.<sup>2,3</sup> These feelings were strong in EuroFestival, the largest cultural programme ever built around a Eurovision contest, and in EuroStreet and EuroLearn, which took the Eurovision ethos into local communities. At EuroFestival, 19 of the 24 commissions were collaborations between UK and Ukrainian artists, facilitated through the combined efforts of the Ukrainian Institute and the British Council. These commissions involved 557 artists and 1,750 participants delivering work at 71 different venues. The commissions could address the war's impact on Ukrainian culture in ways the Eurovision live shows could not. They took their messages to a wide audience, with active engagement from 326,039 people over the two weeks of Eurovision.

*"It's really nice, despite the war...to be able to connect and for ravers in Kyiv to know there are people in the UK who are also dancing...It will show people how grateful Ukrainians are for everything that's been done but also remind them that it's everyone else's help we rely on, I think it's an exercise in unity."*

### **Feedback from EuroFestival event Rave UKraine**

The community and wellbeing evaluation also shows that the sense of solidarity with Ukraine extended well beyond the live shows, facilitated by EuroStreet and EuroLearn which took the Eurovision ethos deep into local communities.<sup>3</sup> Solidarity with Ukraine emerged as a key theme of group interviews held with participants of Eurovision events. Interviewees described how Liverpool people were "very open to Ukraine" and "wanted to know more". Community and school activities also strengthened understanding of the situation in Ukraine. For example, a group involved in working with school children to develop art inspired by Pysanka Eggs highlighted the story of a Ukraine milk jug that survived bombing. This helped the pupils in the UK to connect with those in Ukraine realising that "kids like us" were suffering the effects of war.



The evaluations highlighted the critical need to simultaneously celebrate Eurovision's sense of fun and be sensitive to the fact that Ukraine was at war.<sup>3</sup> This sense of conflicting emotions was strongly felt by participants reflecting on their experiences of delivering Eurovision activities. Experiences ranged from feeling that Eurovision brings hope at a challenging time, to at some moments feeling embarrassed and guilty for the joy and fun they experienced. Collectively, these evaluations revealed a broadened sense of citizenship and enhanced empathy for those in Ukraine.

*"It is horrible time, but Eurovision brings a good message of hope. Life doesn't stop, something good happens, life continues. Music doesn't die with war."*

### **Participant in the Community and Wellbeing evaluation**



### 3. Eurovision 2023's immediate boost to economic activity and employment

Hosting Eurovision led to a significant immediate, net boost in tangible economic activity of £54.8 million in Liverpool City Region.<sup>1</sup> The direct economic benefits come from visitor spending and from organiser spending in the region. To calculate visitor spending, the gross figures were adjusted for 'leakage' – visitor spend outside regions of interest during Eurovision-related visits; 'displacement' – the proportion of spending on Eurovision-related activities that led to reduced spending on other city attractions; and 'deadweight' – spending that would have occurred without Eurovision, and losses due to cancellation of other events at the M&S Bank Arena. After these adjustments, the net additional visitor spend was £42.3 million in Liverpool, £43.0 million in the Liverpool City Region and £45.3 million in England's North West region.

Whilst longer-term impacts are likely to be most significant for creative industries and those organising events, other sectors experienced immediate benefit.<sup>1</sup> The £42.3 million net additional direct spend for Liverpool city itself was split between sectors as follows:

- £14.8 million on food services
- £13.0 million on accommodation
- £7.9 million with local businesses (shopping)
- £4.7 million on leisure and entertainment
- £1.6 million on the Liverpool transport network (trains, buses and taxis)
- £0.4 million other

The net visitor spend was boosted by organiser spend in the region.<sup>1</sup> In Liverpool and the Liverpool City Region approximately 40% of the spend was on accommodation and hospitality for production and event staff. In addition, 65% of Liverpool City Council's overall spend in procurement of Eurovision 2023 contracts in Liverpool City Region went to small and medium enterprises. The net visitor and organiser spend effects combine to a net impact of £53.3 million for Liverpool, £54.8 million across Liverpool City Region



and £61.2 million for the North West. The breakdown of impacts at each spatial level and the equivalent effects of these impacts in terms of number of staff in one year full time employment and Gross Value Added is shown in *Table 2*. Longer term economic effects will be evaluated in a survey one year on from Eurovision 2023.

<b>Table 2: Net additional impacts from Eurovision 2023 for Liverpool, LCR, and North West – reproduced from<sup>1</sup></b>			
	<b>Liverpool</b>	<b>LCR</b>	<b>North West</b>
<b>Visitor expenditure impacts</b>			
Visitor expenditure	£42,342,062	£43,031,456	£45,327,797
1-year FTE employment	425	432	455
Temporary GVA	£16,103,454	£16,365,643	£17,238,983
<b>Organiser expenditure impacts</b>			
Organiser expenditure	£10,925,146	£11,728,533	£15,903,244
1-year FTE employment	164	179	243
Temporary GVA	£7,399,325	£8,079,978	£12,122,747
<b>Total expenditure impacts</b>			
Total expenditure	£53,267,208	£54,759,989	£61,231,041
1-year FTE employment	589	611	698
Temporary GVA	£23,502,779	£24,445,621	£29,361,730

Eurovision 2023 offered many opportunities for individuals to access employment. Liverpool City Region spearheaded a multi-partner collaborative effort to fill roles for the event and to establish a sustainable talent pipeline for the broader hospitality sector.<sup>1</sup> Activities included a Eurovision jobs fair strategically linked to the event's official planning and branding launch. 6,000 job openings were advertised, leading to 394 jobs being offered on-the-day, and an impressive number (3,216) of individuals advancing to second round interview. Over the course of recruitment events 3,287 jobseekers, 173 employers, and 52 skills support providers were actively engaged. The success of the Eurovision Jobs Fairs shows the value of face-to-face recruitment events, with the positive outcomes leading to discussions about replicating this model in the future, potentially on a regular basis. In addition to short-term employment, there are positive examples of individuals being supported by partners (or their employer) into other events or roles or being retained beyond the event.

*“I’ve been in and out of work and I had a meeting with my work coach and he referred me to a jobs fair at the Hard Day’s Night. I headed down there and it was the first person I spoke to. The guy welcomed me over and it went from there... He said they had other major events. It’s all positive stuff. I can’t wait”*

### **Individual who successfully secured employment with supplier to Eurovision**

In another, targeted, employment approach the organising committee from the BBC approached the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) as a source of talent and expertise in performing arts and production.<sup>12</sup> The Covid-19 pandemic hit LIPA students graduating between 2020 and 2023 hard, with those graduating in 2020 facing a collapsed job market and later cohorts having far fewer opportunities for learning experiences in live audience-facing productions outside the classroom. Following a competitive selection process, 150 LIPA students and recent graduates were employed in support of Eurovision, across Performance, Management, Music, Sound Technology, Theatre & Production Technology and Costume Making. 45 dancers took roles in the live shows, working alongside professional dancers and world-leading choreographers. Eurovision provided valuable experience for these students, bolstering their CVs and raising their confidence as they apply for other roles.

*“To get the chance to be taught by and work with inspirational choreographers was a great experience”*

### **Mollie Scholes, LIPA dance Graduate**



#### 4. Eurovision 2023: viewership and visitors

As the premier global music competition, Eurovision commands an unparalleled viewership.<sup>6</sup> In 2023, Eurovision reached an audience of 162 million viewers. The Grand Final attracted 40% viewer share, more than double the average for the broadcasters forming the EBU. The BBC report that it was the most watched final since modern records began, with an average of 9.9 million viewers in the UK throughout the evening of the Grand Final. The contest was particularly popular with younger audiences. The Grand Final was watched by more than 50% of 15 to 24 year-olds viewing EBU member broadcasters at that time, four times higher than the broadcast channels' average.

The BBC and EBU were strongly committed to promoting Eurovision 2023 on social media platforms.<sup>6</sup> The largest platform was TikTok, where Eurovision's digital platforms reached 105 million unique accounts during the two weeks of the event. TikTok also saw 315 million video views on the official Eurovision account, 40% more than last year. Videos of [Mel Giedroyc churning butter](#) proved to be a particular favourite across platforms, as the BBC's most viewed video across the whole campaign. National Museums Liverpool has obtained the butter churn for its collection!

Eurovision is unique in the opportunity it provides for host countries to broadcast narratives about their city and country to a mass international audience. Researchers evaluating the cultural effect of Eurovision surveyed 5,000 participants split equally across Estonia, France, Poland, Romania and Spain to gain their immediate impressions two to four weeks after the event.<sup>2</sup> Across all five countries more than 6 in 10 people had watched at least one broadcast show. The survey data strongly suggest Eurovision fostered a positive view of Liverpool and highlighted the city as an attractive place to visit.

- 35.3% of those who watched at least one live show associated Liverpool with 'diversity', in contrast only 20.7% of those who did not watch a live show associated Liverpool with diversity.
- 31.7% of watchers associated Liverpool with 'creativity', as opposed to 17.0% of non-watchers.
- 32.5% of people who watched Eurovision this year, and even 10.6% of people who did not watch it, said that Liverpool hosting Eurovision had made them more likely to visit Liverpool.

Longer-term impacts of large-scale events like Eurovision are researched less often, but Wave 2 of the survey in October to November 2023 will discover how far these initial results persist over time.

In addition to reaching an audience through broadcast and social media, Eurovision 2023 attracted 306,000 individuals to Liverpool city centre. Many people attended more than one official event, leading to venues collectively welcoming 473,000 attendees. This is nearly twice the number estimated to have attended the 2023 Open Championship at the Royal Liverpool Golf Course in the same year. Visitors were drawn from 49 different countries, with around 10% of visitors from outside the UK. Another 30% of visitors were UK residents from outside Liverpool City Region, plus a strong local contingent making the most of the opportunities available on their doorstep.

*“What happened this week through the city is absolutely outstanding. The vibe, the people, I love. It's been the best week I've ever had. I live here in Liverpool and it is literally the best thing I've ever experienced.”*

### **Eurovision Visitor May 2023**

Responses collected by researchers investigating economic impacts and engagement with entertainment emphasised again the appeal of Eurovision to younger audiences. More than 60% of adult (16+ years) visitors to the city for Eurovision were under the age of 45,<sup>1</sup> and similarly, 75% of those actively engaged in Eurovision nightlife and in-person events were aged 18 to 49.<sup>4</sup>



Visitors to Liverpool for Eurovision reported an overwhelmingly positive experience. The evaluations captured visitor views across a range of times and locations. The socio-economic evaluation delivered by Amion captured the feelings of visitors on the ground at Eurovision venues (n=1,808) and throughout the city, and of members of Eurovision fan clubs (n=1,200). The Liverpool John Moores University study focused on the experiences of those attending Eurovision entertainment spaces and nightlife venues (n=803). In all cases the vast majority of Eurovision visitors would promote Liverpool as a host city that produced a safe and inclusive Eurovision experience:

- Visitors gave a net promoter score<sup>1</sup> of 81% for Liverpool as a host city, 89% for producing a safe Eurovision experience, and 88% for providing an inclusive Eurovision experience.<sup>1</sup>
- Fan club members were similarly positive with more than 99% of respondents feeling welcome in the city and 97% responding that Liverpool made substantial efforts to deliver fan satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>
- Of those attending Eurovision entertainment events 98.4% found people friendly and welcoming, and 98.1% agreed that there was a festival atmosphere during Eurovision.<sup>4</sup>

The sense of community was also highlighted in interviews as part of the cultural and economic evaluations.<sup>13</sup> Interviewees who had visited Liverpool for Eurovision often remarked on how much the people of the city had participated in creating a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.

*“[I can’t tell you) how friendly the whole atmosphere has been, really friendly, volunteers been amazing and just really cool”*

*“We’d like to come back again so we can see a bit more when there’s a bit less people about and explore it a bit further.”*

### **Eurovision Visitors May 2023**

They noted the positive effects of music in city streets, bars advertising Eurovision parties, and shops and hospitality venues joining in with the community brand.

The positive experience of Eurovision enhanced visitor perception of Liverpool amongst visitors on the ground, fan club members, and those engaging in Eurovision entertainment and nightlife.

- 95.9% of those sampling Liverpool nightlife would return and 96.4% would recommend to others<sup>4</sup>
- 65% of respondents to our visitor survey would definitely visit Liverpool again<sup>1</sup>
- 54% of respondents to our visitor survey reported a positive change in their perception of Liverpool<sup>1</sup>
- 80% of fan club members expressed their intention to revisit the region for tourism<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The NPS metric asks respondents to rate a statement on a scale of 1 to 10. Scores of 6 or below are Detractors, 7 and 8 Passives, and 9 or 10 Promoters. The aggregate percentage of detractors is deducted from the aggregate percentage of promoters to provide the score.

## 5. Community and citizen participation in Eurovision 2023

Liverpool citizens were proud that their city had won the competition to host Eurovision 2023 in partnership with Ukraine. 80% of 1,398 respondents in the doorstep community and wellbeing survey were proud that Liverpool had won the competition to host the contest, even though fewer than 40% considered themselves Eurovision fans (37.4%).<sup>3</sup> Similarly, 'proud' was the most prominent response among those questioned for the Community and Wellbeing strand during Eurovision events, and the themes of 'feelings of pride' and 'a sense of achievement', emerged strongly from interviews held as part of the socioeconomic evaluation.<sup>1</sup> In post-event surveys 87.3% of respondents agreed that Eurovision promotes positive feelings across the countries involved, compared to 70.5% when surveyed before the event.<sup>3</sup>

The effect that Eurovision had on wellbeing depended on the respondents' feelings about Eurovision.<sup>3</sup> Surveys before and after Eurovision showed that the feelings of anticipation associated with Liverpool being announced as host produced a significant increase in wellbeing among local citizens. However, whether there was improvement in wellbeing from pre- to post- Eurovision depended on how individuals felt about the contest. Feeling that Eurovision was 'for you' was a significant predictor of wellbeing improvement. Overall, the wellbeing boost was a short-term effect.

Community-based events were essential for reaching a wider audience and making Eurovision accessible and inclusive. An estimated 750 events were held, extending the impact geographically beyond the focal point of the waterfront live shows and into communities that were unlikely to travel and historically have been less engaged in major events, including school children, older people and minority communities.<sup>1</sup> By providing up to £2,000 funding, EuroGrant offered concrete support for many creative activities including the EuroStreet community programme. EuroStreet and EuroLearn involved 367 organisations, 36,026 participants, 14,792 engaged audience members and 17,746 school children.



The power of EuroStreet to bring Eurovision events into smaller community spaces, overcoming economic and confidence barriers to participation and involving sometimes forgotten communities is shown in the community wellbeing evaluation.<sup>3</sup> Group evaluations emphasised the theme of 'extending into peripheral communities' as an important aspect of inclusivity. Experiences in this theme included benefitting directly from events and building confidence to participate further.

*"...getting some of the wealth that everyone was enjoying to people that weren't necessarily getting into town..."*,

*"if the time that people spent here meant they had to the courage to go into town and be part of something that is their cultural right to be part of then that's an amazing step in the right direction"*

#### **Quotes from group interview participants in the Community and Wellbeing evaluation reflecting on their experiences in EuroStreet**

Another key theme emerging from the community and wellbeing work was that Eurovision promoted a feeling of belonging to a wider area beyond Liverpool.<sup>3</sup> When surveyed before Eurovision, respondents expressed feeling more like a citizen of Liverpool, rather than their neighbourhood, Merseyside, the North West, England, UK, Europe or the world. In the post-Eurovision Survey, whilst more people still identified as belonging to Liverpool rather than anywhere else, the proportion of people identifying with a geography wider than the city increased. This finding was reinforced in group work where widening citizenship and creating a sense of belonging were emphasised. Participants expressed a feeling of being reconnected to the outside world after the pandemic, and of growing into a sense of belonging to an area larger than their neighbourhood.

*"[their feelings of belonging changed from] being part of Wirral, to part of the city region, to part of Europe, to part of the world".*

#### **Participant reflecting on the changing feelings of pupils during a EuroLearn project, as part of the Community and Wellbeing evaluation**

Residents across the North West were also strongly involved in Eurovision 2023 as volunteers. A total of 475 people were recruited, including 30 Ukrainian volunteers and 29 students taking Prep For Life courses at Wirral Met College, which equip those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities for work and independence.<sup>1</sup> The selection process emphasised finding those with the right skills and a genuine enthusiasm for making the event a success. Collectively the volunteer team



devoted over 12,000 hours to Eurovision activities, with roles ranging from greeting and dispensing information to visitors and performing artists, supporting accessibility at the EuroVillage, to managing the volunteer cohort. Volunteers interviewed on their Eurovision experience as part of the socioeconomic evaluation collectively rated the experience as 9.3 out of 10.0.<sup>1</sup> They highlighted how the event gave them confidence, a sense of purpose and the drive to take similar opportunities when offered in the future. Community and wellbeing work with volunteers emphasised the value of the ‘sense of belonging’ that was created through the Eurovision experience.<sup>3</sup> Volunteers experienced a wide range of emotions, including a sense of loss once the event was over coupled with the euphoria of participation. However there was a strong indication that volunteers were excited at the prospect of future opportunities.

*“My message is that people with disabilities can be volunteers too – just go for it. I would encourage everyone else to do it”.*

*“...I’m going to be looking at other opportunities, you know life doesn’t end when you finish work or finish your original job or whatever...”*

### **Reflections from two Eurovision volunteers during group interviews as part of the Community and Wellbeing evaluation**

Eurovision 2023 was rated very highly for its welcome to those from all walks of life. However, in at least one reported incident, young people living in residential care did report a lack of accessibility to EuroVillage. This issue arose due to an insufficient number of adult supervisors accompanying the young people, meaning they did not meet safety requirements for the venue. In future events there is scope for enhanced engagement with the residential care sector to prevent this issue occurring.<sup>3</sup>



## **6. Social cohesion and wellbeing in Eurovision 2023 entertainment and nightlife spaces**

Large-scale Eurovision entertainment events and nightlife made an enormous contribution to the Eurovision atmosphere. Camp & Furnace (C&F), an event space at the heart of the Baltic Triangle, played a key role in the fan experience by hosting the official Euro Fan Club. C&F was at full capacity for nine nights. The events left a strong legacy at C&F through improved integration across teams and as a 're-introduction' post-pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Eurovision 2023 fostered international friendships and camaraderie and a sense of belonging within the entertainment spaces at C&F and beyond.<sup>4</sup> Eurovision participants enjoyed meeting new people during Eurovision (84.9%), with two in three people talking to others from outside their group. During Eurovision the majority of participants felt a sense of belonging (92.6%) and part of a larger group 85.2%. They also felt that people experiencing Eurovision nightlife share the same interests as them (81.8%).

As with any large-scale cultural event, there was potential for heightened levels of risk to health and wellbeing due to alcohol and/or drug consumption, and antisocial behaviour. How safe individuals felt, plus levels of health risk behaviours associated with nightlife including risky alcohol and drugs consumption, risk taking in relation to sexual health, and antisocial behaviours such as violence, were directly addressed in a survey of 803 'consumers' of Eurovision entertainment between the hours of 4pm and 1am over four days during the event.<sup>4</sup>

Participants' views on Liverpool's nightlife were overwhelmingly positive with 87.2% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that Liverpool is a safe place to go out. High levels of confidence in the safety of the city were coupled with a strong majority view that the police presence in Liverpool during Eurovision was about right (88.5%), and that they knew where to go if they needed help and support (79.3%).<sup>4</sup>

Almost three-quarters of individuals had drunk or intended to drink alcohol on the day they were surveyed (72.1%). For those who did drink alcohol, on average they drank an estimated 7.9 units. The proportion of individuals drinking alcohol and the average number of units consumed are both lower than in previous nightlife surveys in Liverpool and other parts of the UK. Similarly, reported drug use was low, with only 25 individuals reporting having used any drugs on the day of the interview.<sup>4</sup>

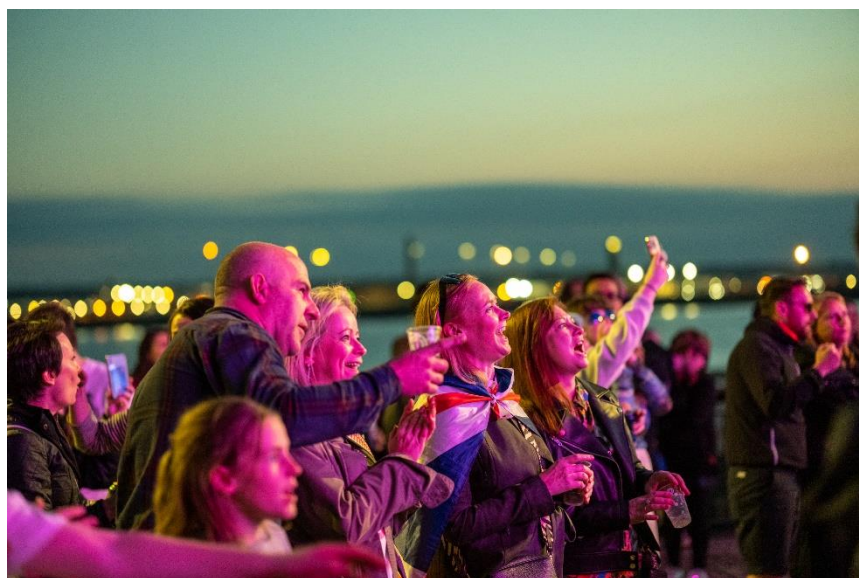
Those engaging in Eurovision entertainment and nightlife experienced relatively low levels of anti-social behaviour, violence, and negative nightlife experiences.<sup>4</sup>

Just over a quarter of participants (27.5%) witnessed anti-social/negative behaviour, most commonly someone so drunk that they needed assistance to walk. Other violent or antisocial behaviours were witnessed by fewer than one in ten participants. A much lower proportion (7.3%) reported experiencing anti-social behaviour, violence, and negative nightlife experiences on days/nights out during the Eurovision period. The proportion of people reporting negative experiences was significantly higher amongst those who identify as gender non-binary, people aged 18-29, respondents from non-White ethnic backgrounds, and LGBTQ+ groups.

Collectively, participants in Eurovision entertainment and nightlife activities on average drank less alcohol and took fewer drugs than in comparable events, and experienced lower levels of antisocial behaviour and violence. These are highly promising findings for public health and demonstrate that large events do not have to be associated with high levels of antisocial behaviour.<sup>4</sup> These findings align well with feedback on the Eurovision crowd from EuroClub at C&F, describing the Eurovision audience as, *“one of the best crowds, really lovely people”*.<sup>1</sup>

There are many reasons why a Eurovision audience might be, *“one of the best crowds”*. The sense of belonging to a group created by Eurovision could have led to a drive to ensure that everyone can enjoy Eurovision nightlife and entertainment spaces safely, including more positive bystander behaviour.<sup>4</sup> Lower alcohol consumption – itself potentially induced by participants’ desires to fully-participate in Eurovision activities – may also play a role in reduced negative behaviours and experiences, including violence in nightlife settings. One external factor that may have also led to low levels of anti-social and violent behaviour is an appropriate police presence and visibility during the Eurovision period.

Eurovision 2023 aimed to be inclusive to all. However, no other international event of its scale has gained such significance to LGBTQ+ communities as Eurovision.<sup>2</sup> As expected, Eurovision 2023 was popular amongst the LGBTQ+ community. Around a quarter of ‘on the ground’ visitor respondents to the socio-economic survey identified as LGBTQ+.<sup>1</sup>



Similarly, a third of those surveyed by the Liverpool John Moores University public health team identified as non-heterosexual.<sup>4</sup> This compares to 3.2% of people in the 2021 census of England and Wales.<sup>7</sup> The delivery of a welcoming and inclusive event was a key objective for Liverpool. As part of ensuring that welcome, Intercultural Communication and LGBTQ+ Inclusion were an integral part of volunteer training and there was strong LGBTQ+ representation within organising committees at all levels.<sup>1</sup>

The involvement and commissioning of Liverpool City Region-based LGBTQ+ producers and artists was felt to boost their portfolios and visibility across the city, creating opportunities and exposure for LGBTQ+ talent.<sup>1</sup> Specific activities included: commissioning of two new pieces of public art by LGBTQ+ artists, one in John Lennon airport and a mural in Lush, Liverpool One; an exhibition created with photos of everyday lives of Ukrainian LGBTQ+ people; EuroCamp Presents in Chavasse Park, providing 8 hours of cabaret with 60 LGBTQ+ artists; a Vogue Ball, themed around the coronation, on the main stage of the EuroVillage; and Pride hosting a screening party at St George's Hall. LGBTQ+ performers were also included in the cultural programme more generally.

Evaluations involving members of the LGBTQ+ community showed a feeling that well-deserved recognition was finally being given and also that there was hope for the promotion of LGBTQ+ artists to continue.

*"...particularly artists that I've worked with over years and years now have finally I feel, got a bit more recognition for what I say is really excellent work"*

*"I've got a fairly good confidence that that will continue right, and the organisations in the city want to do more work with queer artists and they want to profile them, brilliant, brilliant, brilliant in terms of visibility..."*

### **Participants in Community and Wellbeing evaluations reflecting on their experiences in Eurovision 2023.**

The funding of MerseyQueer, a physical map of LGBTQ+ business, safe spaces, clubs, etc, which was previously an online-only project was particularly well-received and created an important way for local producers and organisers to physically document their work. It was also felt to play a tangible role in boosting the profile of Liverpool as an inclusive and safe space for LGBTQ+ people, aligning Liverpool with Manchester, London and Brighton as go-to destinations.<sup>3</sup>

## 7. Eurovision 2023: leaving a legacy

**Liverpool was able to deliver an outstanding Eurovision experience on a compressed timetable thanks to sustained investment in infrastructure for cultural and large-scale events.** At a personal level, Eurovision 2023 success was driven by experience of delivering high-quality events, evaluating them to understand what worked well and rapidly implementing an evidence-based operational plan. In turn, Eurovision has enhanced the city's institutional capacity to host future events through continued partnership between those in Liverpool and the wider regions. The successful execution of Eurovision has provided further invaluable experience in event planning, coordination, and management on a large scale. This enhanced institutional capacity will undoubtedly be a valuable asset, attracting a wider range of cultural, entertainment, and sporting events, further contributing to the city's appeal as a dynamic and capable host.

**Communication and team building are critical.** In general, Eurovision 2023 showcased strong communications between international partners with wide-ranging backgrounds and experience. Substantial time and effort are needed to create fully comprehensive communication plans and to ensure strong communication channels between relevant partners. Despite overall excellent teamwork, there were specific areas that could have been further developed had the full 12 months usually available to Eurovision host cities been possible. Community wellbeing focus groups showed there was a desire for more collaboration between the producers and organisers of EuroGrant community events, and those responsible for Eurovision marketing and communication. Some producers felt that their event marketing wasn't optimal, whilst others commented that there was a "*pool of talent*" within producers and organisers that could have been better utilised.

**Liverpool's hosting of Eurovision in 2023 led to a significant short-term boost in economic activity.** The influx of tourists from the UK and around the world contributed to a significant increase in business activity, creating employment opportunities across various sectors. This economic impact is likely to have a ripple effect, benefitting local businesses, hotels, restaurants, and transportation services over time. The increased economic activity could also provide a catalyst for further investment in the city's infrastructure and amenities. The significant influx of visitors during Eurovision presents a unique opportunity for the growth of tourism in Liverpool.

**Hosting Eurovision in 2023 elevated Liverpool's international profile, garnering global recognition as a dynamic and culturally vibrant city.** It showcased Liverpool's ability to orchestrate large-scale, high-profile events successfully. It drew attention from international organisations, businesses, and investors. This recognition will position Liverpool as an attractive destination not only for cultural events but also as a place with significant visitor potential.

**The successful hosting of Eurovision in 2023 fostered a strong sense of community pride among Liverpool's residents.** Residents took pride in showcasing their city's hospitality, culture, and capabilities to a global audience. This sense of pride continued to resonate even after the event, contributing to a heightened sense of identity and unity among Liverpool's diverse population. Liverpool's hosting of Eurovision in 2023 contributed to enhancing the city's image on the global stage, and provoked the city region's residents to consider their roles in communities beyond the city and region.

**Eurovision fostered strong ties between the city and Ukraine, and within and between communities.** These ties were created through investment in wide-ranging cultural activities including performing arts. We can build on the foundations created by Eurovision through investing in education, providing access to instruments, performing arts opportunities, and training programs. In this way the event can create a legacy of inclusivity in talent development. Collaborations with schools and community spaces will ensure effective resource utilisation for the future. Liverpool, a city with a global outlook, promoted Eurovision as a symbol of unity. The event not only demonstrated the power of music and art to bridge gaps but also underscores the enduring significance of unity and freedom in a world grappling with shifts in economic, political, and social dynamics.

**Eurovision 2023's promotion of inclusivity created an atmosphere of acceptance, drawing diverse audiences and providing a welcoming platform for artists from various backgrounds.** This commitment to inclusivity can serve as a foundational principle for upcoming events, ensuring Liverpool's cultural and music scene remains vibrant and representative of its diverse population. The city's vibrancy, culture, and inclusivity took centre stage, making a lasting impression on both visitors and observers worldwide. The city can further promote itself to tourists to explore its rich musical history and thriving contemporary music scene.

**Eurovision 2023 offers a blueprint** for planning, executing, and evaluating big and complex international cultural events at pace, through multi-stakeholder partnership with strong civic foundation.

## **Thanks from Steering Group**

Liverpool City Council: Professor Matt Ashton (Chair), Claire McColgan CBE, Robin Kemp, Paula Parvulescu, Martin Thompson, Charley Marshall, Melisa Campbell, Jen Falding, Rhiannon Newman, Riannah Brown, Philippa Horrocks, Autumn McCartney, Camilla Mankabady

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority: Sophie Bevan, Maria Salcedo, Kate Downes, Daniel Bimpson, Laura Bailey, Helen Burkinshaw

University of Liverpool: Iain Buchan, Rhiannon Corcoran, Kay O'Halloran, Simeon Yates, Christine Cornforth, Oliver De Groot, Beatriz Garcia, Helen Page, Rachel Warsaw

Liverpool John Moores University: Mark Bellis

Edge Hill University: Rebecca Phythian

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC): Julianna Pigott, Kateryna Zhuk

BBC: Annie Gascoyne, Ben Kerry, Tom Carr

British Council: Ian Thomas, Christine Wilson, Angelica Burrill, Mona Lotten

Department for Culture Media & Sport: Emily Hopkins, Amy Coleman, David Fyson, Harman Sagger

Spirit of 2012: Kate Baldock, Amy Finch, Katie Bines

UK Music: Hannah McLennan

We would like to thank the many researchers from different disciplines and organisations who worked so hard to evaluate the myriad aspects of Eurovision 2023. This synthesis of the evidence and its component reports reflects a large, multidisciplinary team effort that is typical of the Liverpool and Eurovision culture of togetherness.

*Professor Matt Ashton, Chair of the Steering Group*

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