

# EDINBURGH'S FESTIVALS

PLAYING AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN ECONOMY,  
COUNTRY AND CULTURE



EDINBURGH'S YEAR ROUND FESTIVALS 2004-2005

## ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

September 2005

  
**EDINBURGH**  
INSPIRING CAPITAL

## GENERATING MUCH MORE THAN APPLAUSE

From August 2004 to July 2005 Edinburgh's festivals attracted over 3.1m attendances, and an estimated 1.4m trips to the city. This generated:

- output of just under £170m in Edinburgh and £184m in Scotland
- £40m in new income in Edinburgh and £51m in Scotland
- support for 3,200 FTE jobs for a year in Edinburgh and 3,900 in Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

Four of the festivals represented 82% of all economic activity. The Fringe supported almost £70m of output in Edinburgh's economy and £17.2m in income. The Military Tattoo generated £23.3m in additional output, the International Festival £19.3m and the Hogmanay events £24.4m.

New visitor expenditure generated a net increase of £31m for accommodation providers in the city, and £22.5m for bars and restaurants. Additionally, the festivals' impact stretched beyond Edinburgh, with an estimated 39,000 trips that included at least one overnight stay in Glasgow, 34,000 in the Highlands and Islands and 18,000 in the old Central region.

Together, the festivals received public funding of just over £3m and private sector support of £4m. This suggests that each £1 of public sector support generated £61 of new output in Scotland and £17 of new income. The 3,900 jobs supported indicate a cost per job supported of £7,690 per FTE (ten year equivalent).

The advertising equivalent value of the press and broadcast coverage generated by the summer festivals alone is estimated to have been £12.6m in the UK. Although this cannot be added to the economic impact measures, it indicates the level of media coverage the festivals inspire.

<sup>1</sup>Output represents the total value of output generated by all businesses within the geographical area. Income is the measure of wages, salaries and profits retained within the economy as a result of the expenditure generated by the festivals. Employment is shown as Full Time Equivalent jobs for one year.

A SUMMARY OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FESTIVALS IS PRESENTED IN **TABLE 1**.

	EDINBURGH		LOTHIANS		SCOTLAND	
	Output (£'000's)	FTEs (1 yr)	Output (£'000's)	FTEs (1 yr)	Output (£'000's)	FTEs (1 yr)
Summer Festivals	126,400	2,483	139,500	2,886	134,700	2,857
Winter Festivals	35,900	635	39,000	727	44,400	930
Autumn/Spring Festivals	5,390	111	5,690	122	5,154	117
Totals	167,690	3,229	184,190	3,735	184,254	3,904

*This suggests that each £1 of public sector support generated £61 of new output in Scotland and £17 of new income.*

## A VAST AND VARIED AUDIENCE

Overall, the festivals attracted a wide range of visitors and city residents. Among many other facts this study revealed that:

- 35% of attendances were by city residents, with 6% from the Lothians, 15% from elsewhere in Scotland, 29% from the rest of the UK and 16% by visitors from overseas
- the Military Tattoo, Hogmanay, the Fringe and the Book Festival attracted the highest proportion of visitors from outside Edinburgh
- the Mela, Science Festival, Ceilidh Culture, the Storytelling Festival and the Easter Festival attracted the highest proportions of local residents
- for half of the city's August visitors, the festivals were their sole reason for coming to Edinburgh (48%), and it was a very important reason for a further 16%. This was slightly lower during the winter festivals (33%) and autumn and spring (37%)
- around half of the audiences chose the events they were attending before their trip. This was higher amongst the autumn and spring festivals (59%) than the winter (50%) and summer festivals (44%). Meanwhile, 42% of those attending Fringe events had not decided on any performances before coming to Edinburgh
- the proportion of visitors on their first visit to the city was highest amongst those attending the Military Tattoo, the Mela and the Easter Festivals, and lowest amongst those who attended the International Book Festival (11%) and the Festival Cavalcade (11%)
- 23% of visitors at the summer festivals said that they expected to take one or more trips to Edinburgh in the next year to attend events or festivals. This figure was higher for the winter festivals (40%) and the autumn and spring festivals (73%)
- 47% of audiences at the summer and winter festivals were on a trip that involved at least one night away from home. For the spring and autumn festivals this figure was 18%
- summer festival visitors stayed longer in Edinburgh (5 nights) than visitors to the winter festivals, who stayed 3.8 nights. Across all festivals the average stay in Edinburgh was 4.4 nights
- highest ratings for the range of events, overall experience of the festivals and value for money were given by those attending the winter festivals.





## CONCLUSIONS

This summary comes from a full report which presents a substantial range of statistics and data on all the festivals held in 2004/5. Although the results are for one year, the impact has been built up over many years based on the festivals' reputation for high quality and diversity.

This impact is not guaranteed every year. To ensure that Edinburgh and Scotland continue to benefit to this level, the festivals must maintain and enhance their reputation. This means ensuring that, in the long term, the Festivals stay at the forefront of their respective disciplines. The recently commissioned "Thundering Hooves" project will help assess this task.

The study confirms that the festivals collectively are a major success in generating income for Edinburgh and Scotland but it raises a number of increasingly important measurement issues. While a great deal of work has

been done to understand the direct economic benefits of visitor expenditure there has been much less investigation of the wider benefits – education, social inclusion, cultural diversity, civic pride, creativity and innovation, city promotion and quality of life for residents.

There is scope now to develop a more sophisticated framework to help understand whether and how the festivals have a wider impact. This would:

- help ensure that the work of the festivals is fully recognised and supported
- allow public agencies to more effectively assess their return on investment
- identify opportunities for increasing the role of the festivals in engaging with businesses and communities.

### APPROACH

Economic impact is interpreted to mean the contribution made to the economy's output, income and employment. These are presented as net figures, which exclude the activity and expenditure that would have taken place without the Festivals. In other words, the figures represent the difference that the Festivals make.

Information is based on face-to-face interviews with 4,129 visitors attending Festival events throughout the year. Although the Festivals are all unique, we were able to use similar questionnaires for the visitor surveys which produced robust and comparable data. In addition there were surveys of performers, delegates, journalists, organisers, retailers, hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs.

### NOTES

The Summer Festivals: the Edinburgh International Festival; Edinburgh Festival Fringe; Edinburgh Military Tattoo; Edinburgh International Book Festival; Edinburgh International Film Festival; Edinburgh International Jazz and Blues Festival; Edinburgh Mela; Festival Cavalcade; Edinburgh International TV Festival; Edinburgh International Games Festival  
The Winter Festivals: Capital Christmas; Edinburgh's Hogmanay  
The Spring and Autumn Festivals: Easter Festival; Edinburgh International Science Festival; Ceilidh Culture; Edinburgh Children's International Theatre Festival; Edinburgh Storytelling Festival

The work would not have been possible without the help of all the Festivals that took part and we appreciate the time and effort they gave.

This study was commissioned by:



Copies of this study are available from:

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