YES Group @ IBIT Fachtagung

Future-Fit Festivals at IBIT fachtagung für Veranstaltungssicherheit

3F Training event E 3.8 | November 08 & 09, 2023

RheinEnergiestadion, Köln, Germany

Report written by Svenja Klemp; Images by Anke Hesse

YOUROPE THE EUROPEAN FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION
FUTURE-FIT FESTIVALS
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YOUROPE at IBIT Conference

9th IBIT Conference for Event Safety

RheinenergieSTADION Köln, Germany

November 8th & 9th, 2023

Report written by Svenja Klemp

Images by Anke Hesse (AH) & Svenja Klemp (SK)

The 9th IBIT conference took place in Cologne at the RheinEnergie Stadion's event space over the course of two days on the 8th and 9th of November, 2023, under the overarching theme

"Knowledge. Network. Responsibility."

At this conference YOUROPE was delighted to present a number of workshops, panel discussion as well as presentations. This cooperation was presented with the kind support of YOUROPE's 3F project Future-Fit Festivals.

Guidance signposting, photo by AH

Entering the stadium, the 268 accredited attendees were welcomed to the event through staffed gates for accreditation and state of the art e-gates to use with their wristbands, which showcased some of the exhibitors' technology already on the way into the conference. Further exhibitors had tables and stalls set up in the central event space amongst coffee and small breakfast offerings to welcome the attendees in a space that invited socialising and gathering of information before the official opening of the event.

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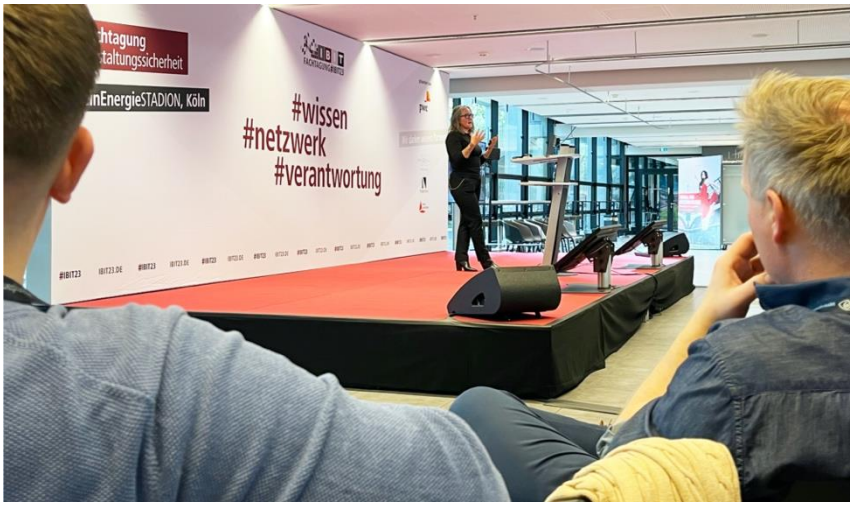
The commendable use of colour-coded signposting on the floor of the stadium event space corresponding with the colours chosen to mark the different topic streams in the event program led the conference attendees to the rooms reserved for the sessions.

Day 1

Opening

To open the 9th edition of the annual conference, IBIT founder and CEO, Sabine Funk, welcomed new and familiar faces alike, looking back at the past year since the last conference. She said she intended to create a paper which contains the results of the conference but also, and especially, the challenges the industry faces. Funk wanted to shed light on the state of the industry to make industry members think about and seriously discuss outliers instead of writing them off as "bad things that happen somewhere else." It is necessary to face these topics, despite the discomfort caused by discussing them, she said. "If not the event safety specialists, who else?" Funk asked.



Sabine Funk, photo by SK

Session 1: "From Manchester Arena Attacks to Protect Duty"

The first English-speaking session of the day was held by Figen Murray OBE. She was introduced by Sabine Funk with a short disclaimer: Figen had lost her son Martyn Hett in the attack on the Manchester Arena and is now working to introduce legislation to prevent such attacks and their impacts. Figen started by painting a picture of her family life prior to the incident, and how the night of her son visiting a concert had taken a turn for the worse. This impact on her life showed her how important safety and security jobs are, since a lack of them and not considering worst case scenarios can have catastrophic outcomes. She herself did not return to her professional life as a psychologist and instead studied terrorism on Master's level and intends to eventually take up a PhD.

Figen Murray OBE, photo by AH

During these studies she learned that in the UK security at events is voluntary and not mandatory at all, which in turn led her to start a government petition with the ultimate aim to introduce Martyn's Law that later on found support in the government. The resulting bill was part of the King's speech on 7th November, 2023, and is currently undergoing a public consultation launched by the UK government.

Her lesson was that terrorism is a global issue with worldwide repercussions that the general public is often unaware of, and legislation should protect the general public.

Session 2: "Planning, managing and commanding complex security operations in crowded places, spaces and the public realm"

After a lunch break with vivid conversations amongst attendees the second session block of the day opened with former UK Specialist Police Commander and now Protective Security Consultant, Pete Dalton MSyl. Dalton opened the session by declaring that all information he provides in his presentation is in the public domain and, explaining that his career has spanned working on major sporting events, which is also transferable into other fields in the event industry. He outlined key threats to major crowded space events as well as common methods of attacking to show how to develop effective protective security concepts as well as the importance of integrating safety, security and service in the planning process.

Pete Dalton MSyl, photo by AH

He pointed out the most vulnerable areas for attacks. According to him, an absence of intelligence does not imply an absence of a threat. This stressed the importance of planning for worst-case scenarios, even if they seem unlikely. To achieve this, major

events should integrate safety and security in their host contracts, and effective partnerships within and beyond the event organiser's organisations to allow a high level of interoperability.

Session 3: "What is Zone Ex and why is it important?"

This session was held by Íse Murphy-Morris MSc. The events consultant specialised in crowd safety, event transport and Zone Ex, began the session by explaining that Zone Ex is also known as "Grey Space", "Last Mile", "*der letzte Kilometer*", "External Zone" and by other names. She pointed out that these are all recently coined terms for a a long-existing phenomenon. Being as relatively recent term, it is not fully defined officially just yet and generally described as an area without one distinct party being clearly responsible for it. Previously often serviced under the wide umbrella of "transport" and its attached crowd management, the industry has now recognized the need to shift planning and responsibilities to assure that people are kept safe and able to have a good time, not just inside the event but in its surrounding space and time as well.

Íse Murphy-Morris MSc, photo by AH

Especially considering that attendees will often spend significantly more time around the event than at the event itself contributes to the perception of Zone Ex as part of the experience, positive or negative. This is an opportunity to enhance a large portion of the event experience for the audience as well as the need to direct attention to the vulnerability of Zone Ex and its attached high importance of collaboration between stakeholders to make this dynamic area and time as safe as possible.

The program of the first day concluded with activities such as guided tours through the stadium, allowing attendees to get an insight into the surroundings as well as exchange knowledge, and the quarter and semi-finals of the IBIT Masters (a table football tournament), which was kindly organised by competitive players.

Additionally, the conference offered two interactive moderated workshops: *"Knowledge Transfer Between Science and Practice"* (in German) and *"International Exchange"*. The latter was attended by a small group of attendees and conference speakers and was hosted by Holger Jan Schmidt (YOUROPE's General Secretary). It started out as a loose exchange on linguistic particularities and commonalities in different languages and led to the realisation that different language and their peculiarities (or lack thereof) can hugely influence how concepts for events, such as "safety" and "security", are conceived and perceived.

A Crowd Simulation, photo by SK

This makes international exchange ever more important to share expertise, learnings and best practices, with the goal of defining and implementing international standards to everyone's benefit. The increased availability of formal training in the events industry is contributing to better networking and knowledge exchange.

A balance needs to kept, so that cooperation doesn't turn into competition when parts of exchanges are turned into business opportunities. Named as a positive example of non-competitive learning, sharing and cooperation is YOUROPE'S Event Safety (YES) Group, which was founded 20 years. Participating in international networks is often seen as an opportunity to share with a lower threshold due to the networks not being perceived as local competition. Where governments may be slower moving to formalise licensing and education in the field, the high level of expertise and exchange present in

these international networks as well as their agility present an opportunity to establish training and licensing for crowd managers.

The day ended with a dinner buffet that over the course of the evening turned into a party with the opportunity for attendees, exhibitors, hosts and speakers to socialise with lively conversation on and off topic.

Day 2 Thursday 08.11.2023 - Presented by YOUROPE Events Safety Group

The second day of the conference showcased a number of English-speaking sessions and panels presented and hosted by YOUROPE's own YES Group.

Session 1: "The Loveparade – What Happened"

Prof DrEng Jürgen Gerlach, photo by AH

The day opened with a double session hosted by Prof DrEng Jürgen Gerlach. Prof Gerlach is not only the head of teaching and research in road traffic planning and road traffic engineering at Fachzentrum Verkehr (transport institute) at Bergische Universität Wuppertal, but also a member of multiple international organisations in the field of road and transport research. With his level of expertise, he was called on as an expert witness in the court proceedings following the fatal crowd crush at Loveparade 2010 in Duisburg.

At the conference, he first gave an in-depth description of the event and its site: near Duisburg Central station on a former freight and switch yard, nestled between a set of train tracks and a main motorway. Due to its location between these main traffic arteries, the only access points were via two tunnels on the Southern end of the site from which two ramps, a main ramp and a smaller ramp, led up to the main festival area. Since festival visitors arrived at and departed from the station in different directions, separate dedicated routes to and from the festival site were set up. The site set-up and especially the tunnels and ramps have been widely reported on in the media since the incident.

Prof Gerlach explained and discussed with the attendees every point of the site set design and crowd movements. This resulted in animated and highly detailed questions

and discussions in the workshop. With these many perspectives and angles discussed, the workshop showed a high level of exchange of expertise.

Session 2: "Loveparade – Lessons Learned"

The second part of the session had Prof Dr Gerlach lay out the findings of the inquiry, which differentiated between a number of "main line" causes as well as several more contributing factors. Again, the attendees were active in contributing questions, ideas and related experiences, including a reminder that crowd crushes are not just a matter of big crowds but can also occur in small to very small crowds, once more stressing the importance of crowd management no matter the size of the event.

In case of the Loveparade incident, Prof Gerlach concluded that no single cause can be pointed out as the sole reason for the catastrophe. Rather, an amalgamation of multiple factors contributed to it, from the site not being quite suitable for the event as well as some design flaws, a lack of crowd dispersion in neuralgic points on site, possible misunderstandings and miscommunication between stakeholders, blocked off routes of egress and ingress and the lack of rerouting capacities.

For further detailed information and commentary, please refer to Prof Gerlach's research department, which has published their findings on their website under the category "Research" (website available in German, English, French): https://www.svpt.uni-wuppertal.de/en/

Session 3 "Audience Communication – Challenges in Communicating with the next Generation in the context of (Mass) Events"

After a lunch break, the program continued with a panel led by Sander Teunissen (founder of MediaCows and expert in Crowd Communication, Master of Event Technology, expert in technical communication). First, Teunissen introduced the scientific background to lay the basis for understanding which factors influence communication, to then be able to deploy effective communication and avoid frustration. The panel further discussed attendees' experiences in communicating successfully at events, pointing out how Gen Z and potentially also future generations communicate differently due to a lower acceptance

Sander Teunissen, photo by AH

Alexandra von Samson (left) and Magdalena Binder

of authority than previous generations. This was partly amplified by a marked impact of COVID-19 measures on this generation.

After an unplanned interruption by a fire alarm and the following evacuation of the building, the panel reconvened with Teunissen giving recommendations and outlooks into the future, remarking how important it is to align both industry and authorities, and get "the old school" onboard with modern communication strategies to create successful and safe communities.

Session 4: "The New Event Safety Award – Ideas & Projects"

Following up, Markus Wiersch (YES Group, deputy CEO at KME Karlsruhe Marketing und Event GmbH, Das Fest) presented a session on the "Event Safety Award" of the European Festival Awards (EFAs), which for the 2023 EFAs succeeded the "Health & Safety Innovation Award". As an example for a concept that could qualify for this award but that was not submitted to the awards, he named the "SOS Island", easy to locate contact points providing help at an event.

To achieve this, the islands use easy to understand signage with pictograms on high visibility flags across the event site, showing up where to access information, first aid and a point to help locate lost children and other vulnerable visitors. These islands are staffed by event professionals with training in the aforementioned areas so any visitors requiring assistance can receive support at these points.

Markus Wiersch, photo by SK

Despite the seemingly easy idea, it the implementation, which Markus laid out in detail, was complex. He also

acknowledged that the concept requires a good understanding of the audience demographic to be able to adjust and implement the concept of SOS Islands at different events. He stressed the importance to not just plan an event like a figurative architect but to also consider the spectators' perspective in the planning of successful events.

Session 5: "Safety vs Security – Only Words or a Real Difference?"

The concluding session of the day was held by Morten Thorkildsen (Head of Safety at Roskilde Festival, RF Experience) in which he built on concepts previously touched on in Sander Teunissen's introduction. He considered the terms "security measures", "safety measures" and "service measures" as equally important and the need to address them on the same level.

Morten Thorkildsen, photo AH

He touched on the history of the term "security" as a commercial concept and when crowd management was first mentioned, indicating how recent the concept of crowd management actually is. As a relatively young profession, formal and informal education & training is still expanding, and he noted that these are heavily influenced by learnings and experiences being shared within the professional network. It is important to note that despite the differentiation between the terms "safety" and "security", it must be understood that security is a subset to create a safe environment, and multiple qualifications make interoperability between the specialisations possible – but should not necessarily be done by one and the same person.