

**Highland 2007**

**Press Content Analysis: July 2004 - March 2008**

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## Summary of Main Findings

This section focuses on the analysis of local, regional and national press coverage of Highland 2007 and its associated events, in the period between July 2004 and March 2008. Analysis of press coverage on Highland 2007 allows for assessment of the (changing) regional and national narratives about the Highlands and Highland culture in particular, and the influence this is likely to have on the perception of local residents, visitors from around Scotland and tourists. It also provides evidence of the range of press coverage indicating the effectiveness of Highland 2007 event-marketing and the legacy of pledge programmes and related initiatives, particularly in terms of perceptions and success.

### Method

Press cuttings published between July 2004 and March 2008 were collected by Glasgow-based UK press agency McCallum Media Monitor and Highland-based service Platform PR. A total of 2369 collected articles were included in the analysis. These were all individually coded to record both objective and qualitative data. Key themes were identified before the start of the coding process and these themes were adjusted over time, to reflect the developing narratives in press coverage. Statistical analysis of frequencies and correlations was undertaken using the statistical software package SPSS.

### Main findings

Over 60% of all articles were published in 2007, while just over 25% were published in 2006. Levels of coverage were at their highest during the first half of 2007, with peaks in June, January and May. After a dip in the second half of the year, coverage levels were again high in January 2008, mostly due to reporting on the year's closing events.

Regional newspapers were by far the largest source of articles, with almost 82% of all coverage. Coverage in regional *daily* newspapers was dominated by the Press and Journal and the Inverness Courier, with 95% of coverage in this newspaper type, making up almost half of all total coverage. Across regional *weekly* titles coverage was distributed quite widely, with the Highland News publishing the largest number of articles. The Scotsman and the Herald were responsible for the majority of articles by national broadsheets (10.5% of overall coverage), while the combined titles of the national tabloids published only 1.7% of all articles. Finally, a large number of specialist press publications was found, most of which included only one or two references to Highland 2007, with the exception of BBC News Online, Northings and Times Educational Supplement.

The main thematic categories identified were, in order of importance: events; audiences and event reach; image and representations; funding; physical developments; organisation and policy issues; economic impacts; and performer and event origin and focus.

1) With 45.4% of all coverage, reporting on cultural events makes up the largest thematic category. It covers all reporting on events and activities taking place in the context of Highland 2007, including reporting on a number of events taking place prior to 2007 (if these were connected to Highland 2007 in the context of the newspaper reporting, i.e. reporting on the Royal National Mod in 2006, with references to the Mod as part of Highland 2007).

Events have been grouped into the following sub-themes by target audiences:

- International Events;
- Regional Events;
- Community Events;
- Cross-Community Events.

In addition to these 4 groups, special events (including reporting on the launch and closing events) and generic events reporting were distinguished. As a whole, events received the

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highest percentage of positive coverage of all thematic categories. Almost one-third of this was dedicated to community events, followed by international and regional events. Overall, reporting on regional, community and cross-community events was the most positive, with over 90% of positive coverage for all, while special events and international events received much lower levels of positive and higher levels of negative coverage.

2) Reporting on audiences and event reach (11.8%) includes discussion of who Highland 2007 was for and the accessibility of events from a Highlands perspective – for instance, comments on the centrality of events taking place in Inverness compared to opportunities for more remote areas – as well as references to key target groups. The most prominent sub-themes within this category include:

- accessibility and participation of young people (e.g. through The Highland Promise);
- community participation in events, including the employment of local skills and traditions; and,
- inclusion of linguistic minorities.

This category received 81.1% positive coverage, with reporting on inclusion of youth and ethnic minorities being the most positive sub-themes, both receiving over 90% of positive coverage. Negative reporting was concentrated in a small number of stories on accessibility for local audiences.

3) Image and representations (11.7%): this category includes reporting of Highland 2007 in relation to the identity of the Highlands and Islands, divided into four main sub-themes:

- Promotion and place-marketing
- Image and Perception
- Quality of Life
- Relations with other areas

Topics in this category include specific attempts to promote the Highlands and Islands (such as the Tartan Week events in New York), the changing identity and (re)presentations of the area, civic morale and self-identity, outside perceptions of the Highlands and Islands, the appropriateness of hosting a 'Year of Highland culture', etc. Positive coverage, predominant in all subthemes, focused e.g. on Highland 2007 as a way to showcase the Highlands as a great place to live and visit, or specific references to the Golden Broom tartan being used as the official Highland 2007 tartan. Negative coverage, which reached about 10% in all subthemes, dealt with e.g. the lack of publicity surrounding the year's events.

4) Coverage of funding (11.4%) involves reporting on financial issues, which is divided into sub-themes concerning the origin, spending and type of funding. The main distinctions in this category are between neutral reporting (e.g. news on the allocation of funds) and critical comments (discussion on the choice of specific funding allocations, use of public funds to support commercial events, etc.). Public funding received the highest level of negative coverage in this category, and the lowest level of positive coverage, while reporting on private funding and sponsorships was predominantly positive.

5) The category physical developments (8.5%) includes all stories focusing on physical preparations and transformations taking place in the context of Highland 2007, i.e. the building and/or renovation of culture or sports venues, but also references to general amenities, the cleaning of buildings, public art, the development of transport links, and environmental issues. Interest in this category includes the extent to which certain projects have been identified as part of Highland 2007; e.g. while all articles make at least a marginal reference to the year, some projects are seen more clearly as a legacy of Highland 2007 (Eden Court and some other 'Capital Projects') than others. Reporting on Capital Projects dominates this category with almost two-thirds of all coverage. Of all Capital Projects reporting, more than one-third deals with the Eden Court refurbishment. The overall tone of reporting in this category was positive, with no subtheme receiving more than 20% of

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negative coverage. Negative reporting on Capital Projects dealt mainly with overspending and delays in the delivery of the Eden Court and Culloden Battlefield projects.

6) Organisation and policy issues (5.7%): all reporting on the organisation of Highland 2007 as an event (in terms of institutions, appointments), but also coverage of city management, the role of specific political decision-makers in the Highland 2007 process, activities of key figures, etc. Dominant sub-themes within this category include:

- Highland 2007 legacy and cultural policy developments;
- reception and evaluation of Highland 2007;
- public leadership; and,
- Highland 2007 event leadership.

The first two sub-themes appeared primarily at the start and end of 2007, and show the highest levels of neutral and reporting. Reporting on legacy, however, received far more positive coverage than coverage of the reception and evaluation of the year's events. Public leadership was by far the most negative sub-theme.

7) Reporting on tourism and business investment growth in the context of Highland 2007, as well as more direct reporting on the economic impact of Highland 2007 events, is included in the economic impacts category (4.2%). This includes reporting on ticket sales and increases in visitor numbers, as well as specific discussion on the economic impact of major Highland 2007 events, reporting on new business investments, etc. With almost 85%, this category reaches a very high level of positive coverage. Of its sub-themes, stories on ticketing were the most negative, while references to tourism impact were the most positive.

8) Performer and Event origin and focus (1.3%): this category, which received the smallest number of articles, includes all discussion of the presentation of the Highlands's own culture and opportunities for local talent and artists, as well as perceptions of parochialism or elitism, etc. In particular, this section covers the debate on culture from/of the Highlands and Islands versus culture from *outside* of the Highlands and Islands (i.e. the debate on 'Highland Year of Culture' versus 'Scotland's Year of Highland Culture'). Attitudes here were slightly more positive than negative, with negative opinions voiced primarily through letters, comments and editorials. Coverage on the international content of the programme, however, was positive only.

General coverage of events was the highest in 2007, more than tripling in comparison to 2006. A similar trend can be seen across most other categories. Funding-related articles, however, appeared slightly more often in 2006 than in 2007, and received the highest level of coverage of all categories in 2005, even surpassing reporting on events; the latter may be explained by the fact that at this early stage the programme of events was still being developed.

Of all stories on Highland 2007, 76% had a positive tone, 13% were neutral, while 11% were negative. Attitudes were distributed relatively equally across the various newspaper types. Regional dailies had the lowest percentage of positive coverage and the highest percentage of negative coverage, while specialist press was the most positive and the least negative. 79.6% of all generic news reporting (which made up 80% of all coverage) had a positive tone, but almost 75% of all letters from readers were negative. Editorials, opinion and commentary pieces were more often positive than negative.

Positive attitudes dominated across all thematic categories. Coverage of events received the highest percentage of positive coverage (85.9%), as well as the lowest percentage of negative reporting. Coverage of organisation and policy issues, on the other hand, was the least positive, with less than half of all stories having a positive attitude (47.4%) against 27.1% neutral and 25.5% negative. Reporting on performer and event origin received the highest percentage of negative coverage (28.6%).

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More than 50% of all positive coverage consisted of reporting on events, followed by reporting on audiences reach (12.7%) and image and representation (10.7%). Of all negative reporting, 24.7% focused on events, while funding-related stories scored an almost equally high percentage of negative coverage (23.4%). 15.5% of negative reporting dealt with physical developments, 13.3% with policy and organisational issues. Neutral reporting again focused mostly on events (28%), followed by image (18%) and funding (14%).

Across all categories, reporting was done mostly by newspapers based in the Highlands and Islands area. This picture becomes even stronger when the centrality of Highland 2007 to the coverage is taken into account, which shows that around half of all coverage in national broadsheets and tabloids was made up of marginal references to Highland 2007 only, while the year was central to only 23.5% of coverage in national broadsheets, and 19% of national tabloids. For all other types, centrality was significantly higher (either mixed or central). This indicates that Highland 2007 received an even lower percentage of coverage in the national press than found so far, which corresponds to the finding that the outreach of the year was very much Highland based.

It should be noted, furthermore, that this analysis has only included newspaper coverage if any noticeable reference to Highland 2007 was found. A significant number of clippings were found that did cover stories that were in some way related to Highland 2007, without making any reference to this fact. For instance, an August 2007 edition of *The List* contained a large number of articles on various artists performing at the Connect Festival, one of the main summer events of the Highland 2007 programme, but did not once mention this as the context in which the event was taking place. Similar articles (i.e. lacking any reference to Highland 2007) appeared on a number of other high profile events. These references were found across all newspaper types (though, with the exception of the above example, almost not in the specialist press). What is more, the initial collection of press clippings also included coverage of high profile cultural events taking place in the Highlands irrespective of Highland 2007, and which did not contain any reference to Highland 2007. This was the case, for instance, with coverage of a number of (established) music festivals taking place in 2006 and 2007 (e.g. RockNess, Belladrum<sup>1</sup>).

While these high profile events were picked up by the agencies despite a lack of reference to Highland 2007 (and, in the case of the latter examples, even without any connection), it is far from clear if this was equally the case for all Highland 2007 events. In fact, it is likely that a number of articles reporting on more low profile Highland 2007 activities have not been picked up by the agencies because clear references to Highland 2007 were missing. For instance, no coverage was found of a number of Capital Projects listed on the Highland 2007 website, while it is to be expected that at least the local press will have reported on these projects to some extent. As this may equally have been the case for other low profile local Highland 2007 events, the final analysis only includes articles containing references to Highland 2007 (or Scotland's Year of Highland Culture, or variants thereof).

Due to the sheer number of events that have been associated with the year in some way, it is very difficult to record all articles reporting on Highland 2007 events without making any reference to Highland 2007. However, it is significant to stress their existence, as this reflects the fact that many events were not recognised as part of Highland 2007. This is in line with the finding that the year's events overall had a relatively low profile. For instance, a poll carried out by the Highland News Group showed that many locals were unable to name

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that while some high profile music events were, in fact, linked to the programme in 2007, this had not always been the case in the previous year. Coverage of 2006 events that *did* make a reference to Highland 2007, e.g. by mentioning support for the next edition of the event (as was the case for e.g. RockNess), was included in the analysis.

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two Highland 2007 events, and that many people were not even aware that some of the major events that they did know about had actually been part of year.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, although individual events may have been applauded as successful, it is important to recognise that if no connection was made between the event and Highland 2007 (as is reflected in a lack of press coverage linking events or projects to Highland 2007), this cannot be expected to reflect in any way on the impact of Highland 2007.

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<sup>2</sup> 'How was it for you? You tell us what you think of Highland 2007', Highland News Group, week ending Saturday, December 15, 2007.

## Press Content Analysis

### **Methodology**

The analysis is based on a study of the themes and attitudes emerging in local, regional and national press coverage of Highland 2007 and its associated events, in the period between July 2004 and March 2008. Press cuttings were collected by Glasgow-based UK press agency McCallum Media Monitor, as well as Highland-based service Platform PR, to ensure full inclusion of Highland and Islands press and Highland and Islands editions of national newspapers.

All clippings were individually coded by the research team to record both objective data (such as date of publication, newspaper title, article type and length) and qualitative data (e.g. thematic focus, centrality of references to Highland 2007, etc.). The method allowed for the possibility of articles to include two different themes. While a list of key themes was identified before the start of the coding process, this was adjusted over time, to reflect the developing narratives in press coverage. Themes prioritised by the Highland 2007 organisation (e.g. The Highland Promise, Capital Projects, Air Splaoid) received particular attention. Attitudes (positive, negative, neutral) towards the themes were also recorded (in the case of multiple themes, multiple attitudes were possible).

A quantitative method of analysis was applied to the raw data, using statistical software package SPSS. Identified categories and themes were thus transformed into numeric variables to allow statistical analysis of their frequencies and correlations.

Newspaper titles were grouped into 5 different types: regional weekly press, regional daily press, national broadsheets, national tabloids, and specialist press (which included a wide variety of specialised publications, magazines and others). All sources included were UK-based and predominantly Scottish. Although some internet sources were collected, these have been largely disregarded in the final analysis, as it was unclear how representative these were of the total internet coverage. Two exceptions were made. The BBC News website was included because the BBC was a partner in Highland 2007 with a strong commitment to cover Highland 2007 events. Although its support did not guarantee news coverage, the BBC consistently ran news items on its website throughout the year. The other exception was Northings, the online news journal of HI-Arts, which represents a key source of coverage from the point of view of the local cultural community. Both had a significant amount of coverage of the specialist press type.

### **Development of newspaper coverage over time**

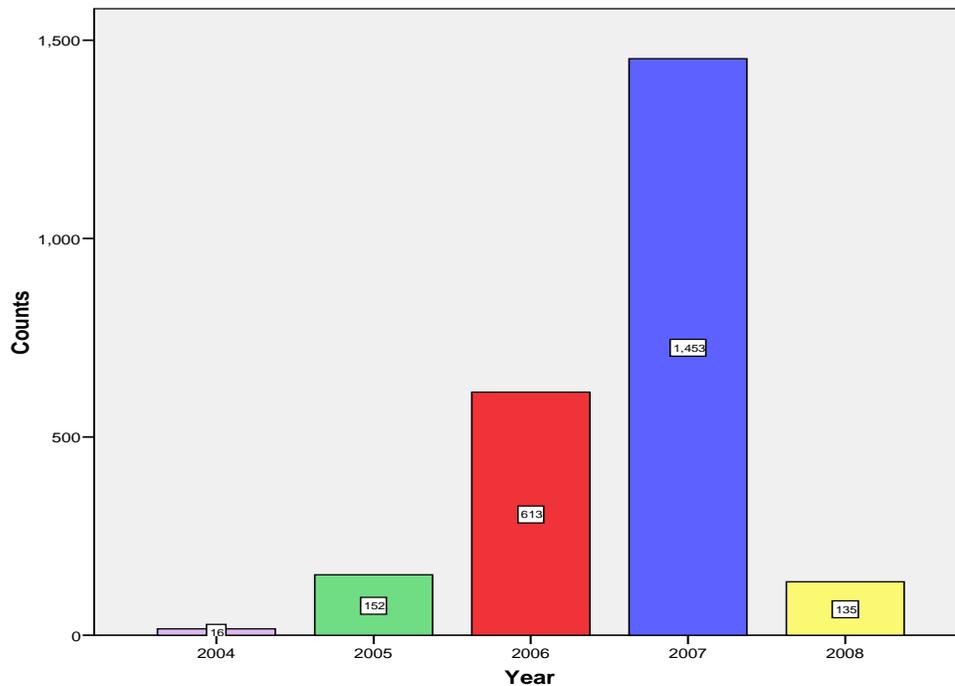
A total of 2369 articles were collected and analysed. Figure 1 shows how these were distributed over the years. As was expected, most articles referring to Highland 2007 were published in 2007 (61.3%). One third of all articles were published before the start of the year, the majority of which were published in 2006 (25.9%). An additional 5.7% was published after 2007, until March 2008.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This includes reporting on the closing event on 12 January 2008, which was in fact part of the year's events.

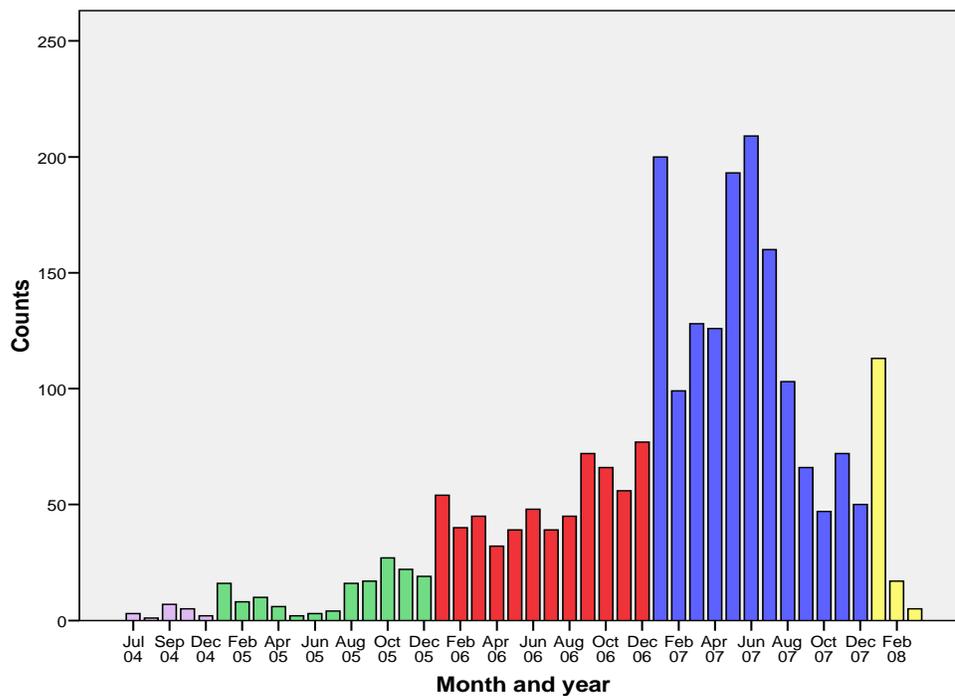
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**Figure 1: Number of articles, per year.**



The distribution of articles over the months shows a curve leading up to a peak in the Summer of 2007 (see figure 2). An early peak is recorded in January 2007, which reflects the large interest in the start of the year, with the opening event on 12 January. A similar, albeit smaller, peak can be seen in January 2008.

**Figure 2: Number of articles, per month.**



Full records of monthly article distribution are recorded in table 1:

**Table 1: Number of articles per month**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Jan		16	54	200	113
Feb		8	40	99	17
Mar		10	45	128	5
Apr		6	32	126	
May		2	39	193	
Jun		3	48	209	
Jul	3	4	39	160	
Aug	1	16	45	103	
Sep	7	17	72	66	
Oct	5	27	66	47	
Nov	0	22	56	72	
Dec	2	19	77	50	
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>135</b>

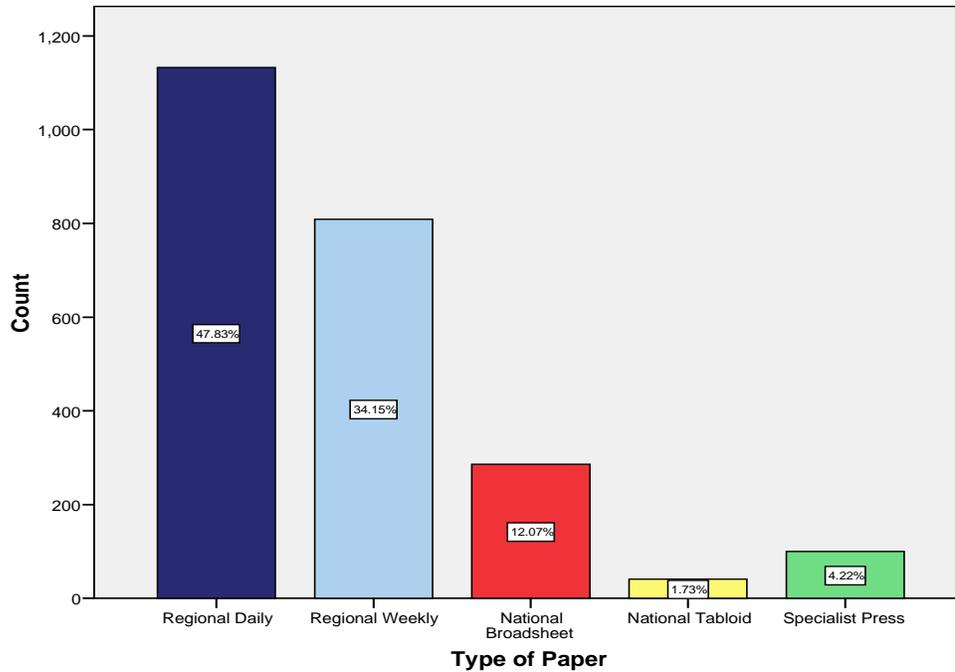
**Distribution of coverage over newspaper types and titles**

Newspapers titles have been divided into 5 general types: regional weekly (39 recorded titles), regional daily (9 recorded titles), national broadsheet (12 recorded titles), national tabloid (10 recorded titles), and specialist press (36 recorded titles). The national titles (broadsheet and tabloid) include both daily and Sunday editions of either Scottish-only newspapers (e.g. the Scotsman) or Scottish editions of UK-wide newspapers (e.g. The Times).<sup>4</sup> Regionally based newspapers are by far the largest source of articles, responsible for almost 82% of all coverage, 58.3% of which comes from regional dailies (47.8% of the total) (see figure 3). Given the much lower frequency of publication and significantly smaller numbers of publications, the large percentage of articles from regional weeklies (over 34% of the total) is significant; however, this can be explained by the fact that many of the Highland 2007 events had a local focus.

<sup>4</sup> A full list of newspaper titles is included in table 2, at the end of this section.

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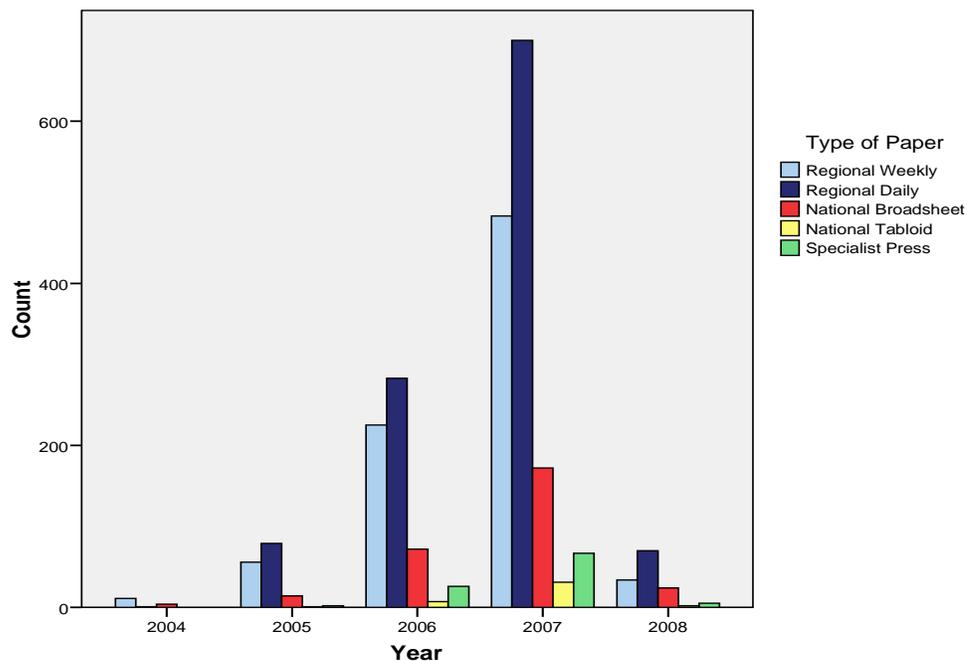
**Figure 3: Distribution of articles across newspaper types**



## Distribution of newspaper types across years

The distribution of newspaper types across the years is represented in Figure 4. It shows a relatively even distribution of changes in numbers for each type over the years, with a clear build-up over all types in 2006, leading to a significant peak in 2007.

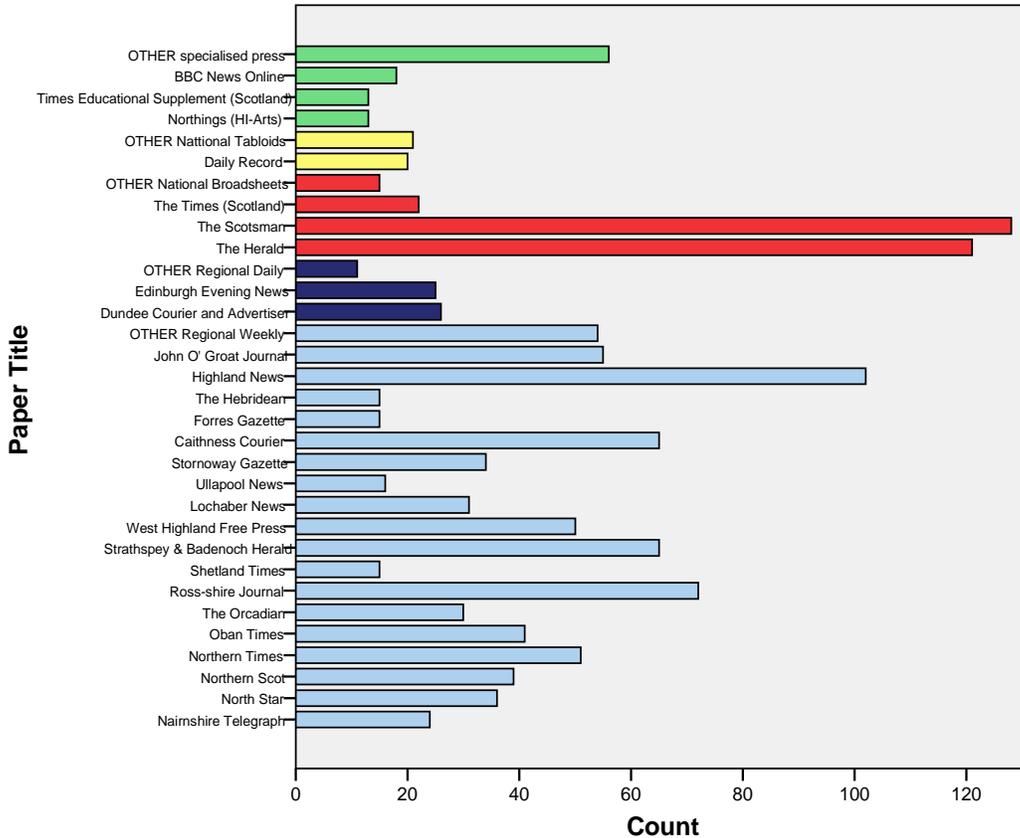
*Figure 4: Distribution of newspaper types across years*



**Exploration of newspaper titles**

The Press and Journal<sup>5</sup> and the Inverness Courier<sup>6</sup> together are responsible for 95% of all coverage in regional daily newspapers, and almost half of all total coverage (696 and 374 articles respectively). To be able to make a more representative analysis of coverage by the other newspapers, figure 5 shows the distribution of articles across major newspaper titles, excluding the above two. In the case of national titles, the figure shows the combined number of articles from daily and Sunday editions (e.g. The Herald and the Sunday Herald are counted as one single source); titles with less than 10 recorded articles have been combined into "Other" (grouped per newspaper type).

**Figure 5: Coverage count per newspaper title (excl. Press & Journal and Inverness Courier).**



As figure 5 shows, reporting on Highland 2007 was distributed quite widely across a large number of titles of the regional weekly type, with the Highland News publishing the largest number of articles (102, or 4.3%). The category "Other Regional Weekly" consists of 54 articles published across 21 different titles.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Articles from the Press and Journal have sometimes been attributed to specific editions of this title, e.g. the Aberdeen or Highlands and Islands edition. However, this was not always the case. As it was not possible to trace the origin of a large part of the coverage attributed to the Press and Journal in *general*, for the purpose of the analysis the special editions of this title have been considered to be one and the same, with double references to the same article being excluded where possible.

<sup>6</sup> As the Inverness Courier is only published twice per week, it is technically neither a daily, nor a weekly. However, as its numbers are significantly higher than any of the weeklies, it has here been counted as a regional daily type newspaper.

<sup>7</sup> NB: While most of the regional weeklies are Highland and Islands-based, some titles, like the Dumfries and Galloway Standard, are published in other regions.

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After the Press and Journal and the Inverness Courier, the only regional newspapers with any significant coverage were the Dundee Courier and the Edinburgh Evening News, with 26 and 25 publications respectively. In the case of the latter, these publications were made up almost entirely of short news reporting on one specific exhibition at the Royal Scottish Academy, which looked at artists' responses to Highland and Islands culture in the context of Highland 2007 but was not presented as part of the year's programme of events as such.

The Scotsman and the Herald (including their Sunday titles) were responsible for the majority of articles by national broadsheets (87%), making up 10.5% of the overall number of articles (128 and 121 articles, or 5.4 and 5.1%, respectively). This percentage was significantly higher than that reached by national tabloids, which published no more than 1.7% of all articles. Almost half of all national tabloid articles (20 out of a total of 41) were published by the Daily Record (including its Sunday title, the Sunday Mail).

Finally, of the 36 different publications making up the specialist press type, only 3 published a noticeable number of articles (BBC News Online, Northings and Times Educational Supplement – the first two being internet-based). The majority of articles of this type (56%, or 2.4% of the total) was published by a wide variety of magazines and specialist publications, most of which are included here with only one or two references.

**Table 2: Full list of press titles, per type**

### ***Regional Weekly Newspapers***

Banff-shire Herald
Nairnshire Telegraph
North Star
Northern Scot
Northern Times
Oban Times
The Orcadian
Orkney Today
Ross-shire Journal
Shetland Times
Banff-shire Journal
Strathspey & Badenoch Herald
West Highland Free Press
Lochaber News
Gairloch District Times
Ullapool News
Stornoway Gazette
Assynt News
Banffshire Advertiser
The Illeach

The Buteman
Campbeltown Courier
Broughty Ferry & Carnoustie Gazette
Annandale Herald Series
Helensburgh Advertiser
Arran Banner
Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser
Dumfries & Galloway Standard
Argyllshire Advertiser Series
Lanark Gazette Series
Caithness Courier
Dumbarton & Vale of Leven Reporter
Perthshire Advertiser
Bratach
Inverclyde Extra
Forres Gazette
The Hebridean
Highland News
John O' Groat Journal

### ***Regional Daily Newspapers***

The Press & Journal
Aberdeen Evening Express
Dundee Courier and Advertiser
Dundee Evening Telegraph
Edinburgh Evening News

Evening Times (Glasgow)
Inverness Courier
Sunday Post (Dundee)
The Shetland News

### ***National Broadsheets (Daily and Sunday editions)***

The Herald
The Sunday Herald
The Scotsman
Scotland on Sunday
The Guardian

The Observer
The Independent
Daily Telegraph
The Times (Scotland)
The Sunday Times Scotland

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(Scottish) Daily Mail
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(Scottish) Mail on Sunday
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### ***National Tabloids (Daily and Sunday editions)***

(Scottish) Daily Mirror
Sunday Mirror
(Scottish) Daily Express
Scottish Sunday Express
Daily Record
Sunday Mail

Daily Star
(Scottish) Sun
Metro (Scotland)
(Scottish) News of the World

### ***Specialist Press***

Representing the Highlands
The List
Highland Life
Scottish Field
Ship to Shore - A Local Guide
(Inverness) Chamber of Commerce Magazine
Museum Journal
Music Week
Travel Britain
Northings (HI-Arts online magazine)
Holyrood Magazine
The Big Issue
In Britain
Travel GBI
The Hub
History Scotland
The North
Scotland in Trust
Jet Away

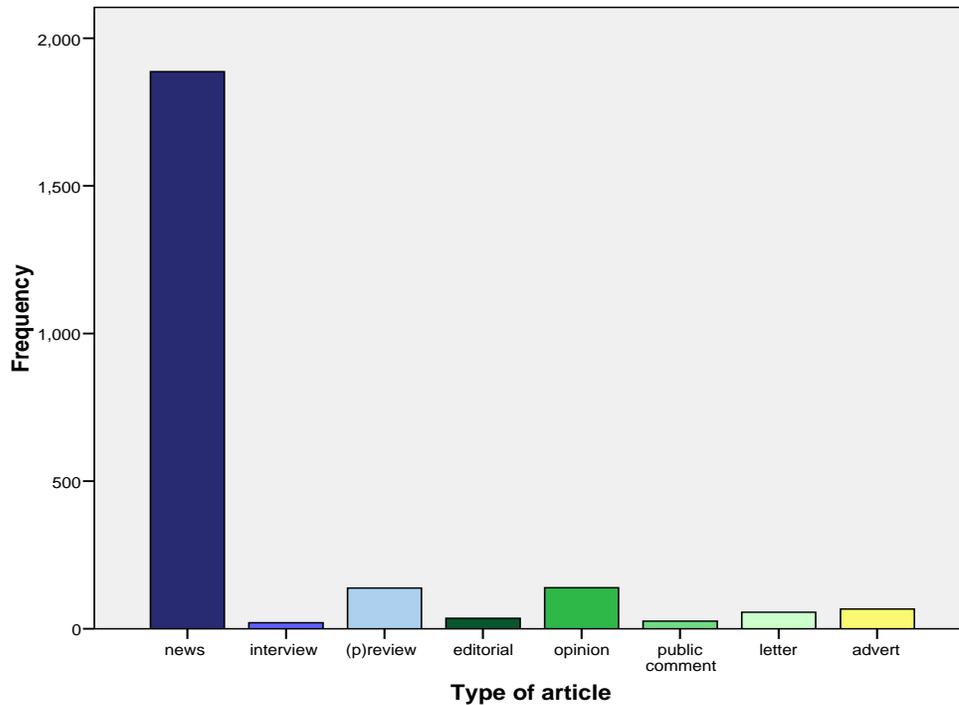
First Insight
Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)
ICA Awards (magazine)
Holiday Cottages Magazine
Highlands and Islands Voice of Business
Northwords Now
Summer in the City
Ambitions
Heritage
Estates Review
Yachting Life
The Drum
BBC News Online
Skill City
Scotland Magazine
Christmas in the City
Britain Calling

### **Distribution of article types**

All newspaper articles have been grouped according to type of article. Figure 6 shows the distribution of articles over 8 different types. News stories, i.e. articles of a more generic kind, are clearly the dominant type, with almost 80% of all articles falling into this category. Of the other types, almost 11% is made up of articles that express some kind of opinion (editorials, opinion or comments, comments made by public figures, and letters from readers). Part of the articles of the preview/review type can be expected to express opinions as well (i.e. reviews of plays, concerts etc.).

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Figure 6: Distribution of article types

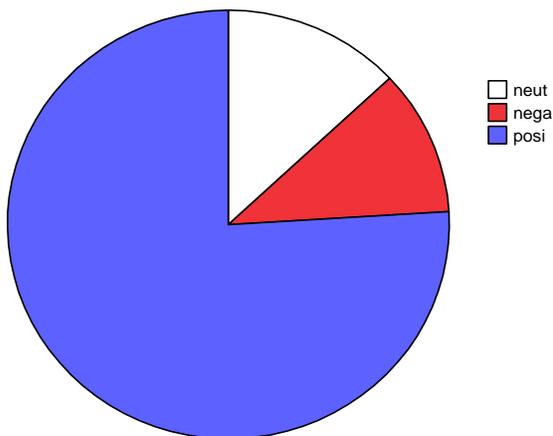


### Attitudes

Coverage was divided into three types of attitudes: positive, negative, or 'neutral', with the latter type including articles which reflected no discernable attitude towards the main theme, or which reflected both positive and negative attitudes in equal measures. In many cases, neutral and positive attitudes were separated only by a thin line, with the specific choice of words of the article determining the tone.

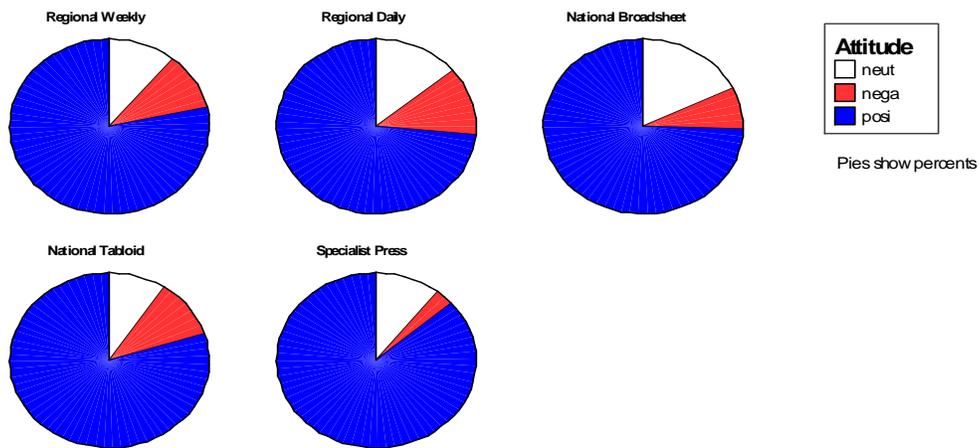
Of all stories on Highland 2007, 76% had a positive tone, against 13% neutral and 11% negative.

Figure 7: Attitudes distributed across coverage, in percentage



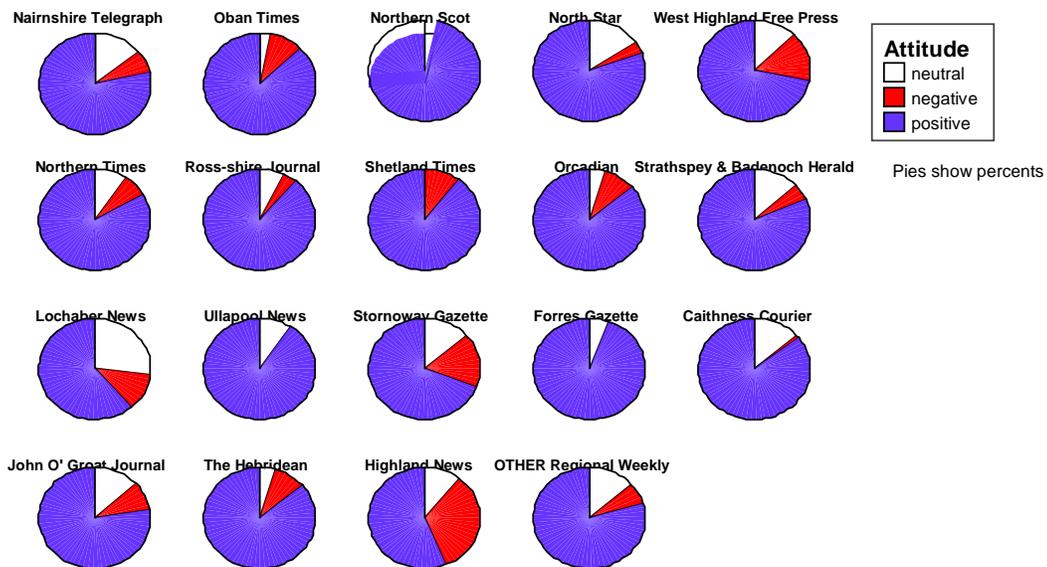
As figure 8 shows, attitudes were distributed relatively equally across the various newspaper types. Regional dailies had the lowest percentage of positive coverage (73.5%) and the highest percentage of negative coverage (12.7%), while specialist press had the most positive tone (86.5%) and was the least negative (3%).

**Figure 8: Distribution of attitudes across newspaper types**



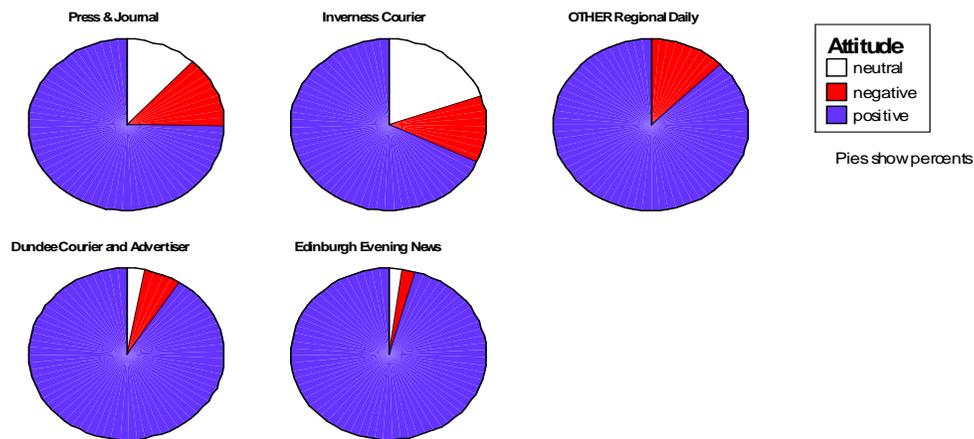
A more detailed look at coverage per newspaper title shows that of all regional weekly newspapers, The Highland News, West Highland Free Press and Stornoway Gazette were the most negative in their coverage, while the Northern Scot, Forres Gazette and Ullapool News had no negative coverage at all.

**Figure 9: Distribution of attitudes across regional weekly newspapers**



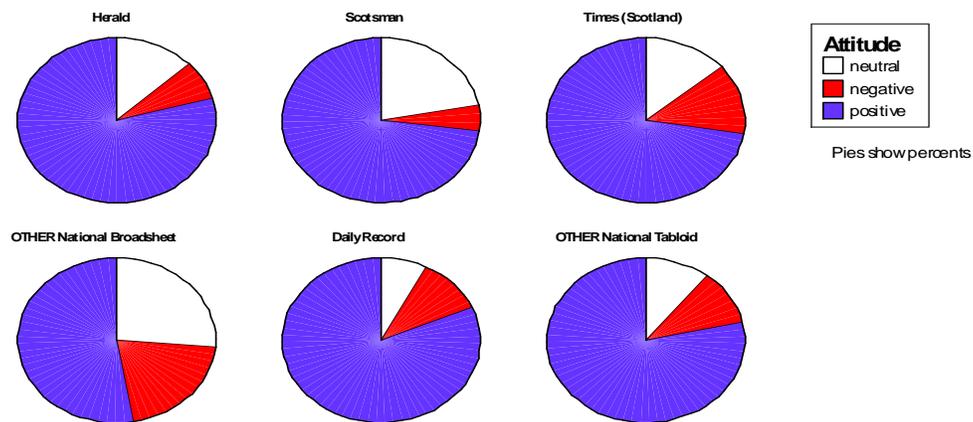
The Inverness Courier had the lowest percentage of positive coverage of all regional dailies, while its percentage of negative coverage was comparable to that of the Press and Journal. The other named regional dailies were significantly more positive.

**Figure 10: Distribution of attitudes across regional daily newspapers**



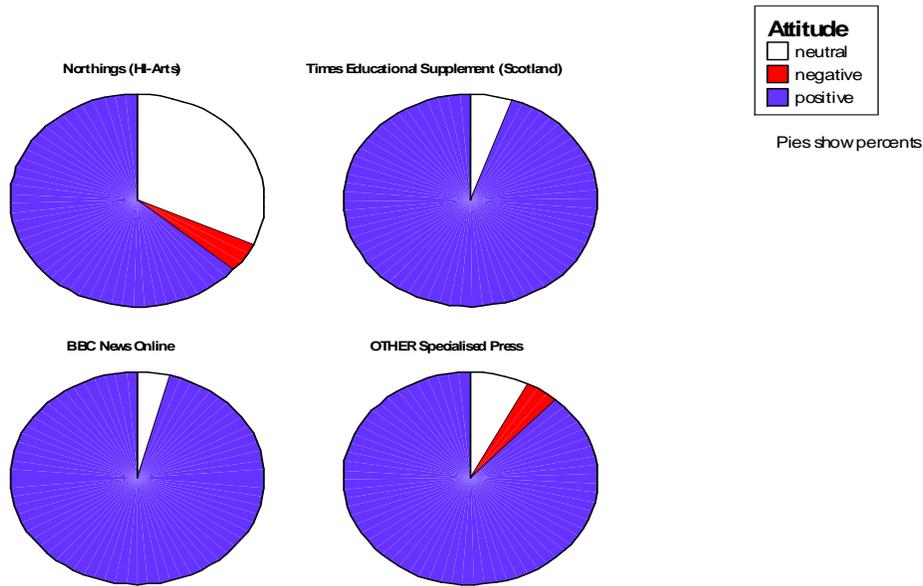
Of the named national newspapers, the Herald and the Daily Record had the most positive tone, while the Times was the most negative.

**Figure 11: Distribution of attitudes across national newspapers (broadsheet and tabloid)**



Of the specialist press, Northings had the lowest percentage of positive coverage and the highest percentage of neutral and negative coverage, the latter being comparable to the level reached by the combined other specialised press titles.

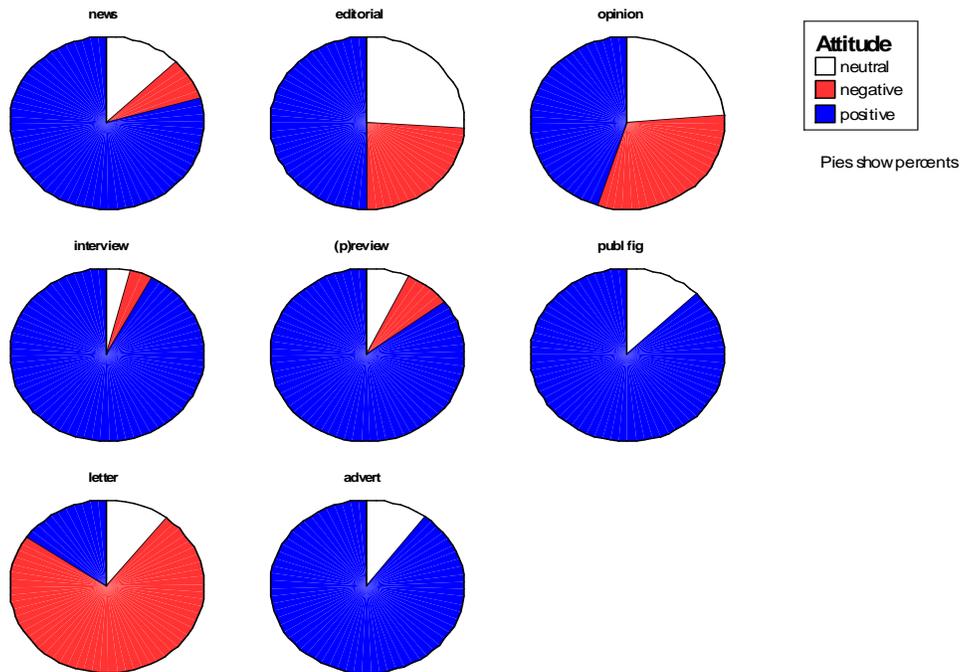
Figure 12: Distribution of attitudes across specialist press titles



A comparison of attitudes across article types shows that negative coverage was concentrated primarily in those types of articles clearly expressing an opinion. Letters from readers were the most negative type, with 74.1%, against only 15.3% positive. Opinion and commentary pieces and editorials, however, were still more often positive than negative; for instance, 50% of all editorials have a positive tone, against 24.1% negative. Comments made by public figures were never negative. 79.6% of all news reporting had a positive tone, with only 7.9% negative and 12.5% neutral. Editorials showed the highest percentage of neutral coverage, with 25.9%, which can be explained by the fact that many editorials tended to reflect on both sides of current debates; for instance, an Inverness Courier editorial at the start of Highland 2007 started off positively by noting that the year would be 'a one-off opportunity for the region to boost its self-confidence, attract visitors from across the UK and abroad and to cast off the last vestiges of its outdated tartan and shortbread image', but then ended with a more negative warning, stating that 'the stakes are high, but so is the cost of failure'.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 'Failure is not an option', Inverness Courier, 12 January 2007.

Figure 13: Attitudes across article types



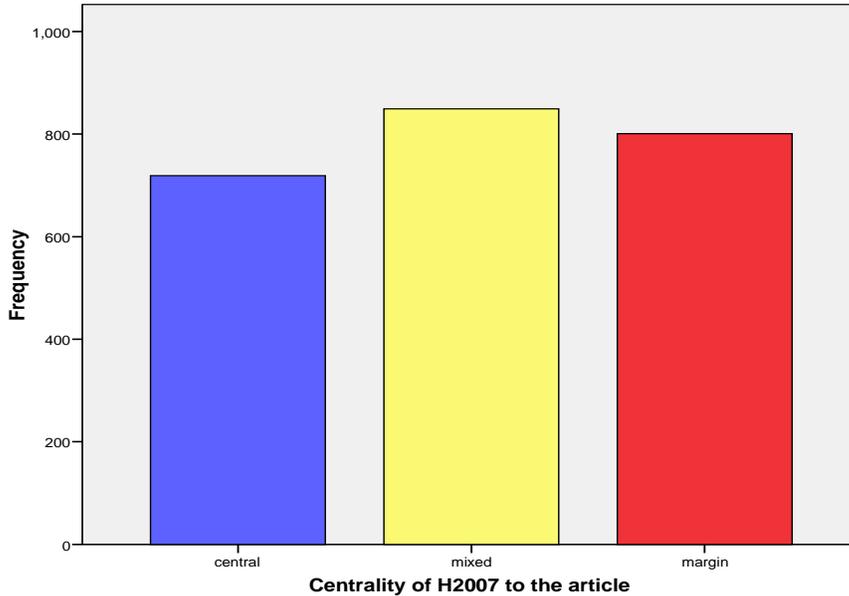
### Centrality

Of the total number of articles collected, not all have Highland 2007 as the main topic. Articles can be divided into three groups according to how central the reference to Highland 2007 is for the article. 'Central' means that Highland 2007 has been identified as the core of the article, i.e. its main topic; this includes e.g. articles directly discussing the Highland 2007 launch events, comments on the progress of the year, the impact of Highland 2007, and so on. In the case of reporting on specific events, the distinction was based on whether or not these were clearly identified as Highland 2007 events in the reporting; where the main focus was on the event, but only a short reference was made to the event being part of Highland 2007, this has been identified as 'Mixed' – i.e. Highland 2007 is understood as being relevant enough to the story, but is not the main issue in itself. This second category would include most stories reporting on specific projects and events for which Highland 2007 is seen as offering the context (e.g. through dedicated funding), but the focus of the article is not on Highland 2007 as such. Finally, all stories in which any reference to Highland 2007 is made merely in passing are grouped under 'Marginal' – i.e. Highland 2007 is mentioned in the text, but the actual topic of the article is something unrelated to the year.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> NB: The distinction in centrality of Highland 2007 to the article does not reflect on the actual centrality of specific events to Highland 2007. In fact, a number of key events have been reported upon with little or no reference being made to Highland 2007 at all.

# Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

**Figure 14: Centrality of Highland 2007 in recorded newspaper articles**

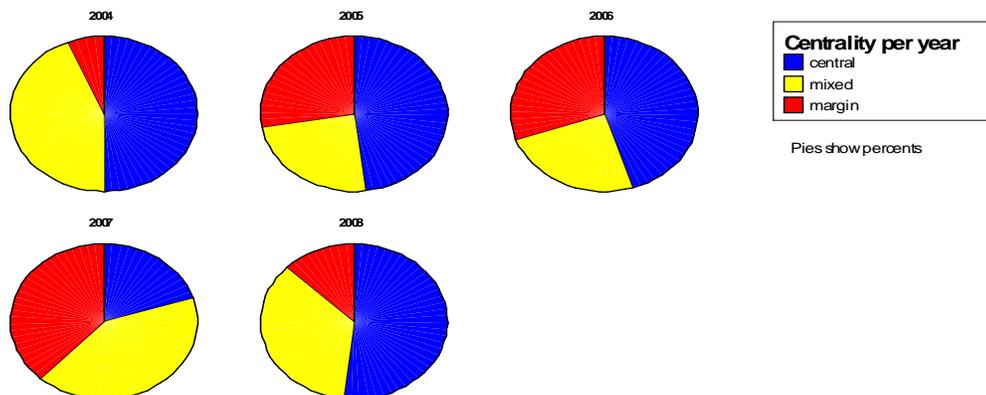


Overall, the centrality of Highland 2007 is equally distributed over the total amount of articles, with mixed coverage scoring only slightly higher (35.8%) than marginal (33.8%) and central (30.4%). However, a more detailed analysis of specific periods of time shows a more differentiated result (see table 3). While the amount of articles in which Highland 2007 featured as a central theme remained largely the same in 2006 and 2007, there was a significant increase in the number of articles in which references to Highland 2007 were either mixed or marginal.

*Table 3: Centrality of Highland 2007 in recorded newspaper articles, per year*

	Central	Mixed	Marginal	Total
2004	8	7	1	16
2005	73	37	42	152
2006	276	151	186	613
2007	292	606	555	1453
2008	70	48	17	135
<b>Total</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>2369</b>

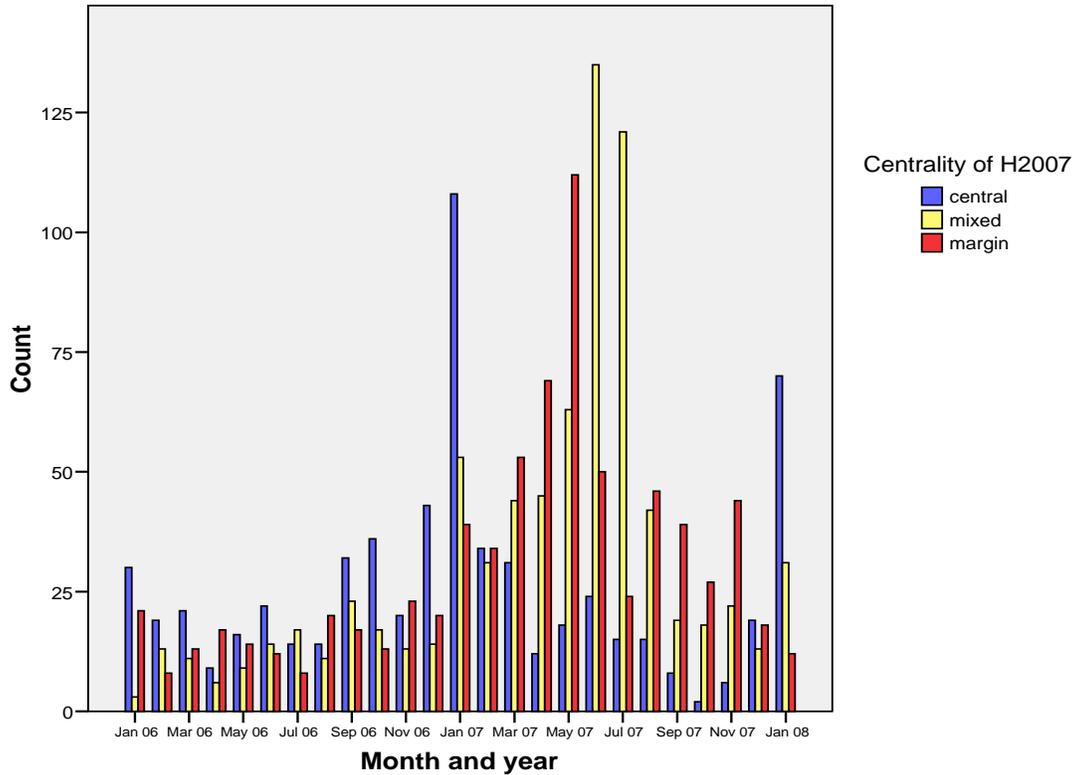
*Figure 15: Centrality of Highland 2007 in newspaper articles, per year (in %)*



## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

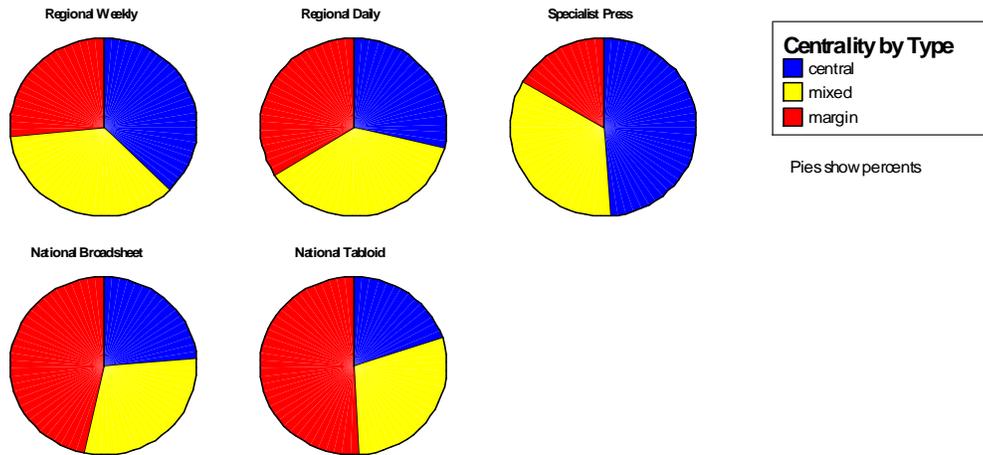
A closer look at the period 2006-2008, which saw the highest total numbers of articles, shows that January 2007 and 2008 had a strong peak of coverage in which Highland 2007 was central, which can be explained by the large number of articles on the Highland 2007 Launch and Monster Street Party (2007) and Highland Lights (2008). Marginal references strongly increased during 2007, peaking at the start of the Summer (May 2007);

**Figure 16: Centrality of Highland 2007 to newspaper reporting, January 2006-2008**



Of all different newspaper types, national newspapers were the types that had the highest percentage of marginal coverage. This means that for both broadsheets and tabloids, around half their recorded coverage of Highland 2007 (47.4% and 50%, respectively) was actually made up of marginal references to the year only. One-third of their coverage was mixed, while Highland 2007 was central to only 23.5% of coverage in national broadsheets, and 19% of national tabloids. Specialist press shows the opposite picture, with 48% of references focusing specifically on Highland 2007 as its central theme (often, these were larger feature articles in for example specialist tourism magazines) and just 17% marginal coverage. Regional newspapers had a more diverse distribution, with mixed references scoring highest for both weeklies (36.5%) and dailies (37.3%). Of the two, regional weekly newspapers had the highest percentage of references in which Highland 2007 was central: 35% against 27.6% for regional daily press.

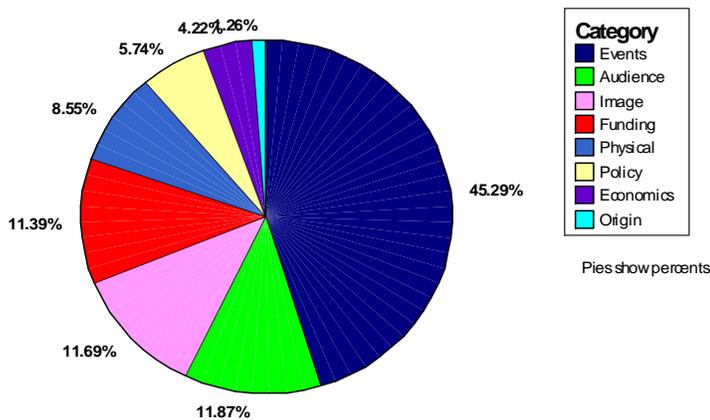
Figure 17: Centrality of Highland 2007, per newspaper type



**General coverage of thematic categories**

Newspaper stories on Highland 2007 can be divided into 8 main thematic categories (featured in figure 18). Event-related stories clearly appear as the single most important thematic category of press reporting on Highland 2007, with over 45% of all articles focusing on events. Reporting with a focus on audience reach, image and funding all make up just over 11% of all stories, followed by stories on physical developments with 8.5%. A small percentage of stories is dedicated to policy and event organisation (5.7%) and economic issues (4.2%), while only a fraction focuses on the origin of events and artists (1.3%).

Figure 18: Thematic categories, in percentage

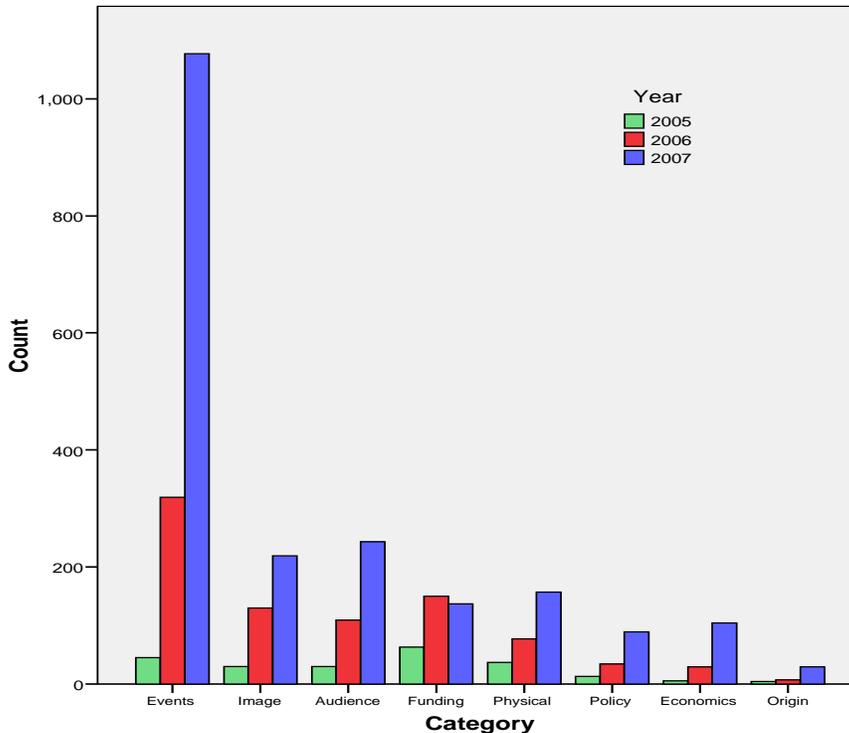


When comparing the development of thematic categories between 2005 and 2008, it is clear that coverage of events was by far the highest in 2007, more than tripling in comparison to the previous year, which in turn showed an even larger increase when compared to 2005.

## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

Although the increase in 2007 is at its most extreme for events-related stories, a similar trend can be seen for all categories, with the notable exception of stories on funding. The slightly higher number of articles on funding in 2006 than in 2007 can be explained by the fact that much of these stories refer to funding being made available for Highland 2007 events prior to the start of the year. What also becomes clear is that in 2005, funding had the highest number of articles of all categories, even surpassing reporting on events. The reason for this seems to be that at this stage in the preparations for Highland 2007, apart from the availability of general amounts of funding, there was not yet much else to be reported on, as the programme of events was still being developed.

**Figure 19: Distribution of categories over years**



### **Distribution of thematic categories per newspaper types**

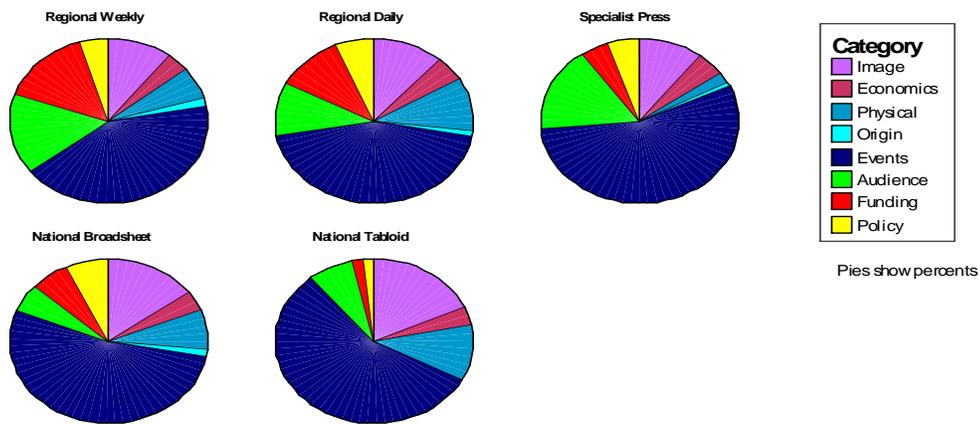
Comparing the presence of the different thematic categories across the different newspaper types, some clear distinctions appear (see figure 20). In general, regional weekly newspapers show a distribution of thematic categories that is quite similar to that of regional daily newspapers, while coverage in national broadsheets is roughly comparable to that of national tabloids. Specialist press reporting shows a more diversified picture, in some categories reaching percentages of coverage equivalent to the regional press, while being comparable to national press coverage in others. In part, this is likely to be due to the fact that the specialist press type includes publications with both national (e.g. BBC News Online) and regional (e.g. Northings, the online journal of HI-Arts) orientations.

While reporting on events again emerges as the most important category for all newspaper types, national newspapers and specialist press have dedicated around 55% of their coverage to this single category, while this was less than 44% for regional newspapers. National broadsheets and tabloids also dedicated a higher percentage of coverage to stories relating to image (15 and 18.2% respectively) than regional papers (10.6% (weekly) and 11.6% (daily)). Regional newspapers in turn had more coverage on funding (14.8% (weekly) and 11% (daily), against 6.3% (broadsheets) and 1.8% (tabloids) and audience reach (15.8% and 10.3% against 5.5% and 7.3%), although the latter appears as an even more important

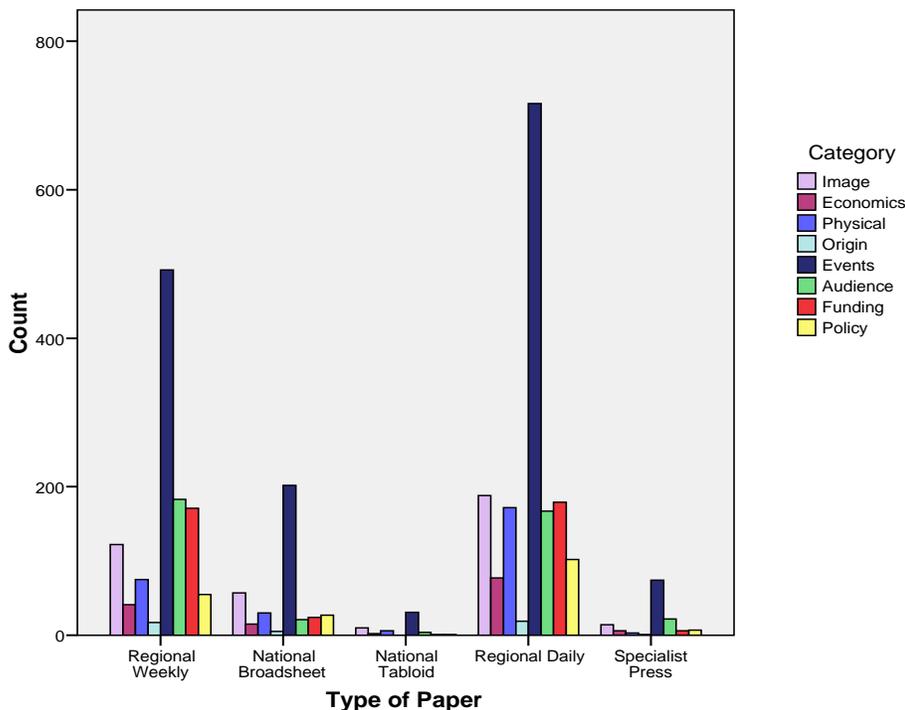
## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

category for the specialist press (16.5%, against only 4.5% for articles on funding). Articles on economic impact received a similar percentage of coverage across all types (between 3.5 and 4.5%), while reporting on physical developments and policy and event organisation show a more diverse distribution; physical developments received just under 11% of coverage in both regional dailies and national tabloids, with national broadsheets and regional weeklies reaching 7.9% and 6.5% respectively, while specialist press devoted only 2.3% of coverage to this category; policy-related stories on the other hand were almost ignored by national tabloids (1.8%), while receiving between 4.8% and 7.1% of coverage from the other types. Finally, reporting on origin of events and performers was low throughout, ranging from 1.5% of coverage in regional weeklies to no coverage at all in national tabloids.

**Figure 20: Distribution of thematic categories per newspaper type (in %)**



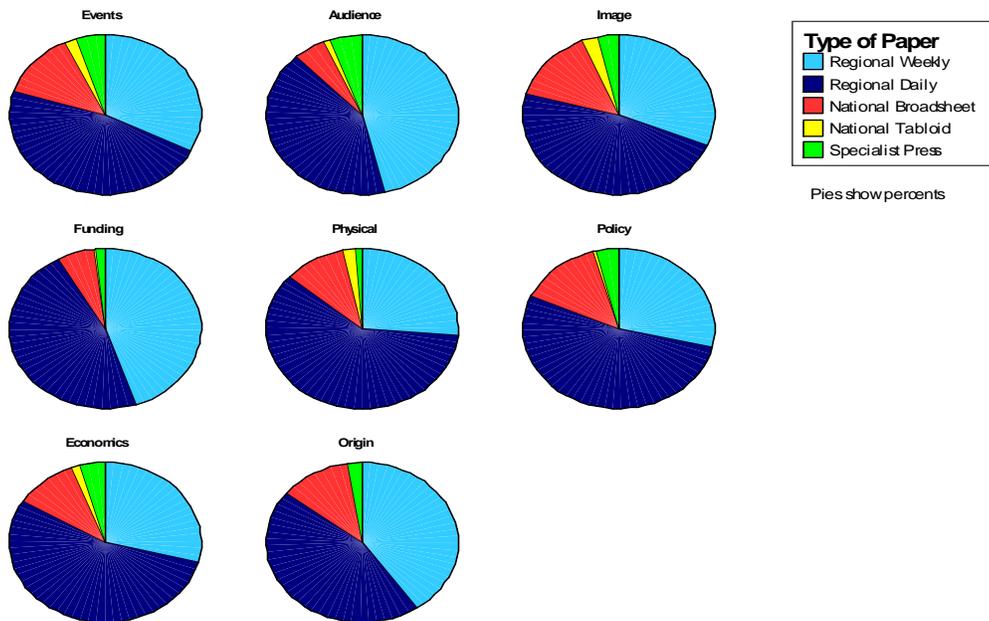
**Figure 21: Distribution of thematic categories per newspaper type (counts)**



**Distribution of categories across newspaper types**

Figure 22 shows that all thematic categories of reporting are dominated by regional press. Regional dailies are responsible for the highest levels of coverage in most categories, ranging from 42% on audience reach to 60.1% on physical development. Regional weeklies dominate reporting on audience reach. National broadsheets come in third place in terms of coverage in most categories, with reporting ranging between 5.3% and 14.6%; this newspaper type is overtaken in third place only in coverage of audience reach, where specialist press reaches 5.5%. However, specialist press is responsible for a much smaller percentage in all other categories. Finally, the highest percentage of coverage reached by national tabloids is 2.56% (on image-related stories), while on origin this type has no coverage at all.

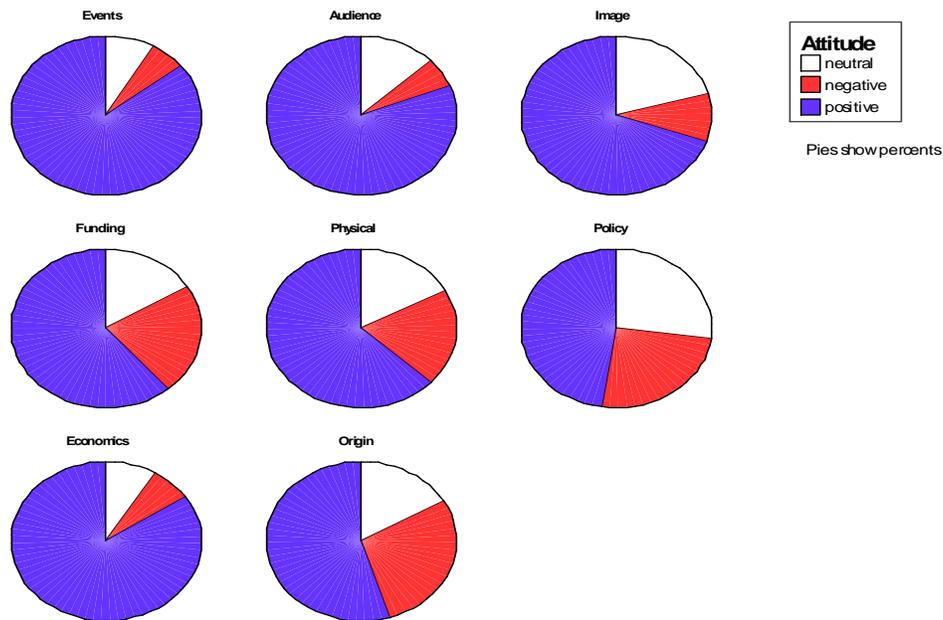
**Figure 22: Distribution of categories across paper types**



**Distribution of attitudes**

Positive attitudes dominated throughout all categories. Highland 2007 events received the highest percentage of positive coverage (85.9%), as well as the lowest percentage of negative reporting. Coverage of organisation and policy issues was the least positive, with less than half of all stories having a positive attitude (47.4%) against 27.1% neutral and 25.5% negative. Reporting on performer and event origin received the highest percentage of negative coverage (28.6%).

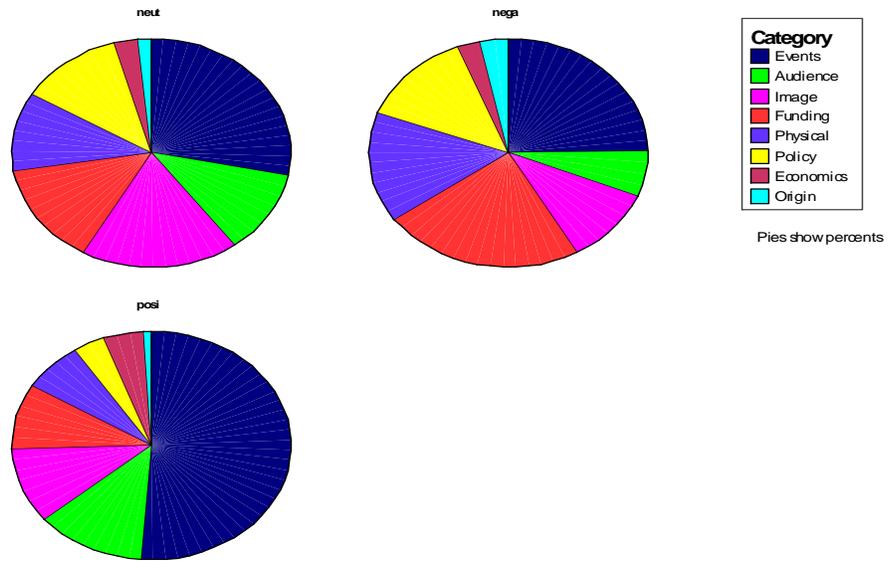
Figure 23: Distribution of attitudes across themes



More than 50% of all positive coverage consisted of reporting on events, followed by reporting on audiences reach (12.7%) and image and representation (10.7%). Of all negative reporting, 24.7% focused on events, while funding-related stories scored an almost equally high percentage of negative coverage (23.4%). 15.5% of negative reporting dealt with physical developments, 13.3% with policy and organisational issues. Neutral reporting again focused mostly on events (28%), followed by image (18%) and funding (14%).

# Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

Figure 24: Percentage of categories per attitudinal approach

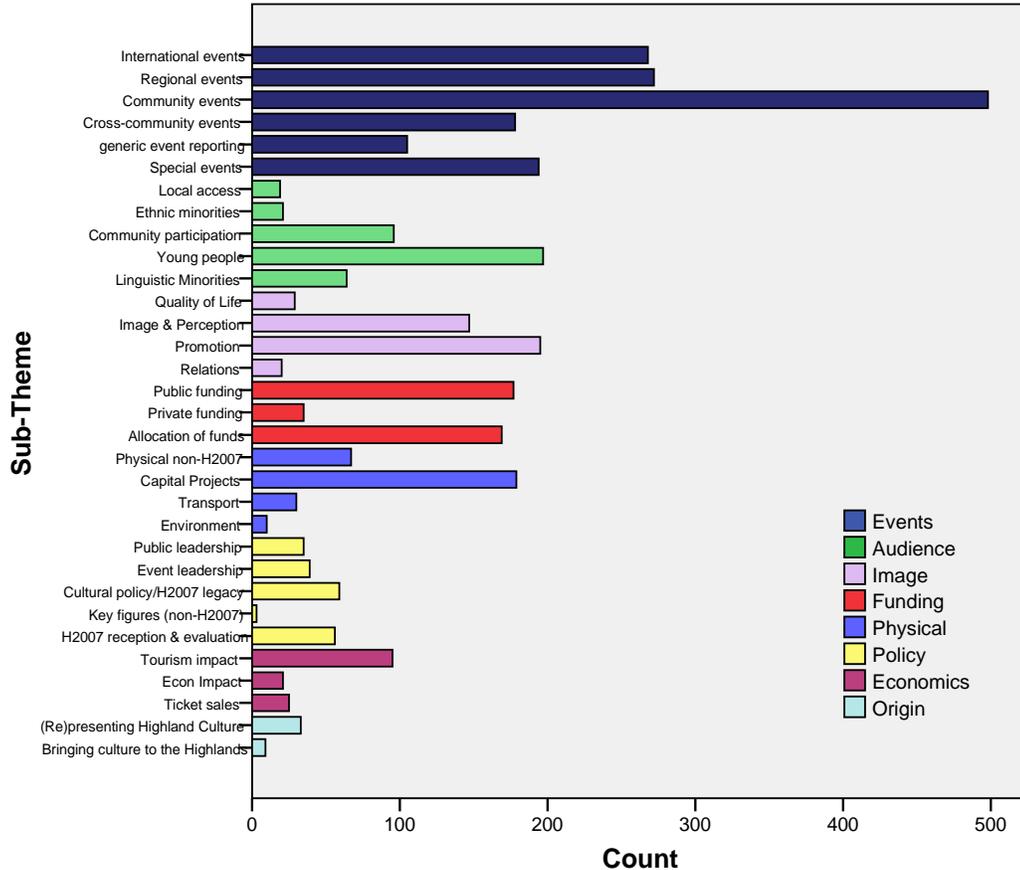


**SUB-THEMES**

**Main sub-themes: summary of trends**

The 8 main categories described above cover a wide range of subjects. Distribution of the sub-themes is presented in figure 25; the main trends are discussed below.

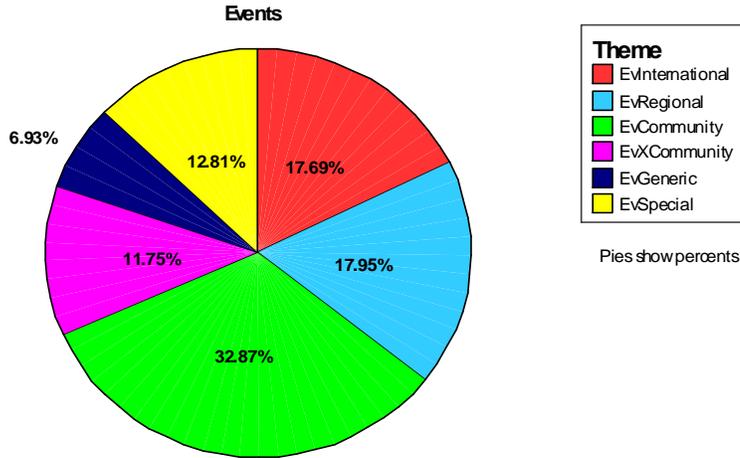
**Figure 25: Thematic categories and sub-themes (total coverage counts)**



**1. Cultural Events**

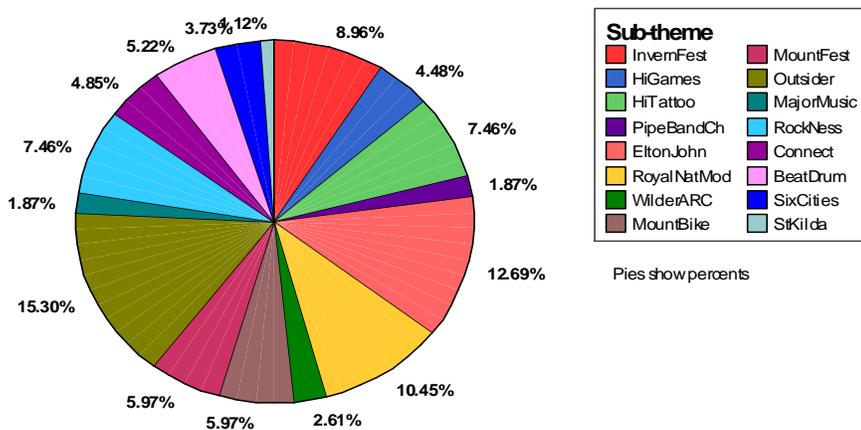
Although all sub-themes in this category receive relatively high levels of coverage, reporting on cultural events is dominated by community events, with almost one-third of all coverage, followed by international and regional events, both reaching over 18% of coverage. The sub-theme of community events consists of reporting on a very large number of (usually) small projects taking place within a specific local context. Because of the large number of events involved, and the fact that no single project or event was featured in a significant number of articles, no further distinctions were made for this sub-theme. For international, regional, cross-community and special events, more detailed analysis has been included below.

Figure 26: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage



Reporting on international events focuses on high-profile Highland 2007 events that were designed to attract (international) spectators, participants and significant media interest. No single event dominates the sub-theme, although the Outsider Festival attracted the highest percentage of coverage of all events. When combined into bigger sub-groups, two major strands become visible. Reporting on events related to the InvernessFest (here divided into Highland Games, Highland Tattoo, Pipe Band Championships, Elton John Concert and general reporting on the InvernessFest) received 35.5% of all international event coverage, while major music festivals (the Outsider, RockNess, Connect, Beat the Drum and general reporting on major music festivals) were covered by 34.7%. Major sporting events (the Wilderness ARC and UCI Mountain Bike and Trials World Championship) received 8.59%, which was less than reporting on the Royal National Mod, which received 10.5% of coverage.

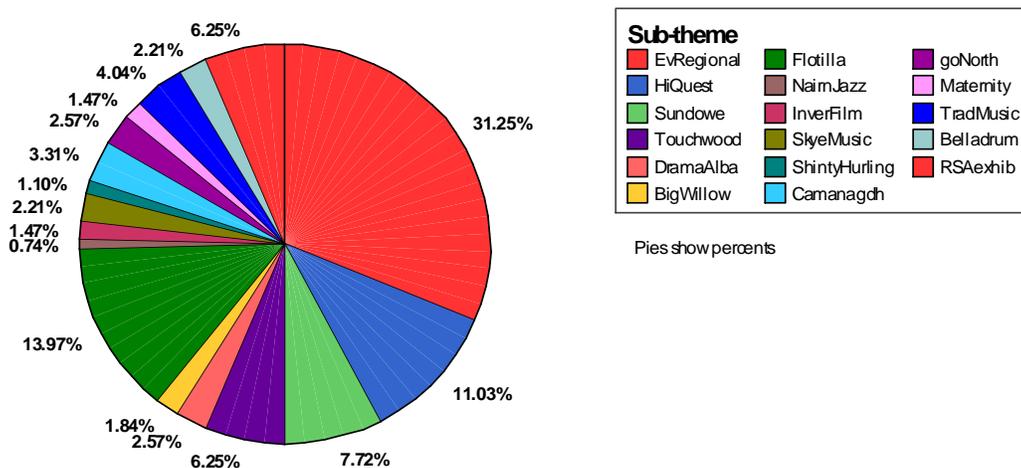
Figure 27: coverage of international events



## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

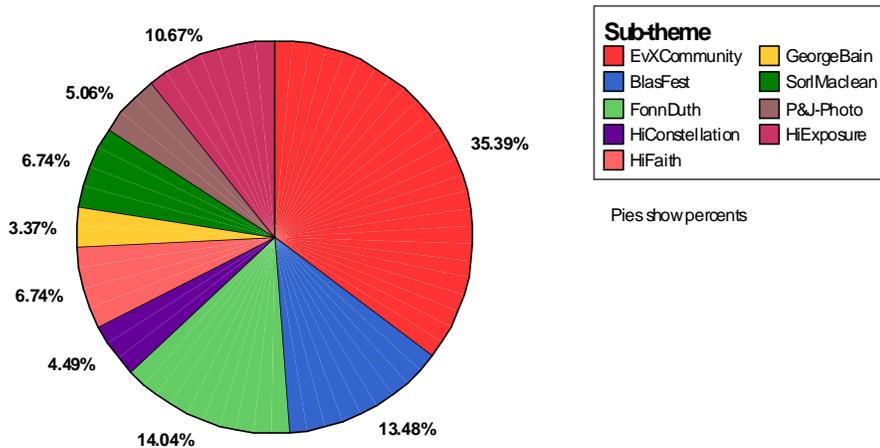
Coverage of regional events consists of a large number of events, which were identified as major events targeting spectators and participants from out with the area, as well as local audiences. The largest segment of figure 28 (31.3%) contains references to a wide variety of regional events, none of which received enough coverage to be singled out for analysis. However, a number of key regional events did receive a higher percentage of attention in the press. Of these, the Moray Firth Flotilla was the most important (with 14% of coverage), followed closely by reporting on the Highland Quest (11%). However, specific coverage of the Sundowe (7.7%), the winner of the Highland Quest, is presented here as a sub-theme on its own – if this is combined with overall coverage of the Highland Quest, the total percentage on this sub-theme rises to 18.8%. Two other regional events identified as receiving a significant percentage of coverage were the Touchwood Festival and an exhibition at the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh (both scored 6.25%), where artistic reflections on Highland identity were presented in the context of the Highland Year of Culture. Although the latter was not officially part of the year's events (and did in fact take place outside the Highlands), it is included here as a regional event as a significant link to Highland 2007 was made in press reporting.

**Figure 28: coverage of regional events**



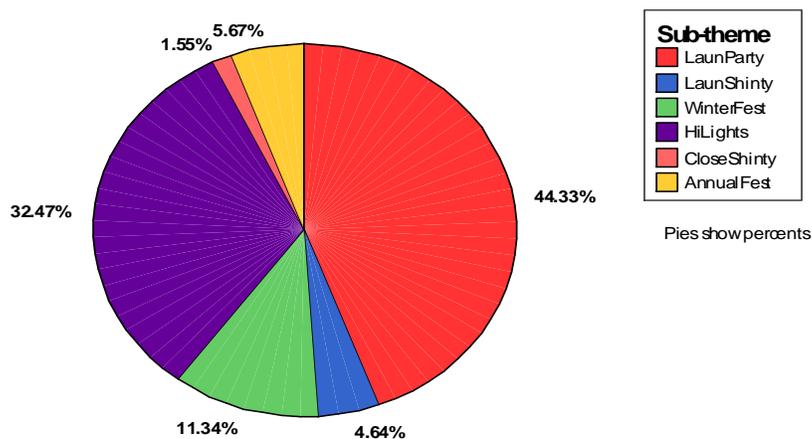
While cross-community events, like community events, focus primarily on participation of local people, they can be distinguished from the latter by the fact that they take place at numerous places across the Highlands, or are designed to attract participants from across the wider Highland and Islands area. As such, travelling exhibitions and performances and other projects carried out at more than one location are included in this sub-theme. Of these events, the Land and Legacy exhibition (Fonn 's Duthchas) received the highest percentage of coverage (14%), although this was only slightly higher than coverage of the Blas Festival (13.5%). Other significant cross-community events were the Highland Exposure photography project (10.7%), Between the World and Eternity (a musical project of the Sorley Maclean Trust) and Highland Faith (both receiving 6.7% of coverage). The Press & Journal travelling photo exhibition was covered only by the Press and Journal.

Figure 29: coverage of cross-community events



Coverage of special events includes reporting on the Highland 2007 opening and closing events, as well as other annual festivities, such as Burn's Night and Hogmanay, as far as they were being covered in the context of Highland 2007. Almost half of all reporting in this sub-theme was dedicated to launch events taking place in January 2007, the vast majority of which dealt with the Highland 2007 Launch and Monster Street Party (44.3% of all special events coverage). A small percentage (4.6%) focused specifically on the shinty match that was to be played to mark the start of the year. *The Highland Lights* closing event received 32.5% of coverage, again with an additional small percentage of coverage (1.6%) focusing on the shinty match that was planned for the closing of Highland 2007. The Inverness Winterfest, which as a sub-theme includes reporting on plans for the 2007 Hogmanay, attracted 11.3% of coverage.

Figure 30: coverage of special events



## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

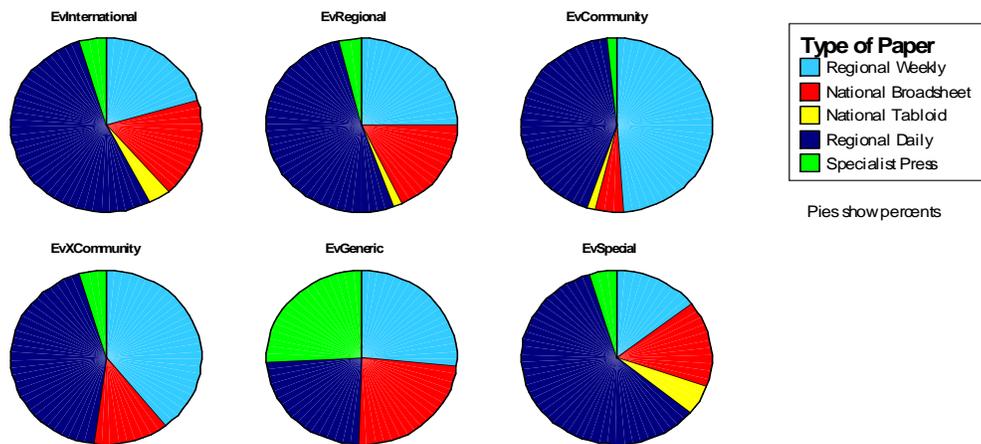
As figure 31 shows, reporting on community events is done almost entirely by regional newspapers. Almost 50% of all articles come from regional weeklies, while coverage by regional dailies is only slightly smaller than that. Given the fact that the regional newspapers (especially the regional weeklies) tend to have a stronger focus on local events, this is not unexpected.

International and regional events received similar levels of coverage (just under 18%), which was also spread over the different newspaper types in comparable percentages. Here, regional daily newspapers clearly have the highest level of coverage, reaching over 50%, which is twice as high as coverage by regional weeklies. Coverage by national broadsheets was significant, with 18% for both sub-types, while national tabloids and specialist press only had a small percentage of the coverage.

The 'generic events reporting' sub-theme includes all events reporting without a clear focus on any single targeted event, including e.g. 'guide' listings of various events. These sort of references were equally distributed over all newspaper types, with the clear exception of national tabloids. Tabloids are also completely absent from any reporting on cross-community events, where regional weeklies and dailies again take up a roughly equal percentage of the coverage (around 40%).

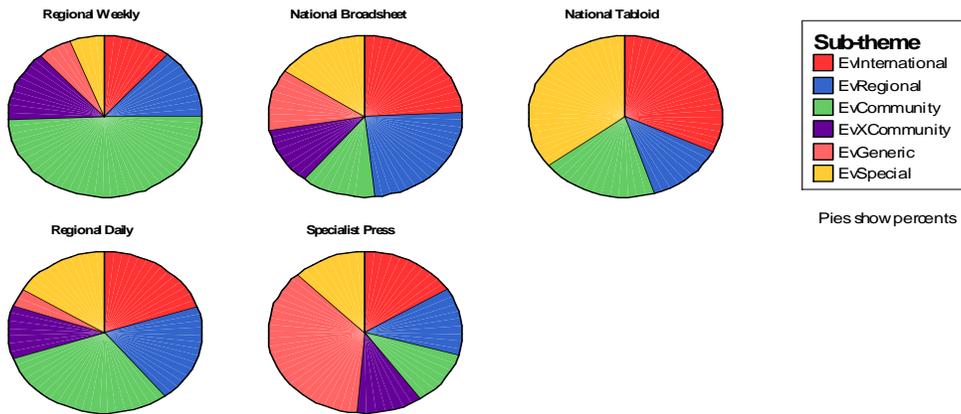
Finally, coverage of 'special events' is again dominated by regional dailies. Interestingly, of all sub-themes this one attracted the highest percentage of coverage by national tabloids, at just under 6%.

**Figure 31: Distribution of themes across paper types**



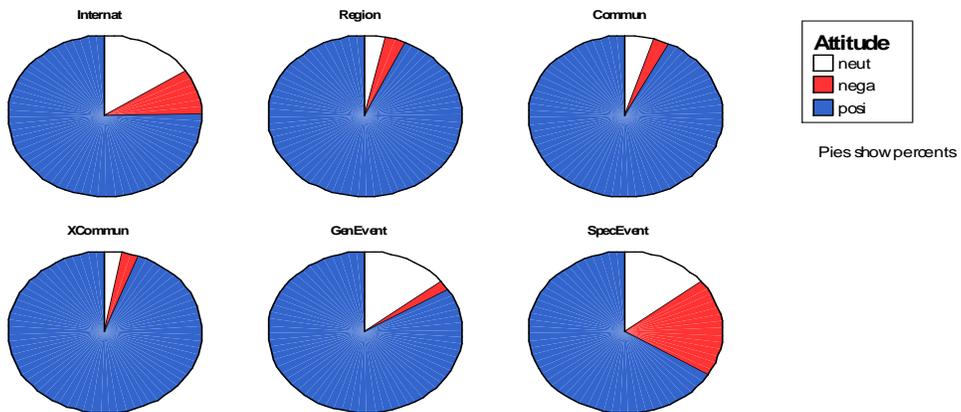
When coverage of sub-themes is compared for each newspaper type separately, the predominance of reporting on community events for both types of regional newspapers is again apparent. For regional weeklies, this sub-theme makes up half of its coverage on events, while coverage on all other topics is much more evenly spread out. National tabloids dedicated a high percentage of coverage to special events, as well as international events (albeit slightly lower), while specialist press shows more of a focus on generic event reporting.

Figure 32: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage



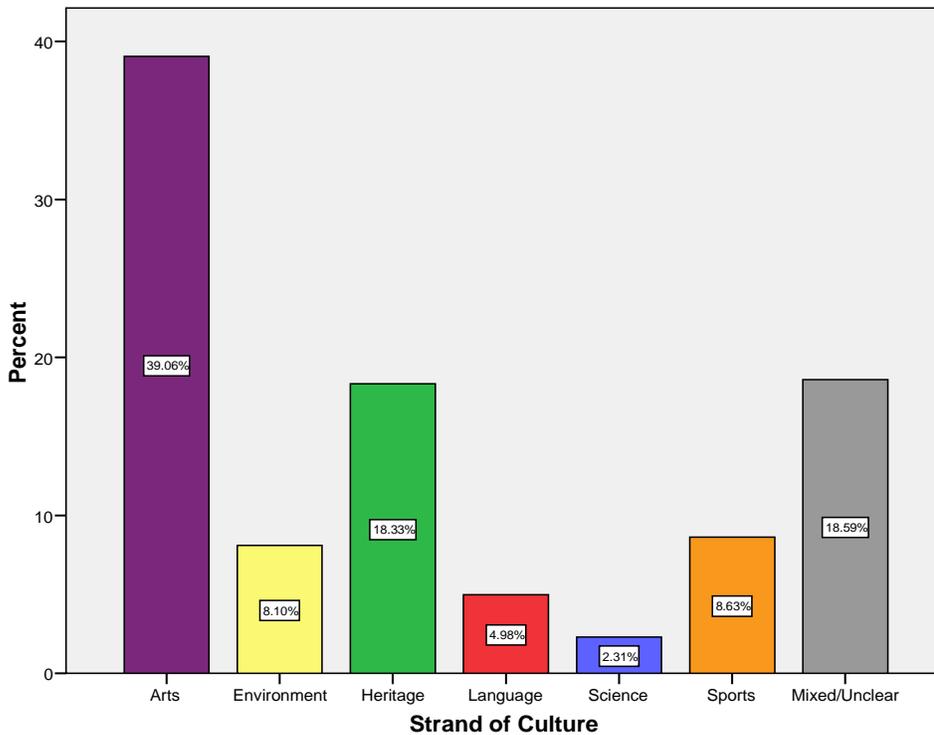
Reporting on regional, community and cross-community events was overwhelmingly positive, with positive attitudes scoring between 92.6% (community events) and 94.4% (cross-community). Special events (66%) and international events (75.4%) scored lowest in positive attitudes, with special events also attracting the highest level of negative coverage (19.6%).

Figure 33: Attitudes towards events, per sub-theme



Divided across the six strands of culture central to the Highland 2007 programme, arts and heritage appear as the two most important strands in terms of emphasis in reporting on events. With almost 40% of all events-related coverage, arts events received the largest share of coverage, more than twice as high as events relating to heritage. The other four strands of culture together were central in less than 25% of all events coverage, each receiving less than 10%. Science events scored the lowest percentage of coverage, with only 2.3% of all event coverage reporting on activities in this specific subject area. 18.6% of events coverage had no clear focus on any one particular strand, most often reporting on a variety of activities from different strands in a single article.

Figure 34: Reporting on events, distributed over strands of culture

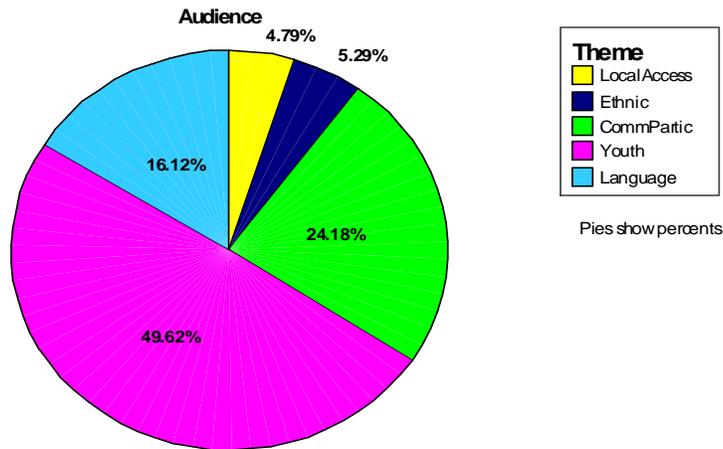


**2. Audiences and event reach**

Almost half of all reporting in this category deals with the inclusion of young people in the Highland 2007 programme of events, including all references to The Highland Promise. A quarter is made up of reporting on direct community participation in the programme (e.g. by taking part in workshops, organising local events, etc.), while 16% of event-reach coverage deals with inclusion of linguistic minorities. This specific sub-theme includes for example a number of references to a specific dialect from Cromarty, the preservation of which was part-funded by Highland 2007, but the majority of articles here focused on Gaelic language elements in the Highland 2007 programme (or lack thereof). Only two specific references to AirSplaoid were found.

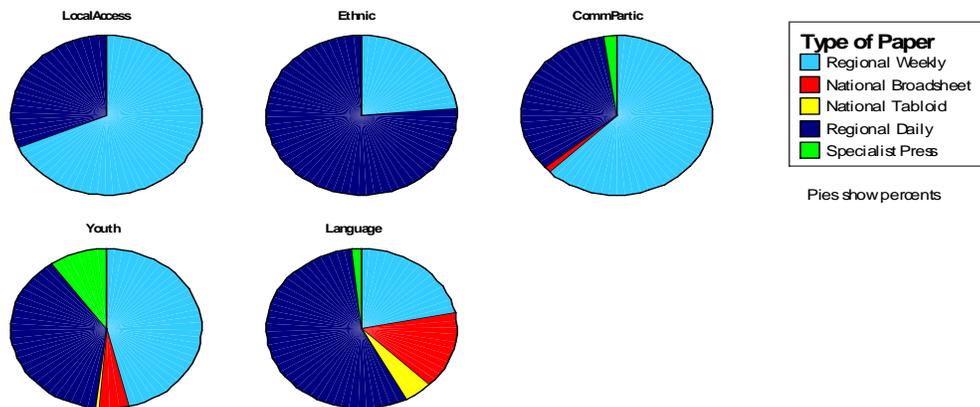
The accessibility of the year's events for the people of the Highlands and Islands (i.e. local accessibility) featured in a number of articles, in which critical comments were made regarding the centrality of Inverness to the programme compared to opportunities for other areas. However, when compared to the sub-themes, this topic received only limited coverage (4.8%). The same goes for multicultural events and the inclusion of ethnic minorities (5.3%).

Figure 35: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage



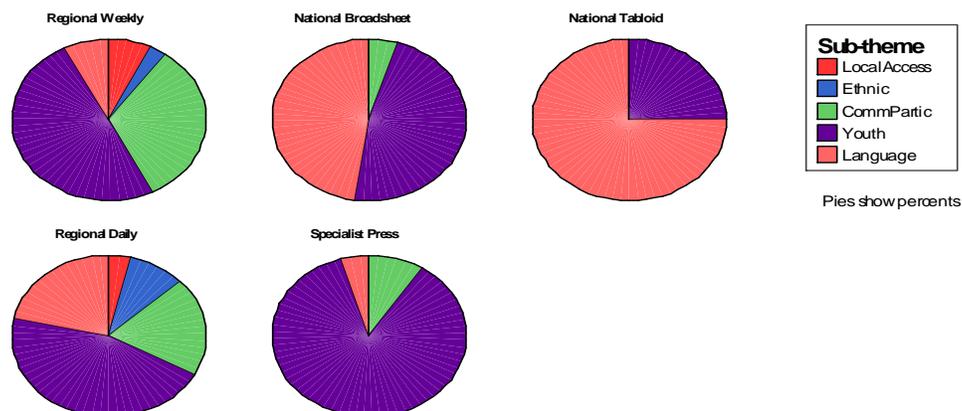
Regional papers are responsible for the vast majority of reporting in this category. The inclusion of linguistic minorities was the only sub-theme to receive a noticeable level of coverage in national broadsheets (15%), while specialist press published just under 10% of all articles on young people's participation; in all other cases, coverage in the non-regional newspapers was less than 5% (if the subject was covered at all).

Figure 36: Distribution of themes across paper types



Inclusion of young people clearly appeared as the main sub-theme across all newspaper types, with the exception of national tabloids, which were dominated by references to the inclusion of linguistic minorities. This second sub-theme also featured prominently across most other paper types. However community participation received coverage mainly in the regional newspapers, the category of press which dominated reporting on community events.

Figure 37: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage



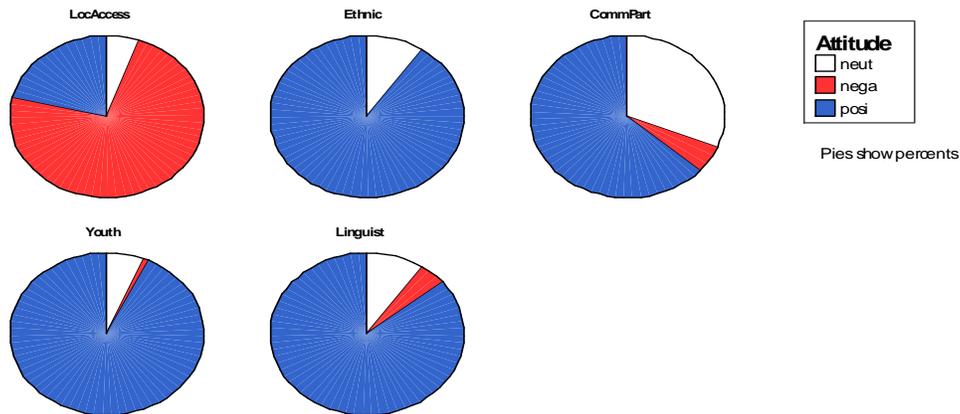
As a whole, event-reach received 81.1% positive coverage. Reporting on the inclusion and participation of youth and ethnic minorities were the most positive themes, with positive coverage reaching over 90%. Ethnic minorities received no negative coverage at all, while only 1% of all stories on inclusion of young people was negative. Negative reporting was concentrated primarily in coverage of accessibility for local audiences, which received the most negative coverage across all different categories, with 73.7%. Negative reporting here was mostly connected to the fact that many events were perceived to be centred around Inverness, with little attention being paid to the more remote locations such as the Western Isles. This was reflected for instance in a comment made in a letter to the Press & Journal, where one reader complained that

Those of us living any distance from Inverness have been left largely unmoved by this year-long extravaganza frequently heralded as being of great social and economic benefit to the entire Highlands. [...] Perhaps there have been enormous benefits as a result of the festival, but they haven't been felt much further than the shores of Loch Ness.<sup>10</sup>

Community participation and language-related reporting were again predominantly positive, receiving only small levels of negative reporting (5.2% and 4.7%), although almost one-third of community participation coverage was neutral.

<sup>10</sup> 'Cultural explosion in the Highlands', The Press and Journal, 26 September 2007.

Figure 38: Attitudes towards audiences and event reach, per sub-theme



### 3. Image and representations

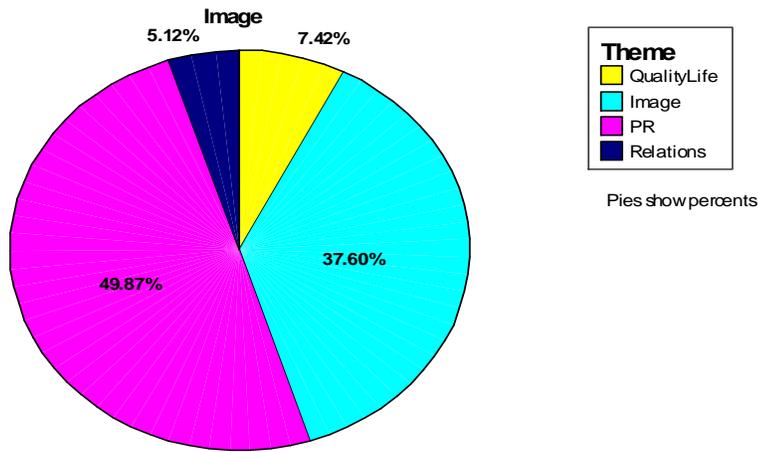
Half of all references in the category 'images and representations' of the Highlands and Islands deal with promotion and place marketing. This sub-category includes for example calls for event organisers to have their events listed as part of the Highland 2007 calendar of events, adverts for specific events, but also a number of articles discussing specific PR activities, such as Highland 2007 being promoted as part of the Tartan Week in New York, as well as references to the Golden Broom as the official tartan of the year and its use for promotional purposes.

References to the image of the Highlands form the second largest sub-theme in this category (37.6%). These can be split up even further into a larger number of sub-themes. 65% of all articles in this sub-theme focus on the changing identity of the area, often (but not always) presenting Highland 2007 as a reflection of this. 15% is focused specifically on Highland self-confidence. This theme initially appeared in connection to Jack McConnell's speech at the launch of Highland 2007, in which he presented Highland 2007 as an event that would boost the area's confidence, but was later picked up by other key figures as well; for instance, *the Herald* quoted the outgoing chief executive of The Highland Council, Arthur McCourt, as saying that Highland 2007 was 'an expression of the growing confidence of the people and the region'.<sup>11</sup> A further 18% covered stories on iconic representations of the Highlands, reporting mostly on the search for a new Highland icon, but also referring to other icons, such as tartan and whisky.

The quality of life sub-theme includes all references to the quality of living in the Highlands and Islands, specifically in relation to Highland 2007. While the press picked up a few specific attempts to present the Highlands and Islands as a good place to live (for example, the Healthy Highland initiative), this accounted for only 7.4% of coverage. Although this sub-theme did not attract a lot of press attention, the coverage exceeded that given to reporting the Highlands and Islands' relations with other areas. This last theme, which received 5.1% of all coverage, includes reporting on e.g. historical and cultural ties with other parts of the world, as part of the Highlands and Islands' history and image.

<sup>11</sup> 'Caring for the bonniest banks and braes', *The Herald*, 23 February 2007.

Figure 39: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage



This category received very little coverage in national tabloids. As for all categories, coverage in regional papers dominates, with regional dailies have the largest percentage of coverage over all sub-themes and regional weeklies coming second. However, in the sub-themes quality of life and image, the percentage of coverage in national broadsheets is still significant at 20.6% and 17.7%.

Figure 40: Distribution of themes across paper types

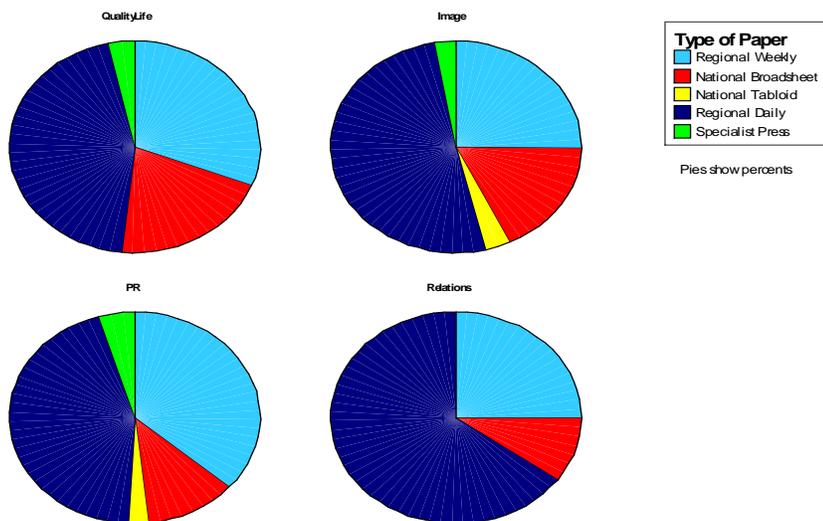
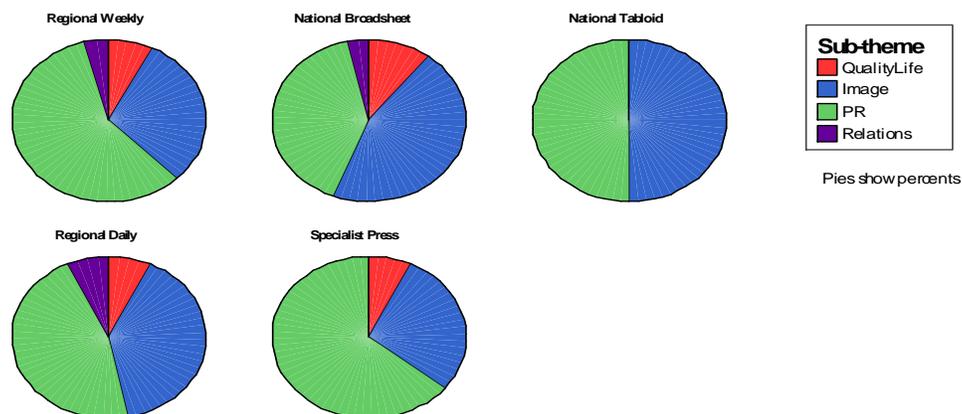


Image and promotion were the main sub-themes for all paper types. Of all types, national broadsheets devoted the highest percentage of coverage to quality of life in the Highlands, while stories on relations with other areas were covered only by regional newspapers and national broadsheets, though only as a minor percentage of their total coverage of the category.

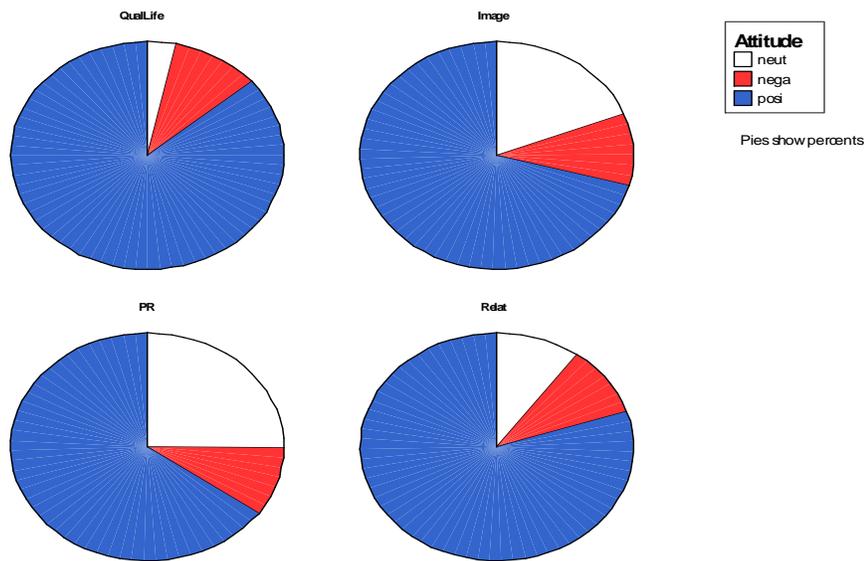
Figure 41: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage



Stories related to image and representation of the Highlands received an overall negative coverage of 10%, which was equally distributed over all sub-themes. References to quality of life received the most positive coverage (86.2%), while reporting on promotion and place marketing received the highest percentage of neutral coverage (25.1%). Neutral coverage in the latter section was made up mostly of articles urging local organisers to 'get aboard Highland 2007' and add their events to the yearly programme. Negative reporting focused mainly on a perceived lack of profile and general lack of publicity surrounding Highland 2007 events, as well as coverage on the delay in the UHI being granted university status, which was mostly seen as negative in the context of Highland 2007. Positive reporting focused for instance on the fact that Scotland's Year of Highland Culture would be a great way to showcase the Highlands and Islands as a great place to live and visit. For instance, one article from the Forres Gazette, on the availability of funding for events in Moray, called this 'a huge opportunity for Moray to put itself on the map, to promote Moray as a good place to live, and also from a tourism point of view, to attract people into the area'.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> 'Cash aid for Moray Festival spin-off', Forres Gazette, 15 February 2006.

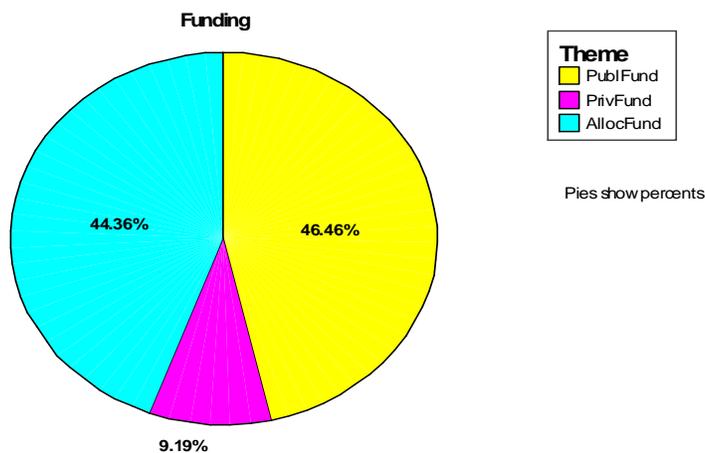
**Figure 42: Attitudes towards image and representation, per sub-theme**



**4. Funding**

The availability of support from public bodies (which includes direct funding through Highland 2007, funding distribution through the community funds, and funding from other governmental organisations distributed as part of Highland 2007) received more or less the same level of coverage as reporting on the allocation of these funds, i.e. what the money was being spent on. Private funding, sponsorships, or private partners of Highland 2007, however, generated much less interest from the press (9.2%).

**Figure 43: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage**

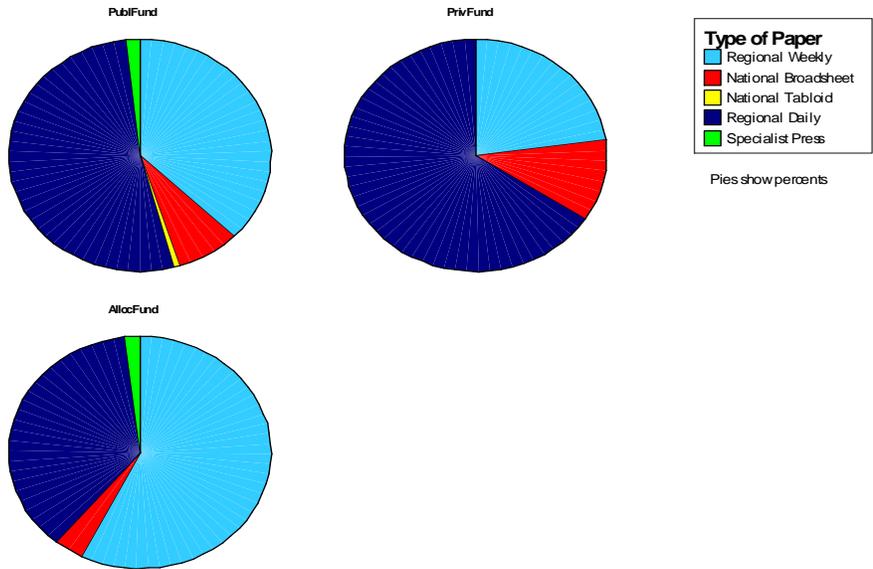


As figure 44 shows, reporting on funding was predominantly a case for regional newspapers, with regional weekly papers taking the largest share of reporting on allocation of funding and

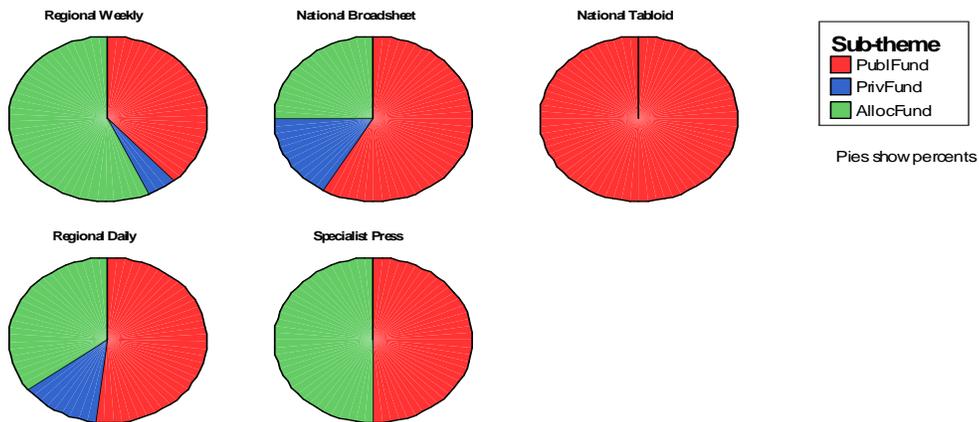
## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

regional dailies dominating the other two sub-themes. National tabloids and the specialist press are almost completely absent from reporting on funding.

**Figure 44: Distribution of themes across paper types**

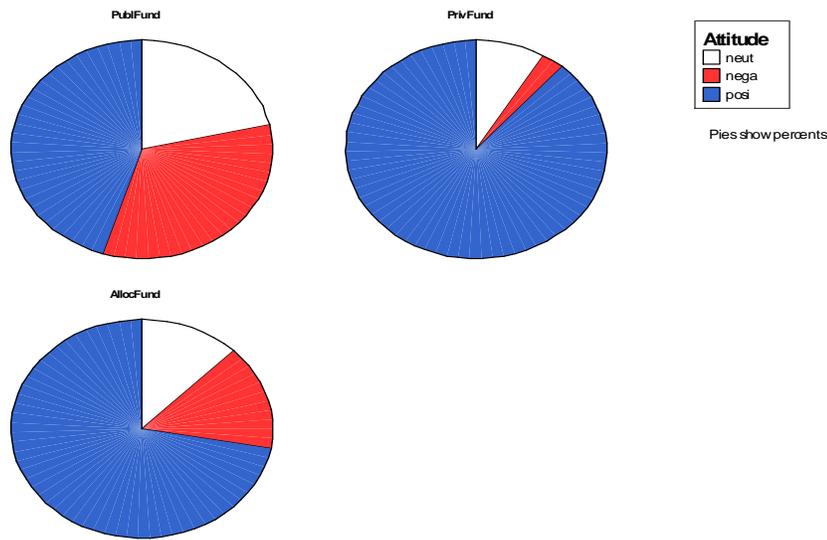


**Figure 45: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage**



Public funding received by far the most negative coverage of all sub-themes in this category (33.3%), as well as the lowest level of positive reporting (45.2%). Negative reporting was related to local issues, such as specific community projects having funding problems because their Highland 2007 funding applications were denied, but the funding of major events attracted most negative coverage, with a lot of negative press being raised by the spending of public funds on the fireworks closing event and the rising costs of the Eden Court refurbishment. References to private funding and sponsorships, on the other hand, were predominantly positive (88.6%).

**Figure 46: Attitudes towards funding, per sub-theme**



**5. Physical developments and legacy**

Reporting on Capital Projects makes up the bulk of coverage in the physical developments category. Figure 48 represents the distribution of coverage dealing specifically with this sub-theme. The main Capital Projects were identified firstly on the basis of their inclusion in this section on the Highland 2007 website, and secondly on any reference to specific Highland 2007 funding.

With 37.4% of all coverage, the Eden Court refurbishment was the largest single development within this sub-theme. Work on the Inverness Museum and Art Gallery received 10% of all coverage, while the re-development of the Culloden Battlefield Visitor Centre received just under 8%.<sup>13</sup> However, almost half of this sub-theme (44.7%) was made up of reporting on a large number of other projects. This includes reporting on seven other identified Capital Projects (Fas, Sabhal Mor Ostaig; the Highland Folk Museum; the Highland Archive; Nairn Community Centre, Moray Arts Centre; Dornoch Sports Barn; and Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre). Together these projects reach 10% of all coverage, with the Highland Archive receiving the highest percentage at 3.9%. Finally, the main 'capital project' section (34.64%) contains all references to projects funded by Highland 2007 which were NOT specifically identified on the website.<sup>14</sup>

Reporting on physical developments NOT specifically associated with Capital Projects or Highland 2007 funding makes up the second largest sub-theme (23.4%). This includes reporting on e.g. the new Scottish Natural Heritage office in Inverness, the restoration of a number of memorials in public spaces, and plans for an open-air theatre in the Sutherland woods. While coverage of these developments dealt with them in the context of Highland

<sup>13</sup> The actual number of articles on the development of Culloden Visitor Centre was higher than the final number taken on board in the analysis, due to the fact that not all coverage contained a direct link to Highland 2007. This was also the case for the Eden Court refurbishment, although on a much smaller scale.

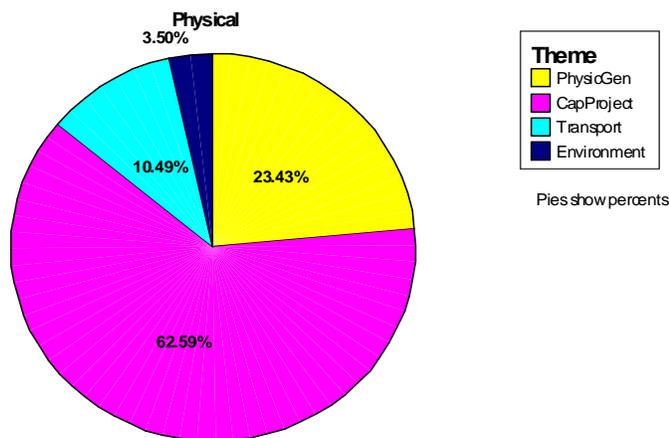
<sup>14</sup> Some other Capital Projects identified on the Highland 2007 website, such as Thurso Town Hall, Lairg Auction Mart, received no coverage at all.

## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

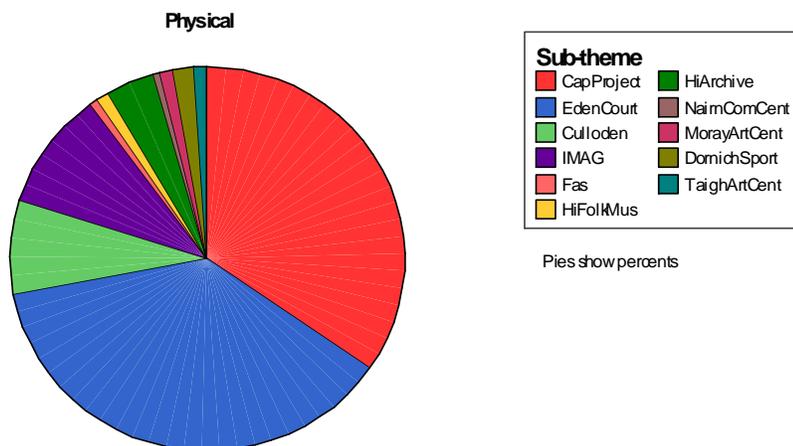
2007 (e.g. the fact that the new Scottish Natural Heritage office would be available as a venue during the year), these physical developments were not presented as having any direct association to the year.

Reporting on transport and infrastructure (10.5%) and environmental issues (3.5%) made up relatively small percentages of the total coverage. Transport and infrastructure stories dealt with e.g. the state of roads (also as a matter of image), new flight connections to Inverness (in connection to tourism development), and road closures around Inverness during some events. Environmental issues were raised primarily in reporting on the impact of a number of major festivals (especially the Outsider) and stories on the presence of litter in Inverness (again also as a matter of image).

**Figure 47: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage**



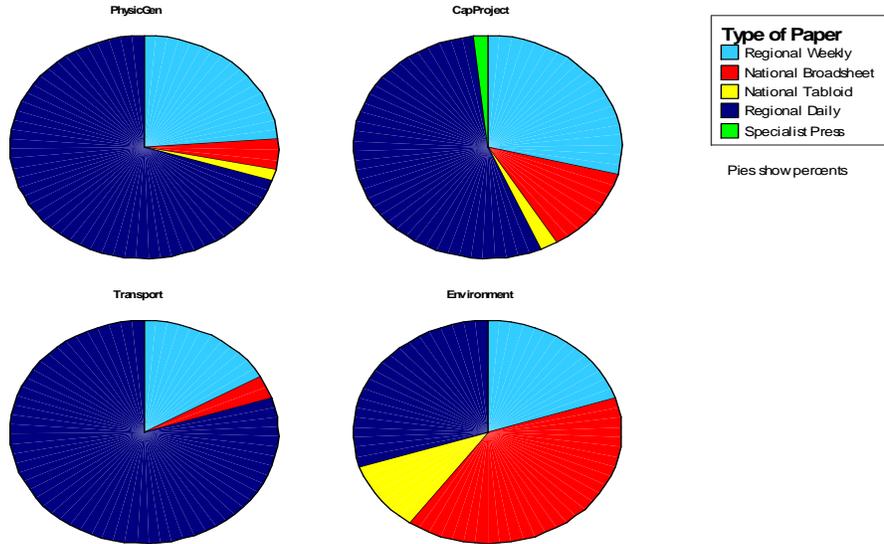
**Figure 48: Coverage of Capital Projects**



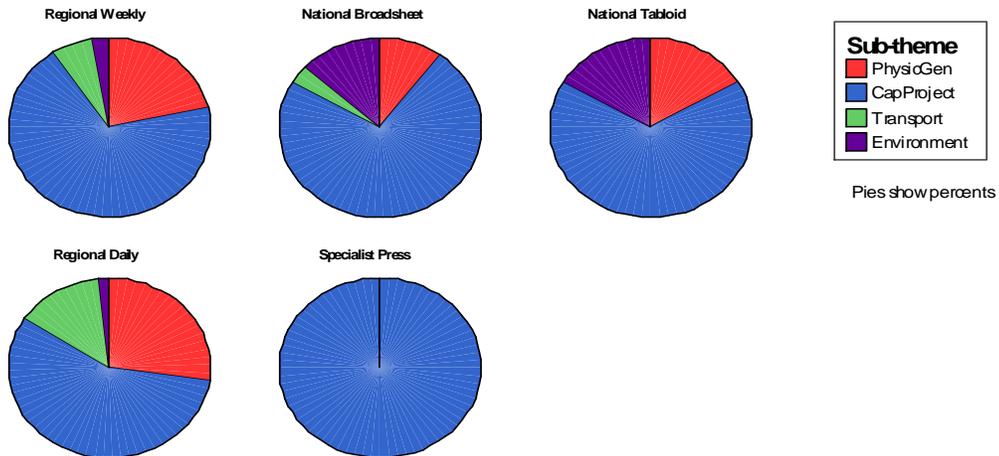
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The large percentage of coverage on environmental issues in the national press (see figure 49) was linked almost entirely to the Outsider Festival, while national broadsheet reporting on capital projects focused primarily on the Eden Court refurbishment.

**Figure 49: Distribution of themes across paper types**



**Figure 50: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage**

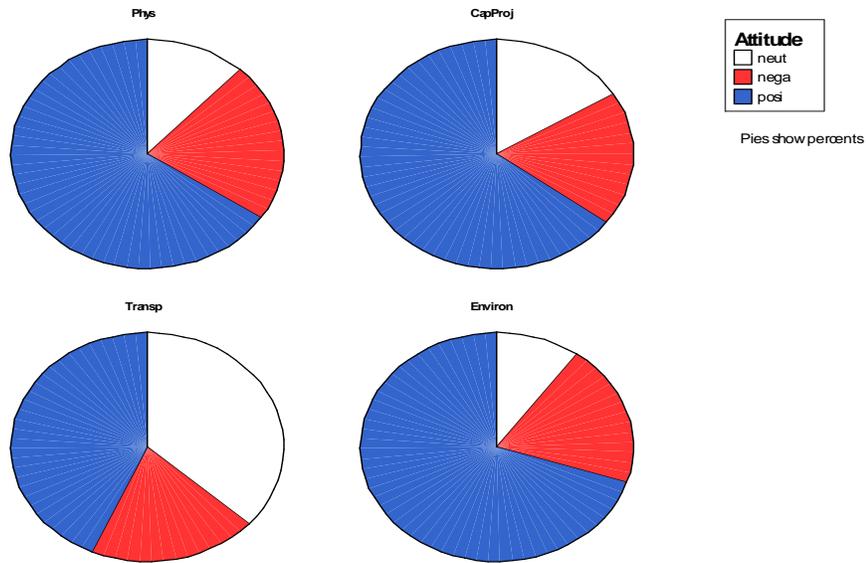


Overall, the tone of reporting on physical developments was predominantly positive. All sections received around 65-70% of positive coverage and around 20% of negative coverage, with the exception of reporting on transport and developments in infrastructure, which saw a significantly higher percentage of neutral coverage (36.7%), at the expense of positive reporting, which dropped to 43.3%. Neutral reporting here consisted mainly of references to general road closures etc. which in some cases featured as negative reporting when comments or letters were written on the same subject. Negative reporting on capital projects focused mainly on Eden Court and the Culloden visitor centre, with coverage focusing on overspending and delays in delivery, leaving Highland 2007 without two of its

## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

major projects. However, in general the legacy of these two projects was mostly appreciated.

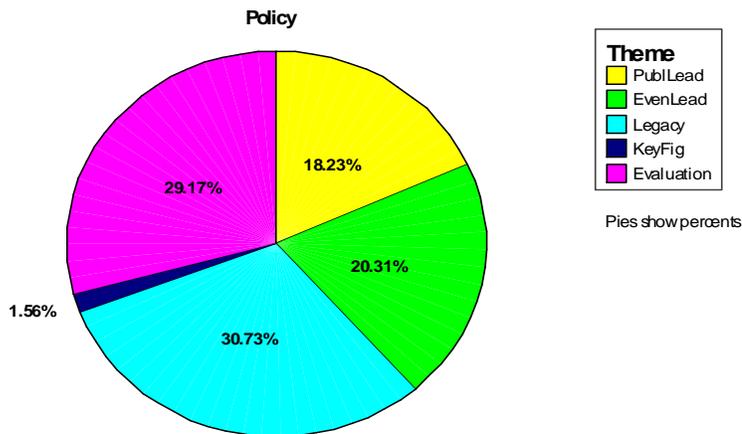
**Figure 51: Attitudes towards physical development, per sub-theme**



## 6. Organisation and policy issues

The distribution of reporting on various sub-themes on the subject of organisation and policy issues shows no clear focus. While the legacy and evaluation of Highland 2007 received the largest percentage of coverage (both around 30%), a significant amount of articles dealt with the organisation of the event and public leadership in the context of the year.

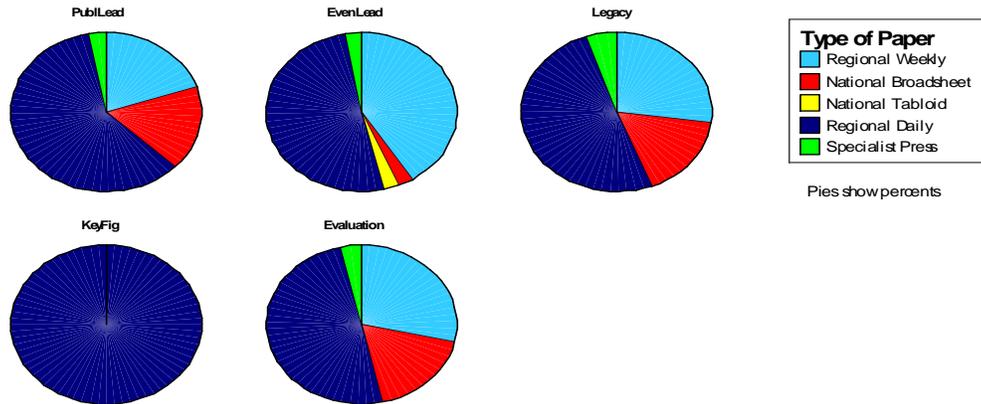
**Figure 52: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage**



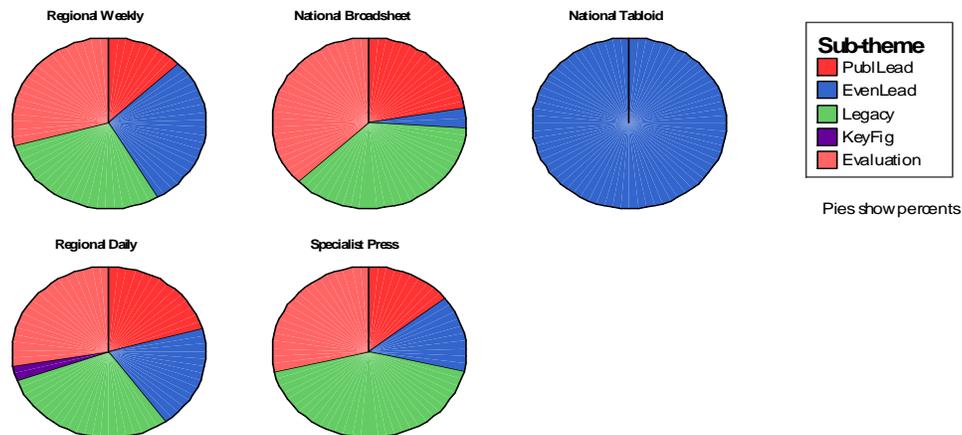
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All sub-themes were dominated by regional daily press. Public leadership, legacy and evaluation received significant attention in regional weeklies and national broadsheets as well, while the sub-theme 'event leadership' received almost no coverage outside the regional press. Specialist press reported on only a small percentage of articles in this category, while outside of event leadership, national tabloids were completely absent.

**Figure 53: Distribution of themes across paper types**



**Figure 54: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage**



Overall, reporting on policy and organisational issues received the highest percentage of neutral and negative reporting, and the lowest percentage of positive references.

Legacy and evaluation are the sections that show the highest percentage of neutral reporting (around 30%). Many articles of this type merely referred to the fact that legacy was an important aspect of the year. Other references displayed a 'wait and see' attitude, which is also to be expected. Another reason to record articles in both sections as neutral is that some merely reported on the existence of numerous opinions, without taking a clear position, as was the case in this comment from The Scotsman:

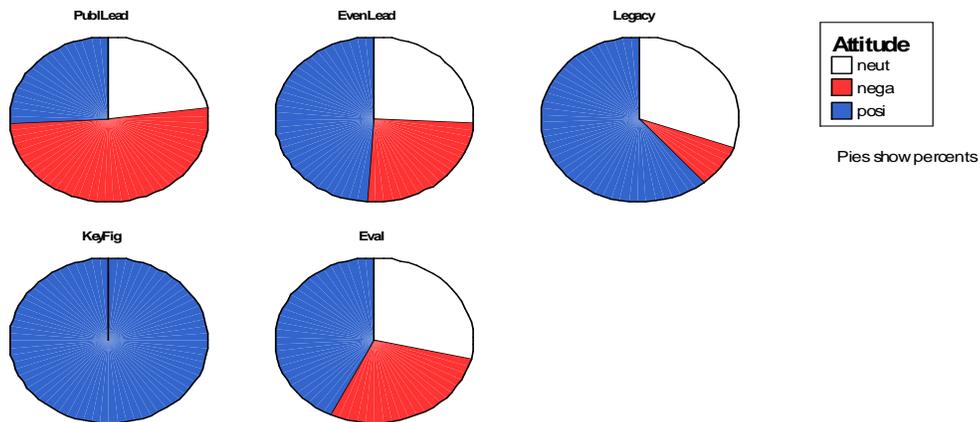
## Evaluation: Scotland's Year of Highland Culture

Highland 2007 may fizzle out like a firework display. Or it might create a lasting association between the Highlands and its culture which benefits those who work and live there. All will become apparent in 2008 and beyond.<sup>15</sup>

While 42.9% of reporting on the reception and evaluation of Highland 2007 was positive, the sub-theme attracted as much negative as neutral coverage (28.6%). Much of the negative reporting here came in the form of letters and comments. Comments on the legacy of the year overall were much more positive (61%).

References to event leadership were mostly positive, while reporting on public leadership were dominated by a negative attitude (51.4%), largely due to a number of articles on politicians reacting to specific developments in the context of the Eden Court refurbishment and the Highland 2007 fireworks finale. The small sub-theme of 'key figures', finally, mainly contains positive references to visits of famous people (e.g. royalty) to the Highlands and Islands in the context of the year's events.

**Figure 55: Attitudes towards organisation and policy issues, per sub-theme**



## 7. Economic Impacts

This category is dominated by reporting on tourism impacts. Most stories in this sub-theme refer to expectations of increasing visitor numbers as a direct result of the multitude of events taking place. In some cases, this expected increase was directly associated with specific events, such as the Moray Firth Flotilla, the Mountainbike World Championships, or InvernessFest. Only a small number of articles reported on actual increased numbers. The most important single-subject tourism-related story to appear dealt with the Highland and Islands Tourism Awards, where in most cases a reference (or more) was made to the fact that one award category was sponsored by Highland 2007.

Ticketing featured as a theme primarily in stories related to InvernessFest events, with reporting on high demand for the Highland Tattoo and the Elton John concert being the two main events in this sub-theme.

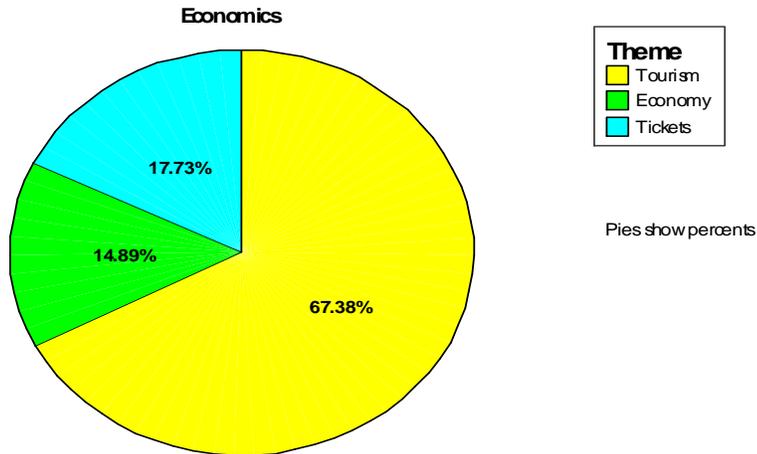
Reporting on the subtheme of economic impacts deals with a number of diverse subjects. As with tourism impacts, many stories refer to expectations of positive economic effects during 2007, in some cases reporting on specific events or projects that were found or

<sup>15</sup> 'Taking the High road to the arts', The Scotsman, 5 May 2007.

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expected to boost the economy (e.g. the Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival, Project Maelstrom). Specific reporting was found on statements made by Jack McConnell, referring to Highland 2007 as an economic catalyst for the region.

**Figure 56: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage**



National newspapers devoted only a small percentage of coverage to this category, focusing only on tourism and ticketing. Stories on the sub-theme of economic impacts did not feature at all in the national press.

**Figure 57: Distribution of themes across paper types**

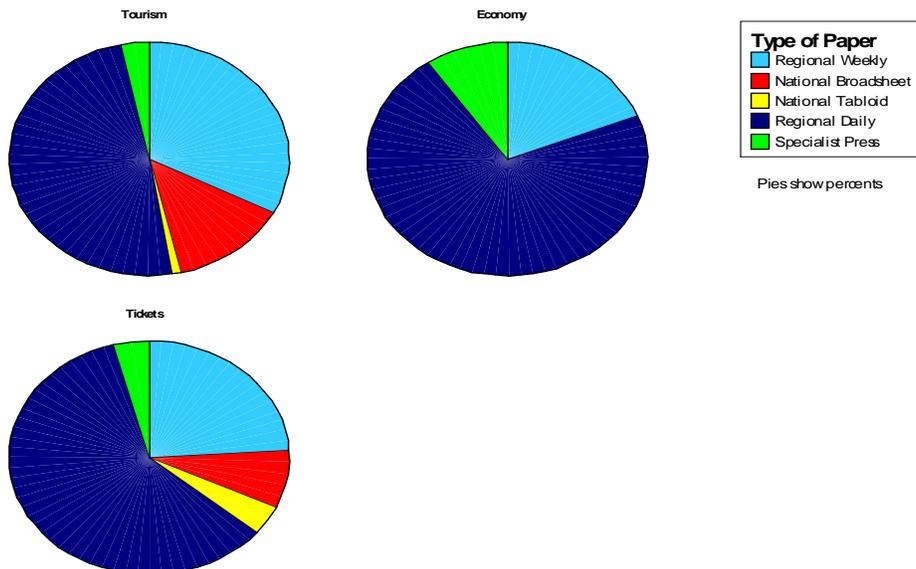
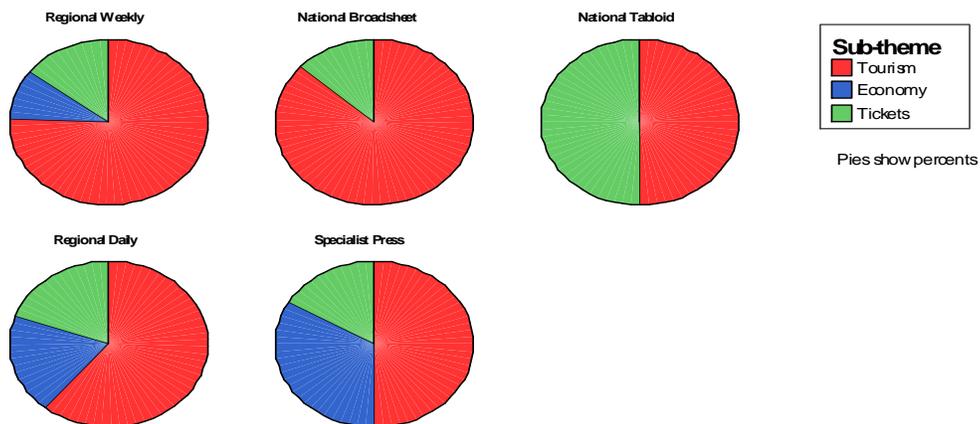
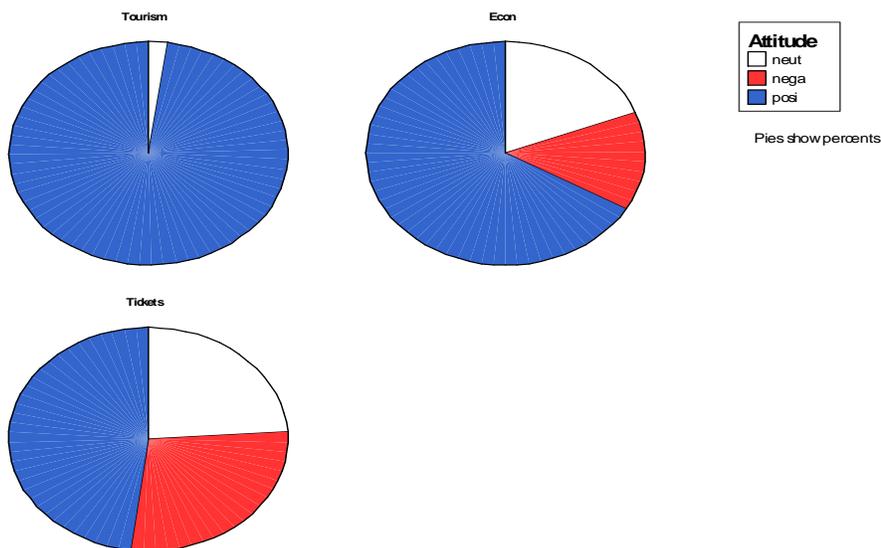


Figure 58: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage



As a category, economic impact is second only to events in terms of percentage of positive coverage, with 84.4%. Of its three sub-themes, tourism received by far the highest percentage of positive coverage, with 97.9%, the remaining 2.1% being neutral. References to tickets received the most negative coverage of all, with 28% (against 48% positive and 24% neutral). Negative reporting here included for example reporting on disappointing ticket sales for the Outsider and a comment in the Highland News making fun of the fact that the Elton John concert had not sold out, while positive stories referred to the high demand for tickets to the Inverness Highland Tattoo.<sup>16</sup> Reporting on economic impacts and developments was again largely positive (66.7%).

Figure 59: Attitudes towards economic impacts, per sub-theme



<sup>16</sup> 'Caley park's greatest hit!', Highland News, 21 July 2007.

### **8. Performer and Event origin and focus**

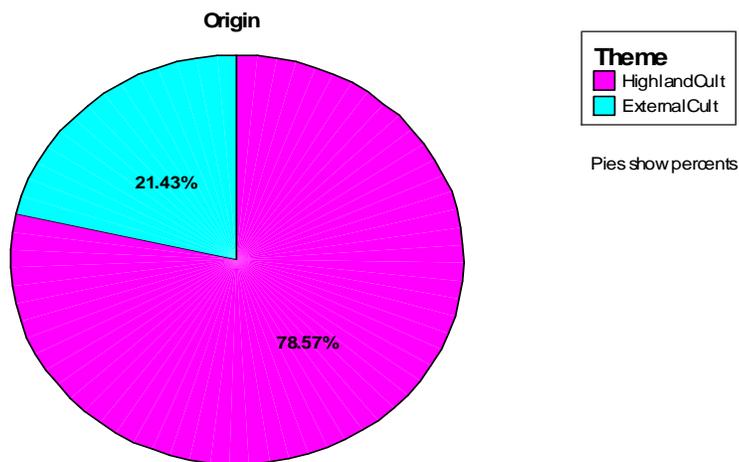
Coverage in this category, the smallest of all, focuses primarily on one key debate, which revolves around the nature of Highland 2007 as either the 'Year of Highland Culture' or the 'Highland Year of Culture'. Essentially, this deals with discussions on whether or not the cultural specificities of the Highlands are presented well enough, opportunities for local talent, and criticism of the 'imposition' of foreign elements, such as the choice of Elton John as one of the main events of the year; in the words of one angry reader of the West Highland Free Press:

'I don't see what the bloke has to do with Highland culture.'<sup>17</sup>

A similar criticism was raised (on a smaller scale) on the fact that the Sundowe, the production to win the Highland Quest, had very little to do with the Highlands.

A second sub-theme to emerge within this category (with 21.4% of coverage) focuses on the quality of the programming being brought to the Highlands from elsewhere.

**Figure 60: Distribution of sub-themes as part of overall category coverage**

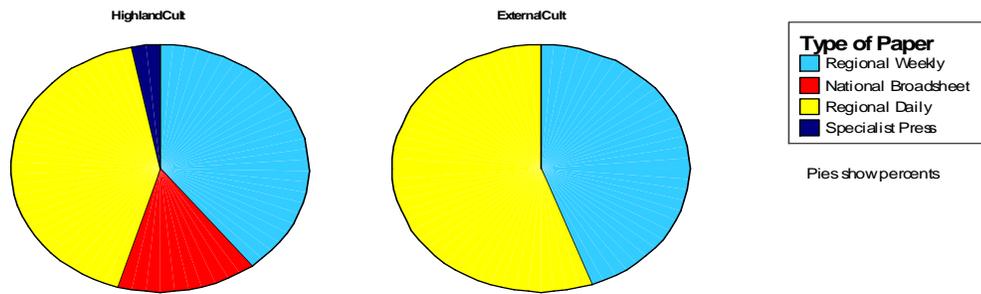


While this category was covered predominantly by the regional press, the first sub-theme still received over 15% of coverage in the national broadsheets. Articles on the second sub-theme appeared only in the regional press, while national tabloids did not cover this category at all.

<sup>17</sup> 'Elton John and Highland culture', West Highland Free Press, 22 June 2007.

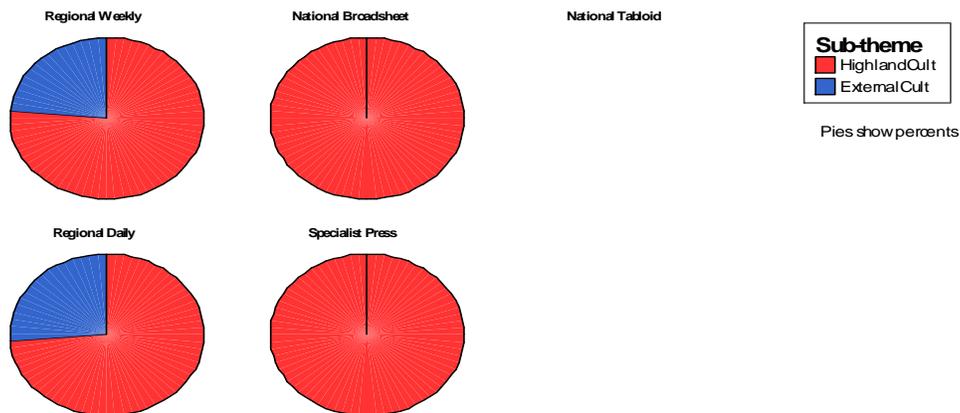
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**Figure 61: Distribution of themes across paper types**



Regional dailies and weeklies both spent around 75% of their coverage of this category on the debate on Highland culture.

**Figure 62: Coverage of sub-themes as percentage of paper type coverage**



Attitudes towards the representation of Highland culture were very mixed, although slightly more positive (42.2%) than negative (36.4%). Negative opinions were voiced primarily through letters, comments and editorials, while positive coverage existed mainly of news reporting on opportunities for local artists. On the other hand, coverage of the second sub-theme was 100% positive, which shows praise for the quality the international contribution to the year's programme.

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Figure 63: Attitudes towards performer and event origin, per sub-theme

