Ex-post Evaluation of 2007 & 2008 European Capitals of Culture

Final Report

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Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture
Final Report

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Introduction

The European Capital of Culture Action was introduced in 1999 by a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council[1], building on the European City of Culture event that had operated annually since 1985. This Decision created a specific Action, whose overall objective was to "highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote the greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens".

Article 3 of the Decision stated that the "nomination of each city shall include a cultural programme of European dimension, based principally on cultural co-operation". It also set out a number of objectives that each nominated city must address, which were to:

- highlight the artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution;
- promote events involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States and leading to lasting cultural cooperation, and to foster their movement within the European Union;
- support and develop creative work, which is an essential element in any cultural policy;
- ensure the mobilisation and participation of large sections of the population and, as a consequence, the social impact of the action and its continuity beyond the year of the events;
- encourage the reception of citizens of the Union and the widest possible dissemination of the various events by employing all forms of multimedia;
- promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world and, in that spirit;
- optimise the opening up to, and understanding of others, which are fundamental cultural values; and
- exploit the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city.

The 1999 Decision also set out a process for the designation of cities as ECOC, based upon an Order of Entitlement for Member States to nominate a city for the title. This process was used to designate two of the cities that form the subject of this evaluation – Luxembourg and Greater Region (GR) (2007) and Liverpool (2008). Article 4 of the Decision also introduced the possibility of non-Member States nominating a city. The other two cities that form the subject of this evaluation were thus nominated by their countries and subsequently designated by the Council as ECOC under the terms of Article 4 - Sibiu in Romania[2] (2007) and Stavanger in Norway (2008). As well as being awarded the title, each ECOC could receive EU funding of up to €1.5m for specific projects within their cultural programme. Whilst a further Decision was made in 2006, this Decision specifically stated that the requirements of the 1999 Decision would apply in the case of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC.[3]

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[1] Decision No 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019.
[2] Romania was not yet a Member State when Sibiu was designated European Capital of Culture.
[3] Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019.

Approach taken by the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to satisfy the requirement of both 1999 and 2006 Decisions for a report evaluating the results of the previous year's events. The four ECOC were evaluated individually, drawing in part on evaluations commissioned by the ECOC themselves. Data was gathered at two levels: a small amount of data at EU-level; and more extensive data from the ECOC themselves. The key sources included the policy and academic literature at the European level; the original ECOC applications, studies and reports commissioned by the ECOC, events programmes, promotional materials and websites; quantitative data supplied by the ECOC on activities, outputs and results; interviews of managing teams for each ECOC; a telephone survey of key stakeholders in each ECOC; and visits to each city. A comparative review and meta-evaluation exercise considered the conclusions emerging from all four ECOC, compared and contrasted approaches, and verified the quality of the research.

Conclusions relating to the ECOC Action more generally were drawn from considering the evidence and conclusions emerging from all four ECOC. To this end, the evaluation covered issues relating to the key themes of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. The issues were explored through a long list of evaluation questions as set out in Section 2.3 of the main report.

The main findings of the evaluation in relation to these topics were as follows:

Relevance of the ECOC Action

The evaluation considered the relevance of the ECOC Action to Article 151 of the Treaty. It found that the ECOC Action has been consistent with and relevant to the objectives of Article 151. Indeed, taking a long-term perspective it is clear that the broad objectives of "developing cultural activities" and "promoting the European dimension of and through culture" have featured strongly in the ECOC Action.

In addition, it appears from our findings that cities holding the ECOC title have adopted over the years a third broad objective that we have defined as "supporting social and economic development through culture" although such an objective does not explicitly feature in Article 151 of the Treaty. The preamble to the 1999 Decision first introduced an explicit reference to the development of culture and tourism and to the need to mobilise large sections of the population. These references were later strengthened in the 2006 Decision by the inclusion of explicit criteria relating to "fostering the participation of citizens" and "long-term development". Many ECOC have gone further in stating explicit social, economic or tourism objectives.

The introduction of such objectives into the ECOC Action has both shaped and reflected broader trends in cultural policy. However, the growing importance of these objectives has been accompanied by a debate about balance between whether culture should be supported for its own intrinsic value or as a means to deliver tangible, quantifiable returns on investment. Indeed, there is a view that the introduction of economic and social objectives into cultural policy risks skewing policy and practice towards those activities that have maximum wider impacts, which arguably militates against the funding of 'risky' and/or avant garde cultural activities.

Relevance of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC

The evaluation considered the motivation of the cities in bidding to become ECOC and the relevance of their objectives in relation to the objectives of the ECOC Action and of Article 151 of the Treaty. All four ECOC were strongly relevant to at least one of the three specific objectives of "developing cultural activities", "promoting the European dimension of and through culture" and "social and economic development through culture" and demonstrated some relevance to all of them. Whilst all four ECOC were relevant to the objective of "developing cultural activities", this was most apparent in Stavanger; in the other three ECOC, this was seen through the lens of other overall aims, i.e. building a cross-border region (Luxembourg GR), raising the international profile of the city (Sibiu), and urban regeneration and inclusion (Liverpool). All four ECOC were relevant to the objective of "promoting the European dimension of and through culture", primarily through their objectives of fostering co-operation with cultural operators, artists and cities in other Member States. All four ECOC were also relevant to the objective of pursuing "economic development through culture", primarily through using the ECOC to improve the image of the city (the GR in the case of Luxembourg) and to the objective of pursuing "social development through culture" through widening access to culture.

> **Recommendation 1:** the current objectives of the ECOC Action are relevant to the wider context in which it operates, e.g. cultural policy, aspirations of cities; it may be inevitable that each ECOC will tend to prioritise one of the three specific objectives over the others, but the Action should continue to allow "space" for cities to interpret the objectives of the Action in their own way.

Efficiency of Governance

Consideration was given to the efficiency of the governance of the ECOC, including their organisational models, processes for selecting and implementing cultural activities and events, communications and promotions, and processes for raising finance. All four ECOC faced difficulties in establishing efficient governance arrangements, particularly during the development phase. These difficulties primarily related to the challenge of establishing an organisational structure and building a team with the appropriate skills to implement the cultural programme. In each case, this required a wider set of skills and thus a different structure from the team that had prepared the successful application, albeit retaining most of the key individuals. Issues that played an important role were: the need to balance artistic and political interests and to ensure that any new delivery mechanism was welcomed by the existing stakeholders as a co-operative partner; and getting the right mix of existing and seconded staff as well as new talent. Each ECOC did eventually establish an efficient governance structure, as was recognised by the majority of stakeholders. The experience of 2007 & 2008 demonstrates that a new and independent structure is usually advisable, one that is carefully customised to reflect the political and cultural context of the city and, indeed, the country more generally. Another important lesson of 2007 & 2008 has been the importance of the evaluations commissioned by the ECOC themselves.

Since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, the Commission has published a guide for applicant cities with recommendations on governance. The Commission also provides additional support in the form of information sessions with applicant and designated cities.

> **Recommendation 2:** Future evaluations of the ECOC Action should consider the effectiveness of the support put in place since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC.

> **Recommendation 3:** the Commission should require all ECOC to commission evaluations of the impact of their cultural programmes and associated activities.

Efficiency of ECOC mechanisms at EU-level

A key consideration was the efficiency of the selection, monitoring and financial processes operated by the European Commission.

The 1999 Decision introduced a new selection process, for the 2005 title onwards, based on the formation of a selection panel to consider the nomination(s) for each year. Whilst all the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, perhaps unsurprisingly (since they were winners), expressed broad satisfaction with the new process, it is too early to draw robust conclusions on the efficiency, effectiveness and impartiality of that process. This is because of the specific circumstances of 2007 and 2008: the selection panel was only required to give a view on the absolute merits of each bid, rather than its merits relative to competing nominations, since there were none. In any case, this process is no longer operative, having been replaced by a new process introduced by the 2006 Decision.

> **Recommendation 4:** future evaluations should consider the efficiency, effectiveness and impartiality of the selection process introduced by the 2006 Decision.

Although the Commission did not play a significant support and monitoring role in relation to the 2007 and 2008 ECOC, the predominant view from three of the four cities is that such a function would have brought benefits. Indeed, some monitoring points might have introduced important checks that would have highlighted potential problems and allowed for earlier remedial action. The networking between past, present and future ECOC is active and was welcomed by all four ECOC.

The 2006 Decision foresees a two-phase monitoring process for the ECOC as of 2010 which should help in this regard (two years and eight months before the start of the year). It should be noted that the Commission is currently trying to step up the support to cities further still. Indeed, as a result of feedback from stakeholders it is seeking to introduce voluntary informal monitoring six months after the designation. The Commission is also facilitating advisory visits by members of the panel to future cities requiring help.

> **Recommendation 5:** future evaluations should consider the efficiency and effectiveness of the new monitoring process implemented by the Commission.

The criteria for the €1.5m EU funding per ECOC are clear and the administrative processes not dissimilar to those of other EU programmes. Each ECOC received funding from the EU's Culture Programme for specific projects. The EU funding formed a very modest proportion of the total expenditure on the cultural programme of each ECOC and in no cases did it significantly influence the decision to apply. In view of the modest amount provided from the EU budget, the ECOC designation, nevertheless, has a very effective leverage effect.

Since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, the Commission has reviewed the EU funding mechanism. As a result, the 2006 Decision introduced the "Melina Mercouri Prize": a prize of €1.5m to be awarded to designated cities before the start of the year, on the basis of the reports delivered by the monitoring panel. This prize will be awarded for the 2010 titles onwards.

> **Recommendation 6:** future evaluations should consider the effectiveness of the awarding of the prize including whether the award of the prize before the beginning of the year in a lump sum is appropriate. They should also examine the relevance of the prize concerning the decision of cities to apply and to the quality of the ECOC implementation. Consideration should also be given to other EU funds, such as the EU Structural Funds.

The ECOC Action generates high demand from candidate cities, substantial investment in the cultural programmes and in the cities more generally and high profile in the media and with the public. The ECOC title thus remains highly valued by cities, generates extensive cultural programmes and achieves significant impacts; it is doubtful if any other policy mechanism could have achieved the same impact for the same level of EU-investment in terms of financial resources and effort. However, it may be that "returns" start to diminish in future years and that alternative policy mechanisms are required, albeit drawing on many of the concepts underpinning the ECOC Action and the experiences to date.

> **Recommendation 7:** future evaluations should consider the continued value of the ECOC "brand", as viewed both by the title holders and by the wider world (media, cultural sector bodies and the general public); in the event that the value of the brand is perceived to be diminishing, the Commission should explore alternative approaches and compare their relative merits with those of the ECOC.

Effectiveness in developing cultural activities

The evaluation considered the effectiveness of each ECOC in implementing its cultural programme and its impact on the long-term cultural development of the city. In each ECOC area a more extensive cultural programme has been implemented than would have been the case in the absence of ECOC designation. Many genuinely innovative projects and new commissions have been undertaken, across a broad range of cultural genres. Audiences for cultural activities have in general been far greater than in the years preceding the ECOC and, where evidence is available it suggests a high level of audience satisfaction. The cultural scene of each city is now more vibrant and more recognised nationally and internationally than previously. Whilst each cultural programme has featured many established international and national artists, a significant number of local cultural operators has been supported in each case. As well as enjoying greater profile and contacts, one of the most important benefits reported across all four ECOC is the greater professionalism and operational capacity of such operators. In many cases, the mere fact of working more closely with cultural institutions and authorities has enabled greater support to be provided than would otherwise have been the case. For example, increased public funding has typically been accompanied by practical help to enable smaller organisations to enter into contracts and account for grant funding more effectively.

Overall, each ECOC, and thus also the ECOC Action more generally, was broadly successful in achieving its objectives relating to the development of cultural activities during the title year. Of course, not every element of the cultural programmes was completely successful and some stakeholders were disappointed (such as some cultural institutions for whom the ECOC offered limited relevance), some local artists felt there was an undue bias towards international artists, and the expectations of some local cultural operators for financial and other support could not be met. But the Action has enabled four extensive cultural programmes to be implemented that include many exciting and innovative projects.

Effectiveness in promoting the European dimension of and through culture

The 1999 Decision offers no explicit definition of the "European dimension" and the criteria of the "European dimension" as set out in the 2006 Decision are open to very different interpretations. Perhaps as a consequence, the European dimension of the ECOC Action was interpreted in very different ways by the 2007 & 2008 ECOC. The evaluation therefore allowed for such diversity when considering the effectiveness of the ECOC in promoting a European dimension.

Whilst all four ECOC were effective in implementing a wide range of activities with a European dimension, the nature of that dimension and the extent of effectiveness varied:

- the visibility gained by the title helped all four to be effective in generating a significant increase in tourism, although this had been an important objective for only two of them;
- all were effective in undertaking collaborations, co-productions and exchanges, although this activity was only extensive in three ECOC; in the other (Sibiu), collaboration was peripheral to the main cultural programme and primarily took place only with the other title holder;
- similarly, all were effective in establishing transnational partnerships with other cities or regions, but this activity was only extensive in Luxembourg GR;
- three of the ECOC were effective in meeting their objective of attracting artists of European significance;
- in the other (Luxembourg GR), this was a less prominent objective although many European artists were attracted;
- activities related to "European history, identity and heritage already present in the city" were implemented to a modest degree in all four ECOC, although all were relatively effective; and finally
- all ECOC gave only modest attention to the development of European themes and issues.

Effectiveness in achieving economic, urban development and tourism impacts

The evaluation found that all four ECOC were effective in achieving impacts related to economic, tourism and urban development objectives; tourism increased in all four cases and there is evidence of impact on the local economy; all four ECOC either directly funded cultural infrastructure and urban development investments or gave them greater impetus. However, there are some reasons to believe that the economic impacts of future ECOC may be less certain in current economic circumstances in which there may be reductions in public expenditure and private investment as well as reduced consumer expenditure in the tourist and cultural sectors. Moreover, there may also be a natural limit to the extent that the ECOC concept can continually drive urban regeneration. In the future, it may therefore be that purely cultural objectives recover the prominence that they enjoyed in the early years of the ECOC – or that the ECOC concept requires to be revisited.

> **Recommendation 8:** in forthcoming debates, the European Commission should explore the extent to which the ECOC concept (and culture more generally) can (continue to) and should be used to stimulate urban regeneration and economic development or whether to return to an approach that is more about culture as an end in itself – or whether to retain the flexibility for cities to strike their own balance.

Effectiveness in supporting social development through culture

The evaluation considered the effectiveness of the ECOC in respect of the social dimension of the Action. There is evidence that each was effective in implementing activities intended to achieve social objectives, notably the widening of access to culture and participation in volunteering (particularly in Sibiu and Liverpool). There is also evidence of an increase in attendance at cultural events and participation in cultural activities, including amongst target groups (in the case of Luxembourg). Moreover, many new ways to involve such groups have been developed, for example, through the creation of new venues, the organisation of cultural events in different neighbourhoods and the creation of community arts projects. However, the social dimension of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC has consisted primarily of widening access to culture, rather than of cultural inclusion or social inclusion *per se*.

> **Recommendation 9:** in forthcoming debates on the ECOC the European Commission should explore the extent to which the ECOC concept (and culture more generally) can (continue to) and should be used to stimulate the social renewal of cities, as opposed to merely widening access to and participation in culture, or whether to retain the flexibility for cities to strike their own balance.

Sustainability

Finally, the evaluation considered the sustainability of the activities of the ECOC and their impact on the cultural governance and long-term development of their respective cities. Whilst the level of cultural activity has, naturally, decreased following the end of the title year, there is evidence in all four ECOC that many of the activities initiated in the title year have been sustained and, in some instances, public authorities have provided ongoing funding. There are also numerous examples of festivals, first initiated in the title year, continuing to be held in future years. In addition, there are many examples of cultural institutions and independent operators that are undertaking a higher level of activity than before the title year, although some opportunities have been lost in that respect.

The experience of 2007 & 2008 was that the end of the title year leads to the disbanding of the dedicated delivery agencies and inevitably some loss of the experience that has been built up. However, it is clear that the ECOC has brought about important shifts within the governance of culture within their respective cities. Not only is much of the experience retained (with many individuals remaining involved in the cultural governance of the city, having returned to their previous employers, e.g. municipalities, or taken up new posts, e.g. with cultural institutions); ECOC have also led to the introduction of new ways of working, new partnerships, and new strategies. In many cases, the ECOC has ushered in a new set of relationships between local municipalities and cultural operators, and pushed culture up the agenda of local political debate. Overall then, the ECOC have seen significant changes in the way cultural activities are brought about which have established new platforms for activity which are likely to be sustained into the future.

At this stage, it is too early to evaluate the sustainability of economic and tourism impacts. Whilst the 2007 & 2008 ECOC enjoyed increases in tourism and higher international profiles during their title years, there is a risk that these benefits will be difficult to sustain in current economic circumstances – though the title holders may, of course, enjoy more visitors than they would have done in the absence of ECOC designation and be in a better position to capture future benefits once the global economy recovers.

1.0 Introduction

European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) are now an accepted and important part of the European cultural scene. Since its origins in 1985, some 38 cities have secured and implemented activities under the ECOC banner (or its predecessor).[4] In some ways, ECOC have indeed become 'big business', attracting growing attention and subject to increasing scrutiny.

Given this, it is perhaps surprising that – despite a growing commentary within academic and professional circles – this evaluation is, as far as we are aware, the first formal independent external evaluation of ECOC carried out since they became a Community Action in 1999. Although an extensive study was produced by Palmer/Rae Associates in 2004 on behalf of the European Commission, to cover the period 1995-2004, this was not, as the authors point out, an evaluation but was designed to 'document', 'make observations' and 'offer a factual analysis', although it also refers to the longer term impacts of the 1985-94 cohort of cities, and offers many useful insights[5]. The current evaluation goes beyond the Palmer/Rae Associates study, and is the first evaluation of its type, in that it fulfils the functions of accountability and learning and be subject to the rigour of the application of the DG Budget evaluation model now firmly embedded within European Commission custom and practice. As such, it satisfies the requirement of the 1999 Decision for 'a report evaluating the results of the previous year's events' (Article 6).[6]

The evaluation is also significant for another reason. The 1999 Decision did not foresee any formal monitoring by the Commission of the ECOC in 2007 and 2008, although a monitoring process was introduced by the 2006 Decision for the 2010 title onwards.[7] The four ECOC that are the subject of this evaluation were therefore not monitored to any significant degree outside of the formal procedures applied to the activities funded by the Commission, which, as we shall see, constituted only a small part of the activity carried out. The evaluation is therefore all the more important in that it fills a 'gap' in the Commission's knowledge of the four ECOC, including the four-year development phase, between the point of designation and the start of the title year. Furthermore, whilst the ECOC have all been evaluated to varying degrees through 'local' evaluations, they have not been assessed against a common set of evaluation criteria. This evaluation thus provides an opportunity to see for the first time through the lens of a common evaluation framework what the ECOC of 2007 and 2008 achieved.

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[4] The title has, in fact, been awarded 39 times up to and including the 2009 titles; Luxembourg has held it twice.

[5] European Cities and Capitals of Culture; Study Prepared for the European Commission; Palmer-Rae Associates; August 2004.

[6] Decision No 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019.

[7] Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019.

1.1 Structure of this report

This report responds to the requirements of the Terms of Reference for the study. As such, it presents the following:

- In **Section 2**, a brief description of the ECOC Action, the conceptual framework that guided the study, the evaluation questions that the research aimed to answer and the methodology followed;
- In **Sections 3 – 6**, the reports for Luxembourg and Greater Region, Sibiu, Liverpool, and Stavanger
- In **Section 7**, lessons in delivery from across the four ECOC
- In **Section 8**, overall conclusions and recommendations for the ECOC Action.

2.0 Evaluating European Capitals of Culture

2.1 The European Capitals of Culture Action

2.1.1 Origins of the Action

"Throughout its history, Europe has been the site of exceptionally prolific and varied artistic variety; whereas urban life has played a major role in the growth and influence of the European cultures".[8]

Since the earliest days of European integration, European policy has recognised the existence within Europe of both a "common cultural heritage" and a diversity of national and regional cultures. Indeed, under the terms of Article 151 of the 1957 Treaty Establishing the European Community[9], the EC has sought to bring that heritage to the fore and to respect such diversity, by encouraging co-operation between Member States and by taking cultural aspects into account in its other actions. Within that context, the special role that cities play in culture was recognised by a 1985 Resolution[10] that introduced the "European City of Culture" concept – a year-long event during which a city would operate a programme of events to highlight its contribution to the common cultural heritage and welcome people and performers from other Member States.

Since Athens 1985, the European City of Culture has had "a positive impact in terms of media resonance, the development of culture and tourism and the recognition by inhabitants of the importance of their city having been chosen".[11] In recognition of this success, a 1999 Decision of the Parliament and of the Council transformed the concept into the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) and sought to create a more predictable, consistent and transparent rotational system for the designation of the title. The 1999 Decision introduced an "order of entitlement", whereby each year one Member State would be entitled to nominate one or more cities to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions. The 1999 Decision also maintained the possibility for non-Member States to nominate candidates for the ECOC title. Those nominations (from both Member States and non-Member States) received each year were to be considered by a selection panel composed of seven leading independent experts in the cultural sector, which would then issue a report on the nomination or nominations judged against the objectives and characteristics of the ECOC Action. On the basis of this report, the Parliament would then issue an opinion to the Commission, which would then make a recommendation to the Council. The Council, acting on this recommendation would then officially designate the city (or cities) in question as European Capital of Culture for the year for which it was nominated.

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[8] 1999 Decision.
[9] Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and of the Treaty Establishing the European Community, C 321 E/1, 29.12.2006.
[10] European Commission (1985) Resolution of the Ministers Responsible for Cultural Affairs Concerning the Annual Event European City of Culture (7081/84).
[11] 1999 Decision.

Under the process introduced by the 1999 Decision, two cities were designated for 2007 (Luxembourg, LU and Sibiu, RO) and two for 2008 (Liverpool, UK and Stavanger, NO). Whilst a further Decision was made in 2006, this Decision specifically stated that the requirements of the 1999 Decision would apply in the case of these four ECOC (as well as those designated for 2009), the plans of which were in any case well advanced by then. Future ECOC will be designated, co-financed and monitored according to new processes set out in the 2006 Decision. For example, a call for submission of applications and a European selection panel will be organised for each Member State.

As well as being awarded the title, each ECOC could receive funding of up to €1.5m from the EU's Culture Programme for specific projects within their cultural programme. This funding was available for activities intended to "help implement activities stressing European visibility and trans-European cultural co-operation."[12] Such funding could constitute no more than 60% of the budget of the specific projects.

Since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, the Commission has reviewed the EU funding mechanism. As a result, the 2006 Decision introduced the "Melina Mercouri Prize": a prize of €1.5m to be awarded to designated cities before the start of the year, on the basis of the reports delivered by the monitoring panel. This prize will be awarded for the 2010 titles onwards.

2.1.2 Objectives of the Action

In approaching the evaluation, the starting point for this evaluation has therefore been the legal basis for the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) in the years 2007 and 2008. This is Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council. Amongst other things, the Decision sets out the overall objective of the Action (Article 1) and a set of objectives that each city must address (Article 3).

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[12] Decision No 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing the Culture Programme (2007 to 2013).

Article 1
'…to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens'

Article 3
The nomination shall include a cultural project of European dimension, based principally on cultural cooperation, in accordance with the objectives and action provided for by Article 151 of the Treaty. The submission shall specify how the nominated city intends: - to highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution   - to promote events involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States and leading to lasting cultural cooperation, and to foster their movement within the European Union   - to support and develop creative work, which is an essential element in any cultural policy   - to ensure the mobilisation and participation of large sections of the population and, as a consequence, the social impact of the action and its continuity beyond the year of the events   - to encourage the reception of citizens of the Union and the widest possible dissemination of the various events by employing all forms of multimedia   - to promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world and, in that spirit to optimise the opening up to, and understanding of others, which are fundamental cultural values to exploit the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city.

2.2   Conceptual framework

In developing our approach to the evaluation, we have taken as our starting point the DG Budget model that is the basis for all evaluations carried out at the present time for DG EAC and which is represented in Annex Two. Under this model, clear links are established between high-level global and intermediate objectives (generally reflecting wider policy goals) and specific and operational objectives at the level of the intervention itself. This 'hierarchy of objectives' is directly linked to the typology of effects used in EU evaluation theory, whereby:

- Operational objectives specify outputs directly produced/supplied through the implementation process;
- Specific objectives specify the short-term results that occur at the level of direct beneficiaries/recipients of assistance;
- Intermediate objectives specify short to medium-term effects (or intermediate impacts) on both direct and indirect beneficiaries/recipients of assistance; and
- Global objectives specify longer term and more diffuse effects (or global impacts).

In agreement with the Steering Group, it was necessary to apply this somewhat rigid model flexibly in the context of the ECOC in which an EU-level hierarchy of objectives was not fully developed and in which each ECOC was given considerable freedom to define their own objectives and implement their programme of activities. Our approach was thus to derive common sets of specific and operational objectives using the elements of Article 3 and a detailed examination of the objectives of the ECOC in question. Although each of the four ECOC had a different set of objectives, it was clear from an inspection of the objectives that they (not surprisingly) cover similar territory: differences between them are a question of emphasis within a more or less common set of objectives rather than fundamental differences, although this clearly results in a very different 'spin' placed on the ECOC and what it might achieve within the four very different contexts[13].

The intervention logic is shown in summary form in Figure 2.1 below. We identified three main specific objectives and nine operational ones, reflecting the breadth of actions taken by the ECOC. The diagram indicates the main logical connections between these objectives, and it should be noticed that each specific objective does not have a separate set of operational objectives through which they were designed to be achieved - there is overlap. In particular, we have indicated that the operational objective of implementing European-themed activities relates strongly to the specific objectives of both developing cultural activities and promoting the European dimension; and improving access to culture to both developing cultural activities and supporting social and economic development.

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[13] It should be stressed that we are seeing this very much from the point of view of carrying out an evaluation using a pre-set model (albeit applied flexibly) and a set of criteria that – as always – have to be laid over the subject matter of the evaluation. Clearly there is enormous variety across the ECOC whose complexity and multiple objectives and outcomes, some have argued, 'makes judgements of overall success and the merits of one city against another superficial and misleading' (Palmer/Rae Associates, 2004, p39). Clearly our task here is not to compare cities in this way, but it is to try to judge overall success in order that the accountability function can be fulfilled.

Figure 2.1 Generic ECOC Intervention Logic
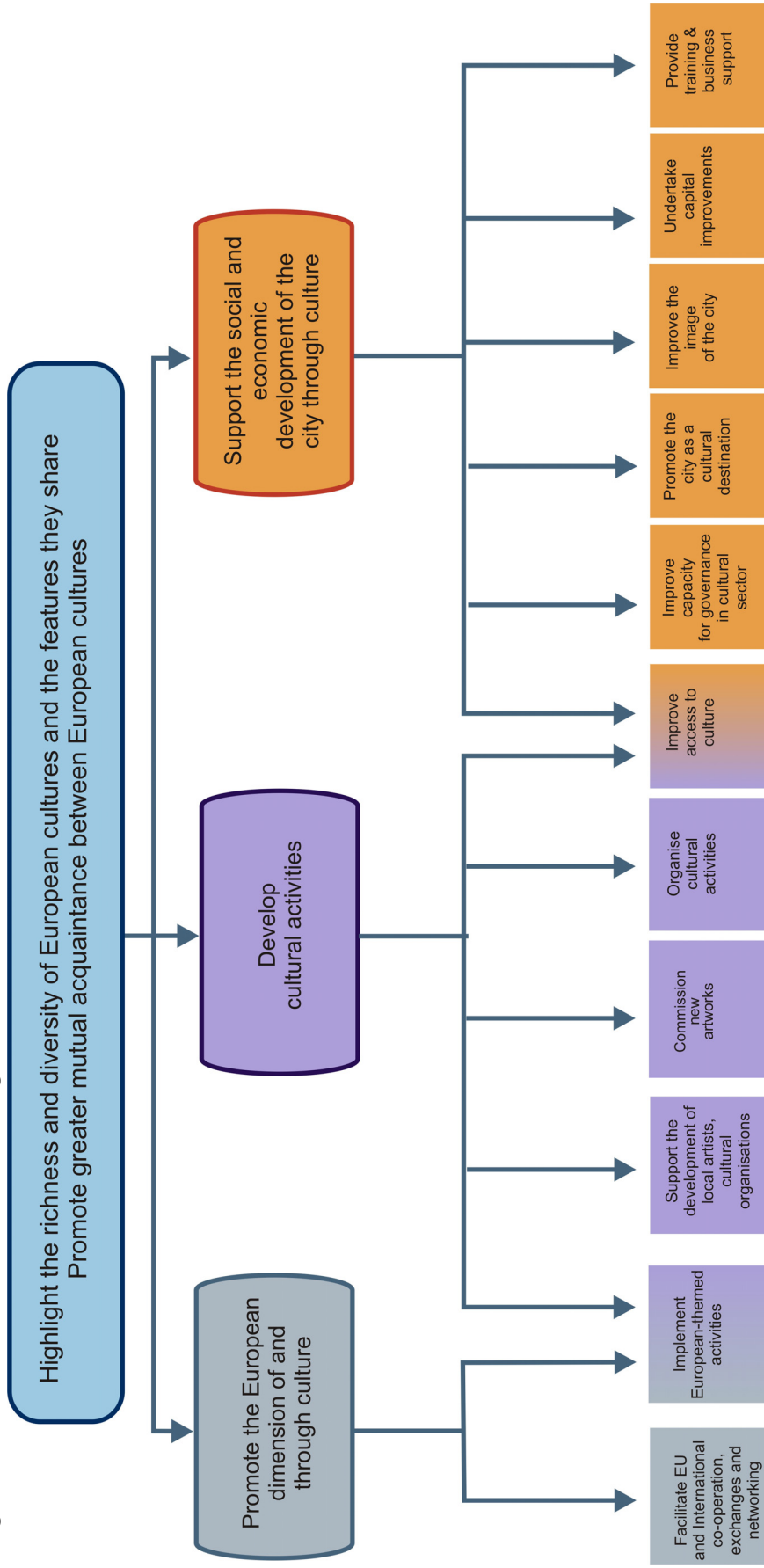
Having defined the objectives and set out the connections between them, the next task was to determine a logical set of intended effects that would have flowed from them. Table 2.2 provides this, identifying for each specific objective the relevant operational objectives and sets of corresponding outputs, results and impacts. It should be noted that for the purpose of this table we assigned an operational objective to only one specific objective, so it needs to be seen together with the intervention logic diagram. Similarly, the table also simplifies the linkages that would exist in reality between the operational objectives and their outputs, results and impacts; again, the table is schematic and shows the main links.

Table 2.1 Table of objectives and intended effects

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES	OUTPUTS	RESULTS	IMPACTS
Develop cultural activities	Support the development of local artists and cultural organisations	Individuals/organisations receiving support	Larger/stronger/ more skilled sector	International/national profile and importance of city's cultural sector
	Commission new artworks and encourage new forms of cultural expression	New artworks New forms of cultural expression	Ongoing process/trend for stimulating new artworks / forms of cultural expression	Recognised & ongoing contribution to artistic innovation
	Organise cultural events, activities and projects	Cultural events, activities and projects Individuals accessing events, activities and projects	Positive effects on participants	More cultural activity taking place on on-going basis / Step change in vibrancy of cultural scene
Promote the European dimension of and through culture	Implement activities with a specific European theme (diversity and commonalities)	Events with European themes	Effects on participants – more aware of European diversity and common cultural heritage	More cultural activities taking place with a European theme More European outlook of city residents
	Facilitate international exchanges and create international networking structures	Individuals and organisations on exchanges Transnational activities	Effects on participants – more likely to participate in exchanges in future	Sustainable platform for international cooperation established

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES	OUTPUTS	RESULTS	IMPACTS
Support the social and economic development of the city through culture	Improve access to culture	Events, activities and projects to widen participation and improve access to culture Individuals from target groups accessing activities, events and projects New approaches to participation Volunteering activities	Positive effects on participants More people from target groups accessing culture	Step change in cultural participation
	Improve the capacity for governance in the culture sector	Effective delivery mechanisms	Greater engagement with the cultural sector	Sustainable platform for cultural activities established
	Promote the city as a cultural destination nationally and internationally (especially in the EU)	Marketing campaigns to promote the city and its cultural programme to visitors and tourists (including those specifically stressing the European dimension) and activities to improve the visitor experience	Increase in visitors and tourism (from within country, EU and outside EU)	City recognised internationally (and especially in the EU) as a cultural destination
	Improve image of the city	Information/promotion activities focussed on improving image of the city (including city branding)	Residents' perceptions and media coverage more positive	Improved civic pride and image (internally and externally)
	Undertake capital improvements to cultural infrastructure	New and refurbished facilities	Increased physical capacity for cultural events	Improved cultural and tourist offering
	Provide training and business support in the cultural field	Individuals and businesses trained, supported	Stronger businesses, higher skills levels	Greater economic success of cultural sector

2.3   Evaluation Questions

Taking into account the intervention logic and the initial research, we developed a list of questions that the evaluation must consider, as shown in Table 2.2. This incorporated the questions from the Terms of Reference (ToR) as well as others that we believed were essential to the evaluation (shown in italics). The questions are grouped under the headings of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness in line with the ToR, although we have moved some questions from one heading to another where we believe this is most appropriate.

In considering the evaluation questions in the ToR and elaborating further ones, it was clear that some apply more to ECOC and others to the EU level. We have thus indicated for each question in Table 2.2 the level at which the conclusions drawn will mainly apply. Table 2.2 also indicates the main source of data for each question. As can be seen, this is most significant in relation to the EU level questions where conclusions were drawn from a mix of evidence drawn from the ECOC, from a "meta-evaluation" exercise (see Section 2.4 Methodology) which enabled us to draw generalised conclusions in some cases from across all four ECOC, and from additional research at EU level. An important consideration throughout has been that of *timing*; in answering questions at ECOC level, we have had to take into account potential changes in each ECOC's objectives between those set out in the application and those pursued in practice during the title year. Moreover, whilst the 1999 Decision forms the reference point for the ECOC under consideration, we have had to note a number of changes already introduced into the implementation of the ECOC Action by the 2006 Decision and applicable to the 2010 ECOC onwards.

Table 2.2 Evaluation questions (EQ)

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
Relevance					
EQ1	What was the main motivation behind the city bidding to become a European Capital of Culture?	ECOC	X		
EQ2	*What was the process of determining objectives?* Was there a process of consultation in each city to define aims and objectives?	ECOC	X		
EQ3	*What were the objectives of the city in being an ECOC? (refer to list in intervention logic) What was the relative importance of each objective?*	ECOC	X		
EQ4	Have any specific objectives of the cultural year been related to social impacts?	ECOC	X		
EQ5	In this connection, did the objectives of the year include reaching out to all sectors of society, including the excluded, disadvantaged, disabled people and minorities?	ECOC	X		

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
EQ6	To what extent have the specific themes/orientations of the cultural programme proved to be relevant to the objectives defined?	ECOC	X		
EQ7	*To what extent were the objectives consistent with the Decision and with the ECOC's own application? (special focus on the **European dimension**)*	ECOC	X		
EQ8	*To what extent were the activities consistent with the ECOC's own objectives, with the ECOC's application and with the Decision? (special focus on the **European dimension**)*	ECOC	X		
EQ9	How was the European dimension reflected by the themes put forward by the events and in terms of cooperation at European level? How did the Capitals of Culture seek to make the European dimension visible?	ECOC	X		
EQ10	As far as the conclusions made for the 4 cities allow it, to what extent have the general, specific and operational objectives of the Community Action for the European Capital of Culture have been proved relevant to Article 151 of the EC Treaty?	EU	X	X	X
EQ11	To what extent have the general, specific and operational objectives of the 2007 and 2008 European Capital of Culture events proved relevant to the Community Action for the European Capital of Culture?	EU	X	X	X
EQ12	As far as the conclusions made for the 4 cities allows it, to what extent has the European Capital of Culture action proved to be complementary to other Community initiatives in the field of culture?	EU	X	X	X

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
Efficiency					
EQ13	How have the organisational models of the formal governing Board and operational structures played a role in the European Capital of Culture? What role have the Board and operational structures played in the European Capital of Culture's implementation? At what stage were these structures established?	ECOC	X		
EQ14	Who chaired the Board and what was his/her experience? What were the key success and failure elements related to the work of the Board and operational structure used and personnel involved?	ECOC	X		
EQ15	Has an artistic director been included into the operational structure and how was he/she appointed? What were the key success and failure elements related to the work of the artistic director and personnel involved?	ECOC	X		
EQ16	*What was the process of designing the programme?*	ECOC	X		
EQ17	*How were activities selected and implemented?*	ECOC	X		
EQ18	*How did the delivery mechanism contribute to the achievement of outputs?*	ECOC	X		
EQ19	To what extent has the communication and promotion strategy been successful in/contributed to the promotion of city image/profile, promotion of Capital of Culture programme, awareness raising of the European dimension, promotion of all events and attractions in the city?	ECOC	X		
EQ20	To what extent has the communication and promotion strategy successfully reached the communication's target groups at local, regional, national, European and international levels?	ECOC	X		
EQ21	*What was the process of securing the financial inputs?*	ECOC	X		

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
EQ22	What was the total amount of resources used for each European Capital of Culture? What was the final financial out-turn of the year?	ECOC	X		
EQ23	What were the sources of financing and the respective importance of their contribution to the total?	ECOC	X		
EQ24	*To what extent were the inputs consistent with the Decision and with the application? (special focus on the **European** dimension)*	ECOC	X		
EQ25	What was the total expenditure strictly for the programme of events?	ECOC	X		
EQ26	What proportion of expenditure was used for infrastructure (cultural and tourism infrastructure, including renovation)?	ECOC	X		
EQ27	Was the total size of the budget sufficient for reaching a critical mass in terms of impacts? Could the same results have been achieved with less funding? Could the same results have been achieved if the structure of resources and their respective importance was different?	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ28	To what extent have the human resources deployed for preparation and implementation of the action been commensurate with its intended outputs and outcomes?	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ29	Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms have provided greater cost-effectiveness? As a result, could the total budget for the action be considered appropriate and proportional to what the action set out to achieve?	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ30	To what extent have the mechanisms applied by the Commission for selecting the European Capital of Culture and the subsequent implementation and monitoring mechanisms influenced the results of the action?	EU	X	X	X

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
Effectiveness					
EQ31	Provide typology of outputs, results and possible impacts of the action at different levels (European, national, regional etc.)	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ32	*How did the delivery mechanism improve management of culture in the city during the title year? (explore role of Board, Chair, Artistic Director, decision-making, political challenges, etc.)*	ECOC	X		
EQ33	What quantitative indicators (number of visitors, overnight stays, cultural participation of people, etc.) of the social and tourist impact of the event have been gathered by the ECOC?	ECOC	X		
EQ34	*To what extent did the ECOC achieve the outputs hoped for by the city and as set out in the application (refer to list in the intervention logic)?*	ECOC	X		
EQ35	To what extent have the events been successful in attaining the objectives set (general, specific and operational) and in achieving the intended results *as set out in the application or others (refer to list in the intervention logic)?*	ECOC	X		
EQ36	*To what extent have the ECOC been successful in achieving the intended impacts as set out in the application or others (refer to list in the intervention logic)?*	ECOC	X		
EQ37	To what extent have specific objectives related to social impacts been met?	ECOC	X		
EQ38	To what extent were the objectives related to reaching out to all sectors of society, including the excluded, disadvantaged, disabled and minorities, met?	ECOC	X		
EQ39	What were the most significant economic outcomes of the Capital of Culture experience?	ECOC	X		
EQ40	What have been the impacts of the event on regional development?	ECOC	X		
EQ41	Can impacts on tourism be	ECOC	X		

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
	identified? What was the total number of visitors (from abroad and from the country) to the Capital: before the cultural year during the cultural year, after the cultural year?				
EQ42	Are there any instances where the events have exceeded initial expectations? What positive effects has this had?	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ43	Where expectations have not been met, what factors have hindered the development of the action?	ECOC EU	X	X	X
EQ44	To what extent has the implementation of the action contributed to the achievement of the objectives of Article 151 of the EC Treaty?	EU		X	X
EQ45	As far as the conclusions made for the 4 cities allow, what is the Community added value of the European Capital of Culture?	EU		X	X
EQ46	*What lessons can be learnt in terms of how to deliver ECOC effectively which might have wider applicability to future ECOC?*	EU	X	X	
Sustainability					
EQ47	Which of the current activities or elements of the action are likely to continue and in which form after the Community support is withdrawn?	ECOC	X		
EQ48	Has any provision been made to continue and follow up the cultural programme of the year after the closure?	ECOC	X		
EQ49	*How will the city continue to manage its long-term cultural development following the title year?*	ECOC	X		
EQ50	*What will be the role of the operational structure after the end of the European Capital of Culture year and how will the organisational structure change?*	ECOC	X		

	Evaluation Question	Level	Data sources		
			ECOC	Meta-level evaluation	EU-level research
EQ51	*What has been the contribution of the ECOC to improved management of cultural development in the city? (in the long-term)*	ECOC	X		
EQ52	What are the likely impacts of the action on the long term cultural development of the city?	ECOC	X		
EQ53	What are the likely impacts of the action on the long term social development of the city?	ECOC	X		
EQ54	What are the likely impacts of the action on the long term urban development of the city?	ECOC	X		
EQ55	*What lessons have been learnt from the ECOC in terms of achieving sustainable effects that might be of general applicability to future ECOC?*	EU	X	X	

2.4 Methodology

The evaluation methodology was developed in light of our assertion that the evaluation should primarily consider each of the four cities *discretely and in their own particular context* in the first instance, before going on to draw generalised conclusions (illustrated by reference to the cities) and that the evaluation will contribute to the debate about the new Decision which will take place over the next five years.

2.4.1 Data sources

Data was gathered at two levels: a small amount of data at EU-level; and more extensive data from the ECOC themselves. The key sources were as follows:

- *Background literature at European level*; this included key EU policy and legislative documents relating to ECOC, which were essential in determining the evaluation questions and the criteria against which to evaluate the ECOC; the reports of the selection panels; previous research into ECOC at European level, most notably, the Palmer/Rae Associates study produced in 2004 on behalf of the European Commission to 'document', 'make observations' and 'offer a factual analysis' of the 1995-2004 ECOC; academic literature relating to ECOC and the role of culture in cities more generally.
- *Background literature at ECOC-level;* this included the original applications, studies and reports commissioned by the ECOC, events programmes, promotional materials and websites; of particular significance were the reports of evaluations commissioned by the ECOC themselves; these reports were treated as a key data source and provided evidence to 'populate' our own evaluation model the reports were especially helpful with regard to basic data on outputs and results, as well as on the views of visitors and residents, which we were not able to gather as primary data within the scope of this evaluation:

► In the case of Luxembourg, an extensive final evaluation report was completed by an independent evaluator in June 2008; the evaluation was based on longitudinal data collected before, during and after the title year through a survey of residents, focus groups with stakeholders, questionnaires to project organisers and web forums;[14]

► Sibiu produced both a final report of the co-ordination team[15] and also a report of the findings of a survey of visitors to the city; [16]

► Liverpool City Council commissioned one of the most comprehensive evaluations of an ECOC to date – the Impacts 08 programme;[17] undertaken by a partnership between University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, Impacts 08 evaluated the social, cultural, economic and environmental effects of the Liverpool ECOC; importantly, Impacts 08 operated from the pre-bid period (2000) until the legacy years (2009 and beyond); it considered both quantitative impacts, for example in terms of job creation, as well as qualitative impacts such as changes in perception and self-confidence; the evaluation has also considered processes (such as approaches to participation) in addition to outcomes; the final evaluation report is not to be published until 2010, although other 'interim' reports with various data of a more contextual nature were available;

► The International Research Institute of Stavanger together with the University of Stavanger published a report into the attitudes of local residents towards culture in general, and their perception of Stavanger's ECOC; the main report was based on large-scale telephone and postal surveys carried out in 2007 and 2009;[18] the full results of this research were not yet available, although some data and tentative findings were available.

- *ECOC quantitative data*: in all four cases, data relating to number and type of cultural events, income and expenditure, visitor numbers and profile, etc. was recovered from either the ECOC's own evaluation reports, the ECOC co-ordination teams and/or their evaluators; all the ECOC had undertaken their own surveys of audiences and/or residents, which provided valuable evidence; all data was captured in an Information Template for each ECOC, which enabled us to move on to exploring underlying reasons for success/failure and key success factors.

- *Interviews of managing teams*; in Luxembourg and Sibiu, although the delivery agencies had all ceased operations, many of the key individuals were still active in the governance of culture in their cities and were therefore accessible; in Liverpool and Stavanger, the delivery agencies were still in operation at the time of the evaluation and we were able to interview the key individuals whilst still in post; in most cases, the individuals involved, once identified and contacted, proved co-operative indeed were keen to share openly their experiences of planning and implementing the cultural programmes.

- *Survey of key stakeholders*; given that each ECOC had undertaken very professional and extensive marketing and publicity, one challenge was to "get beneath" the positive marketing message given out; interviews with key stakeholders were essential in that respect; they offered an alternative and in-depth perspective on the ECOC; they allowed us to explore particular issues in more depth, for

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[14] Luxembourg and Greater Region, European Capital of Culture 2007 Final Report; June 2008.

[15] Nistor, S. (2008): Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007, Ianuarie 2005 - Decembrie 2007, Raport Sinteză.

[16] Richards, G. and Rotariu, I. (2007), Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007 Evaluation Report, ATLAS, Arnhem.

[17] www.impacts08.net

[18] Berg, C. and Rommetvedt (2009), *Stavanger as European Capital of Culture, 2008: the Citizens' views*; International Research Institute of Stavanger; preliminary presentation of research results, 9 June 2009.

example, relating to the effectiveness of the governance structure, or the strength of artistic direction; key interviewees included municipalities, chambers of commerce, tourist offices, national ministries, cultural operators and community arts organisations.

2.4.2 Key research tasks

Drawing on these sources of data, the research involved the following key stages:

- Inception and background research, including the refinement of the conceptual framework and methodology, as well as the review of policy documents and academic literature;
- Desk research on each of the four European Capitals of Culture; the purpose here was to gather basic factual information about the activity undertaken, in order for the research team to become familiar with the cultural programme in each city but also to serve as a source of evidence to inform the later analysis and underpin any conclusions.
- Fieldwork in each of the four cities; this stage of the evaluation took the form of telephone interviews, a survey of city stakeholders and visits to each city. Interview questions focused less on *what* activities took place (this information had been gathered by the desk research) and more on the *results and impact* of that activity, in the view of the stakeholders. In short, the interviews aimed to answer key questions related to the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of each city's programme.
- Analysis and final reporting, including a comparative review and meta-evaluation, which considered the conclusions emerging from all four ECOC, compared and contrasted approaches, and verified the quality of our own research.

Having followed this methodology, we now present the findings of the research in the form of a discrete report for each ECOC, lessons in delivery from across the four ECOC, and final conclusions and recommendations.

Luxembourg

3.0 Luxembourg and Greater Region

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The city and the Greater Region

Founded in 963 and becoming a Grand Duchy in 1815, Luxembourg lies on the cultural divide between Romance Europe and Germanic Europe, borrowing customs from each of the distinct traditions and having three official languages – French, German and Luxembourgish. It is dominated by the city of Luxembourg, which hosts a number of EU institutions as well as international businesses, particularly banks. Luxembourg's population of 480,000[19] enjoys one of the highest incomes per capita in the world[20] and provides employment for 140,000 workers from Belgium, France and Germany that cross the border each day for work; indeed, some 44% of all jobs in the Grand Duchy are held by cross-border workers[21]. As well as the daily commuters, many other expatriate workers depart Luxembourg at the weekends. There are also a number of well-established foreign communities, notably Portuguese and Italian, as well as more recent arrivals from ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Indeed, some 42% of the population was of foreign nationality in 2007.[22]

Luxembourg forms one of the constituent parts of the Grande Région (GR), a broader territory also encompassing Wallonia in Belgium, Lorraine in France, and Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland in Germany and home to ten million people. Since the early 1970s, the GR has been a mechanism for political co-operation amongst neighbouring territories sharing common economic interests – initially the decline in employment in the coal and steel industries and later the dominance of Luxembourg as a centre for employment.

3.1.2 Cultural sector

Luxembourg is unique in being the only city to have hosted the ECOC title twice, the first occasion being 1995. The view of the majority of interviewees was that, prior to 1995, the city of Luxembourg enjoyed a limited range of cultural facilities and provision, which primarily served a fairly narrow segment of the population and young emerging artists would typically go abroad to study. However, 1995 stimulated a significant expansion in Luxembourg's cultural sector. Over the period 1995-2007, some €568m was invested in the renovation or construction of cultural infrastructure. For example, several significant new facilities were opened, including the Casino, Forum d'Art Contemporain (1996), Centre national et sportif (2002), Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-duc Jean (2005), Centre national de l'Audiovisuel (2005), Philharmonie Grande-duchesse Joséphine-Charlotte (2005), Centre de Musique Amplifiées (Rockhal) (2005), Archives nationales (2007) and Centre national de culture industrielle (2007). Over the period 1990-2005, the budget of the Ministry of Culture[23] rose from €12.8m to €89.8m, increasing from 0.55% to 1.28% of the state budget.[24]

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[19] Statistiques de Luxembourg, 2007; www.statistiques.public.lu.
[20] Third, after Liechtenstein and Qatar; CIA World Factbook, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook.
[21] Inspection Générale de la Sécurité Sociale, 31.12.07; www.mss.public.lu/acteurs/igss/index.html.
[22] Statistiques de Luxembourg.
[23] Ministère de la Culture, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche.
[24] Ministère de la Culture, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche.

Luxembourg's cultural offering had thus been significantly expanded over that period. The view of many of the cultural stakeholders, however, was that the civic and cultural life of Luxembourg did not adequately reflect the composition of its workforce and population, at least until 2007. The feeling that was more could be done for non-nationals (whether commuters, expatriate workers, long-established communities or new arrivals) to be served by and involved in the mainstream cultural, social and political life of the city and Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. There was, it was believed, a need for a different cultural offering that would serve, reflect and reveal the "hidden" Luxembourg of these non-nationals, as well as young people in general.

Given the strong economic links between Luxembourg and its neighbouring regions, there was also a perceived need for greater cross-border cultural development that reflected and took advantage of these economic realities. Whilst a working group on culture had already operated within the context of the Grande Région for many years before 2007, the application highlighted the need for the GR's cultural actors to know each other better.[25]

3.2   Cultural programme

3.2.1 Aims and objectives

Given that it had held the ECOC title just 12 years previously, Luxembourg attempted to undertake something different to the programme of 1995. At the initiative of the Prime Minister, Jean-Claude Juncker, it was agreed at the GR summit at Liege in 2000 that the ECOC would be extended beyond Luxembourg's borders to encompass the entire GR. The main motivation (**EQ1)** here was to implement a cross-border cultural programme covering territories in four countries, which would help forge the image of a genuine "Greater Luxembourg Region". As such, it was hoped that through cross-border cooperation the ECOC would help reinforce the GR as a political entity. The overall aim was, then, to enhance "cultural co-operation" within the overall theme of "a European experiment". This broad aim was to be taken forward through eight objectives, five regional themes[26] (one for each territory) and eleven key topics.

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[25] Luxembourg and the Greater Luxembourg Region, European Capital of Culture 2007, Application Proposal "LUXplus2007" 16 February 2004, p.2.

[26] Luxembourg's ECOC application refers to "regional themes" although Luxembourg is, of course, a state not a region. In order to be consistent with the application, we apply the same terminology throughout this report.

Table 3.1 Objectives, Regional themes and Key topics of Luxembourg GR

Initial Objectives	Regional themes	Key topics
Ensure that the cultural year is in compliance with EU rules Put the Greater Luxembourg Region on the map Undertake a European experiment Be a trial year for sustainable cultural development beyond 2007 Deal with each region's chosen themes in a comprehensive and innovative way Link past, present and future Find a balance between the event-focussed work and long-term work in a network Showcase creations and productions "typical" of the Greater Luxembourg Region	Migration (Luxembourg) Industrial culture and heritage (Saarland) Great European personalities (Rhineland-Palatinate) Culture and memory (Lorraine) Expressions of modernity (French-speaking community of Wallonia and Brussels and the German-speaking community of Belgium)	Roots – historical, industrial and natural heritage Borders – natural, political, social and human obstacles Arriving-leaving – migration and historical exchanges, present and future Getting to know each other – confluence of citizens and institutions Creating together – the people of the region working together Communicating – inter-regional concourses Men and women – famous people of the region Learning – training, research and imagination New horizons – towards long-lasting convergence Europe and the world – the heart of Europe and the world at its heart Living and celebrating together – events and a convivial atmosphere

Source: Luxembourg and the Greater Luxembourg Region, European Capital of Culture 2007, Application Proposal "LUXplus2007" 16 February 2004

3.2.2 Changes to objectives, regional themes and key topics

In terms of the objectives (**EQ3**) of the ECOC, during the development phase (i.e. 2004-06) some significant changes were made to those proposed in the application. Luxembourg GR's final report features a revised list of overall objectives, as well as a specific set of objectives for cross-border collaboration.

The objectives that remained the most pertinent both during the year and in the years since were "putting the Greater Luxembourg Region on the map", "undertaking a European experiment" and "being a trial year for sustainable cultural development"; their importance is reflected in the fact that the final report expands them into a longer list of specific objectives relating to cross-border collaboration.

The objective of "showcasing creations and productions typical of the Greater Luxembourg Region" appears to have been retained, at least in Luxembourg itself, and to have been refined to focus more on presenting the more contemporary, innovative and avant-garde dimension of culture in the GR, rather than culture more generally. The focus within this objective on fostering "exchange between creative people in the GR and Europe and the wider world" was, in practice, strengthened as reflected by the inclusion of two explicit objectives listed in the final report.

The objective of "ensuring that the cultural year is in compliance with EU rules (including projects with a European dimension and large-scale events representing cutting-edge creativity at European level) was retained in essence, but translated into the objectives of "developing projects with a European dimension" and "presenting an original and innovative European culture". However, most interviewees agreed that the eventual objectives and ethos of the ECOC did not primarily relate to large-scale events, although some did take place.

Two objectives do not feature in the list of objectives in the final report and did not feature prominently beyond the point of designation: "dealing with each region's chosen themes in a comprehensive and innovative way" and "linking past, present and future". These objectives were not extensively pursued for the reasons set out in the application, i.e. too many themes would have been too hard to communicate and different themes for different territories would have actually forced the territories apart rather than bring them together. The objective of "finding a balance between the event-focused work and long-term work in a network" does not feature in the list of objectives in the final report, but evidence from the interviews suggests that it retained some importance; for example, plans were made during 2007 to sustain the ECOC's legacy through the creation of two new governance structures.

Table 3.2 below compares the objectives pursued during the title year against those proposed in the original application, as listed in the final report. The list of objectives in the final report has been re-ordered, in order to allow such a comparison to be made.

Table 3.2 Objectives of Luxembourg GR

Objectives proposed in the original application	Objectives listed in the final report (2007)
Ensure that the cultural year is in compliance with EU rules (including projects with a European dimension and large-scale events representing cutting-edge creativity at European level)	Develop projects with a European dimension Present an original and innovative European culture
Put the Greater Luxembourg Region on the map Undertake a European experiment Be a trial year for sustainable cultural development beyond 2007	Objectives relating to cross-border collaboration: implement and develop sustainable cross-border projects; support the creation and development of networks in the Greater Region; encourage exchanges and create solid links between the cultural actors of the different regions; reinforce cross-border collaboration between all the actors in the cultural field; encourage mobility across the Greater Region put the Greater Region on the European map; promote the Greater Region as tourist destination through culture improve the cultural image of the Greater Region in terms of European public opinion and internationally
Deal with each region's chosen themes in a comprehensive and innovative way Link past, present and future	
Find a balance between the event-focused work and long-term work in a network	
Showcase creations and productions typical of the Greater Luxembourg Region (including exchange between creative people in the GR and Europe and the wider world)	Present the creative and artistic potential of the region, and particularly the avant-garde aspects of local/European creativity Project a more contemporary image of the region to attract young people and young audiences Welcome numerous European and international cultural actors Place the enlargement of the EU in perspective through new relations between the Greater Region and Sibiu, as well as other European countries

Sources: Luxembourg and the Greater Luxembourg Region, European Capital of Culture 2007, Application Proposal "LUXplus2007" 16 February 2004; Luxembourg and Greater Region: European Capital of Culture 2007: Final Report, June 2008.

As with the objectives, the relative importance of each of the five regional themes in the eventual cultural programme was very different to that proposed in the application. The themes had been chosen by the representatives of each territory at an early stage, i.e. between 2001 and 2002 and the intention had been, according to one interviewee, to give each citizen a "menu" of themes, at least one or two of which they would identify with and which would reflect the diversity of the GR. However, as stated in the application, this approach risked "fragmenting the cultural year into themes and separate entities and could reduce consistency from a marketing point of view".

In practice, the five regional themes did influence the eventual programme, but to varying extents. The theme of migration remained relevant to Luxembourg and to parts of the ECOC programme across the rest of the GR. Some of the events in Rhineland-Palatinate did relate to "Great European Personalities", such as those relating to Constantine, Johann Anton Zinnen and Robert Schuman. The theme of "industrial heritage" featured in some events in Saarland and also in Luxembourg (e.g. through the use of former industrial sites as artistic venues). In Wallonia (where the theme was "expressions of modernity") and Lorraine ("culture and memory"), no particular emphasis was put on the regional themes; in the case of Lorraine, the first criterion for selecting projects was the cross-border dimension rather than relevance to the regional theme. Although one interviewee regretted the weakened focus on the themes, the majority of interviewees agreed that it had been right to weaken the focus, for the reasons set out in the application and as we have already noted above, i.e. too many themes would have been too hard to communicate; and different themes for different territories would have actually forced the territories apart rather than bring them together.

The importance of the key topics was also reduced during the ECOC's development phase. This reduction was consistent with the view of the selection panel, which was that eleven key topics could prove to be confusing[27] and, in practice, projects were not actually grouped under these topics as had been anticipated. (Given the lack of a single common fund to cover the GR as a whole, projects were in fact grouped by territory.) Indeed, whilst some traces of the topics can be seen in the eventual cultural programme, the topics became less prominent after the point of designation.

Eventually, as reported by interviewees and by the final report, two main themes emerged, which were "crossing borders" and "daring the unexpected". In the views of those involved in co-ordinating the ECOC, this narrower focus facilitated more coherence and collaboration within the ECOC.

In summary, then, Luxembourg GR's eventual objectives (as pursued during the title year) featured some significant changes to those proposed in the application. As noted above, the focus on the regional themes was weakened, which in turn also reduced the focus given to "linking past, present and future". The objectives relating to undertaking a European experiment and undertaking a trial year for sustainable cultural development remained perhaps the most important (although given less prominence in the list of objectives featured in the final report), both during the year and in the years since.

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[27] Report on the Nominations from Luxembourg and Romania for the European Capital of Culture 2007, Issued by the Selection Panel for the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2007; April 2004.

The objective of showcasing creations and productions typical of the Greater Luxembourg Region also appears to have remained its importance, at least in Luxembourg itself, and been refined to focus more on presenting the more contemporary, innovative and avant-garde dimension of culture in the GR, rather than culture more generally.

Overall, it can be said that, despite the changes, the new set of objectives respected much of the *spirit* of the application, if not the detail – though with a significant weakening of the focus on the (artistic) regional themes. **(EQ7)**

3.2.3 Activity

Overall, the 2007 ECOC comprised two main dimensions. It was intended that, together, these would reflect two dimensions of contemporary life in Luxembourg – i) the young, changing, diverse and "hidden" population of Luxembourg; ii) the everyday reality of crossing borders within the GR. These dimensions were reflected in two main types of activities:

- cultural activities focussed on Luxembourg which featured more than half of all projects within the cultural programme; these aimed to be innovative and avant-garde and present a more contemporary image of the region to attract young people and young audiences; key elements of this programme included former industrial premises converted into cultural facilities, notably, the two Rotundas adjacent to Luxembourg central station, Espace Paul Wurth in Hollerich and Halle des Soufflantes in Esch/Belval.
- cross-border activities in the form of 139 projects that operated in two or more territories of the GR and comprising about a quarter of all projects within the cultural programme; there was little, if any, common artistic focus to this cross-border programme, since the projects were selected within different regions featuring different themes (which themselves were not consistently applied) and often selected more for their cross-border character rather than for their relevance to a particular artistic theme.

Of course, these were not the only dimensions to the cultural programme; other activity took place, including many projects in the French or German regions, including the best-attended event – the Constantine exhibition in Trier. Co-operation with Sibiu, which shared the 2007 title, was also a significant element of the programme. Moreover, the different dimensions of the cultural programme did interact with each other; for example, in some cases, transport was laid on to encourage residents of one territory to attend cultural events in another.

Across the ECOC, the principle of territoriality was applied in the selection and financing of projects; each regional co-ordination (the General Co-ordination in the case of Luxembourg) was responsible for selecting and financing its own cultural programme. This meant that, in practice, five cultural programmes were in fact implemented – one for each territory – but each featuring a number of cross-border projects. In total, some 584 projects were operated within the cultural programmes. Of these, more than half (352) operated solely in Luxembourg and 93 solely in one of the French or German regions, with none operating solely in Wallonia. As noted, some 139 were cross-border in nature. Around two-thirds of projects in the original application were implemented and many new projects were added.

Lead region	Cross-border projects	Other projects	Total
Luxembourg	37	352	389
Lorraine[28]	22	28	50
Rhineland-Palatinate	25	31	56
Saarland	37	34	71
Wallonia	18	0	18
Total	139	445	584

Source: Luxembourg and Greater Region: European Capital of Culture 2007: Final Report, June 2008.

3.2.4 Financing (EQ23, EQ24, EQ25)

The original application set an indicative budget of €56m for the cultural programme (including co-ordination, marketing and communications, and events). Of this, half was intended to be expended in Luxembourg and half in the other territories, €7.5m in each region.

In practice, total expenditure amounted to just over €57m, although this was mainly focussed on Luxembourg - €45m, against €12.36m on the other territories.[29] Actual funding provided by the government of Luxembourg (approximately €30m) and the City of Luxembourg (approximately €10m) exceeded the commitments in the application (€10m and €7m respectively). But average expenditure in each of the other regions was far less than the figure of €7.5m per region that was described as "realistic" in the application. The reasons suggested by interviewees for the lower level of funding in these regions included the fact that decisions on the funding of cultural policy were often taken somewhat remotely, e.g. in Mainz, Brussels or Paris, as well as the difficulties in securing corporate sponsorship.

Indeed, corporate sponsorship was less than the 20% hoped for at the outset, constituting, for example, less than 8% of the €45m spent in Luxembourg.[30] Reasons offered by interviewees for the lower than expected corporate sponsorship included the difficulty of getting companies to sponsor activities across four countries, a perceived lack of coherence of the GR concept, a perceived lack of attractiveness of the cultural programme to international audiences and media, and the fact that the ECOC was, for some, "old news" in Luxembourg which had held the title before. Moreover in Lorraine, the policy of the Conseil Régional was to not seek corporate sponsorship of culture, that authority being under socialist leadership. **(EQ21)**

Luxembourg GR received €1.375m of EU funding for its cultural programme, representing just over 2% of total funding. The funding was specifically used to co-finance activities taking place at the Rotundas in the city of Luxembourg, which featured a wide variety of different art forms.

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[28] According to other data provided to ECOTEC, an even higher proportion of projects initiated in Lorraine were cross-border, i.e. 70%.
[29] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.73.
[30] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.73.

Of the overall budget, 44% was spent on cultural projects proposed by cultural operators, 27% on cultural projects initiated by the delivery agency itself, 16% on marketing and communications, 11% on co-ordination and administration and 2% on publications. **(EQ25)**

3.3   Relevance

Having described the ECOC and its cultural programme, we can consider the relevance of its objectives and activities in relation to the three specific objectives of the ECOC Action, as set out in the intervention logic for this evaluation.[31]

First, the objectives and activities of Luxembourg GR's ECOC were very relevant to the EU-level objective of "*promoting the European dimension of and through culture*" and, through that, also to the aim of the 1999 and 2006 Decisions to "promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens" and the aim of the Treaty to "encourage co-operation between Member States". Indeed, we have already noted that the most pertinent objectives were those of "putting the Greater Luxembourg region on the map", "undertaking a European experiment" and "being a trial year for sustainable cultural development". As one interviewee noted, "gaining commitment to the European Dimension is not really a problem in the GR since everything is European here". In practice, the activities of the cultural programme were also highly relevant to these objectives; for example, some 139 projects were cross-border in nature and 48 were joint projects with Sibiu and many of these projects demonstrated a European theme; in addition, a dedicated cross-border delivery agency and logo were created (see "Cross-border governance" below).

Second, the objectives and activities of Luxembourg GR's ECOC demonstrated relevance to the EU-level objective of "*developing cultural activities*". The objectives of "developing projects with a European dimension" and of "presenting an original and innovative European culture" were relevant to that objective and thus to the objectives of the 1999 Decision to "highlight richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share" and to "support and develop creative work". Indeed, a key feature of the cultural programme was the activity that highlighted the diversity of the different territories of the GR, as well as other cultures, such as Roma. Whilst the cultural programme featured many innovative and original projects and a large number of projects that, *individually*, highlighted the common aspects of European culture, its overall relevance to the objective of "presenting *an* original and innovative European culture" was limited by the lack of overall artistic direction (see "Governance" below") and the weak focus on the (artistic) regional themes.

Third, the objectives and activities of Luxembourg GR's ECOC demonstrated some relevance to the EU-level objective of *"supporting the social and economic development of the city through culture"*. The relevance of the ECOC to this EU-level objective lay primarily in the ECOC's objectives relating to the presentation and image of the GR, i.e. "improving the cultural image of the GR", "projecting a more contemporary image of the region to attract young people and young audiences" and "presenting the creative and artistic potential of the region". The activity of the cultural programme, particularly in Luxembourg, was very relevant to these objectives through its selection of contemporary and avant-garde projects, new use of industrial premises and its youth programme. It was also relevant to the perceived shortage of cultural events for young people in Luxembourg.

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[31] The intervention logic is itself based on the objectives of the 1999 and 2006 Decisions and of Article 151 of the Treaty.

Economic development objectives did not feature prominently in the ECOC and activity thus demonstrated limited relevance in that respect, other than through the conversion of industrial premises into cultural venues.

3.4 Efficiency

3.4.1 Governance (EQ14b)

Two non-profit associations were created under Luxembourg law to implement the 2007 ECOC – "Luxembourg and Greater Region, European Capital of Culture 2007" and "Luxembourg and Greater Region, European Capital of Culture 2007, Cross-border structure". The first featured a board comprising representatives from Luxembourg, whilst the second featured a board comprising representatives from across the GR. Activity was co-ordinated by the General Co-ordination office in Luxembourg and Regional Co-ordination offices in the other territories.

Across the ECOC, the principle of territoriality was applied in the selection and financing of projects; whilst applications were received centrally via a website and judged against a common set of criteria, each regional co-ordination (the General Co-ordination in the case of Luxembourg) was responsible for selecting and financing its own cultural programme. The programme for each territory was then proposed to the monthly meetings of Regional Co-ordinators.

To a certain extent, the principle of territoriality reduced the potential for conflict between partners; since there was no common fund and each territory funded its own activities, there was little to contest between the different Regional Co-ordination offices. Indeed, one interviewee reported that the programme for each territory was typically approved without contention. However, as noted above, this devolved approach, whilst being "democratic", made it difficult for order to be "imposed on this complex cultural landscape, with resulting problems of clarity and communication".[32] Moreover, a small number of interviewees also stated (without prompting) that the devolved co-ordination had been a factor that weakened the artistic direction of the ECOC, for example, by removing the requirement for selected projects to focus on one or more of the regional themes.[33]

As noted in the application, the role of the General Co-ordinator was not intended to be "that of a traditional artistic director, but rather of a managing director of a multitude of projects". This was, in practice, the role fulfilled by the General Co-ordinator and there is consensus that this role was fulfilled efficiently. However, the General Co-ordinator was increasingly called on to provide artistic support to projects and did eventually go beyond merely soliciting applications and began to commission activities, for example relating to the theme of migration. **(EQ15b)**

There is consensus amongst those interviewed that the co-ordination of the ECOC was efficient and professional; some mentioned that lessons had been learnt from the experience of 1995. The application of objective criteria, support offered to small/new cultural operators during the application process, clear contracting procedures and the requirement to provide monitoring and reporting information represented something of an innovation within Luxembourg.

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[32] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.106.
[33] No interviewees disputed this assertion.

3.4.2 Communication (EQ19, EQ20)

The ECOC's communications and marketing activity attempted to target two different audiences in different ways: firstly, the "hard-core" of committed highbrow cultural audiences, representing about 5-10% of the population; secondly, the larger audiences for popular or mainstream events, such as open-air festivals. Activity included an internet site, press and media campaigns, publications and posters. A logo – the Blue Stag – was specifically developed for the ECOC, following a competition. A decentralised approach was taken, in line with the broader management of the ECOC, with much of the responsibilities devolved to the regional co-ordination offices and to project organisers themselves.

However, the final report relates a number of difficulties in marketing the ECOC, most notably insufficient resources to cover the whole of the GR (for example, there was no press or marketing officer for Lorraine) and to undertake extensive international marketing, a lack of experience on the part of some project organisers, tensions between the marketing of the ECOC in general and the marketing of specific events, the large number of labelled events (which, according to the Final Report, created "information overload" and made it hard for audiences to "read" the programme[34]) and problems with the website.

These problems notwithstanding, the communications and marketing activity helped the ECOC to achieve a high level of awareness amongst residents of Luxembourg. By the end of 2007, 95% of the population were aware of the ECOC and 80% were aware that it covered the GR, the latter suggesting a deeper level of awareness than merely what we might term a 'passing acquaintance'.[35] The ECOC website received some 2.3m "hits" from 270,000 unique visitors, including 20% of the population of Luxembourg.[36] 54% of those attending events said it was always clear or clear most of the time that the event was part of the ECOC programme and awareness of the Blue Stag logo was high amongst residents of Luxembourg.

Overall then, the ECOC created a high level of awareness across the GR, including amongst target groups (such as young people and the Portuguese community) and attracted a large number of audiences to events. There is also evidence that it achieved these results efficiently, since it achieved a higher ratio of visitor numbers to marketing expenditure than other comparable events including the 1995 ECOC .[37] Whilst there could have been significant improvements in some areas and lessons were learnt during the year, it is unlikely that a much more effective approach could have been taken without a substantial increase in the budget or in a restructuring of the entire ECOC. As it was, the ECOC committed a level of financial resources (€7.5m) and staff (12 individuals) to communications and marketing activity that was close to the mid-point for ECOC.[38] With hindsight, the ECOC probably required significantly more resources for communications and marketing than other ECOC, given its complexity and its focus on a territory covering four countries and home to 10m people.

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[34] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.105.
[35] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.59.
[36] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.60.
[37] In constant price terms; Final Report, p.106.
[38] Expenditure on communications and promotions by the ECOC for 1995-2004 ranged from €1m-€14m and the number of staff from 1-40; Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).

3.4.3 Cross-Border Governance

The cross-border governance structure represented a substantial innovation for the ECOC Action and something of a "step-change" in collaboration for the GR. Whilst the decisions about the selection of projects and the allocation of funding were ultimately made *within* each territory (albeit endorsed by the meetings of Regional Co-ordinators), the Regional Co-ordinators and the Cross-border Co-ordinator appointed by Luxembourg supported projects in applying for support from the different national/regional administrations and in linking with cultural operators from other territories in the GR. Despite the complexity of operating across territories in four different countries, there is a degree of consensus amongst stakeholders that the cross-border governance was efficient. This efficiency is perhaps reflected in the fact that far more projects (139) than expected were implemented.

A key factor here, as mentioned by interviewees, was the willingness of the public authorities to earmark funding for cross-border projects, e.g. €2m in Luxembourg and €4m overall. In the case of Lorraine, a decision was made at the outset to prioritise the cross-border dimension above all other criteria – even at the expense of reducing the emphasis on the regional theme for Lorraine. Despite this funding, the demand from cross-border projects far exceeded the resources available. Indeed, the demand might have been even higher had there been a single common fund for cross-border projects. As it was, the fact that each territory was responsible for selecting, approving and financing its own projects meant that applicants had to apply to all of the territories covered by their proposed projects and respect the administrative procedures of each. Not surprisingly this created a sometimes insurmountable hurdle for projects seeking support from all five territories – despite the support offered by the Regional Co-ordinators.

Another feature of the cross-border dimension has been the differing extent of activity across and within the different constituent regions of the GR. For example, key interviewees involved in co-ordinating the ECOC have commented on the inherent difficulties in raising the interest of cultural decision-makers that were geographically remote from Luxembourg, for example, those in Mainz or even in Brussels. In contrast, the Conseil Régional de Lorraine appointed a dedicated Chargée de mission "Transfrontalier et Europe" to promote cross-border cultural co-operation within the context of the ECOC. Yet even within Lorraine, the level of interest was reportedly varied, being typically higher within the border localities than elsewhere. Similarly, in Rhineland-Palatinate, the focus was primarily on localities close to the border, such as Trier, where some €5.2m was invested in the cultural programme.[39]

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[39] A significant proportion of that sum is accounted for by the Constantine exhibition, which was already planned and would have taken place in the absence of the ECOC.

3.5 Effectiveness

Whilst Luxembourg GR's ECOC application set out a number of objectives, regional themes and key topics, it did not set out in detail the outputs, results and impacts that were hoped to be achieved. With this restriction in mind, we therefore consider the effectiveness of the ECOC against the typology of outputs, results and impacts set out in the intervention logic for this evaluation. The first table in Annex Five summarises the main effects *for which evidence is available*.

3.5.1 Developing cultural activities

The selection criteria applied to projects requesting inclusion in the cultural programme (whether directly financed by the ECOC or merely operating under the ECOC label) enabled the cultural programme to prioritise activities that demonstrated a European dimension, were innovative and involved local cultural operators. A small number of interviewees reported that the operation of this transparent selection process and the associated support offered by the General Co-ordination office (and the Regional Co-ordination offices) did enable many small local cultural operators to operate to higher professional standards during the title year, e.g. in respect of contracting, financial management and monitoring of activity. The same interviewees also suggested that more could have been done to sustain this practical support in the long-run. But overall, it has to be concluded that the ECOC made an important contribution to the wider efforts of the Ministry of Culture to make Luxembourg's cultural sector more professional.

3.5.2 Promoting the European dimension

In relation to the impact of the cross-border dimension of the ECOC, the research, to date, suggests a strong consensus amongst interviewees. The primary impact has been to strengthen, deepen and formalise cultural co-operation across the different component territories of the GR. This co-operation takes many forms; firstly, there is the regular and systematic co-operation between the public institutions responsible for cultural policy in each region, such as Luxembourg's Ministry of Culture and Lorraine's Direction des affaires culturelles. Of course, links between such bodies did exist prior to 2007; but there is now an agency dedicated to carrying forward such co-operation – Espace culturel Grande Région (ECGR), as discussed in section 3.6.3.

Overall then, the ECOC has certainly put in place the administrative "infrastructure" for cross-border cultural co-operation. There has been some impact in terms of building links for cultural operators and enabling them to operate across the GR, but this lags behind the co-operation between the public authorities. There has been some progress towards the objective of creating cross-border audiences for culture, but only a limited impact on public perceptions of the GR and the sense of belonging to it – and a shared identity has certainly not been created, although this was perhaps a very ambitious objective in any case.

3.5.3 Improving the image of the GR and promoting it as a cultural destination

In terms of achievement of the aim of forging the image of a genuine "Greater Luxembourg Region", the evidence from the interviews suggests that progress has been made, but is at best, one step on a very long road. In terms of creating such a sense of *belonging*, the evidence from the interviews suggests that little, if any impact was made in that respect. But there is a degree of consensus that progress has been made in terms of increasing *knowledge* of the GR amongst its residents as well as internationally. One contributory factor mentioned by interviewees was the ECOC logo which, being visible across the GR, helped strengthen the sense of shared activity.

This evidence from the interviews appears to be largely consistent with the evidence from a survey of residents.[40] These survey findings suggest that the proportion of residents of Luxembourg and of the Belgian and French regions that considered the ECOC to have been a step towards a common destiny for the GR did increase over 2007 – from a quarter to a third of residents in Luxembourg and from about 5-8% to about 15% in the Belgian and French regions. It also needs to be pointed out, however, the number of residents of the German regions expressing such an opinion fell during 2007 from just over 40% to around 35%, although taking into account margins of error this might be less significant than the trends in the other countries.[41] Alternatively, it points again to the varied experiences across the GR.

3.5.4 Supporting social development through culture

From the perspective of the city of Luxembourg (and the Grand Duchy more generally), it is clear that a new, innovative and co-ordinated approach was made to provide for and involve a wider set of "publics" in culture (young, different ethnic groups, etc.). This approach created the capacity, within the General Co-ordination, to design and implement a cultural programme specifically for youth as well as other cultural activities for the other "hidden" publics within Luxembourg. New and innovative cultural spaces, dedicated to serving these groups, were created and remain either in operation or, in the case of the Rotundas, the subject of full renovation. If 1995 stimulated the creation of mainstream cultural infrastructure in Luxembourg, serving a more traditional audience, the evidence suggests that 2007 marked a new phase in cultural development in Luxembourg in terms of providing for youth and the "hidden" Luxembourg more generally, with CarréRotondes taking a lead in sustaining the legacy.

However, there is weaker evidence to suggest that these groups were drawn into the more mainstream cultural institutions, though some positive activities did take place in that respect. The growth in museum attendance in Luxembourg from 2004 onwards appears therefore to owe more to factors such as the opening of new institutions and less to the ECOC. Across the ECOC, participation amongst target audiences was indeed raised, although audiences for the ECOC more generally did tend to be disproportionately constituted from higher-educated people with managerial and professional occupations.[42]

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[40] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.85.
[41] Depending on the sample size and the margins of error, it may be that this reduction is not statistically significant.
[42] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), p.38.

In terms of the impacts of the ECOC on the social development of the GR, two conclusions can be made.

First, the focus on serving particular groups was primarily a feature of the programme of Luxembourg (and particularly the city of Luxembourg) rather than the other territories; Lorraine, for example, placed no particular importance on serving or including any specific target groups. Impact on social development is therefore likely to have occurred primarily in Luxembourg.

Second, given the nature of the activity in the city of Luxembourg, the social impact is primarily in terms of widening "access" to culture and improving "cultural inclusion"[43], rather than in terms of increasing "social inclusion", *per se* (in terms of participation in the economy[44]). In short, the Luxembourg GR ECOC did not use the cultural programme to alleviate the socio-economic problems of the GR. **(EQ53, EQ54)**

3.5.5 Supporting economic development through culture

Economic and tourism impacts have been harder to ascertain, although this was a less significant focus of the ECOC in any case. For example, the ECOC did not explicitly aim to provide training and business support in the cultural sector and therefore had, at best, a modest effect on the skills and strengths of businesses (and other bodies) in that sector and thus its economic performance.

Although the GR seeks to develop its tourist offering (for example, by linking together its 40 UNESCO heritage sites) and has had a working group on tourism for many years, a small number of interviewees reported that the ECOC did not lend itself easily to the promotion of international tourism. For example, the cultural programme, given that it featured a very limited number of flagship events and relatively weak artistic themes, was not seen as a "product" that could easily be sold to foreign tourists. In short, much of the cultural programme did not lend itself to international audiences beyond the GR. A few events did attract a large international audience, notably the Constantine exhibition, but most of these events would have taken place anyway.

Whilst there was an increase in tourist visits across the GR, this was particularly focussed on certain areas, most notably the cities of Luxembourg and Trier. For example, the city of Luxembourg enjoyed an increase of 7% in overnight stays compared to 6% in Luxembourg as a whole. But such a tourist impact must be seen in the context of a 5% increase in overnight stays across Europe in 2007 and an average increase of 12% for the 1994-2004 ECOC. The increase in tourism attributable to the ECOC was therefore, at best, modest. Despite a positive view offered by a survey of hoteliers, one stakeholder interviewed within this evaluation reported a general lack of interest by the hotel and tourist sector in the ECOC; this interviewee reported that tour operators seemed reluctant to arrange packages and many hotels had to be enticed into creating packages by being given free tickets to events.

In terms of the economic impact, the final report estimates that €56m of additional visitor expenditure was directly generated by the ECOC. Even allowing for inflation, this compares favourably with the figure for previous ECOC – estimated to range from €10m - €37.5m in 1995-2003. However, the full economic and tourist impact remains largely un-researched and therefore unknown.

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[43] defined as "extending opportunities for cultural creation to people whose cultural values are marginalised from the dominant cultural landscape"; Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).

[44] See Stevenson, D. (2004) *Civic gold rush: Cultural planning and the politics of the Third Way*, International Journal of Cultural Policy, 10(1), pp. 119–131 cited in R.Griffiths, *City/Culture Discourses: Evidence from the Competition to Select the European Capital of Culture 2008*, European Planning Studies, Volume 14, No.4, May 2006.

3.6 Sustainability

Whilst the cultural programme was completed at the end of the title year, the evidence suggests some very positive legacies of the ECOC. Certainly, the creation of sustainable legacies appears to have been a priority, demonstrated in part by the adoption of the slogan: *"2007 (re)commence en 2008!"* These legacies include: i) the continuation of some cultural activities and new cultural facilities that remain in operation; ii) continued cross-border co-operation between authorities responsible for culture and, to a lesser extent, between cultural operators themselves; iii) the creation of a new operational structure in Luxembourg to carry forward the youth programme.

3.6.1 Cultural activities (EQ47, EQ48, EQ52)

Although the level of cultural activity in Luxembourg reduced following the end of the title year, this was seen, quite rightly, by the Ministry of Culture as "normal and natural" and is consistent with many other ECOC. Whilst the Ministry's budget also fell in 2008 (by 1.6%), it nonetheless remained at a higher level than before the title year and was, in any case, more than offset by an increase of 4.0% the next year.[45]

Looking more specifically at the investments made by the ECOC in Luxembourg, we see that the refurbished former industrial premises continue to operate as cultural facilities or will do so in the near future, notably:

- the two Rotundas adjacent to Luxembourg central station; these were temporarily refurbished and housed events throughout 2007; however, they required further decontamination to be used as permanent facilities and therefore closed at the end of the title year; they are expected to reopen in 2010, at which point they will house the new delivery body CarréRotondes and host many of its events;
- Centre de Production et de Création Artistique – continuing to be used as a performance and rehearsal space for contemporary dance;
- Espace Paul Wurth in Hollerich, featuring exhibition, performance and workshop space; the venue enjoys continued funding from the Ministry of Culture and is managed by a new body "CarréRotondes-Espace Paul Wurth";
- A former steelworks, Dudelange, which featured exhibitions during the title year; converted into production studios for the audiovisual sector; and
- Halle des Soufflantes in Esch/Belval, an iron and steel factory used as an exhibition space; its future is the subject of discussion between the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research and le Fonds Belval.

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[45] Ministère de la Culture, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche

A significant number of activities, newly initiated in 2007, have also continued beyond the end of the title year including:

- TRAFFO – performing arts festival, aimed at young people, based initially at the Espace Paul Wurth and later to move to the Rotundas
- Total Theatre – proposed as a biennial festival; due to be next held in Autumn 2009
- Creation of a network across the GR for operators in dance: "Dance Palace"
- Continuation of collaborations related to the "Best of Nature" exhibition
- LX5 network of cultural operators continuing to operate – internet site, further multi-disciplinary artistic projects planned, promoting consideration of urban and contemporary culture
- Humour pour la paix – Le Centre Culturel de Recontre Abbaye de Neumünster intends to create an ongoing event related to the theme of humour in art

3.6.2 Cultural governance (EQ49, EQ51)

Whilst the main delivery agency and the General Co-ordination Office ceased operation, a new body, CarréRotondes,[46] has been created to continue the youth programme initiated in 2007. Based in Luxembourg and directed by the former General Co-ordinator of the ECOC, CarréRotondes is a not-for-profit association, which aims to complement the cultural programmes of Luxembourg's existing cultural institutions by providing an entry point ("moyen d'accès") into culture for those audiences that would not otherwise access the full range of the mainstream institutions and artistic forms available in Luxembourg. Upon completion of the refurbishment of Rotunda 2, CarréRotondes will relocate to that location and therein host a number of events. Not only does CarréRotondes represent a legacy in terms of improved governance of culture in Luxembourg, it also continues many of the key activities of the 2007 ECOC programme, including TRAFFO (a festival for young people) and OPEN SPACE (a programme of weekly cultural events).

3.6.3 Cross-border cultural governance (EQ49, EQ51)

Whilst the cross-border delivery agency ceased operation, another new body, Espace culturel Grande Région[47], has been created to continue the cross-border cultural co-operation. Espace culturel Grande Région (ECGR) also represents a genuine innovation in the field of culture – reflecting and fulfilling one of the aims of the ECOC, to undertake a "European experiment".

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[46] www.rotondes.lu
[47] www.espaceculturelgr.eu

ECGR is a not-for-profit association created in April 2008 with the objective of carrying forward the positive legacy of cross-border cultural co-operation developed during 2007. It is overseen by a Council of 25 "administrateurs" – 5 from each region – and its President is the former Chairman of the Board of Luxembourg and Greater Region European Capital of Culture 2007 – and at time of writing the Director of Luxembourg's Ministry of Culture.

The aim of ECGR is to bring together the public authorities responsible for culture within the GR to develop a programme of shared activities. The early activity of ECGR focussed on meetings of the cultural administrations and round tables bringing together the administrations with cultural operators in the fields of theatre, cinema/audio-visual, music, literature, dance and arts. These preparatory activities are leading to more concrete activities focused on:

- leading the debate on a cultural strategy for the GR;
- stimulating and supporting cross-border cultural projects;
- providing training and support for networks of cultural operators;
- encouraging mobility of cultural operators across the GR; and
- building bridges between culture and education, as well as other areas of activity.

The sustainability of ECGR and its activities have been given further impetus by the success of its application for co-financing from the INTERREG IV programme "Grande Région". With co-financing provided by the partners, the INTERREG project will support ECGR until 2011.

In conjunction with the activities of ECGR, regional co-ordinators have been appointed (or retained) in some regions in order to continue to support cross-border cultural projects. For example, at the time of writing cross-border co-ordinators remained in post at the City of Trier and the Conseil Régional de Lorraine.

Also in conjunction with the ECGR and building on the activity of 2007, is the "Plurio.net" project. Managed by the Agence luxembourgeoise d'action culturelle (a body created in the context of the 1995 ECOC to provide a box office for the whole of Luxembourg), Plurio.net operates an internet portal[48] in support of cross-border cultural co-operation through, for example, promoting cultural events and providing news relating to the GR. Plurio.net is also currently funded by INTERREG IV until 2011.

3.7   Conclusions

3.7.1 Success of the ECOC (EQ42, EQ43)

Luxembourg GR 2007 was intended to be a "European experiment" that would, through cultural co-operation, help reinforce the GR as a political entity and help forge the image of a "Greater Luxembourg Region". The ECOC was certainly an ambitious experiment; although previous ECOC, such as Lille 2004, had included a significant cross-border dimension, Luxembourg GR 2007 was the first to make the cross-border dimension so central to its purpose. This was reflected in both the partnership (which formally incorporated partners from all parts of the GR) and the cultural programme (which featured projects in all parts of the GR, one-quarter of which operated in two or more countries). More cultural operators and audiences did cross borders during 2007 than would have done otherwise and should

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[48] www.plurio.net.

continue to do so. But the more significant achievement of 2007 has been the legacy of informal links between cultural operators in different parts of the GR and, more importantly, the strengthening of the administrative infrastructure for cross-border cultural co-operation – most notably the creation of Espace culturel Grande Région. In this respect then, the ECOC was successful in reinforcing the GR as a political entity.

Since Luxembourg itself had previously been ECOC, it was essential not merely to replicate what had been done in 1995. The ECOC thus aimed to present the creative and artistic potential of the region, particularly the avant-garde aspects and, in so doing, draw more young people into culture. Whilst the devolved co-ordination of the ECOC weakened its artistic focus, the ECOC did achieve this aim, at least in Luxembourg if not elsewhere. Innovative new venues were created, hosting avant-garde events and attracting new audiences; in short, the cultural programme of 2007 looked very different to that of 1995 and drew in many, particularly young, people that would not typically access the mainstream cultural institutions. 2007 thus built on the extensive progress made in since 1995 and represented a step-change in the development of its cultural scene. Crucially, many of the benefits of 2007, at least of the youth programme, should be sustained through the legacy planning – including a body (CarréRotondes) dedicated to continuing that legacy.

3.7.2 Lessons learnt

- A devolved and "democratic" approach to the co-ordination of an ECOC can widen the set of stakeholders involved and reduce tensions between the partners. But such an approach risks weakening the artistic direction of the cultural programme.
- The processes used to allocate and monitor grant funding for small, new or informal cultural operators can help such operators to become more professional in their operations. However, it may take longer than one year for the full benefits to be achieved; the termination of the operations of an ECOC delivery agency risks some of those benefits not being achieved.
- Widening access to and participation in culture need not consist solely of populist events; avant-garde events held in innovative venues, where carefully planned and targeted, can attract new audiences, including amongst groups that would not typically access mainstream institutions.
- Whilst the ECOC title is highly valued by cities that hold it, the ECOC concept requires to be continually refreshed and "reinvented" from year to year; the risk is that without such modification, it becomes jaded in the eyes of cultural operators, media and the general public – particularly in cities that hold the title for a second time.
- Ensuring that the positive impacts of an ECOC are sustained may best be achieved through the creation of one or more dedicated legacy bodies; these should be planned from an early stage and, as far as possible, retain key members of staff involved in delivering the ECOC programme.

Sibiu

4.0 Sibiu

4.1 Background

4.1.1 The city

Sibiu is an ancient city situated at the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains in central Romania. Founded in the twelfth century by settlers of Germanic origin from the West Rhine (part of a major eastward shift of German-speaking peoples at that time), Sibiu was the centre of the Transylvanian Saxon community until the Second World War. However, the German population diminished in the 1940s as a result of the War and again following the end of Communism in 1989, when many Germans emigrated. In recent years, Sibiu has experienced economic growth on the back of tourism and foreign investment, particularly from German firms.   With a population of 185,000, Sibiu remains an important regional centre for administration, industry and services.

4.1.2 Cultural sector

Sibiu's history has given it a rich legacy of Romanian and Germanic culture, the city having been the most important of the seven ethnic German cities that gave Transylvania its German name Siebenbürgen ("seven cities"). Sibiu also played a prominent role in the awakening of Romanian culture from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Indeed, it was the birthplace of the Asociaţia Transilvană pentru Literatura Română şi Cultura Poporului Român (ASTRA[49]) and home to a number of prominent writers and philosophers. Sibiu suffered less destruction than many other central European cities during the Second World War, but the communist period was marked by under-investment and thus a general deterioration in the city's infrastructure. In recent years, there has been a move to refurbish the medieval centre and also to "re-discover" and promote Sibiu's Germanic heritage.

Sibiu remains one of Romania's most important centres of religion, culture and learning, being a Metropolitan seat of the Romanian Orthodox Church, featuring two national cultural institutions - the Radu Stanca National Theatre and Brukenthal National Museum - and hosting some 30,000 university students. Prior to the title year 2007, Sibiu already enjoyed an extensive cultural scene, which attracted domestic and international visitors – encouraged, in part, by the city's efforts to promote cultural tourism. This programme included several festivals, the most prominent of which were the internationally-renowned Jazz and Theatre Festivals. In addition to the Radu Stanca National Theatre is the Gong Theatre, which specialised in mime, puppetry and innovative shows for children and young people. Sibiu is also home to the State Philharmonic Orchestra, based at the Thalia Hall.

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[49] Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People

4.2 Cultural programme

4.2.1 Aims and objectives

At the time of application (2004), Romania was not yet an EU Member State, although it did accede on 1 January 2007, the first day of the title year. Whilst Sibiu was not the first city from a non-Member State to successfully apply for ECOC designation,[50] it was the first to do so under Article 4 of the 1999 Decision.[51] In contrast to Luxembourg and Liverpool, which received the title by virtue of their countries' entitlement to nominate an ECOC[52] (albeit, in the case of Liverpool, after a national competition), Sibiu's application was the initiative of the city itself and of Romania more generally. This represented something of a bold innovation for a relatively small city from, what was at that time, a non-Member State.

The origins of Sibiu's application lie in the ambitions of a small number of cultural operators and civic leaders that, as early as the mid-1990s, saw the potential for Sibiu to hold the title. Having held early discussions with Liverpool, it was eventually the discussions with Luxembourg that provided the final impetus to Sibiu in its decision to apply. Certainly, Luxembourg was keen to partner with Sibiu, its Minister of Culture having encouraged the idea of a bid from Romania in discussions with the Prime Minister of Romania.[53]

Once the idea of applying had been proposed, a process of consultation was undertaken locally, which covered local authorities, cultural institutions, universities and other local stakeholders **(EQ2)**. Since the results of that consultation demonstrated support for a bid, a team was formed to prepare the application, with support from the City of Sibiu and in partnership with the Ministry of Culture. A significant factor in Sibiu's success, as reported by the co-ordination team, was the advice provided by Luxembourg at each stage of the application process.

One of the main motivations for Sibiu's application **(EQ1)** was the desire to increase the city's visibility at European level, the other main motivation being to support the development of the city's cultural activity more generally. Sibiu's original application set out five main objectives for the ECOC title year **(EQ3)**. The "external" objectives were mostly focussed on the European dimension **(EQ9)**, i.e. using culture to make Sibiu more European and to promote Sibiu to the rest of Europe. In more specific terms, the programme co-ordinator reports that the intention was to present events focused on the talents of European artists; to support projects based on European artistic co-productions and cultural collaborations; to celebrate European history, identity and heritage and to develop opportunities for European networking. The "internal" objectives focussed on using culture to build social cohesion **(EQ4)** and local civic pride.

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[50] Bergen, Cracow, Prague and Reykjavik were four of the nine cities that held the title in 2000; at that time, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic and Iceland were not EU Member States, although the Czech Republic and Poland did later accede, in 2004.

[51] 1999 Decision.

[52] As set out in Annex I of the 1999 Decision.

[53] Luxembourg Final Report (2008), page 7.

4.2.2 Changes to objectives and themes

In the title year itself, a wider set of objectives was pursued, which was, nonetheless, consistent with the broad spirit of the original set of objectives – and with the aims of the ECOC Action more generally **(EQ7, EQ8)**. These objectives were more specific in most cases; for example, the broad objectives relating to European integration had been interpreted into a more specific focus on developing relationships with other European cities and promoting European cultural co-operation. Similarly, the objective of raising inhabitants' awareness of Sibiu's cultural richness had been interpreted into the objective of expanding the local audience for culture. Four entirely new objectives had been added, one of which was specifically cultural (long-term cultural development), two of which were more economic (create an economic downstream, improve infrastructure) and one of which combined the cultural and economic (promoting creativity and innovation). The objective of improving social cohesion was retained and related to a desire to offer cultural opportunities for all sections of the local population, including children, young people, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and others outside the "mainstream" culture **(EQ5)**.

Table 4.1 below compares the objectives pursued during the title year against those proposed in the original application. We present the objectives here under the broad headings of "external" and "internal" objectives. However, these two headings have been developed solely for the purpose of this evaluation and were not used by the ECOC itself.

Table 4.1 Objectives of Sibiu

Objectives proposed in the original application	Objectives pursued during the title year (2007)
"External objectives"	
Present to Europe our city's cultural identity and diversity and promote the understanding and co-operation of our communities on a European scale Pioneer and speed integration of our city and our country in the European construction	Developing relationships with other European cities/regions and promoting European cultural cooperation
Gain attractiveness on a regional, national and international level	Raising the international profile of Sibiu Attracting international visitors
"Internal objectives"	
Raise the awareness and pride of our inhabitants for our cultural richness	Growing and expanding the local audience for culture Enhancing feelings of pride and self-confidence
Raise social cohesion	Improving social cohesion
	Long term cultural development
	Creating an economic downstream Improving cultural and non-cultural infrastructure
	Promoting creativity and innovation

Sources: Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007 Application 2004; Nistor, S. (2008): Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007, Ianuarie 2005 - Decembrie 2007, Raport Sinteză.

4.2.3 Activity

Sibiu's original application did not set out an extensive cultural programme with clearly-defined activities but mostly included only preparatory activities related to infrastructure as well as artistic themes. However, the eventual cultural programme consisted of some 867 projects attended by more than 1m people[54]. The cultural programme did not feature a specific artistic theme, but did adopt the leitmotif of "*city of culture. city of cultures*", which embodied Sibiu's mixing of different cultures, e.g. Romanian and Germanic. A key focus was on using the city's architecture and its public space – indeed, the whole city centre – as a wide stage for cultural events. The three main squares were fully renovated and equipped to host events simultaneously. According to some interviews, such use of public space - particularly for the opening and closing events - contributed significantly to increasing participation in culture and attracting media attention.

Co-operation with Luxembourg was also a significant element of the cultural programme, with some 48 joint projects taking place and a special publication produced that detailed those projects. The importance of this co-operation was symbolised by the re-naming of the building housing the Sibiu co-ordination team, as "Luxembourg House".

4.2.4 Financing (EQ22, EQ23, EQ24, EQ25)

In terms of the extent to which the cultural programme reflected the commitments set out in the application, Sibiu's final report states that the total financing equalled €17.2m against €15.8m proposed in the application. In financial terms, Sibiu's cultural programme was therefore significantly smaller than the Stavanger programme, despite the slightly larger size of the city[55], although it was still well above the lower end of the range of expenditure in 1995-2004. Nearly half of the funding of the cultural programme came from the City Council, although much of this was channelled through two of the main cultural institutions. The Ministry of Culture was the next most significant funder, providing nearly one quarter.

Sibiu received €1.4m of EU funding for its cultural programme, representing 8% of total funding. The funding was specifically used to co-finance the series of ten closing events in five venues in December 2007.

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[54] Another source suggests more than 2m people.
[55] The relatively lower costs of goods and services in Romania would reduce the difference in "purchasing power" between the two ECOC.

Table 4.2 Financing of Sibiu

Sources of finance	Total €[56]
Ministry of Culture	4.1m
Sibiu Local Council (through the Casa and Radu Stanca Theatre)	8.2m
County Council	0.5m
European Commission	1.4m
TOTAL	**14.2m**
Additionally:	
Cultural operators contributions	**2.3m**
Support from the 3rd European Ecumenical Reunions' budget	**0.4m**
CULTURAL PROGRAMME TOTAL BUDGET57	**16.9m**

Source: Sergiu Nistor (2008): Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007, Ianuarie 2005 - Decembrie 2007, Raport Sinteză.

In addition to the financing of the cultural programme, a significant investment was also made in cultural and other infrastructure in Sibiu, much of it by the national government **(EQ26)**. In interviews, key individuals from the City Council reported that this expenditure was necessary anyway and was not financed from the ECOC programme but that the title year gave an impetus to these improvements.

Table 4.3 Infrastructure expenditure of Sibiu

Infrastructure	Total €
Tourism infrastructure	117.0m
Cultural infrastructure renovation	15.4m
Historical centre renovation	4.1m
Technical equipment (scenes/stages, lighting system, sounds system, projectors, etc)	0.9m
TOTAL	**137.4m**

Source: Sergiu Nistor (2008): Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007, Ianuarie 2005 - Decembrie 2007, Raport Sinteză.

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[56] €1 = 3.6 Romanian New Lei (approximate rate prevailing in 2007)

[57] Totals in this table differ from the source, due to inconsistencies in the source. A contribution of €7,500 was also made by the Sibiu 2007 Association.

4.3 Relevance

Having described Sibiu and its cultural programme, we can consider the relevance of its objectives and activities in relation to the three specific objectives of the ECOC Action, as set out in the intervention logic for this evaluation.[58]

First, the objectives and activities of Sibiu's ECOC were very relevant to the EU-level objective of *"supporting the social and economic development of the city through culture"*, particularly in respect of economic and tourism development. As noted above, the main motivations for Sibiu's application were to increase the city's visibility at European level and to support the development of the city through culture. These motivations translated into a number of economic and tourism objectives, including those of raising the international profile of Sibiu, attracting international visitors, creating an economic downstream, improving infrastructure and promoting creativity and innovation. Activities were relevant to these objectives, particularly to those of raising the international profile, attracting visitors and improving infrastructure and less to that of creating an economic downstream. Sibiu's ECOC was relevant to the EU-level objective of social development, through its objectives of "improving social cohesion". However, the activity was of limited relevance to this objective, consisting primarily of events taking place in different neighbourhoods of the city and other activities to widen access to culture.

Second, the objectives and activities of Sibiu's ECOC were relevant to the EU-level objective of "*developing cultural activities*". Sibiu's objectives of "long-term cultural development", "growing and expanding the local audience for culture" and "promoting creativity and innovation" were relevant to that objective and thus to the objective of the 1999 Decision to "support and develop creative work".[59] The project selection criteria ensured that activities of Sibiu's cultural programme were also relevant both to Sibiu's objectives and to the EU-level objectives; for example, they included the generation of new cultural products of the improvement of existing ones, as well as creativity, originality, stimulating debate and dialogue.[60]

Third, the objectives and activities of Sibiu's ECOC demonstrated relevance to the EU-level objective of "*promoting the European dimension of and through culture"*, through its objective of "developing relationships with other European cities/regions and promoting European cultural co-operation. Again, the relevance of activities within the cultural programme to this objective was ensured by the project selection criteria, one of which explicitly related to the European dimension. This was primarily in terms of European co-operation, notably with Luxembourg, but also through activity to attract international performers, rather than in terms of the exploration of European themes; in this latter respect, Sibiu's ECOC demonstrated limited relevance to the European dimension.

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[58] The intervention logic is itself based on the objectives of the 1999 and 2006 Decisions and of Article 151 of the Treaty.
[59] Article 3.
[60] See section 4.4.1.

4.4 Efficiency

4.4.1 Governance (EQ14b, EQ18)

The governance of Sibiu's ECOC operated at two levels: national and local.

At the national level, the government of Romania played a key role in providing the legal framework for the governance of the ECOC. In order for the ECOC to operate, it was necessary for the government to introduce new legislation and regulations.[61] With these new legal mechanisms in place, the Ministry of Culture was able to provide a significant amount of funding for both cultural infrastructure and the cultural programme, as well as operate the call for projects. The Ministry played an important role here in two respects. Firstly, since the City of Sibiu was not able by law directly to enter into contracts for the financing of cultural projects, it was essential that other bodies took on that role. Secondly, as reported by the local co-ordination team, there was not sufficient capacity at the local level to oversee the extensive project selection and contracting process.

The Ministry thus launched an open call for projects to be included in the cultural programme and appointed a jury to select a cultural programme **(EQ17)**. This jury was composed of a mix of Ministry representatives, local stakeholders from Sibiu (including the Mayor of Sibiu) and prominent cultural figures at the national level. Given the diversity of cultural genres and the volume of applications anticipated, the jury established six Selection Committees to scrutinise applications and propose lists of projects.[62]

One criterion was the European dimension, which related to the partnership implementing the project, as well as an emphasis on local identity as part of international cultural diversity. The other selection criteria were:

- Continuation / development of traditions
- Generating new cultural products or improving existing cultural products
- Interactions between citizens and institutions
- Coherence and identity of projects
- Creativity, originality, stimulating dialogue and debate
- Ensuring participation of a wide set of cultural operators
- Extended impacts in various public categories and real potential for media visibility
- Valorising capacity for buildings, spaces, equipments, unconventional urban spaces

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[61] Six new Government Decisions relating to the allocation of budgets; a new Government Decision enabling the appointment of a "Sibiu 2007 ECOC Commissioner"; a new Government Decision to transfer legal ownership of Sibiu Airport, from the state to a non-state entity; eight new Ministry of Culture Ordinances for the appointment of a programme co-ordination team at (national level) and for introducing a simplified project selection process.
[62] These Committees related to: Visual Arts and Multimedia; Material and Non-Material Patrimony; Music and Choreography; Theatre and Cinematography; Cultural Mobility; Committee Secretary.

At the local level, a dedicated delivery agency, the Sibiu 2007 Association, was established to co-ordinate the implementation of the cultural programme. The decision to form such a body was taken by the City of Sibiu following consultation of the key stakeholders and a number of public meetings. Established as an independent, not-for-profit body, the Association provided a co-ordination and technical support role for the cultural programme selected by the jury.   This included preparing the calendar (and rescheduling events where necessary), providing technical and logistic support to projects requiring it, promoting the programme locally, operating the volunteer programme and commissioning additional (small) projects where necessary.   In practice, the Association provided more intensive support to the small cultural operators than to the established cultural institutions, these smaller operators having less capacity to implement activity.

4.4.2 Communication

The promotion and communication of the ECOC and its cultural programme was managed at the national and the local levels. At the national level, a contractor was appointed by the Ministry in November 2006 to promote the ECOC nationally and internationally. This promotional campaign featured presentations or exhibitions in 35 cities abroad (e.g. at international tourist fairs), advertisements of international TV and websites, articles in international and foreign publications and the dissemination of printed materials. The contractor also created the ECOC logo for Sibiu, which was also used in the local promotional campaign run by the Association. This local campaign included the website (www.sibiu2007.ro), press releases, advertising in local media, printed materials and billboard advertising. A key part of the local promotional campaign undertaken by the Association was the support offered to the smaller cultural operators to help them to promote their own events. Use of the logo was offered free of royalties to contractors wishing to produce merchandise, subject to quality control. The intention here was to spread the logo further than would be possible otherwise.

The local co-ordination team expressed overall satisfaction with the national and international promotions and have confirmed that the appointment of a contractor was essential for that purpose.   Indeed, appointing such a contractor provided the necessary capacity and, crucially, access to the national and international media that would not otherwise be available to the ECOC. Of course, having promotional campaigns at two levels, operated by different bodies was not without its problems. For example, the view of the local co-ordination team was that more use could have been made of local knowledge – such as the feedback received from visitors - in undertaking the national and international promotions.

The media coverage generated by the combined promotional campaigns is illustrated in the Table of Effects (outputs, results and impacts) in Annex Five. In terms of the success of this campaign, there was a substantial increase in the number of visitors to Sibiu during 2007 (see next section), although this increase cannot all be attributed to the campaign. Amongst those visitors, there was high usage of the website, which was consulted by 60% of visitors from abroad and 56% from elsewhere in Romania[63]. For visitors from elsewhere in Romania, TV/radio and newspapers were also very significant, being consulted by 26% and 22% respectively, but much less important for visitors from abroad (8% and 14%) **(EQ19, E20)**.

The local co-ordination team reported a number of lessons learned from the experience of 2007 in respect of promotional and communications activity.

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[63] Richards and Rotariu (2007).

First, given that the cultural institutions would usually promote their own events, it was difficult for the staff of the Association to convince them to work within the common approach to the promotion of ECOC events. However, this was essential if cultural operators, audiences and the media were to receive a clear and consistent "message". According to the Communication Co-ordinator: "*There were so many different events that, if we had let each communicate in its own way it would have created confusion*". The support offered by the Association to the smaller operators in respect of their promotional activity was also essential.

Second, with hindsight, the promotional activity should have started earlier than it did (late in 2006). Indeed, whilst the Association offered support to the cultural operators in respect of public relations from November 2006, it was only in about March 2007 that full support in all aspects of publicity could be offered.

Third, the promotional and communications activity (at all levels) finished too early, i.e. at the start of 2008. For example, continued communication beyond 2007 with the all cultural operators from elsewhere that had performed in Sibiu in 2008 may have encouraged more of them to return in future years. Moreover, the termination of the operations of the Association and the reduction in public funding post-2007 has reduced the extent to which the promotion of Sibiu and its cultural activities is coherent and co-ordinated. Whilst many of the contacts with operators abroad have been maintained, the cultural operators themselves are responsible for promoting their own activities.

4.4.3 Volunteer programme

A key feature of the governance of Sibiu's ECOC was its volunteer programme. In the ECOC's development phase, there was a recognition that the cultural programme could not operate effectively without a large number of volunteers to provide support to the cultural operators, particularly those arriving from elsewhere; providing paid staff to provide such support would have proved too expensive. Volunteers fulfilled a range of roles, such as assisting cultural operators, providing technical support to events, stewarding and greeting visitors.

More than 1200 volunteers were recruited locally, nationally and internationally, encouraged by the slogan: "*It's normal to be a volunteer*". Initially, posters were the most effective form of recruitment, for example, those placed at local universities. Other methods included press articles and visits to universities and high schools. However, the co-ordinator of the volunteer programme reported that word-of-mouth soon became more important, as volunteers recommended the programme to others. Volunteers were aged from 11-69 years old and came from diverse backgrounds, including many that were professional people. However, about 90% were aged 14-30 years, most of whom were high-school or university students. Many of these volunteers were hoping to gain experience and contacts in the sector, with a view to developing a career in the cultural sector. About 35 volunteers were from other countries, including four who came from Luxembourg as part of the wider programme of co-operation and 15 who came from Japan to support Japanese performers at the Theatre Festival.

A key feature of the operation was the design of volunteer roles and the selection and training of volunteers to fill those roles, supported by a database of volunteers and volunteer positions. A "job description" of each volunteer role was developed, with volunteers being selected to match those roles. Each volunteer received a contract detailing the roles and responsibilities of the volunteer and of the Association. Training was also provided at the outset, which reflected the specific demands of the role and of the cultural operator that would host the volunteer.

4.5 Effectiveness

Whilst Sibiu's ECOC application set out a number of objectives and activities, it did not set out in detail the outputs, results and impacts that were hoped to be achieved. With this restriction in mind, we therefore consider the effectiveness of the ECOC against the outputs, results and impacts set out in the intervention logic for this evaluation. The second table in Annex Five summarises the main effects *for which evidence is available* **(EQ34, EQ36)**. We consider those effects in this section.

4.5.1 Developing cultural activities

Although Sibiu's application did not clearly define the contents of its cultural programme, it did go on to implement an extensive programme of activities. As noted above, some 867 cultural projects were implemented, attracting audiences of more than 1m. This was a significant achievement, particularly for a small city for which this was the first time it had hosted such a major event. As well as using existing cultural institutions, the programme demonstrated innovative use of much of the newly-renovated city centre as a "stage" – not least for the opening and closing events. The opening event, attended by the President of Romania, was particularly notable in also acting as the focal point for celebrations marking Romania's accession to the EU on 1 January 2007, that event coinciding with the start of the title year.

In terms of the impact of the ECOC, all the interviewees have recognised that the ECOC was a unique cultural event for them and for Sibiu, given its complexity and diversity. Indeed, it has been suggested by some interviewees that the ECOC was the most extensive cultural event ever organised in Romania. Whilst the local partners did not, at the outset, have experience of organising such a complex event and found it very challenging, there is a degree of consensus that a good working partnership was formed amongst the key local stakeholders.

In terms of the effect on Sibiu's cultural life, those attending events rated the cultural programme at 8.6/10 on average.[64] Moreover, a majority of the interviewees reported that the ECOC has led to a more vibrant cultural scene and a much greater level of cultural participation. For example, the Radu Stanca Theatre doubled the number of spectacles in 2007 and reports continued box-office "sell-outs" in 2008 and 2009. In addition, a number of events that were newly initiated in 2007 have continued to operate since, including the Transylvania Film Festival and the Georgia Anesco classical music festival.

[64] Richards and Rotariu (2007).

Another significant effect reported by several interviewees has been the greater effectiveness of the local cultural sector, particularly small companies and not-for-profit associations. Indeed, the additional public funding available for cultural activities in 2007 is reported to have acted as a stimulus to such operators to raise the quality of their operations and organisation, for example, encouraging informal groupings of operators to become registered companies or organisations. Such bodies also benefited from the new contacts with other cultural operators, including those abroad. In addition, one of the main cultural institutions, the Radu Stanca Theatre, is due to undertake 18 international tours in 2009 – which is reported to be significantly more than in 2006.

4.5.2 Promoting the European dimension

As noted earlier, one of the main motivations for Sibiu's application was the desire to increase the city's visibility at European level. The challenge that Sibiu faced in doing so was highlighted by the selection panel which stated that i) "the city will have to implement an efficient strategy of communication and marketing to become well known and to attract a lot of visitors"; and that ii) "the main events have to be highlighted, and to be attractive enough at a European level. They must involve European people and artists."[65]

In recognition of the first point made by the Panel, and acknowledging the limited capacity within the city, as noted above, a specialist contractor was appointed to promote the ECOC nationally and internationally. This promotional campaign resulted in a significant amount of national and international media coverage as noted in the table in Annex Five. To a certain extent, it may also have contributed to the 27% increase in tourist arrivals in Sibiu in 2007 and to the reception of some 73 official international delegations during the year, although it is impossible to distinguish the impact of the ECOC from other developments, such as the renovation of the airport. Of those foreign visitors to Sibiu surveyed, some 27% considered Sibiu to be one of the top-five European cultural destinations. The ECOC and its promotional campaign may also have contributed to the increased recognition of Sibiu in Europe more generally: in 2006, only 0.5% of cultural visitors interviewed in other parts of Europe listed Sibiu as one of the top-five European cultural destinations, whereas by 2007, this figure had risen to 3.5%.[66]

In terms of the European dimension of the cultural programme, the call for projects was open to international cultural operators. As a result, some 73 projects involved partners from other EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Holland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Hungary) and 6 projects from other countries (Israel, Cuba, Croatia, Serbia). This co-operation has continued to increase since the end of the title year, with the number of new events organised in partnership with other European cultural operators increasing by 30% in 2008 compared to 2007. **(EQ9)** Moreover, the established Jazz and Theatre Festivals were successful in attracting a higher profile set of performers than in previous years.

Sibiu also undertook a programme of co-operation with Luxembourg, featuring 48 projects and 90 events. Of these, at least 3 continued beyond 2007.

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[65] Report on the Nominations from Luxembourg and Romania (2004).
[66] Richards and Rotariu (2007), p.48.

4.5.3 Supporting social development through culture

One objective of the ECOC was to increase social cohesion within Sibiu. The main instrument for achieving this was the organisation of cultural events throughout the city, not only in the centre but also in other neighbourhoods, including the most disadvantaged that would not usually host such events. The intention here was to provide "something for everybody", including (as noted earlier) children, young people, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and others outside the "mainstream" culture.

A survey of local audiences found that more than 65% considered that the ECOC had created more social cohesion within Sibiu,[67] although no further explanation is given of the interpretation of that term by respondents. Any impact on social objectives would appear to have been achieved through the organisation of events across the city – and perhaps also through the greater sense of local pride generated – rather than through activities targeted at particular disadvantaged groups. Given the nature of the activity in Sibiu, it does not appear that Sibiu used the ECOC directly to alleviate the socio-economic problems of Sibiu. Any social impact is therefore primarily in terms of widening "access" to culture, rather than in terms of increasing "social inclusion", *per se*.

4.5.4 Supporting economic development through culture

In terms of economic impact, the Sibiu final report offers comparative data on the increased turnover of key economic sectors related to the ECOC in 2007. These data point to an increase of 9.5% overall with the greatest percentage increase (13.7%) being enjoyed by tourist operators. Whilst such data need to be seen in the context of growth in international tourism generally and growth of 6.7% in the Romanian economy[68] over the same period, the extent of these increases suggests a significant impact for the ECOC.

Table 4.4 Economic impact of Sibiu

Sectors	2006	2007	Difference 2006-07	
	RON	RON	RON	%
Cultural productions and services	31.955.874	34.371.738	2.415.864	7.6
Hotels & Pensions	17.268.555	19.081.753	1.813.198	10.5
Restaurants Bars	54.953.667	59.295.007	4.341.340	7.9
Tourist operators	10.604.340	12.057.134	1.452.795	13.7
Transportation	82.314.320	91.286.581	8.972.261	10.9
Rents	12.424.745	13.418.724	993.980	8.0
Total	**209.521.501**	**229.510.938**	**19.989.437**	**9.5**

Source: Sergiu Nistor (2008): Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007, Ianuarie 2005 - Decembrie 2007, Raport Sinteză.

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[67] Richards and Rotariu (2007).
[68] European Commission (2007), *Employment in Europe 2007*, Annex 1.

These assertions are supported by Richards and Rotariu (2007)[69], who found that the number of tourist arrivals at accommodation establishments in the first six months of 2007 increased by almost 27% and the number of overnight stays grew by almost 36%, compared with the same period in 2005. Moreover, 32% of visitors surveyed by Richards and Rotariu came to Sibiu specifically because of the ECOC, which is strikingly close to the increase in total tourist numbers. As well as increasing the number of visitors, the ECOC appears to have had a positive impact on their perceptions of Sibiu. As noted above, almost 27% of foreign respondents to the Richards and Rotariu survey listed Sibiu among their top five cities for culture and art and as a multicultural, European city.

The development of the economic potential of Sibiu's cultural "industries" was not an explicit objective of the ECOC and very little, if any, training and business support was directed to that purpose. Whilst the ECOC certainly raised the level of cultural activity within Sibiu, it perhaps had less impact in developing local cultural *industries*. Indeed, whilst Sibiu is an (even more) important cultural centre – and derives economic benefit therein – this importance lies more in the attraction of audiences, tourists and cultural operators to Sibiu than in the "export" of cultural "products" created locally. This point notwithstanding, two important new developments have occurred since and as a result of the ECOC: the increase in the international demand for the Radu Stanca Theatre (as described above) and the formation of a new ballet company based in Sibiu. With more cultural capacity and expertise available to Sibiu as a result of 2007, it may be that the local creative industries will expand further in future.

As noted above, significant investment in the physical infrastructure of Sibiu has taken place, supported financially, in part, by the German government and a loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The interviews to date suggest that such infrastructure and equipment continue to be put at the service of cultural activity and are thus offering sustained impact.

4.6   Sustainability

4.6.1 Cultural activities

Whilst many of the activities of the ECOC were one-offs and never intended to continue beyond 2007, there is evidence that some activities have continued. Whilst about ten annual festivals, such as the Jazz and Theatre Festivals were already in operation before 2007, around 36 were reported to be operating in 2008 and 2009, many of which had been initiated as part of the ECOC programme. As noted earlier, whilst the levels of public funding of culture have reduced since 2007, small cultural operators continue to enjoy some of the benefits of the title year, in terms of better partnerships, networks and links internationally and better capacity to receive and account for finance.

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[69] Richards and Rotariu (2007).

4.6.2 Cultural governance (EQ47, EQ49, EQ50, EQ51)

The Sibiu 2007 Association ceased its activities immediately after the end of the title year, with no staff remaining in employment. A majority of the interviewees expressed their appreciation of the work of the Association and reported their disappointment at it ending its operations. Whilst the Casa de Cultura a Municipiului Sibiu took on responsibility for some of the roles of the Association from the start of 2008, it was not able to retain the staff of the Association, one of the reasons cited being legal barriers preventing the payment of salaries at a certain level. Whilst some of the key members of the Association's staff remain employed in roles relevant to culture and tourism, overall the dismantlement of the team represents a significant loss of expertise. This loss of staff was also reflected at the national level, with many of the key individuals departing their posts at the Ministry of Culture soon after the end of the title year. Moreover, the loss of staff has also weakened the link between Sibiu and the Ministry.

This fact notwithstanding, the evidence from the interviews suggests that the capacity of cultural governance within Sibiu has improved significantly as a result of the ECOC. First, those individuals involved in managing the ECOC, both within the Association and other local stakeholders, gained extensive personal experience and expertise which some of them continue to put to use – for example, staff of the Casa or the City. Second, the Casa is able to provide better support to cultural operators through the technical equipment, newly purchased for 2007, that it retains and continues to use. Third, the Casa itself reports that its own operations have become more efficient and professional, for example, in terms of the contracting and financing of cultural operators. Finally, another sustained improvement reported is the change in mindset within Sibiu; culture is no longer viewed as an expenditure of public money, but as an investment that can generate other benefits, such as greater visibility of Sibiu or an increase in tourism.

One tangible activity that has been sustained beyond the end of the title year has been the volunteering that was expanded substantially in 2007. Whilst the Association has ceased to co-ordinate a formal programme, an estimated 200-300 individuals continue in their voluntary roles. For a smaller number of volunteers, their volunteering led directly to a job with the host operator. The learning from the volunteering programme has been carried forward into activity of other institutions in Sibiu, such as the municipality and the police – helped in the latter case by the recruitment of the ECOC Volunteer Programme Co-ordinator by the Police. In addition, the volunteers themselves have formed a volunteers' association "Project 1200", a body committed to encouraging volunteering in the city and promoting a programme of cultural urban planning.

4.6.3 Long-term development (EQ52, EQ53, EQ54)

At this stage, data is not available to evaluate the extent to which the economic impacts of the ECOC have been sustained beyond 2007. Given the increase in tourist arrivals in 2007 and the positive visitor experience, as well as the renovation of the city centre, the investment of international hotel chains and the refurbishment of Sibiu international airport, it is likely that some economic benefit was sustained into 2008 and possibly also 2009. However, given the current global economic difficulties – and the likely reduction in international tourism – such benefits may prove hard to sustain. However, to the extent that the global economy – and international tourism – recovers, Sibiu will certainly be in a much better position to capture future economic benefits than it would have been in the absence of the ECOC.

4.7 Conclusions

4.7.1 Success of the ECOC (EQ42, EQ43)

The 2004 selection panel recognised "the effort of this small city to prepare a programme, and considered the event as a great introduction to the European Union".[70] Sibiu is certainly one of the smallest cities ever to host the ECOC and its application represented a bold attempt to put itself "on the European map". The cultural programme of Sibiu was very extensive and featured a significant European dimension, as well as elements of innovation, for example, the extensive use of urban spaces and the partnership with Luxembourg. It appears that Sibiu's ECOC respected the spirit of the 1999 Decision and broadly fulfilled the commitments in its application. Indeed, the majority of interviewees suggested that the objectives had been fulfilled and their expectations met. As one stated: "For those involved (in co-ordinating the ECOC), the ECOC represented the peak of their careers".

Based on the extent and nature of the cultural programme, the extent of international media coverage and the results of the visitor survey[71], it would appear that Sibiu achieved its aim of increasing the city's visibility at European level. However, to assess the full extent of Sibiu's increased visibility at European level would require a degree of research (for example, a pan-European opinion survey) that is beyond the scope of this evaluation. In terms of the aim of supporting the development of the city's cultural activity, an opportunity has been lost with the premature dismantlement of the co-ordination team and the consequent loss of expertise. However, despite that, there is evidence that the ECOC enabled the development of significant capacity for cultural activity, as well as some ongoing cultural activities; 2007 thus appears to represent a step-change in that respect.

4.7.2 Lessons learnt (EQ46, EQ55)

- Dedicated delivery agency can be essential – separate from the municipality; municipality can be restricted by laws or administrative processes.
- Careful consideration needs to be made of local capacity; where there are gaps, capacity should be built or brought in, e.g. for international promotions and communication
- Communication needs to be linked in to what is happening or the ground, for example, based on the views of visitors and tourists – feedback can help shape communications
- Communication needs to start early (Nov 06 was too late) and continue beyond the end of the title year.
- A volunteer programme requires careful planning to i) match volunteers to suitable opportunities; ii) to train and prepare volunteers to fulfil those roles effectively
- The application and selection process for projects, as well as contracting, financing and monitoring can encourage small cultural operators and NGOs to become more efficient and effective– particularly where advice and support is provided - for example, in their management and financial operations as well as in the standard of their cultural offering by having to be clear about their objectives; however, the end of the title year (and consequent reduction in public funding of culture) risks losing momentum in that respect.
- The delivery agency needs to be continued for some time beyond the end of the title year, e.g. at least 3 months, and have a good legacy strategy.

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[70] Report on the Nominations from Luxembourg and Romania (2004).
[71] Richards and Rotariu (2007).

- Local stakeholders need to plan for the period beyond the life of the delivery agency; the dismantlement of a team can leave a gap in the city's cultural governance and represent a loss of expertise.
- Where possible, opportunities should be created to retain members of the co-ordination team within the cultural governance of the city.

Liverpool

5.0 Liverpool

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The city

Liverpool is a city of around 435,500 people situated in the North West of England.[72] Traditionally, it was an important port city, with a strong industrial base which grew hugely in the 19th and early 20th centuries on the back of the industrial revolution and trade within the British Empire. During this time there was rapid population growth with immigration from those seeking better economic prospects from nations including Ireland, Poland and China, as well as transient populations hoping to move to North America. The 20th century saw a decline in the importance of its docks and its manufacturing industries and, as a consequence, Liverpool's unemployment rate was, by the 1980s, amongst the highest in the UK. Whilst problems of unemployment and deprivation remain, efforts at regeneration are proving successful. Indeed, Liverpool has enjoyed economic and employment growth rates above the national average since much of the period since the mid-1990s, driven in part by an expansion of the city's service sector – financial services, retail, media and tourism. In 2007, the city celebrated its 800th anniversary.

5.1.2 Cultural sector

Whilst the most recognisable aspects of Liverpool's cultural heritage are probably the Beatles and Merseybeat, Liverpool had a diverse cultural offer in the years before it became ECOC. Large cultural organisations operating in the city include the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tate Liverpool, the Everyman Playhouse theatre and the Bluecoat Arts Centre. However, the perception of stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation is that, before the impetus of the ECOC, these institutions did not work together in a co-ordinated way which led to the cultural offer of the city being less developed than it might otherwise have been.

An example of a previous large cultural event held in Liverpool was the International Garden Festival held in August 1981 on a disused site in the Dingle area, which attracted 3.4 million visitors and involved 29 countries over six months[73]. Even before the title year, Liverpool had an extensive annual timetable of cultural events, which included:

- The Matthew Street Festival, held every year since 1993, originally as part of the Beatle Week events, offering free live music and events at stages in streets in the 'Cavern Quarter' area of Liverpool and the waterfront;
- Africa Oye, the biggest free African Music Festival held in the UK. It has been in existence since 1992 and is now held in Sefton Park, and in 2008 attracted an audience of over 20,000 people;[74] and
- Liverpool Biennial, a contemporary arts festival which is held in the city every two years. The first festival was held in 1999. The programme has a strong commissioning role, and previous works include Anthony Gormley's *Another Place*.

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[72] ONS mid year sub-national population estimates, 2007; www.statistics.gov.uk.

[73] Bureau International des Expositions, 1984 Liverpool USA, www.bie-paris.org/main/index.php?p=-152&m2=166, retrieved 26/05/09.

[74] www.africaoye.com/about.htm

The extensive physical regeneration of the city over the last two decades has given new opportunities for cultural organisations. For example, the Tate Liverpool, the Maritime Museum and the Museum of Liverpool Life are all situated in the redeveloped Albert Dock area of the city. It has also provided more opportunities for residents to participate in cultural activities.

5.2 Cultural programme

5.2.1 Aims and objectives

The overall theme of Liverpool's ECOC application was 'the world in one city'. The theme was to be explored through three lenses: 'yesterday, today and tomorrow'. Evidence from stakeholders suggests that Liverpool's overall motivation for bidding to become ECOC was three-fold (**EQ1**):

- A desire to be seen as a cultural city, and improve the city's reputation (evidence from stakeholders suggests that the ECOC title was seen as an opportunity for Liverpool to show that it could put on a large cultural event).
- Promotion of tourism in Liverpool; as one stakeholder commented "the ECOC presented an opportunity to develop a step change in terms of tourism".
- Promotion of Liverpool's regeneration through culture.

Running across this, ECOC status was perceived as a mechanism for engaging with and inspiring residents of the city. Before submitting its application to become an ECOC, Liverpool undertook a wide programme of public consultation to raise the profile of the application and increase public buy-in. The decision was taken to consult the public on what they felt were the best things about Liverpool, and this was used as the basis for the ECOC bid. The team developing the bid held a series of open meetings, placed postcards in libraries and doctors' surgeries and visited every primary school to engage people in the process. The neighbourhood management areas around Liverpool were particularly targeted, through advertisements on the side of buses and discussion groups held in neighbourhood locations. Local firms were involved in discussions through the city's business forum.

The strong perception of a number of stakeholders was that a main driver in Liverpool winning the ECOC title was that residents had been directly involved in formulating the bid, and that it had the backing of so many of them (**EQ2**).

Liverpool's original application set out three objectives that related to three main themes (**EQ3**). Table 5.1 sets out these original objectives, as well as the actions to be taken to achieve them.

Table 5.1 Original objectives

Theme	Objectives	Key topics
Create: Innovate and sustain	1. Confirm Liverpool's position as a premier European City	Forging strong, local, national and international partnerships.
		Forging stronger links between Liverpool, Manchester and the North West.
		Developing a positive profile and image of the city in the region, Europe and internationally, and increasing the confidence and pride of its citizens.
		Marketing the city effectively as a good place to live, to invest or to visit.
Participate: Include and engage.	2. Empower an inclusive and dynamic community.	Building on the strengths of the city's cultural diversity and rich heritage.
		Encouraging high quality and excellence in all aspects of culture.
		Enabling local people to take an active part in planning the future of their communities.
		Increasing opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and circumstances to experience or take part in a wide range of high-quality activities.
Regenerate: improve and review.	3. Achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for Liverpool and its future generations.	Contributing to the economic, social and physical regeneration of Liverpool.
		Increasing access to education and learning which develops creativity and skills relevant to the knowledge economy and cultural businesses.
		Sustaining a strong infrastructure of cultural organisations, activities, facilities and services.
		Creating an attractive environment for cultural businesses and creative people.
		Contributing to a vibrant city centre and revitalised neighbourhoods across the city.

Source: Liverpool Culture Company, European Capital of Culture 2008, Application Proposal "Liverpool the world in one city"

While Liverpool did not have any specific social inclusion objectives relating to any particular groups, the objectives listed above did include one 'to empower an inclusive and dynamic community' (**EQ4**). The activities included in the cultural programme took this objective further and specifically targeted residents of neighbourhoods where people were less likely to access culture, through the Four Corners and the Creative Communities programmes.

The original set of objectives presented in Liverpool's application had a specific European objective: 'to confirm Liverpool's position as a premier European City'. However, feedback from interviewees implies that this was seen more about promoting Liverpool and changing the perceptions of the city nationally and internationally, as opposed to promoting European culture *per se*.

In terms of the relative importance of each objective, the view from consultees was that the main driver of Liverpool becoming ECOC was to achieve the city's regeneration aims, and complement the ongoing physical change that had been occurring in the city. As well as providing an impetus for physical regeneration and driver of economic development, culture was also seen as an effective way of involving people in the city's regeneration. Other important objectives were promoting the city as a tourist destination, and improving its image in the media, and in the public's perception.

5.2.2 Changes to objectives and themes

During the period between the initial application and the title year, Liverpool's objectives had doubled in number, and become more specific. Consultation evidence suggests that all were of equal importance. Table 5.2 aligns the programme's final objectives with those in the original application.

Table 5.2 Objectives of Liverpool

Objectives proposed in the original application	Objectives pursued during the title year (2008)
1. Confirm Liverpool's position as a premier European city	5. Reposition Liverpool as a world class city by 2008.
2. Empower an inclusive and dynamic community.	2. Build community enthusiasm, creativity and participation.
3. Achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for Liverpool and its future generations.	3. Maintain, enhance and grow the cultural infrastructure of the city.
	4. Increase the levels of visitors and inward investment in the city.
	1. Create and present the best local, national and international arts and events in all genres.
	6. Provide efficient and effective management of the European Capital of Culture Programme.

Source: Liverpool Culture Company, European Capital of Culture 2008, Application Proposal "Liverpool the world in one city", and Liverpool Culture Company, Liverpool Culture Company 2005-06 Review and 2006-07 Delivery Plan

The first objective referring to Liverpool's position as a premier European city evolved into one aiming to reposition Liverpool as a world class city. The second objective 'to empower an inclusive and dynamic community' is similar to the final objective 'to build community enthusiasm, creativity and participation'. The third original objective 'to achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for Liverpool and its future generations' expanded into the objectives 'to maintain, enhance and grow the cultural infrastructure of the city' and 'to increase the levels of visitors and inward investment in the city'. Two of the final objectives, ' to create and present the best local, national and international arts and events in all genres' and ' to provide efficient and effective management of the European Capital of Culture Programme', were entirely new objectives but nonetheless consistent with the spirit of the original objectives.

5.2.3 Application process

The UK's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) organised the competition to select the UK's nomination for the European Capital of Culture in 2008,[75]

"The competition… is an opportunity for cities to explore and develop their cultural and creative life. To be a European Capital of Culture is an outstanding honour and, as a showcase for the cultural wealth of a city, it is second to none."[76]

The competition involved a two-stage process. An initial shortlist of cities were commended with a "Centre of Culture" Award, based upon their cultural standing, before being put forward for the final stage of selection to become the UK's nomination for the European Capital of Culture. Twelve candidate cities in the UK progressed to this stage, with Liverpool's principal rivals for the title including Newcastle, Birmingham and Belfast. Application criteria relating to the European dimension included "the ability to display the City's Cultural wealth within a European context and encourage other European states' participation."

Liverpool was selected to be the European Capital of Culture for 2008 on 3 June 2003. The judging panel was reported to have been inspired by Liverpool's cultural heritage and its artistic plans, and as discussed above the involvement and commitment of local people to the bid. Liverpool undertook an extensive process of consultation prior to submitting their bid, including asking local residents to rank their ideas as to why Liverpool should get the title (through forms in libraries, emails and via postal questionnaires), use of business forums and other discussion groups.

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[75] At that time the European legal basis did not oblige Member States to organise a competition. This has later become a formal requirement for cities applying for the title as of 2013.
[76] European Capital of Culture 2008 Criteria and Information for Applicants, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2000)

5.2.4 Activity

Liverpool's cultural programme was organised thematically: music, stage, art, streets, sport, conversations and literature, exploring and participate. Complementing these themes was a public engagement programme which included Creative Communities, Open Culture, the '08 Welcome Programme and the Volunteer Programme. Another cross-cutting project was Cities on the Edge (CotE), which involved six European port cities[77] in projects including art, film, music, performance, conferences and lectures. In total, 7,000 cultural events took place during 2008. Highlights of the programme include:

- La Machine, a giant mechanical spider commissioned from the French company Artichoke, part of the Streets strand of events;
- The visit of the Berliner Philharmoniker conducted by Liverpudlian Sir Simon Rattle, as part of the music programme; and
- The Gustav Klimt exhibition at the Tate Liverpool, which was the first comprehensive exhibition of the artist's work ever shown in the UK.

Apart from these high profile events, the cultural programme had a strong public engagement aspect. The Four Corners Programme involved outreach work which paired Liverpool's large cultural organisations with neighbourhoods across Liverpool. For example, the Everyman Theatre was paired with North Liverpool, which resulted in an increase in bookings for its productions from residents from these neighbourhoods. Similarly, the Bluecoat Arts Centre was paired with the Alt Valley neighbourhood and has since placed an outreach worker there. Additionally, the Creative Communities aimed to promote the use of locations that may not normally be considered 'cultural', for example, Around the City in 80 Pints which involved a number of the city's pubs.

Feedback from stakeholders suggests that the programme was generally considered to include a good mix of activities that would appeal to a wide range of people. The programme included events which may be considered 'high art', such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, but also more populist events such as the Liverpool Sound concert. More than 70% of activities in 2008 were free, which helped counter initial negative press coverage around affordability and accessibility. Tickets for the eight highest profile fee paying events were allocated via a ballot to ensure all had an equal chance of getting the tickets.

The Cities on the Edge project was one of the projects with a strong European dimension, and included activities such as 'Streetwaves' which brought young performers from across the participating cities together for a concert in Liverpool. The European dimension also featured strongly in the 'Intercultural Capital' suite of projects implemented in the context of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, and involving many of Liverpool's twin and partner cities from across Europe. For example, this included the High Hopes project involving young people from Liverpool and Stavanger compiling a film of their lives. Other projects with a European dimension included the Creative Education project 'Tales from Far Away' involved primary school children in retelling stories from Liverpool and across Europe. Many of the projects involved working with European partners to bring different or new aspects of culture to Liverpool for the first time, for example the Berliner Philharmoniker and La Machine.

[77] Bremen, Gdansk, Istanbul, Liverpool, Marseille and Naples.

There was a strong feeling among interviewees that some of the highest profile events during the ECOC year, such as La Machine, the visit of the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Klimt exhibition, would not have happened without the ECOC, as the additional funding needed to secure them would not have been available. Some of the activities in the cultural programme were annual events and would have taken place in the absence of ECOC designation, such as the Matthew Street Festival and the Liverpool Pops. Some existing events, such as the Tall Ships Race were also incorporated into the cultural programme.

5.2.5 Financing

The Culture Company had a tripartite funding strategy, seeking to lever funds from the private sector in the form of sponsorship, local and central government (**EQ21**). For this purpose, it employed two dedicated fundraisers, one for raising private sector funds, and one for the public sector. The consensus amongst interviewees is that Liverpool's fundraising strategy was generally successful. Indeed, this view is supported by financial data supplied by the Liverpool Culture Company.[78]

The total expenditure over the years for preparing and delivering the ECOC programme was far higher than estimated in the original application, reflecting the fact that the eventual cultural programme was much more extensive than first envisaged. The original application set an indicative budget of £18.6m for the title year, with £11.4m to be spent on programming, £2.5m to be spent on marketing, £2.5m to be spent on administration and planning, and £2.2m for contingency. In fact, actual expenditure for 2008 totalled £36.1m (**EQ22**). Furthermore, total expenditure from 2003/04 - 2008/09 equalled £122.4m, compared to the £22.6m estimated in the application (**EQ24**). Of total ECOC funding, the Impacts 08 programme reports that 74% of was focused on programming, 10% on overheads and administration, and 16.7% on marketing and promotions.[79]

Over this six-year period, Liverpool City Council was the main funder, with inputs totalling £75.1m, followed by grants from other organisations including the North West Development Agency, the Arts Council (the UK's national arts funding body) and the EU, totalling £30.8m (**EQ23**). Most of the EU funding (£11.5m) was received from the Merseyside Objective One programme and co-financed marketing, tourism, 08Welcome and the commercial programme. The EU's other financial contribution (£1.3m) was for the cultural programme and consisted of two parts: funding specifically attached to the ECOC designation and which co-financed the Cities on the Edge project; funding received in the context of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and which co-financed the Intercultural Capital suite of projects. Together, this EU funding represented just over 1% of the total funding of the ECOC.

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[78] Liverpool Culture Company Final Report 2003-2008.
[79] Percentages are partly based on projected expenditure. Impacts 08 (2009), *Core Messages 2007-Early 2008*; University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, p6.

Table 5.3 Total funding of Liverpool

Sources of finance	Total (£m)	%
Liverpool City Council	75.1	61.3
European Union	12.8	10.5
Other grants	18.0	14.7
Commercial Programme	12.5	10.2
Miscellaneous (including ticket sales)	4.0	3.3
TOTAL	122.4	100

Source: Liverpool Culture Company Final Report 2003-2008.

Sponsorship from the private sector was hard to attract in the early years, as it was challenging to sell the concept of ECOC on its own without a clear cultural programme. However this became easier as the programme was finalised and Liverpool had a 'product' to sell. Using a sponsorship model based on that used by large sporting events such as the Olympic Games, some £12.5m (10.2% of total funding) was attracted from commercial sponsors, as well as contributions in kind such as volunteer uniforms and refreshments.

It is unclear from the evidence collected however whether the programme could have been successfully implemented on a smaller budget (**EQ27**). There was a feeling among some stakeholders that smaller organisations felt aggrieved that the larger cultural organisations received the majority of the additional funding available. Commissioning smaller and more local cultural organisations could have provided some scope for reducing overall costs, but at the risk of not producing the desired impacts (**EQ29**).

5.3   Relevance

5.3.1 Relevance of objectives

Liverpool's overall motivation to become an ECOC was primarily about achieving the city's long term regeneration objectives, and about improving the city's image, albeit through the medium of a European cultural event. The original set of objectives was relevant to Liverpool's application to become ECOC. They align well with the overall theme of 'a world in one city', and the three minor themes of 'create, participate and regenerate.

Liverpool's revised objectives were not explicitly aligned with the overall objectives of the 1999 Decision to *'highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens'.* Indeed, there was a greater focus more on the potential benefits of ECOC for Liverpool and its residents. However, many of the activities in the cultural programme did have a European dimension and were thus relevant in practice to the overall objective of the 1999 Decision, for example the Cities on the Edge project (CotE) and the Intercultural Capital suite of projects.

5.3.2 Relevance of Activities

Generally, Liverpool's programme of activities was closely aligned to its objectives, both overtly stated and implied (**EQ8**). This is especially true of the second and third original objectives, 'to empower an inclusive and dynamic community' and 'to achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for Liverpool and its future generations'. The programme of activities sought to be inclusive, which can be seen from the number of community-based projects included in the programme, including the Liverpool Commissions strand which commissioned work from local artists. The ECOC and its cultural programme were also designed to help accelerate the regeneration of Liverpool, as well as strengthen the cultural sector through partnership working and international collaboration.

Evidence from stakeholder interviews suggests that the cultural programme built upon the foundations put in place in the original application. While specific details of activities were not included, the overall concepts of high levels of community involvement, celebration of different aspects of Liverpool's culture, and use of Liverpool's built environment were reflected in the final programme of activities (albeit to a slightly lesser extent in the case of using the built environment).

In the view of some stakeholders, activity with a European dimension was not a high priority at the application. Indeed, the Nomination Report of the Selection Panel noted that "the overall concept of the ECOC doesn't yet reflect sufficiently the "European-ness" of the ECOC scheme and the exceptional "brand" of this scheme compared to other exceptional events such as festivals or cultural seasons". However, the European dimension was strengthened during the development phase and thus more visible in the eventual cultural programme than it had been in the application.

Liverpool primarily sought to make the European dimension of ECOC visible through the creation of partnerships with other European cities and through collaborations, co-productions and exchanges within the context of a broader international approach (**EQ9**). This included exchanges of young people as part of Cities on the Edge, which can be seen to have promoted '*greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens',* through the Intercultural Capital projects which highlighted the diversity of different cultures and through the activities that were commissioned from European companies, such as Artichoke's La Machine.

Other aspects included in Article Three of the 1999 Decision are very relevant to Liverpool's programme of activities, including:

- Highlighting artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution.
- Exploiting the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city.
- Ensuring the mobilization and participation of large sections of the population and, as a consequence, the social impact of the action and its continuity beyond the year of the events.
- Supporting and develop creative work, which is an essential element in any cultural policy.

5.4 Efficiency

5.4.1 Governance

The Liverpool Culture Company was set up in 2000 to apply for the ECOC title, and then expanded in 2004 to design and deliver the cultural programme. The Culture Company was intended to operate as a separate and independent body from Liverpool City Council and had three boards during its operation (**EQ13**):

* The first board had 40 members and met once every quarter; it was formed of senior national stakeholders, from a number of different backgrounds;
* The board was slimmed down in 2006 to sixteen members, to oversee the development of the cultural programme with a number of sub groups; and
* The board was reduced to six members in 2007 to support the delivery of the programme.

Evidence from the stakeholder interviews suggests that its large size and the wide diversity of interests represented may have hampered the board's operation making it difficult to establish clarity of leadership and direction. It was also felt to lack the 'hands on' approach that was required in an organisation such as the Culture Company. This may have contributed to an initial lack of joint working between the different teams within the Culture Company, and poor relations with the local media. However, this was recognised and, as noted above, the board was thus reduced to sixteen members in 2006, and then six in 2007, to provide more focussed leadership and drive.

The period following the designation in 2004 was a challenging time for the Culture Company; one stakeholder described it as being presented with 'a blank piece of paper', given the need to translate the objectives and concepts introduced in the application into a tangible programme of activities. The promotion of the concept of ECOC was challenging for the Company, given the potentially subjective nature of the concept of culture. There was also a perception that culture in the city was under funded and not perceived as important.

In 2005, an Artistic Director was brought in to help formulate the programme of activities for 2008. Her background included an interest in the public realm, with experience in the private sector (**EQ15a/b**). However, she stepped down in 2006, and her responsibilities were inherited by the Culture Company's existing Executive Producer and Creative Communities Director. A number of stakeholders felt that such tensions are not uncommon amongst major events programmes such as the ECOC. This clearly led to further challenges to the Culture Company in terms of efficiently developing an artistic programme. However, this situation catalysed the local cultural sector to begin working much more closely together, as the need for partnership and a cohesive approach to delivering the programme became apparent. It was also felt that the cultural sector, especially through the Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium (LARC[80]), began to work much more closely with the Culture Company, and the Local Authority, supporting further efficiencies.

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[80] LARC is a consortium featuring the large cultural operators in Liverpool, including the Bluecoat, FACT, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse Theatres, National Museums Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Tate Liverpool and the Unity Theatre.

The activities included in the cultural programme were developed in different ways (**EQ16, EQ17**). Some were developed by the Culture Company, and some were commissioned directly by the large cultural institutions that used additional funding to enable them to put on higher profile events. For example, the Tate had wanted to commission the Klimt exhibition for a number of years, and used the ECOC as a lever to access this event. The Liverpool Commissions programme was used to engage eighteen smaller cultural players in the ECOC and resulted in a diverse range of activities, including a play about the life of the football manager Bill Shankly. Other large events were suggested by external organisations, for example a company called Wild in Art suggested the Go Superlambananas event inspired by the Cow Parade.[81]

Feedback from stakeholders also suggests that there were some challenges relating to joint working between different teams working within the Culture Company. There is evidence of initial tension between the City Council events team, who had strong experience in maritime and sports events, and those brought into the Culture Company who had more of a 'festival focus'. One interviewee suggested this was because the teams needed time to gel and get used to the different ways of working of those from different backgrounds.

The number of staff employed in the Culture Company grew rapidly from five or six employees in 2004 to about 120 staff in 2008. However, the cultural programme was substantial, and included a number of strands that required employees with different skills and experience (**EQ28**). The fact that the cultural programme was generally delivered and promoted effectively implies that the Culture Company was adequately staffed to deliver an ambitious programme of this nature.

5.4.2 Communication

Liverpool's marketing and promotion strategy was twofold; a local campaign with the strap-line *'it's our time, it's our place*' to increase local engagement in the ECOC, and a national/international campaign focussing on Liverpool's unique selling points and cultural offer (**EQ19**). A local advertising agency was commissioned to develop a flexible logo, brand and 'feel' for the ECOC, in consultation with the public. Frustration was expressed by some interviewees that there was no specific ECOC brand that could be used to provide consistency in marketing across ECOC, which would help to make the brand more recognisable, and no continuity between Liverpool's marketing and past or future ECOC. The lack of 'brand identity' or promotional guidelines for ECOC is seen as challenging.

Part of the national media strategy was to reposition Liverpool in people's perceptions, as the city's recent history has led to a number of enduring negative stories which have become associated with the city. However the local media strategy in the years directly after winning the bid was mainly focused on managing expectations, as some commentators had unrealistic expectations for the ECOC. Indeed, some interviewees suggested that there was a 'media vacuum' in the time before the cultural programme was announced, which led to the media focussing on negative issues around the management and funding of the Culture Company. The strategy therefore included an early announcement of some of the artistic activities in 2006 and the announcement of the full programme in 2007, which made the reporting in the local media more positive. Many stakeholders agreed that the situation was also helped by the

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[81] The original Superlambanana sculpture was created in 1998 by Japanese artist Taro Chiezo to represent two items commonly traded through Liverpool's port in the past. The 2008 parade included 125 smaller replicas of the original, painted in various designs and displayed throughout the city for ten weeks during 2008.

appointment of a high profile Liverpudlian television producer (who had been a Board member since 2006) as Creative Director and Deputy Chairman of the Liverpool Culture Company towards the end of 2007, whose strong local media profile helped deflect negative publicity.

The evidence suggests that the Culture Company's promotional activities were more focussed on the promotion of the city and its image, as well as the promotion of the ECOC events and attractions, as opposed to raising the awareness of the European dimension. It is hard to judge the extent to which the promotional strategy reached the target groups, but the awareness within the city's neighbourhoods appears to have been high; 94.7% of those surveyed in 2008 recognised the logo and were aware of it, however only 33.5% felt they knew a reasonable amount, quite a lot or a great deal about the ECOC.[82]

5.5 Effectiveness

5.5.1 Developing cultural activities

The Liverpool ECOC's seven objectives included "to create and present the best local, national and international arts and events in all genres" (**EQ35**) and the evidence suggests that Liverpool was largely effective in achieving this specific objective.

Liverpool's cultural programme was certainly one of the most extensive ECOC programmes to date. In total, 7000 cultural events, activities and projects were organised or integrated into the cultural programme, across nine themes of activity (A year in Music, A year on Stage etc). These were attended by over 15 million people, with large productions such as the People's Launch attended by around 40-50,000 people, and cultural organisations such as the Tate Liverpool art gallery receiving 1 million visitors. In terms of effects, high levels of satisfaction were registered with ECOC events, ranging from 4.0 out of 5.0 for the John Tavener Requiem (performed at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral) to 4.4 out of 5.0 for the People's Launch. Significant increases in visitor figures were registered for all major cultural organisations in Liverpool during 2008 (for example 68% at Tate Liverpool, 33% at National Museums Liverpool, 22% at Everyman Playhouse theatres and 24% at the Philharmonic concert hall). Key success factors for Liverpool appear to have been the scale and breadth of artistic coverage of the programme, which successfully brigaded new and existing cultural activities to appeal to a wide-ranging audience (EQ34).

Whilst Liverpool already enjoyed a vibrant cultural scene, the evidence suggests that the City Council and its cultural partners made some steps towards supporting an increased level of cultural activity on a long-term basis. This includes the development of a new Culture Strategy up to 2012, the maintenance of funding for cultural organisations at pre-2008 levels, plans to expand their events and public art programme into 2009 and beyond, drawing upon European funding from the North West Development Agency (NWDA), and through the continuation of their neighbourhoods and schools engagement programme. Additionally, Liverpool's consortium of large cultural organisations, the LARC, has successfully accessed a number of national arts-based grants (e.g. Thrive[83]) to deliver additional projects from 2009, as a consequence of strengthening partnership working within their consortium during 2008.

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[82] Impacts 08 (2009), *Local Area Studies - 2008 results*, University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.
[83] A national Arts Council funding stream designed to provide funding for initiatives that support the shared services agenda and create new, sustainable structures for supporting the arts.

Liverpool has also been effective at commissioning new artworks. It hosted 60 world and European premieres, with around 10 new music commissions (including Brett Dean/Sir Simon Rattle commissioned by the Culture Company), 16 art and public art commissions (including the Ben Johnson Cityscape from National Museums Liverpool), five street commissions (including 119 Go Superlambananas and La Machine from the Culture Company), and 14 new plays (including a new production of King Lear from the Everyman and Playhouse Theatres). The most important success factor in this respect has been the involvement of, and close partnership working with, Liverpool's existing cultural organisations. Conversely, relative to other ECOC (such as Stavanger), it could be argued that Liverpool's programme was less innovative and consistent in encouraging new forms of cultural expression. This may potentially be due to absence of a dedicated Artistic Director after 2006, who prior to this had been aiming to develop an innovative programme of activities involving both international and local artists.

As a consequence of such extensive activity, Liverpool's major cultural organisations are reported to have grown in ambition and developed skills in commissioning larger and more complex artworks, which will inform their artistic programmes in the future, and arguably provides a solid platform for the development of new forms of cultural expression in future (**EQ36**). In addition, the success of the Go Superlambanana project and large scale events are now being built upon by the City Council, for example through developing a new public art project featuring penguins. On the other hand, smaller cultural providers are sceptical as to whether they will be able to deliver such ambitious projects in the future without ECOC funding. It is perhaps too early to conclude whether the ECOC will lead to a recognised and ongoing contribution to artistic innovation in the city.

Liverpool has been effective in supporting local artists and cultural organisations (EQ35); indeed, some 10,000 artists were supported. In addition to all eight major cultural organisations in Liverpool, which were supported with project funding, the ECOC helped to develop 14 other local artists and cultural organisations (from 150 applicants) for the Liverpool Commissions programme (exciting, innovative art projects of international quality). Other examples include the 121 Liverpool musicians involved in the Streetwaves project, and 6,300 individuals and organisations involved in Open Culture (encouraging all to get involved in cultural production). As a consequence, the LARC has been strengthened and examples of joint working have increased, delivering the benefits described above in terms of commissioning new activity and jointly accessing funding. In addition, a number of those smaller arts organisations selected for the Liverpool Commissions have since been selected as Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) by the City Council.

This increased level of support has undoubtedly increased both the international and national profile of Liverpool's cultural sector. For example, the opportunity to work with major international artists (e.g. Sir Simon Rattle) and collections (e.g. Klimt), which would not have come to Liverpool otherwise, resulted in a significant level of positive media coverage for Liverpool's cultural sector (including from previously sceptical newspapers and journalists).

5.5.2 Promoting the European dimension

Whilst the Liverpool ECOC did not have a specific objective to promote the *European* dimension of and through culture, its activities have nonetheless made a contribution to that objective. The most significant activities are included in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.4 Cultural Activities with a European Theme

Project	Description
Cities on the Edge	Involved six European Port Cities, including future ECOC, in 'examining their roles', through exchanges, debates, conferences and films.
Intercultural Capital	A series of projects to explore and understand interculturalism, give increased profile to intercultural dialogue by linking it to the ECOC, and develop and share examples of good practice.
High Hopes (part of the Intercultural Capital series)	Followed and documented the lives and aspirations of 10 children from Liverpool and Stavanger.
Tales from Far Away	This project was part of Creative Education programme, which involved schools across Merseyside retelling stories from across Europe.
Four Corners	European Neighbours' Day activities were integrated within the Four Corners neighbourhood outreach programme.

Although sizeable in themselves, those activities were not always the most visible to local and national audiences and media, largely because they were just one part of a very extensive cultural programme (**EQ31**). However, based upon the outputs achieved, the ECOC is likely to have achieved significant impact on those participants involved in the specifically European projects (mostly young people), in terms of making them more aware of European diversity and of a common cultural heritage, as well as encouraging a more European outlook. Some of these European activities are likely to continue albeit at a smaller scale, for example, elements of Cities on the Edge. Other activities, although coming to an end will leave a legacy, for example, via the dissemination of materials developed by the Intercultural Capital series.

One further strategy open to ECOC to help ensure a sufficient European dimension is to embed a range of high profile European artists, performers and commissions within their programmes, to help imbue a strong European 'flavour' to the ECOC year. Within Liverpool these included the French company Artichoke, who devised the La Machine street project, the Berlin Philharmoniker, and the Le Corbusier architecture and Gustav Klimt exhibitions. However, overall it could be argued that the commissioning of European artists specifically (and their visibility) was not a significant priority for Liverpool's ECOC (particularly given their own aim of showcasing culture with links or relevance to Liverpool).

Liverpool has also made a significant contribution towards facilitating international exchanges and creating international networking structures. Cities on the Edge involved an exchange programme between twelve youth theatre groups from across the world, whilst the five winners of the Streetwaves band competition toured the Cities on the Edge, with bands from these cities performing in Liverpool. As a consequence, it was reported that a dialogue for international cooperation has been established, and Liverpool is more likely to participate in exchanges in the future (e.g. Streetwaves will be continuing), although on a smaller scale, and under the leadership of future ECOC, for example Marseille 2013.

One of the most important contributions to the European dimension has been Liverpool's activity to share its ideas and experiences with other (past, present and future) ECOC as well as other European cities more generally. The Culture Company hosted around 120 international delegations (including some from cities designated as future ECOC), a number of consultations, away days and conferences with previous ECOC (e.g. Lille and Cork), and the EuroCities network to help share good practice. As a consequence of this activity, Liverpool City Council and the University of Liverpool (which is co-leading the Impacts 08 evaluation study) identified the benefits of continuing to participate in such exchanges in the future, and developed a proposal to establish a European research network and evidence base relating to ECOC. Funding was secured from the European Commission's Culture Programme, which is supporting a platform for continuing international cooperation in the immediate future.

5.5.3 Supporting social development through culture

From the outset, Liverpool sought to improve access to culture, through building community enthusiasm, creativity and participation. Liverpool's Creative Communities programme was reported to be the largest public and community arts scheme in Europe, receiving £11 million funding over four years and involving 160,000 participants, including all schools in Liverpool (covering 67,000 children), in new approaches to participation. As part of this (**EQ37, EQ38**):

- 27,000 people were involved in the Four Corners neighbourhoods programme, which used art to explore community life in the city's neighbourhood management areas;
- The Generation 21 city planning project involved 160 schools, 21 creative collaborators and 8,000 participants;
- The Portrait of Nation shared heritage project involved 100s of young people across 17 UK cities; and
- Five schools and twenty six community groups were involved in designing Superlambananas.

In turn, Liverpool's 08Volunteer Programme grew from 259 registered volunteers in 2005, to 9,894 in August 2008. Of these, 851 received training to become active volunteers. 1,000 volunteers were specifically involved in the '08 Welcome Programme, taking part in 150 events and 60 training sessions. To help support this diverse programme of participation, the Culture Company worked closely with the City Council to attract other public funding, such as the UK government's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

As a consequence of Liverpool's ECOC programme, the evidence suggests that more people from target groups accessed culture during 2008 than would have in the absence of ECOC designation (**EQ33**). Cultural organisations reported that audiences from target neighbourhoods at mainstream cultural events increased during the title year, for example 50% of people who booked tickets for the 'Three Sisters on Hope Street' play at the Everyman Theatre had never done so before. The programme also reached a diverse audience: representation of low income (D/E) economic groups ranged from 23% at the Tall Ships Race to 30% at the Sir Simon Rattle/Berlin Philharmoniker performance, compared with 21% of visitors overall. Some 34% of the People's Launch participants were 16 to 24 years old, compared with 10.2% of visitors overall. In addition, there were reported positive effects on the skills and self-esteem of young people involved in Creative Communities projects.

In 2007, participants in the Volunteer Programme reported that involvement in the ECOC had widened their cultural interests and helped them to develop confidence and new skills.[84] It is perhaps too early to determine whether this will lead to a step-change in cultural participation in the city. However following the continuation of Creative Education and Neighbourhoods posts within the local authority, and the joint appointment of an outreach officer by the Bluecoat arts centre and the Everyman theatre, there is evidence of sustained impact.

Liverpool also aimed to maintain and enhance its capacity for governance in the culture sector. As discussed earlier (section 5.4.1), the Culture Company provided an effective delivery mechanism, and helped to improve the management of culture during the title year (**EQ32**). Whilst the Culture Company has now been dissolved, stakeholder evidence suggests that the ECOC has helped to forge a stronger relationship between the City Council and cultural organisations (not only larger member organisations of the LARC, but also those smaller cultural organisations who benefited from the Liverpool Commissions), leading to greater engagement with the cultural sector in Liverpool. It also appears that a sustainable platform for cultural activities has been established, at least in the medium term. A new team (Culture Liverpool) will deliver the cultural strategy from within Liverpool City Council, the Creative Education and Neighbourhoods programmes are continuing (with their posts mainstreamed to help sustain engagement), and there will be continued increased funding levels for cultural bodies for the three years beyond 2008. The newly strengthened and emboldened LARC has already received additional external funding from the Arts Council and the DCMS, and it is reported that the range of small and large cultural networks forged across the city during 2008 will continue.

The ECOC did not need to initiate and directly finance improvements in the cultural infrastructure of Liverpool, given the existing level of quality provision in the city and plans for improvement. However, ECOC status was used very effectively to provide a focus for bringing forward and completing existing projects, including Liverpool's first large concert/conference venue in the Echo Arena and the refurbished Bluecoat Arts Centre, amongst others, which have increased the physical capacity for cultural events in the city. Combined with future projects including the new Museum of Liverpool and regenerated World Heritage Waterfront, an indirect legacy of the ECOC year will undoubtedly be an improved cultural and tourist offering for Liverpool. One of the key success factors in this respect has been the strong co-ordination and synergy achieved between Liverpool's ECOC initiative and its regeneration activities, which was embodied as early as 2000 in the Liverpool Vision's Regeneration Strategy.

5.5.4 Support economic development through culture

Liverpool sought to use ECOC status to promote the city as a cultural destination nationally and internationally, to improve the image of the city and to deliver economic outcomes. The evidence would suggest, tentatively, that Liverpool has been successful in achieving its own objectives of increasing levels of visitors and inward investment in the city, and repositioning itself as a world class city. Firstly, a recognisable logo and coherent marketing strategy was devised by an advertising agency, which incorporated a visually arresting local and national campaign (including, for example, advertising on the London Underground). This also aimed to improve the image of the city. Meanwhile a comprehensive '08 Welcome programme was developed to improve the visitor experience, which involved 10,000 frontline staff (with 5,000 of them attending training workshops).

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[84] Impacts 08 (2008), *Volunteering for Culture, Exploring the Impact of being an 08 volunteer*, University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.

In terms of results (**EQ33**), Liverpool is reported to have experienced a 150% increase in visits to its tourist information centres, 81% hotel occupancy levels (up 6.8% from 2007) and one million hotel bed nights sold (**EQ41**). The FACT multi-media arts centre had its most popular exhibition ever, attracting 22,000 visitors. Mersey Partnership data suggests that 43% of visitors were influenced by the ECOC status, and 32% were influenced to visit by an ECOC event. The proportion of non-resident visitors ranged from 26% at Liverpool the Musical to 63% at the Liverpool Sound concert (between July and September 2008, 20% of visitors were from the UK outside the North West and 24% were from overseas). 25% of all visitors during 2008 were new to the city. Most interestingly however, Liverpool also appeared to boost its popularity within the region: the proportion of visitors from Merseyside and the North West increased from 22% in 2006, to 56% in 2008.

Tentative evidence suggests that Liverpool has, as a consequence, become more recognised internationally as a cultural destination. Liverpool was voted the UK's third most popular city in the Condé Nast Readers' Travel Awards 2008.[85] In 2009, foreign calls to Liverpool's tourist information centres were reported to have outstripped 2007 and 2008. Mersey Partnership data also suggests that the 08 Welcome Programme made a positive contribution towards these impacts and wider recognition: visitor ratings of the general atmosphere, feeling of welcome and overall enjoyment in Liverpool increased from around 4 out of 5 in 2006 to 5 out of 5 in 2008. In terms of city and cultural promotion, Liverpool's success factors have included a strong strategic focus on marketing from the Culture Company and continuity of activities, the appointment or secondment of dedicated personnel to focus on marketing and the 08 Welcome, and the use of specialist (local) sub-contractors to add expertise.

Promotional activities focussed on improving the image of the city contributed towards 7,000 articles appearing in the UK and international print media (up to July 2008), and 600 journalists visiting Liverpool. The majority of press coverage was either neutral (54%) or positive (43%), which was felt to have challenged traditionally negative perceptions of the city. 68% of coverage reached an audience beyond the North West. Similarly, 80% of residents agreed that the ECOC will improve positive external impressions of Liverpool. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the range of events and international spotlight on Liverpool increased pride in the city from an already high level, even amongst some residents who did not tend to take part in events. Externally, 79% of people now think Liverpool is a city on the rise, the highest in the UK.[86] The challenge for Liverpool will be to sustain this optimism and pride post-ECOC, as well as positive media coverage of its cultural activities and investments.

Achievement of promotional and city branding objectives will have contributed towards the reported £800 million of economic benefits secured for the Liverpool City Region from the ECOC (**EQ39**). This implies that a net gain was made for the city as a result of the ECOC (which cost £117m). Individual event contributions ranged from £57,561 of additional economic impacts for the Liverpool economy, £1,191 for the rest of Merseyside and £315 for the rest of North West England, and beyond from the John Taverner Requiem, to £9,632,345, £662,777 and £222,498 respectively from Go Superlambananas (supporting 225 full time jobs). The average expenditure of day visitors in 2008 was £47, compared with £35 in 2006. Although impossible to assess accurately, this has arguably, made some contribution towards Liverpool's success in regional development terms over the period: £4 billion investment has been delivered in 300 major physical developments since 2000 (**EQ40**). Eight additional hotels were built between 2007 and

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[85] Compared to the 2007 and 2006 rankings of seventh most popular UK city.
[86] Liverpool '08 European Capital of Culture, The impacts of a year like no other, Liverpool Culture Company, 2008

2008, creating almost 1,000 additional bed spaces in the city. There is some anecdotal evidence that the raised profile for Liverpool may have contributed to increased levels of inward investment, an example being the shipping company Maersk which has just moved in to the city and has expressed interest in being part of the waterfront events.

5.6   Sustainability

5.6.1 Cultural activities (EQ47, EQ48, EQ52)

All cultural events and exchanges planned for the subsequent years are likely to be at a lower level as funding is reduced, and some activities cannot be expected to continue. However, the City Council (and partners) is committed to sustaining increased funding of culture for two more years, and there is an expectation that the cultural sector will improve its effectiveness (**EQ48**). Activities beginning in 2008 and continuing beyond the title year, or directly influenced by the ECOC year, are included in the table below.

Table 5.5 Activities beginning in 2008 carrying on beyond the ECOC year (EQ47)

Activity/Project	Description
The Creative Education Programme	Part of the Creative Communities strand, it will continue after 2008. In 2009, a project called 'Da Boyz' has been commissioned out to an arts organisation and will perform educational plays in deprived communities.
Large scale cultural events	Liverpool City Council will continue the programme of large scale cultural events, for 2009 there is planned a concert on the waterfront featuring the Liverpool Philharmonic and local pub singers, Art on the Waterfront and a version of the Go Superlambanana parade featuring giant penguins, funded through ERDF and the NWDA.
Cities on the Edge	This programme will continue in 2009. This demonstrates an effort to retain European co-operation beyond 2008 and Liverpool will work closely with future ECOC to share good practice through presentations and networking across Europe.
Streetwaves	The cultural company music project which showcases musical talents and provides a springboard to further their careers. Streetwaves is part of the CotE programme which will continue throughout 2009.
Living through Change	This programme will support the Four Corners community programme through the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF).
Arts Council Thrive Programme	The ECOC helped to secure funding from the Arts Council Thrive programme, which will continue until December 2010. It has invested £1.34 million in LARC which delivers a series of programmes aimed at increasing the role of the cultural sector in civic leadership, and addressing social and economic renewal.

In addition, as discussed previously, a number of smaller arts organisations involved in the Liverpool Commissions have since been designated as "Regularly Funded Organisations" (RFOs) by the City Council. There are also plans to extend the legacy of the ECOC through other events such as the Shanghai Expo in 2010, the 2012 Cultural Olympiad project in collaboration with Manchester and Preston, and the Titanic centenary in 2012. One further idea is to have an annual or biennial festival along a similar model to the Edinburgh Festival.

5.6.2 Cultural governance

As discussed under effectiveness, the team responsible for delivering future cultural programming is now known as Culture Liverpool and will operate within the City Council (**EQ49**). A cultural strategy for the period up to 2012 is currently being to ensure a legacy from the ECOC year and the continuation of the large events programme.

There is some concern that expertise will be lost once the Culture Company ceases to operate (**EQ50**). However, there are some examples of useful mechanisms continuing, such as the Bluecoat and the Everyman Playhouse Theatre's jointly funded outreach officer, focusing on dance and youth music in the Alt Valley. This was a new role which has been created and retained as a direct result of the ECOC.

Furthermore, ECOC status has helped to facilitate greater collaboration and strengthen partnership working between organisations, thereby stimulating a more effective multi-agency approach towards thinking and operating in the longer-term (**EQ51**). For example it has encouraged cultural organisations to work together to raise income from other sources.

The Impacts 08 programme is also continuing beyond the title year and promises to leave an important legacy. As well as completing its reports relating specifically to the Liverpool ECOC, Impacts 08 is also seeking to adapt its research framework into an international model for research for use by future ECOC as well as other major cultural initiatives. To that end, it is currently leading a European policy-analysis grouping, with funding from the EU's Culture Programme.[87]

5.6.3 Long-term development

The ECOC has injected enthusiasm and pride in the city and has provided the city government with the know-how and confidence to successfully deliver large scale and high profile events in the future (**EQ52**). There is also evidence which suggests that cultural organisations may now be more willing to collaborate with Liverpool-based companies, for example the Everyman Theatre has found that more people now want to produce with it. The ECOC also helped to initiate or accelerate major capital cultural projects already under consideration, given added impetus now since it has given Liverpool the opportunity to see what difference can be made through culture.

From a business perspective, the ECOC has helped to raise the profile of the city, which has encouraged investment and has made Liverpool a more attractive place to do business. Liverpool is in a more favourable position to continue building on further opportunities to continue to attract new investment to strengthen the local economy and create new job opportunities (**EQ54**). There is also a better tourist infrastructure in place now.

The ECOC has gone some way to changing people's perceptions of Liverpool, and has placed Liverpool on the map as a thriving cultural hub. Moreover it will sustain a wider process of cultural development, through greater awareness and participation in culture (**EQ53**).

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[87] http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc411_en.htm

5.7 Conclusions

5.7.1 Success of the ECOC (EQ42, EQ43)

The cultural programme and associated activity represented one of the most ambitious and most extensive ECOC programmes to date and captured a broad range of cultural, economic and social benefits for the city. Given that, the ECOC can be said to have achieved its objectives.

The Liverpool ECOC was effective in developing and implementing its cultural programme, in promoting the European dimension through collaborations, co-productions and exchanges within the context of a broader international approach, and was very effective in supporting the social and economic development of the city through culture. The Liverpool Culture Company skilfully packaged a diverse range of new and existing cultural activities, which would appeal to a local and international audience, through partnership working. Liverpool has also made a contribution towards the European dimension through its international networking activities and the legacy of the Impacts 08 programme, which offers a model for the evaluation of future ECOC. Cultural participation has been increased through an extensive community arts programme, covering every district of the city and including every school and through a large volunteer programme. The Impacts 08 evaluation suggests very positive economic benefits, including increased levels of visitors and inward investment.

Overall, the Liverpool Culture Company can be said to have achieved its objective of providing "efficient and effective management of the ECOC programme". The strategy for fundraising was successful and Liverpool's major cultural organisations took a strong role in the development of the programme. The strategy of promoting the ECOC year within the city to create a sense of public buy-in, and outside to maximise tourism, also appears to have worked well. The Culture Company did experience a number of difficulties in relation to its governance structure, for example, the large number of board members in the development phase. The appointment of an Artistic Director from outside the city also attracted negative media attention, and there were difficulties in embedding this role within local structures. Overall media coverage was not always complimentary, especially in the time before the programme of activities was announced.

Whilst some stakeholders felt that not enough emphasis was placed on securing a positive legacy and that planning could have begun sooner, the ECOC has nonetheless stimulated many important legacies. The city's capacity for cultural governance has been strengthened, with new partnerships, posts and funding now in place. A large events programme will continue to operate in 2008, with increased ambition, supported by a successful application for ERDF funding. This programme, and other cultural events, will be supported by a continuing volunteer programme. Liverpool's experience will potentially also benefit future ECOC through continued networking and through the ongoing activities of the Impacts 08 programme.

5.7.2 Lessons learnt

- When bidding for ECOC status, it is important to demonstrate broad participation in the process, from cultural organisations, businesses and residents. This can also help to set a benchmark and tone for achieving high levels of participation post-designation.
- The skills required to develop a successful application, which include a strong understanding of the political context and policy making processes, are very different from those required to develop and deliver a successful ECOC and cultural programme. A strong delivery organisation, with a certain level of autonomy from political processes and directed by personnel with the requisite management skills *and* artistic experience, is critical.
- ECOC boards need to be fit for purpose in terms of their role and composition, and include a sufficient number of independent 'advocates' for the ECOC. For example, it may be useful to include high profile, local representatives of the cultural sector on ECOC boards, who can help articulate positive messages to a receptive media, free from political pressures and prerogatives.
- It is also important to publish details of the ECOC's cultural programme as early as possible and on a regular and ongoing basis, to help raise the profile of the ECOC and to encourage positive relationships with the media.
- Artistic directors can help to inject innovation into ECOC programmes, as well as bringing a sense of vision and coherence to activities and events. However, it is most important to ensure that the city or region's major cultural organisations are fully committed as partners and involved in the development of the programme, since they are also able to bring many ideas and ultimately the capacity to deliver activities. Smaller local cultural organisations should also be involved, for example through a commissioning process, to ensure that the ECOC is fully inclusive and helps to build local capacity in the arts.
- ECOC programmes should include activities which appeal to both specialist artistic and populist interests, and in particular look to provide a balance between paying and open-access activities, for example through a programme of high quality public art and opportunities for street theatre. This can help to increase the visibility of the ECOC and widen participation and the benefits.
- It is important to ensure that all communities are able to benefit from the ECOC, given the high levels of public investment following designation. This can be achieved for example by instigating parallel programmes of outreach arts activity within poorer neighbourhoods and communities in the city, in partnership with other service providers, and developing volunteering programmes to provide other practical opportunities to participate in the ECOC year.
- ECOC status can provide an important catalyst for city regeneration, and in particular provide a milestone for bringing major capital projects to fruition. To maximise the benefits, the ECOC year should be integrated within existing plans and strategies (and as early as before the city has received its designation).
- A dedicated team is required to plan and manage the legacy programme, which should be implemented from an early stage. There should be a strong focus on promotional and programme activity for the subsequent years so that progress is not lost. During the transitional phase of the delivery body, every effort should be made to maintain the knowledge and talent base, such as through gradual dismantling, and retaining expertise built up from the ECOC to create a lasting legacy.
- To fully assess the local impact of the ECOC, an ongoing, longitudinal evaluation is required, which employs both quantitative and qualitative methods, and considers cultural, economic and social impacts.

Stavanger

6.0 Stavanger

6.1 Background

6.1.1 The city

Stavanger's ECOC went beyond the limit of the city to encompass the neighbouring city of Sandnes, as well as the wider region (fylke) of Rogaland. Stavanger is a port city in Norway, in the region of Rogaland and, with a population of around 120,000, is one of the smaller cities to be an ECOC[88]. It has experienced periods of growth and decline throughout its history, firstly after the decline of its fish export industry in the 1930s, and then after the fall in demand for its canning industry after the Second World War. The city currently has a strong industrial base in the oil and petroleum industry which has been built up since the discovery of oil under the North Sea in the 1970s; it is now known as 'the petroleum capital of Europe'. This growth in the city's industrial base has increased the city's economic prosperity and population.

The city generally performs well in relation to economic indicators; in 2008 only 1.1% of its population was registered as unemployed, compared to 1.7% nationally. In 2007, gross income per inhabitant aged more than 17 years was 394,700 NOK (€46 568), some 72,200 NOK (€8,518) higher than the national average.[89] Despite – or perhaps because of - its prosperity, Stavanger has suffered from labour shortages in its key oil industry. Part of the rationale for the application to become ECOC was a desire to promote the cities and their region to potential skilled immigrants. Stavanger also wanted to increase its economic base, as past reliance on one industry alone has led to periods of decline.

Sandnes is Norway's fastest growing young city, and has a population of 80,000+, 30% of which is under 18 years old. Rogaland comprises 26 kommunes, and stretches from Sokndal in the far south to Suada in the north – a seven and a half hour drive. The southern coastline grows a large proportion of the food for Norway, whilst the north is mountainous and spectacular, with many islands and fjords. The rural population is thriving, with many small towns and conurbations.

6.1.2 Cultural sector

Stavanger has a number of well-established cultural institutions, including Sølvberget, Stavanger's culture house, which concentrates widely on human rights, literature and freedom of speech and which was a major player in Stavanger2008. The city also houses a number of museums, including the Norwegian Canning Museum, the Archaeology Museum and the Norwegian Children's Museum.

Stavanger also hosts a number of annual festivals, including MaiJazz, the Stavanger international Jazz Festival, the Gladmat food festival and an International Chamber Music Festival. In 1997 and 2004, Stavanger was the host port of the Tall Ships Race.

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[88] 2009 figure, Statistics Norway, Figures on Stavanger.
[89] Statistics Norway (www.ssb.no/english/municipalities/1103); exchange rate from www.ft.com (30.11.2009)

Despite this, evidence from stakeholders suggests that the cultural sector in Stavanger did not have a particularly high profile internationally, given Stavanger's more prevalent reputation as an oil town, but also because there were some views that Stavanger's cultural sector lacked ambition and that there was scope to improve its level of competence. The need to encourage more, and more ambitious, cultural activity in the city was one of Stavanger's key motivations for bidding to become ECOC.

6.2 Cultural programme

6.2.1 Aims and objectives

Stavanger's application had the overall theme 'Open Port', which could be understood by its English meaning of 'an open harbour', and the Norwegian meaning of 'an open gate'. The application was underpinned by three core values:

- Artistic Freedom
- Cultural Diversity
- Cultural Cohesion

The vision for Stavanger included:

- Explore: Horizons and Dialogues
- Openness, tolerance and free artistic development
- Promotion of cultural diversity
- Sustainable culture
- Broad popular participation
- Children and young people
- Tradition and innovation
- Tourist destination with a new cultural profile
- Modernisation, new building, infrastructure.

The motivation for Stavanger's bid to become ECOC (**EQ1**) stemmed from a number of considerations. Possibly the strongest motivation came from a desire to change the way that the local cultural scene is perceived, both in Norway and internationally. There was a desire to promote culture in order to encourage new migrants to the area and help meet some of the labour shortages and also to attract new creative companies to help diversify the local economy. 2008 was seen as a particularly favourable year to bid as Stavanger already enjoyed strong links with the UK (which was entitled to nominate a city that year) and the fact that it was the last year in which only one ECOC would be selected from the EU Member States; the preference was to share the title with only one other city.[90]

Stavanger Kommune and its politicians were a major driver in the decision to apply for the ECOC title, taken in 2001 (**EQ2**). The Kommune also had strong support from both the County Council (Rogaland fylkeskommune) and national government. The application process was challenging as there was a need to undertake research and identify potential funding sources. Before submitting the bid, the team

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[90] The 1999 Decision introduced an order of entitlement for Member States to nominate an ECOC from 2005-2019. Only one EU Member State was listed each year from 2005-08. From 2009 onwards two Member States were listed each year, reflecting the accession of ten new Member States in 2004.

preparing the application consulted widely with the city's cultural sector to help formulate the objectives; in total, some 700 people were consulted. In addition, school children were consulted on the vision of the 'Open Port' concept and what it meant, and some were included on committees. This feedback shaped the underlying premise of their bid and fed into the major projects presented in the application. This model of consultation and transparency was seen by a number of strategic stakeholders as critical to their cultural programme, as well as to the overall concept of Stavanger's ECOC.

6.2.2 Changes to objectives and themes

Whilst no specific objectives had been set out in the original application document, by 2008 Stavanger had developed a set of seven clear objectives for the title year (**EQ3**). These objectives related to the original three values of 'artistic freedom', 'cultural diversity' and 'cultural cohesion'.

Table 6.1 Objectives of Stavanger

Objectives pursued during ECOC year (2008)
1. Ensure a broad and enduring cultural lift, especially for children and the young
2. Promote quality, innovation and diversity in the arts
3. Contribute to the establishment of enduring networks in the fields of arts and culture
4. Contribute to cultural curiosity and tolerance
5. Enhance regional identity and pride
6. Contribute to further development of industry and commerce
7. Contribute to the construction of cultural and physical infrastructure

It can be seen that there are no specific social inclusion objectives included in the list (**EQ4**). However, from the first objective (and also from the list of activities included in the cultural programme), it is clear that there was to be a significant emphasis on widening access to culture (including for children and young people) (**EQ5**). It can also be seen that there were no particular objectives relating to promoting European aspects of culture.

6.2.3 Activities

Stavanger's application presented a well-developed cultural programme. Each of the projects was designed to capture or represent some aspect of the concept of the Open Port; for example, the Youth and Migration project was part of the Open Port of tolerance and social awareness and Neighbourhood Secrets was part of the Open Port of contemporary art, public opinion and identity. Stakeholder interviews suggest that the integrity of the activities proposed in the application remained intact on implementation, albeit in a revised or updated form. Table 6.2 highlights the main projects listed in the original application and how they changed.

Table 6.2 Activities Proposed in the ECOC Application

Open Port Theme	Activity
Open Port of Philosophy, Politics and Literature	The Arts of Hospitality
Open Port of Tradition, Crafts and Creativity	The House, Boat, Pot, Knife and Thread (became *A World Of Folk* – a major national and international exhibition curated by Li Edelkoort
Open Port of Tolerance and Social Awareness	Youth and Migration
Open Port of Heritage, Power and the Consequences of our actions	Oedipus Rex (not implemented)
Open Port of Fine art and Expression	Lars Hertervig exhibition (became a major opera co-production with Opera de Paris and Den Norske Opera)
Open Port of Peace, Human Rights and Conflict Resolution	Point of Peace
Open Port of Contemporary Art, Public Opinion and identity	Neighbourhood Secrets
Open Port of Curiosity, Communication and Expression	Sailors and Missionaries (became the *North Sea Project* involving 28 collaborative strands embracing performance, visual arts, literature, film, youth projects)
Open Port of Traditional and Innovative urban development	Norwegian Wood

During the development phase leading up to 2008, a 'taster' series of activities was implemented. For example, in 2006 the HOT/*cold* programme included performances and collaborations with a number of international artists to explore Nordic and Mediterranean culture, for example the Latino collective of the Spanish Harlem Orchestra collaborated with Rogaland youth musicians and performed at Stavanger harbour. 2007 was branded as 'the year of the voice' and included projects designed to increase partnerships and collaborations. Once again, the programme had a strong international flavour, including artists from Scotland, Germany and America.

The activities for the cultural programme were either inherited from outlines in the original application (ten projects including Point of Peace, Theatre in Landscape, Norwegian Wood, Arts of Hospitality and Neighbourhood Secrets), developed from the Open Call to local organisations and individuals, or formulated by the Director (**EQ17, EQ16**).

Four international companies were invited to act as artists-in-residence in Stavanger over the four quarters of 2008 and, as such, formed the basic 'structure' of the cultural programme. They represented four different artistic forms (dance, theatre, music and puppetry) and were from a diverse range of countries (Belgium, Israel, Lithuania and South Africa). As well as performances and exhibitions, these companies were encouraged to include local people in the activities through participation, workshops and collaboration with local cultural organisations. This combination of international performers with local people thus represented a very real manifestation of the Open Port concept.

Projects emerging from the Open Call process included:

- Art: On the Edge, which involved the use of lighthouses as art installations via a small gallery/artists collective on the coast;
- The World of Sound project which received one million NOK for public installations; the Sonic Vista component of this project is now going to Linz; and
- Tou Works, a performance art series developed by Tou scene, Stavanger's contemporary arts centre.

6.2.4 Financing

Total income equalled €39.5 million[91].   The single largest contribution came from the Norwegian government, as planned in the application document, with an additional significant level of funding from the Kommunes of Stavanger and Sandnes and the Rogaland fylkeskommune. Stavanger2008 received €1.49m of EU funding for its cultural programme, representing 3.5% of total funding. The funding was specifically used to co-finance the "New experiences across boundaries" project, which facilitated collaboration between local people and cultural operators and artists from around the world, including the artists-in-residence.

Table 6.3 Actual Funding 2004-08[92] (EQ23)

Financing sources	Euro (m)	%
Norwegian government	12.0	30.4%
Stavanger Kommune	8.4	21.3%
Sandnes Kommune	3.3	8.4%
Rogaland fylkeskommune	3.1	7.8%
EU Grant	1.4	3.5%
Other income (sponsorship, tickets, merchandising etc)	10.4	26.3%
Finance income (bank interest, foreign exchange gain etc)	0.8	2.0%
Total	**39.5**	**100%**

The strategy for fundraising was developed early on by the Managing Director. The programme was to be funded in a tripartite system, with one third coming from the national government, one third from the owners of Stavanger2008 (50% Stavanger, 25% Sandnes and 25% Rogaland), and one third coming from commercial sponsorship (**EQ21**). Evidence from stakeholders suggests that raising the desired level of private sector sponsorship was challenging. Originally, the task of raising sponsorship was given to an external consultancy, but was then brought in house as one of the teams in the company. The strategy for raising sponsorship was based upon a hierarchy of sponsorship opportunities, from large to more minimal financial contributions, opening up sponsorship to different sized and types of organisations. The companies needed to be convinced of the economic benefits of culture, which was difficult as this was the first event of this sort Stavanger had hosted. Larger companies, such as Total, were naturally interested in being associated with the ECOC as part of their own corporate social responsibility aims. 'Selling culture' was seen as difficult as it is an 'intangible dream' and more than a physical product, and also because money was being raised for the new concert hall at the same time.

[91] Assuming the same exchange rate as used in the Stavanger2008 bid (8.3 nok/€)
[92] Assuming the same exchange rate as used in the Stavanger2008 bid (8.3 nok/€)

Despite these difficulties, the financial data supports the view of many interviews that Stavanger's fundraising was generally very successful (**EQ18**). Indeed, some 21.4% of Stavanger's income (70 million NOK) was secured from commercial agreements alone (in addition to revenue from tickets and merchandising), well above the average of 13% for the 1995-2004 ECOC[93], and the overall target of one third sponsorship was almost met. As an example, Total, one of the main corporate sponsors, reported that the ECOC sponsorship was used as a 'golden thread' throughout its activities. In respect of its customers and business partners, Total reported that ECOC sponsorship would help differentiate the company from its competitors and create opportunities for meeting other businesses. In terms of benefits for its staff, Total highlighted the value of free tickets for events and a tent for its employees at the opening ceremony. Total also stressed the benefits of being seen as a good "corporate citizen" by decision-makers.

One new approach to fundraising was that of the 'Culture Supporter Programme', where smaller companies were able to contribute comparatively small amounts and still be associated with the ECOC brand. The Culture Supporter Programme had a separate logo, and was available in three different packages ranging from 15,000 to 50,000 NOK (€1,700 to 5,700). The idea was to target hotels, tourist outlets and restaurants to increase the visibility of the ECOC. In total, 120 companies participated in the Culture Supporter Programme, none of whom had ever sponsored a cultural event before. Almost 4.5 million NOK (€513,000) was raised through this scheme.[94]

Total final expenditure (€38.6 million) was higher than that predicted in the application (€36.1 million) (**EQ24**). However, the ECOC programme resulted in a surplus of 7.3 million NOK (€778,000), reflecting the success in raising other income from sponsors, ticket sales and merchandise. This surplus will now be distributed back to the owners of the company (Stavanger Kommune, Sandnes Kommune and Rogaland fylkeskommune) in proportion to their initial inputs, to be spent on cultural activities in the region.

Stavanger2008's largest expenditure was on programme and project related costs, equating to 56.2% of total expenditure (**EQ25**). It is not clear what proportion of expenditure was used for cultural and tourism infrastructure (**EQ26**), however the programme only included one infrastructure project, Norwegian Wood, so any infrastructure expenditure would have represented only a small proportion of the total.

Table 6.4 Actual expenditure, Stavanger2008, 2004-08[95] (EQ25, EQ26)

Expenditure	Euro (m)	%
Salary and staff costs	5.6	14.5%
Other operating costs	2.7	7.0%
Evaluation and documentation	0.5	1.3%
Programme and project costs	21.7	56.2%
Sponsor related activity	1.1	2.8%
Marketing/communications	6.9	17.9%
Total	**38.6**	**100.0%**

[93] Palmer/Rae Associates (2004), p.99.
[94] Stavanger 2008 (2009), *Final Report Stavanger2008 - European Capital of Culture*.
[95] Assuming the same exchange rate as used in the Stavanger08 bid (8.3 NOK/€)

6.3 Relevance

6.3.1 Relevance of objectives

Whilst Stavanger's objectives, as stated above, did not explicitly align with the European dimension highlighted in the overall objective of the 1999 Decision - *'to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens'* – there was a strong emphasis on promoting cultural diversity, networks and tolerance that was very complementary to that overall objective (**EQ7**). The overall vision of 'Open Port' and evidence from stakeholder interviews also suggests that the European (and particularly the international) aspects of this were important to the area in terms of increasing the range of cultural activities available to residents and their exposure to European culture. The concept of the Open Port included a desire to change ideas of, what one interviewee referred to as, "old Norway", and to introduce new aspects of culture to the city (**EQ6**). Cross-fertilisation with ideas from other countries was to be important for stimulating innovation and diversity.

6.3.2 Relevance of Activities

In terms of the relevance of Stavanger's programme of activities to its objectives (**EQ8**), it is apparent that the first objective 'to ensure a broad and enduring cultural lift, especially for children and the young' was a high priority. Many of the activities in the programme were either designed to involve young people or tailored towards them as audiences. Whilst Stavanger did not have a separate children and young people's strand of events, they were an integral part of many of the projects, especially the four residencies. Table 6.5 lists some of the highlights.

Table 6.5 Examples of Young People's Participation in ECOC Activities

Activity	Open Port Theme
Fairy Tales in Landscape	Involved final year undergraduates from theatre courses in Oslo, Copenhagen and Stockholm who worked with some of Norway's most experienced artists and directors and produced small productions which ran as part of the overall performance
Project Bandaloop	Involved over 100 children, youth and the wider community as part of outdoor performances in the mountains and fjords of the region
Jan Groth exhibition	Children from three schools were involved in exhibiting their own work at this exhibition of one of Norway's most famous living artists

Activities also demonstrated relevance to the objective of 'contributing to the establishment of enduring networks in the fields of arts and culture'. The programme of activities included four residencies from four international companies who had not worked in Norway before. Part of the rationale behind the concept of the residencies was to encourage the building of networks and partnerships between cultural organisations within Stavanger and established international cultural operators.

The objective to which the cultural programme was least relevant was perhaps that of 'contributing to the construction of cultural and physical infrastructure'. The one infrastructure project included in the programme, Norwegian Wood, whilst it included the development of two new stages, was focused on building and showcasing temporary structures and innovative design. A number of residential properties were also built, as were some new wooden bridges.

The original application set out the main projects and activities in substantial detail. Evidence from stakeholders suggests that whilst the majority of the projects proposed went ahead as planned, five projects were substantially re-drawn/re-developed with new curators. The idea of having the four international companies in residence came from the Director who wanted to bring a more international dimension to the programme. In addition, some of the ideas for projects emerged from an 'Open Call' for project ideas from local and regional artists and cultural organisations, as part of an open but competitive tendering process. Generally, the projects that were included in the cultural programme were relevant in some way to the values and vision of Stavanger2008's original application.

In some regards, Stavanger's cultural programme was very relevant to the European dimension of the 1999 Decision through its activities to promote culture from across Europe, especially in forms that had not been seen in Stavanger before. Indeed, Stavanger strove to make the programme European as opposed to solely Norwegian, although not always in an explicit way; as one interviewee commented: 'we didn't explicitly promote Europe on banners, although we were very aware of the European dimension' (**EQ9**). Two of the four companies-in-residence were from EU Member States as were other artists, curators and companies involved in the cultural programme. For example, the Bocuse d'Or food competition involved chefs from across Europe. There were also joint projects with cultural institutions from elsewhere in Europe, as well as exchanges and networks. The North Sea Project involved exchanges and collaborations between cultural organisations in Stavanger and Scotland, with 45 Scots visiting Stavanger and 36 Norwegians spending time in the east of Scotland.

One interviewee suggested that the activities were more geared towards promoting 'Nordic' forms of culture, as opposed to European ones. However, whilst the Nordic dimension was important, this was certainly not at the expense of the European dimension which retained its prominence within the cultural programme.

6.4 Efficiency

6.4.1 Governance

The dedicated delivery body, Stavanger2008, was set up by Stavanger Kommune, Sandnes Kommune, and Rogaland fylkeskommune, as the leading partners in the original application (with 50% ownership by Stavanger, 25% Sandnes and 25% Rogaland). This included staff seconded from the Stavanger Kommune. The company was managed by a board of seven members, four with political backgrounds, and three from cultural institutions and industry. The chair of the board was the Mayor of Stavanger (**EQ14a/b**). The board were elected by a supervisory board, which in turn was elected by Stavanger, Sandnes and Rogaland (**EQ13**). After the application to become ECOC was approved, the Director (whose role encompassed that of Artistic Director) was appointed in November 2004 and took up her post in summer 2005 (**EQ15a/b**). The Managing Director was appointed in March 2005.

Qualitative evidence from the interviewees as well as information on the income and expenditure of the Stavanger2008 organisation suggests that the overall management of the cultural programme and its financial inputs was efficient. It can also be surmised that efficiency improved over the course of programme delivery. This was attributed to the recruitment of a high quality team by 2008, with clearly delineated roles and responsibilities.

At the same time, the organisation behind the delivery of the ECOC had to address a number of issues during the course of its development. Firstly, the inclusion of non-local board members (four of the seven were based in Oslo) presented some difficulties in ensuring complete attendance at board meetings and keeping board members fully up-to-date with developments.

Secondly, there was a strong consensus that initially there was a lack of clearly defined roles between the Managing Director, the Director and the Director of Strategic Relationships,[96], which made it difficult to ensure clarity of leadership. This was rectified in 2007, following a staff break and reshuffle of the team, including the appointment of staff members with the skills to "marry the finances with the vision of the programme", in the words of one interviewee.

Finally, with many of the initial staff at Stavanger2008 seconded from the Kommune, tensions were identified including a need for ways of working and processes that were more in tune with the task-based and time-limited nature of the ECOC rather than the more regularised and repetitive administrative and regulatory functions of local government. Some interviewees also perceived a need for the programme to be developed and delivered more independently from the Kommune, once the initial application had been successful, to avoid overt political influence.

For example, whilst the Open Call procurement process - put in place before the Director was appointed - appears to have raised awareness of the ECOC, the organisation consequently faced difficulties in efficiently managing the process. Although some of the Open Call projects could be considered to be a success, for example Art: On The Edge, it seems the organisation of the process could have been improved. The application criteria were perceived as being too broad, which led to a greater volume of applications being received than could promptly be processed and assessed by the Stavanger2008 team (diverting them away from other tasks), as well as proposals of varying quality. Inevitably, this also raised the expectations of local organisations beyond that which could be fulfilled by Stavanger2008 and response deadlines were missed. This resulted in poor publicity and hostility from local cultural operators.

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[96] The Director of Strategic Relationships was Interim Director before the appointment of the permanent Director in November 2004.

6.4.2 Communication

In terms of marketing and promoting the ECOC, originally an appointment was made to help embed marketing plans and processes within the organisation, although they were only appointed on a short term contract. Between 2006 and the end of 2007, the organisation faced difficulties in recruiting a suitable replacement (**EQ19**).

Reflecting this, stakeholder evidence suggests that Stavanger's approach to marketing and promoting the ECOC lacked continuity and a strong emphasis and co-ordinated approach at the strategic level. Whilst Stavanger2008 was reported to have successfully engaged with 150 international journalists, the mixed level of effectiveness of promotional activity was considered by members of the Stavanger2008 Team to have impacted negatively on local and regional engagement with potential audiences (as well as the media) (**EQ20**).

Many interviewees cited the decision to employ a communications and PR manager on a short term contract at the start of the development phase as a major mistake and lesson for the future. The approach could not be considered efficient until 2008, when suitably skilled marketing staff were assembled, the programme had been published, and additional funding was made available for promotion (**EQ19**). A greater emphasis on this (and capacity to undertake it within the Company) could potentially have improved overall cost-effectiveness.

6.5 Effectiveness

6.5.1 Developing cultural activities (EQ31, 34, 35, 36)

The evidence suggests that Stavanger has been very effective in delivering the specific objective of developing cultural activities.

A major objective of Stavanger's ECOC year was to promote quality, diversity and innovation in the arts. One way the ECOC aimed to achieve this was through increasing the skills and competency of cultural organisations, and making Stavanger more attractive to young artists and production companies, thereby supporting the development of local artists and cultural organisations. The major cultural organisations in the city and region (for example Rogaland Theatre) were involved in the delivery of ECOC projects. In addition, the Open Call encouraged submissions from local cultural organisations and artists. The four companies-in-residence were encouraged to collaborate with local producers, artists and residents. For example:

- Inbal Pinto worked with Norwegian jazz musicians to produce a new piece that is now being toured;
- Oskaras Korsunovas worked with Stavanger symphony orchestra, local actors and John Fosse, a leading Norwegian author; and
- Rogaland Theatre commissioned a new dance piece from a freelance dance company in the region as part of a wider project.

It was reported by a number of cultural operators interviewed that such activities have resulted in local cultural organisations developing new skills and increasing their confidence, as well as being supported to deliver more culture. For example organisations such as the Rogaland Theatre have benefited from the experience of delivering more ambitious projects, and have increased their confidence and internal effectiveness. It was reported by one of the producers involved in the major outdoors performances that "*a lot of people in the region now have additional [cultural] competencies*" (**EQ40**). As discussed earlier, whilst the Open Call was frustrating to some local freelance artists, others (and principally those already well connected) were nevertheless linked together or with larger ECOC projects, and were satisfied with the outcomes, since the ECOC year was perceived to have "*helped to keep cultural people and organisations busy and in employment*". As a consequence of this development (and projects such as Norwegian Wood and Nordic Music Week), the perception amongst stakeholders was that the ECOC has helped to put Stavanger on the cultural map, nationally and, to a lesser extent, internationally.

Stavanger also aimed to promote quality, diversity and innovation through using its cultural programme as an opportunity to commission new artworks and encourage new forms of cultural expression. The ECOC was widely recognised as having enabled Stavanger to do something daring and new, and expose people to 'professional culture'. For example, the four main companies-in-residence (plus Project Bandaloop and DansDesign who were often based in Stavanger during 2006-08) were selected based upon their potential for innovation and were all operating in Norway for the first time. It is unlikely that such projects would have occurred in the absence of ECOC designation. Table 6.6 includes specific examples of new and innovative work stimulated by Stavanger2008.

Table 6.6 Examples of New Artworks and Forms of Cultural Expression

Company/Activity	Rationale for Commissioning
Inbal Pinto	Israeli dance company targeted since they are extremely visual and eclectic
Oskaras Korsunovas	Lithuanian theatre company providing 3-4 new productions, including one of the biggest productions ever seen in Rogaland ('Fairy Tales in Landscape'), and new Shakespeare productions
Handspring Puppet Company	South African company reported by the Director to be "*quite challenging and controversial, but people had their minds blown open*".
Project Bandaloop	Aerial dance from San Francisco, who were reported to have undertaken amazing performances in the mountains, with wide community participation
DansDesign	Innovative music theatre and multi-disciplinary company, with their outdoors commission involving international extreme snowboarders and skiers and 1000 local residents.
Nordic Music Week	Music festival focused on booking some of the most groundbreaking acts in Scandinavia

The key success factors in this respect included the continuity and perseverance provided by the Director, the authority and trust invested in her by the board (including during the difficult early years of the development phase), close partnership working with the Kommune (particularly following the appointment of an interim Director of Culture at the Kommune in 2007) and the development of specific alliances around projects.

As a consequence, it was reported that organisations such as the Rogaland Theatre will now be more ambitious in the future in terms of producing new artworks and forms of cultural expression - with new personnel in place to facilitate this. Some collaboration developed through the residencies will continue, for example between Tou Scene's Jazz Collective, the Kitchen Orchestra and Inbal Pinto. Sauda Kommune is now planning a further big international outdoor event for 2010. It was also suggested by one cultural organisation that there has been a change in outlook, in that the region now "tries to rise above mediocrity" in its cultural offering.

Evidence from the research suggests that Stavanger2008 has gone a long way to fulfilling its objective of promoting quality, innovation and diversity in the arts, but not as far as some stakeholders would have wished. It was reported that 'lots' of new networks have been developed at the international level (which should continue to bring new ways of looking at culture and new forms of cultural expression), that the Kommune has learnt how to make use of new venues, and that regionally, ambitions and the commitment to artistic expression are high. One Kommune stakeholder reported that from the evidence of current applications and programmes, cultural life seems to be more ambitious in the region. However, one respondent detected a "*lingering provincialism and lack of ambition*", and another suggested that cultural dialogue in Stavanger still embraced mediocrity.

In relation to the objective of ensuring a broad and enduring cultural lift, one of Stavanger's main aims was to spread as many cultural events, activities and projects as possible across the region. In total, 1118 cultural events were supported, with the international residencies acting as pillars and the outdoors/landscape performance element developed around this.
EU funding allowed the ECOC to deliver activities in new dimensions (e.g. organising up to 60,000 people at some events) as well as outdoor events.

Stavanger2008 reported that a total audience of 2-2.5m attended the 2008 events, which is a significant number in view of Norway's total population of 5.4m. Nevertheless, some stakeholders considered that the number of individual participants in 2008 events and activities could have been increased. For example, whilst Nordic Music Week was reported by the project manager to have been successful in attracting and raising awareness amongst industry officials (of Stavanger and Nordic artists), audiences were low (500 attended against an anticipated 1000). This was attributed to the 'avant garde' nature of the artists performing, as well as to the relatively small existing audience for rock music in Stavanger.

In terms of positive effects on participants, those who attended the cultural programme's events (and in particular events such as the opening and closing ceremonies, art in landscapes and residency performances) were reported by the Stavanger2008 team to have enjoyed them significantly, whilst also being challenged through being exposed to new forms of art, and enthused to demand more, and more ambitious culture. The survey of residents provides some evidence in support of this view: 78% agreed that the ECOC created a good atmosphere and 64% agreed that the ECOC gave them experiences that

they would not otherwise have had.[97]   The outdoors events in particular were felt by the organisers to have exceeded expectations (**EQ42**).

It was reported that Stavanger ECOC sought to empower the region in every way to provide culture, and that there has clearly been an increase in cultural activity in the region as a result of the experiences of 2008. For example, there has been a 14.2% increase in funding for the region's cultural institutions, such as Rogaland Theatre.   Organisations such as the region's Symphony Orchestra were reported to be expanding by 12-14 musicians. Some ECOC projects are also continuing; for example Stavanger Rock will continue to deliver a live programme, albeit on a smaller scale, and Norwegian Wood is to continue in 2009.   Major projects planned for 2009 and beyond include plans for a Biennial, jubilee events in Sandnes in 2010 and a new regional opera company, as well as aspirations to host an Expo (regarded as the Olympic Games of the economy, science and technology sectors), and to bid to host a future UEFA European Football Championship competition.   In addition, an 18 million NOK 'lasting effects of Stavanger' fund has been established to support new cultural activity in 2009-10.

Looking further ahead, a new cultural strategy for Stavanger has been produced (2010-2017) to help stimulate cultural activity, plus there are plans for the redevelopment of Tou Scene, which will provide affordable space for local artists on the site of a former brewery. It is hoped that these developments, the stronger networks that have been developed between artists and business, and the increased demand for culture amongst those who participated in 2008 will ensure a more vibrant cultural scene in the long-run.

Conversely, it was considered by some stakeholders that the lasting effects fund has taken too long to be implemented (grants are not be awarded until at least September 2009) and that there has been a lack of long-term vision, resulting in some loss of momentum in terms of cultural activity. This highlights some of the difficulties inherent in legacy planning; whilst funding may be increased for specific cultural organisations in the short-term, and a range of activities programmed for the aftermath of the ECOC year, maintaining the ethos, innovation and dynamism of the ECOC is more challenging, particularly where delivery bodies have been dismantled and given the overall likely reduction in the availability of match funding.

6.5.2 Promoting the European dimension (EQ31, EQ34, EQ35, EQ36)

The evidence suggests that Stavanger has been relatively effective in promoting the European dimension of and through culture.

Whilst none of Stavanger's objectives included an explicit European dimension, it did aim to make its population more internationally-minded through the objective of contributing to cultural curiosity and tolerance.   Indeed, through action linked to this objective, the ECOC actively promoted the Open Port idea of a radical programme and introducing new nationalities - opening up the port to European culture and people's minds to life outside Stavanger. Although few activities had a specifically European theme, many events, artists and curators were of European (rather than Norwegian) origin. For example, three out of four of the companies-in-residence were European and all were international. Another project, High Hopes, produced a film following the lives of five young people living in Liverpool and Stavanger. In this way, the ECOC promoted the recognition and acceptance of different forms of European culture amongst local residents.

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[97] Berg, C. and Rommetvedt (2009), Stavanger as European Capital of Culture.

Overall, the majority of interviewees considered that Stavanger achieved an effective balance between presenting local, European and international forms of culture. Whilst it was accepted that Stavanger could have delivered more European-themed activities, it was also reported that the organisation faced pressures to prioritise local artists within the cultural programme. Staff from the delivery team also reported that they would have preferred more guidance on the European dimension from the European Commission. The key success factor in securing international links was identified as the existing networks of the Director.

As a consequence, it was suggested by a number of interviewees that residents (and politicians) will have 'had their eyes opened' to other forms of culture (including "*great European culture*"), as a consequence of Stavanger 2008. Specifically, residents of the most westerly island in Norway (Utsira) were reported to have said that they now feel more part of Europe (as a consequence of taking part in the 'Art: On the Edge' lighthouse project), whilst the small municipality of Sand also reportedly now feels "closer to Europe" due to their involvement in the opening ceremony. In terms of impacts, the evidence suggests that Stavanger's cultural has become more international than it would otherwise have done in the absence of ECOC designation.

For example it was hoped that people's experiences will lead them to demand a more European/international cultural offer. The region hopes to continue the international residencies in some form, perhaps every two years. However, it is too early to tell what the impact of the ECOC has been on the European outlook of the region's residents, and the evaluation findings should be illuminating in that respect.

Stavanger2008 did have a specific objective to contribute to the establishment of enduring networks in the field of art and culture. This included facilitating international exchanges and creating international networking structures, as well as strengthening existing links with the UK. Networking activities included workshops delivered by the international residencies, in order to exchange ideas, experiences and build networks between artists. The Youth and Migration project involved a network of secondary schools from across Europe (including schools from Liverpool) and the USA (the schools were all members of the Association of European Migration Institutions or participants in the Migration Learning network). In addition five Stavanger volunteers went to work in Liverpool and five came from Liverpool. Stavanger also exchanged experiences with other (past, present and future) ECOC as part of a network established in 2006 in Istanbul. Nevertheless, representatives from the delivery organisation suggested that they would have preferred more support from the European Commission in initiating a dialogue (on a horizontal level) with other ECOC and in building a network to share practice.

In terms of impacts, it was acknowledged that "*the thinking around culture will be less insular in Stavanger in the future*", through the establishment of international cooperation and that the region is keen to maintain and develop links with future ECOC and international artists. For example, Stavanger will remain part of the ECOC network beyond 2008 and seek to make a valuable contribution to learning (decided in Linz, October 2008). Other forms of international collaboration developed through the residencies and through other projects (e.g. Stavanger Rock) will also continue, for example Stavanger's choirs will continue to work with international conductors.

6.5.3 Supporting social development through culture

The evidence suggests that Stavanger has demonstrated more mixed levels of effectiveness in relation to supporting the social and economic development of the city through culture with the stronger emphasis on social development. Stavanger's ECOC sought to improve access to culture, again through ensuring a broad cultural lift, but with a specific objective to involve children and young people (**EQ37, 38**). Indeed, the cultural programme specifically aimed to increase the participation of children and young people in culture through a number of activities:

- children within the region were consulted on the original vision of Open Port;
- 17 networks were established throughout the region (all continuing in 2009) to support Stavanger2008's programme of engagement with kindergartens, schools, elderly, social service organisations;
- All four residencies comprised integral projects with children and youth;
- Stavanger2008 Pop CDs were given to all tenth graders in the region;
- Three schools were involved in the Jan Groth exhibition;
- Sandnes 'gave their town over' to young children for one event, whilst an outdoors production specifically for children and families was held on a beach;
- Many of the outdoor events involved young people and children as performers; and
- Rogaland Theatre sought to bring people together who were at the start of their careers with those who were more experienced; drama schools in Oslo were invited to recommend final year students to collaborate and perform with the Theatre.

Stavanger's cultural programme specifically developed performances around the region's landscapes, within non-traditional venues, to increase people's opportunities to participate. For example:

- Stavanger2008's opening ceremony involved all 26 of the communes of Rogaland, a benchmark event (run by a French company), which involved performers from all parts of the region, along with international artists, three world premieres etc.;
- The activities of Project Bandaloop (a San Francisco-based aerial dance company) included working with the elderly and small children, and also with a local boat builder. 400 local residents were involved; and
- Mot Himlaleite, a major contemporary dance, film, music, extreme skiing and snowboarding project in the Sauda mountains project, led by DansDesign, involved 1000 residents from a small town whose population numbered only about 2000.

In addition, the Port Openers volunteer programme incorporated 486 volunteers aged from 18-70 years, including people with disabilities, and drawn from across the entire region as well as from other European countries. In total, these volunteers provided 16,800 hours of service. Key success factors of this programme included the dedicated volunteer co-ordinator and the ten training courses in 2007 that presented the values and vision of the ECOC. Overall, it was reported that only a few Stavanger2008 projects did not directly involve participation from local people, including children and youth.

The size of the audiences during 2008 – and the fact of a 15% increase across all cultural institutions - suggests that residents who would not normally be involved in culture were engaged by the ECOC. The publication of the cultural programme and the success of the opening ceremony were reported to be key success factors in that respect and participation was considered to have improved as the year went on and awareness grew (for example, through student involvement).

The landscape and outdoors projects were also cited as having helped to improve the accessibility of cultural activities to those who would not normally experience culture, including isolated communities outside Stavanger and young people. Indeed, these activities were reported to have attracted hundreds of new participants (although precise figures are not available). The programme was also considered to be effective in this respect due to the "*vast range of activities*" offered, which catered to both populist and more specialist tastes in art and culture.

There was also a strong consensus amongst all groups of stakeholders that, based upon the quality of the programme's events, attendees will have enjoyed them significantly, been exposed to new experiences and forms of art (and in particular children through the secondary school programme) and been enthused and emboldened to attend or participate in more cultural events in the future. For example, it was reported that Rogaland fylkeskommune is now working with the Sauda community to deliver future projects.

In terms of impacts, the survey of residents reported that 74% of the region's children participated in Stavanger 2008 in some way.[98] However there were mixed views regarding whether Stavanger2008 will lead to a step change in cultural participation in the longer term. Some of those consulted with considered it to be a positive step that the ECOC had encouraged children and families to begin to talk about culture and that contact had been made between youth groups and schools (which the Stavanger Kommune wants to continue) for the future. It was hoped that the level of participation, curiosity and audience confidence generated by the ECOC will provide a platform to build upon, and it was speculated that the higher recorded audience levels during 2008 will impact positively on long-term participation.

However it was also considered that the group of those who participated could have been larger, and that a lack of sufficient communication, strategic thinking and joint working during the early development of the programme may have hindered greater levels of participation. For example, some interviewees suggested a need for more targeted engagement and consultation across the region (rather than the focus on an open call for project proposals), for example using local people to be ambassadors. There was also a feeling that the cultural programme should possibly have continued into 2009, since, it was suggested, it takes time to change people's views and interests (**EQ20, 43**).

Through contributing to the establishment of enduring networks in the field of art and culture, Stavanger also sought to improve the capacity for governance in the cultural sector. Those involved in the ECOC saw it as an opportunity to raise the importance of art and culture within political life, as well as to learn on structural levels. During the title year, the dedicated delivery organisation ultimately can be seen to have delivered an effective cultural programme. Indeed, in the words of one interviewee, it helped to "*strengthen, flesh out and provide strategic direction to the strong ideas in the original application*".

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[98] Berg, C. and Rommetvedt (2009), Stavanger as European Capital of Culture.

As a consequence, stakeholder feedback suggests that a greater degree of engagement between the political administration and the local cultural sector was achieved; however it was also reported to be difficult for the organisation to balance staging a high profile international event with engaging with and satisfying the aspirations of all local artists (**EQ32**). The ECOC was felt to have been particularly successful in strengthening the link between business and culture, via innovative sponsorship deals, and through businesses embracing artistic expression. For example, smaller businesses provided support in kind to major cultural events, such as the smelting plant in Sauda.

There were mixed views on the impacts of 2008 in terms of establishing a sustainable platform for cultural activities. A cultural strategy for Stavanger has been produced under the leadership of a new, highly-regarded acting Director of Culture (in post from 2005 to mid-2008) and it was considered that ECOC has now made this easier to deliver, both politically and financially. There is now reported to be greater collaboration between the Kommunes and the region in term of cultural governance. Whilst some staff have carried their ECOC experience into other organisations (e.g. production manager to Sandnes, the opening ceremony manager to Tall Ships), there were also fears that much of the competencies and knowledge built up during 2008 will be lost (for example skills in hosting festivals, securing sponsorship deals, setting contracts etc). Opinions differed as to whether the locale should retain a small delivery organisation/ team to support legacy events (separate from the local political administration) (**EQ43**).

6.5.4 Supporting economic development through culture

Promotion of the city as a tourist destination and changing its image (**EQ41**), was not a specific objective of Stavanger, which had more of a focus on residents and the workforce. Stavanger is known for having existing capacity problems in terms of its tourist infrastructure and hotels (65% of visitors tend to come for business, and there is a lack of hotels at the lower end of the price spectrum), which limits the number of additional visitors which can be absorbed. Whilst increased tourism promotional activity was undertaken by the regional tourist agency, integrated with standard campaigns relating to the area's landscapes, additional money from the Kommune was not secured until 2007. These efforts were considered by one regional stakeholder to be "*too little too late*".

The lack of consistency and clarification in management roles and responsibilities between 2004 and 2007, a lack of free promotional materials, as well as difficulties in appointing a full time marketing manager until 2007/08 were reported to have impacted negatively on promotional campaigns. Despite reported improvements in 2008 following new team appointments and the publication of the programme brochure, one stakeholder reported that effective communications continued to be hindered by insufficient joint working between the programme department and the rest of the team (e.g. sharing and keeping to milestones and deadlines), which made it difficult to coordinate outputs. In turn, this was reported to have impacted adversely on attracting more visitors and a higher profile during 2008. Despite this, during 2008 it was reported anecdotally that bed occupancy rates increased by 11% (with another interviewee suggesting that the numbers of tourists increased by 5%).

In terms of impacts, based upon the press coverage that the programme received, their visiting delegations, and the new journalists who came to the city, it was nevertheless generally agreed amongst the interviewees that the region (and Norway) will now be more well-known internationally than it used to be, especially for culture. However, a minority countered that Stavanger is still likely to be relatively unknown, because it is so small (and because tourism and tourism expenditure are low priorities for the Kommunes). They suggested that more extensive support and guidance from the European Commission, in terms of logos, common branding, visual standards and requirements to mention the EU, would have been useful.

Whilst tourism was not a primary focus, enhancing local identity and pride was a specific objective of the ECOC. Indeed, the Kommunes and the major sponsors were keen to promote the region as an attractive cultural area with a good quality of life and thus help attract more workers to help meet labour shortages (**EQ39**). To that end, Stavanger hosted groups of European and international journalists and encouraged them to stay in the region for longer to experience its attractions. In total, 150 international journalists came that would not have done otherwise and 5,468 articles were published in the Norwegian media, the majority of which were positive (although some thought that the level of national coverage could have increased yet further, through better communication and promotion).

As a consequence, it was reported that those residents who participated in activities will have experienced increased pride in their city and participating cultural organisations will have gained confidence. The opening and closing ceremonies, in particular, were felt to have had a positive impact on a lot of people. The local press was also aware of the positive international coverage. One major employer reported that interview candidates were well aware of their sponsorship, which must have helped them within a competitive jobs market. University research will provide more evidence on business impacts, including whether perceptions and the image of the region have changed amongst employees. Evidence regarding whether activities have resulted in an improved image externally were mixed, with the largest gains in brand terms likely to have been made at the national level and within Nordic countries. It was also suggested that Stavanger is recognised more now by Bergen and other cities as a cultural centre and that more cultural operators will come to the city to collaborate with others.

Whilst Stavanger2008 did have a specific objective to contribute to the construction of cultural and physical infrastructure, Norwegian Wood was the only infrastructure project directly funded by the ECOC. This resulted mainly in the construction of showpiece residential projects and bridges, but also included temporary outdoor stages at Lundsneset and central Smedasundet, Haugesund (which will continue to be used as part of the annual Fartein Valen festival) as well as an art centre and artists housing, and a covered market-place and stage in the centre of Sandnes. The ECOC is also reported to have helped stimulate the city of Stavanger to purchase a 13,000m^2 derelict industrial site in the east end of the city (Tou Scene), to provide subsidised artists' workshops and galleries. A new concert house is currently being built in Stavanger, although this is likely to have gone ahead without the ECOC status. In terms of impacts, the combination of the new concert house and Tou Scene in Stavanger will help to significantly improve the city's cultural and tourist offering, combined with some of the smaller legacies bequeathed by the Norwegian Wood project.

Although Stavanger2008 had an objective to support the development of industry and commerce, few activities were undertaken specifically for that purpose and there is therefore limited evidence of impact in that respect. This fact notwithstanding, one feature of the residencies was the inclusion of seminars to help exchange ideas and boost the competency of local cultural organisations. For example:

- Oskaras Korsunovas provided an international theatre seminar and student directing workshop, and one of the directors of the Young Vic in London came to talk to young theatre groups; and
- Handspring Puppet Company provided workshops (including with the university) and also held discussion groups and workshops in Oslo.

Some local cultural organisations (e.g. Stavanger Rock) also reported that they had benefited from the experience of delivering ECOC projects and become stronger businesses as a result, with increased confidence, a higher profile/credibility with politicians and greater access to funding (**EQ39**). This is a positive impact, given that creating a diversified economy was also seen as important to the city's future. Businesses were also reported to be more willing now to sponsor cultural events than before the title year.

6.6 Sustainability

6.6.1 Cultural activities

Interviewees from the Stavanger Kommune reported that there are ambitious plans for 2009, as well as a longer-term commitment to sustaining culture development. The commitment of Stavanger, Sandnes and Rogaland to investment in culture can be seen through its current and planned major projects. A selection of these is included in the table below (**EQ47**).

Table 6.7 Ongoing and Future Cultural Activities

Projects	Description
Concert House	The new Concert House will open in 2012 and play a fundamental role in the long-term strategy for positioning Stavanger as an economic and cultural node in Europe.
Tou Scene	The Tou Scene project will provide affordable space for local artists on an old brewery site. (**EQ54**)
Norwegian Wood	Norwegian Wood is a building project which is focused on modern, environmentally-conscious wooden architecture and will continue into 2009. Some of the structures developed have increased the capacity for delivering cultural events, albeit on a short-term basis.
Sandnes	Sandnes will build on the Stavanger 2008 model in the celebration of its 150th Jubilee in 2010.
Sauda	Sauda plans to hold a follow-up spectacular event involving wide community participation after the success of *Mot Himlaleite*, a dance performance held in the snowy landscape of the Sauda mountains.
North Sea Project	The exchange of music, visual arts and literature through the North Sea project is set to continue throughout 2009.
Sølvberget and Kapittel Festival	Sølvberget and Kapittel Festival will continue the links set up through Stavanger2008's North Sea project and further develop their relationship with Edinburgh International Book Festival which was established in the lead up to the title year.
Stavanger International Chamber Music Festival	Stavanger International Chamber Music Festival intends to build on its international network for possible collaboration in 2009/10.
Potential major events	There are also aspirations to host an international Expo, to launch a bid to host the UEFA European Football Championships, and to continue the regional film festival.

6.6.2 Cultural governance

The culture departments at Stavanger and Sandnes Kommunes and Rogaland fylkeskommune intend to build upon the work of Stavanger 2008. A number of stakeholders reiterated how hosting the ECOC had improved the cities' and the region's expertise and capacity for the management of festivals and large cultural events, along with the processes required to obtain sponsorship and develop formal contracts (which they now also intend to share their learning about). Within the cultural sector, the new concert house has appointed a director with experience of managing one of the most ambitious events during 2008 (**EQ51**). As mentioned above, a Cultural Strategy for Stavanger (2010 to 2017) has also been published, in an effort to further move cultural development forward (**EQ49**). The Kommunes and Rogaland fylkeskommune will continue to support projects through their own resources. As discussed earlier, there is also now an 18 million NOK (€2.0m) lasting effects fund available to spend on legacy projects, which will commence from the end of 2009 (**EQ48**), with the aim of sustaining the ethos and activities of 2008.

However, there were some concerns amongst stakeholders that the long-term benefits of the ECOC will not be fully realised, due to a lack of management continuity, and the loss of knowledge and expertise following the wind-down of the delivery organisation (**EQ50**). It was also suggested that the role of the board in promoting a positive legacy could have been stronger; it was suggested by a number of interviewees that more strategic thinking in this respect could have taken place. There were also concerns that some of the momentum of 2008 was being lost, due to the time lag between the end of the programme and expenditure on new activities. It was also considered by some that the lasting effects fund had taken too long to be implemented, with project grants not being awarded before September 2009 at the earliest. Overall, it was felt that a stronger strategic vision was required in relation to the legacy of the programme, as well as a need for earlier legacy planning, ideally prior to the ECOC year in 2007.

6.6.3 Long-term development

The ECOC has extended people's cultural awareness and appreciation for theatres and festivals, which in turn should lead to increased demand for such cultural events and activities (**EQ52**). There is currently a higher level of participation and interest amongst local people taking part in cultural activities (**EQ53**).

There is a cultural strategy to support artists to become more commercial and receive greater exposure, but also to strengthen networks between artists and business. Although many of the cultural plans were already in place, the ECOC has made it easier to implement them successfully, as there is now a greater recognition of the importance of culture, and access to funding to support long-term projects. As a result, funding to support the region's cultural institutions will be increased by 14%. The ECOC has given Stavanger the opportunity to focus on the Open Port brand promotion and to build on the brand for the future by embedding it within their promotional strategy. It has also generated a wealth of sponsorship from businesses and fundraising activities, which has successfully engaged a wide audience of supporters who are likely to continue their involvement in the future.

The ECOC provided an opportunity for Stavanger to learn about the value of cultural promotion and to develop a greater willingness to collaborate in future projects. Stavanger now has stronger links internationally which will potentially make a significant impact on the artistic community and cultural life of the city. Stavanger intends to develop and maintain these through linking with future ECOC and exchanges, by supporting artists in the international arena, and by sustaining the ethos, ideas and approach to working of 2008, particularly in regard to establishing greater international collaboration.

The ECOC has helped change attitudes towards creative diversity and cultural difference; moreover it has helped to break down the barriers to engagement between the cultural sector and cultural departments and youth groups and schools, with plenty of scope to build upon these networks for future projects.

6.7   Conclusions

6.7.1 Success of the ECOC (EQ42, EQ43)

The overall concept of the ECOC year was 'Open Port' (to support Stavanger in becoming more recognised and to develop an identity around art and culture) and this was integrated well within the objectives and programme of activities. Whilst Stavanger's objectives as ECOC did not explicitly include a European dimension, the programme did have a very strong international dimension, driven largely by the vision and skills of the Director.

Overall, the ECOC can be seen to have operated efficiently. Whilst Stavanger2008 did experience some early problems, particularly in terms of a lack of clear leadership, many of these issues were overcome with the appointment of a Programme Manager in 2007, who was able to marry the artistic vision with financial considerations. One particular area for improvement was in promotion and communication. There was a lack of strategic emphasis placed on PR or marketing, for example as a tool to promote broader participation and buy-in. Programme funding was efficiently raised from national, regional and local governments, and one-fifth of the budget was raised through sponsorship, exceeding the average for ECOC. A number of smaller companies were engaged through the Culture Supporter scheme. The programme produced a financial surplus.

Stavanger can be seen to have been very effective in developing cultural activities, relatively effective in promoting the European dimension (of and through culture), with more mixed levels of success in relation to supporting the social and economic development of the city. The delivery organisation's greatest achievement in this respect was in assembling an innovative events programme, which incorporated groundbreaking international 'artists in residence', regional and Norwegian artists in collaboration, and the landscapes of the Rogaland region. This resulted in Stavanger successfully encouraging new art forms whilst delivering a wide range of successful events, some of which exposed people to wider forms of European culture and helped participants in isolated communities to feel closer to Europe.

Regeneration and economic development objectives (for example tourism promotion) were not integral to the Stavanger2008 programme, although evidence suggests that the programme helped to up-skill local creative organisations.

There has been a mixed level of legacy activity. Whilst Stavanger has dedicated 18m NOK (€2.0m) to spend on legacy projects, this had not been allocated at the time of this study, and there were some concerns that the capacity developed with the delivery organisation will be lost. Nonetheless, a number of cultural infrastructure projects are planned, including the high profile new Concert House due to open in 2012, a cultural strategy has recently been put in place to 2017, and some international collaboration is likely to continue. Most positively, the ECOC is reported to have engendered increased political and financial support for implementing the culture strategy within Stavanger.

6.7.2 Lessons learnt

- It is essential to have clearly delineated responsibilities at the management level of ECOC delivery organisations, including the appointment of one overall director, as well as a level of autonomy from political structures and influences.
- It is important to instigate a comprehensive and compelling marketing and communications strategy alongside the development of the artistic programme, both to ensure high levels of participation during the ECOC year, but also to engage with the local media and manage local expectations.
- ECOC boards should play an active role in supporting and promoting the ECOC and its brand, especially during the development phase when many challenges have to be faced and overcome.
- Involving neighbouring towns and cities and/or the county government can bring additional resources and cultural assets to the table, spread the impact of the ECOC across the region, and provide greater scope for securing legacy benefits. This can be achieved by establishing a delivery organisation with joint ownership across tiers of government, in proportion to their level of financial input.
- It is important to have strong financial and monitoring systems and skills within ECOC delivery organisations, alongside cultural development skills and vision, which Stavanger successfully combined within its own organisation.
- Tiered levels of sponsorship, from principal supporters through to lower-value 'culture supporters' can help to widen the pool of potential sponsors and increase business engagement in ECOC. It is important to identify at least one high profile sponsor early on since this can provide an incentive for others to follow.
- The commissioning of high profile European and international artists does not have to be at the expense of local cultural organisations. The latter can be gainfully integrated either through directly contributing to ECOC productions of high profile artists (for example as writers, designers, musicians or stage managers) or through seminars to pass on learning and build capacity. This clearly requires long-term planning, and a strong vision and steer from the artistic director.
- Staging activities outdoors and within the countryside can provide an effective means of attracting large audiences, and involving those residents who would not normally get involved in culture.
- Early planning should be a priority to ensure that legacy structures and processes are in place. The decisions made on organisational structure and staffing, strategic options, commercial and communication strategies etc. have a long term impact; it will be harder to establish a seamless transition between ECOC and post-ECOC cultural development without early planning. Maximising legacy benefits requires strong strategic leadership and vision. ECOC delivery organisations, programme boards, government and the cultural sector all need to take an active role in this.

- There is a need for better planning to maximise the transfer of skills and capacity built up during the ECOC. The ECOC model/delivery vehicle should be extended where possible and used as an opportunity to build new contacts and collaborations, since significant amounts of time are required to adjust traditional ways of thinking regarding cultural delivery and for the transfer of knowledge and expertise to be firmly established and embedded. There is a strong case for retaining key members of staff with expertise in the initial period after the title year.

7.0 Lessons in delivery from across the four ECOC

A requirement of the Terms of Reference for this evaluation was to identify lessons from the 2007 and 2008 ECOC that might be of value to future ECOC. In the preceding chapters of this report we have looked at each of the cities in turn and examined them in detail against the evaluation questions, principally focusing on the accountability function of the evaluation, i.e. to determine the extent to which the funding dedicated to the ECOC was 'well spent'. In the next chapter we will pull together these findings in order to draw conclusions against the evaluation criteria from across all four of the ECOC. There are, however, a number of lessons that warrant separate discussion as they provide valuable lessons for future ECOC but whose full exploration requires us to depart a little from the formality of the evaluation criteria. Not surprisingly these issues focus more on the 'how to' question of effective delivery rather than on what was achieved.

7.1 Defining a European Capital of Culture

"The European Capital of Culture is a golden opportunity to show off Europe's cultural richness and diversity, and all the ties which link us together as Europeans"[99].

As we have noted at the outset, the ECOC concept has always been very broadly defined – a reflection of its intergovernmental origins. As a consequence, within a set of very broad criteria, and as the four cities covered in this evaluation demonstrate, ECOC is largely what the title holders chose to make of it. This flexibility has a number of consequences which we can see rippling through each of the ECOC we have examined, starting with the need to define what the ECOC means for each city and running through issues such as branding and how best to deliver it.

At the same time there is a clear concept behind the ECOC which is highly distinctive, if not unique[100] and which is of enormous consequence for cities trying to implement one: this is that it essentially combines a number of different types of cultural activity. On the one hand it is an international arts festival but one which tries to sustain activity over a much longer time span than is normal. Secondly, it is also a cultural development programme although one with a finite time-span, as the title passes on as the year comes to an end. Finally, it covers the whole gamut of cultural activities across all scales - from "blockbuster" events to community development projects in schools - and across all art forms.

It would be surprising if this did not lead to stresses and strains in trying to realise such a venture and indeed this was apparent – especially in the development phases - of all the ECOC covered to some degree, as we discuss further below.

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[99] http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413_en.htm.
[100] ECOC's uniqueness is perhaps waning owing to the increasing number of similar 'copy-cat' schemes that continue to be developed – a testament to its success. Nonetheless the point remains valid.

This conception of ECOC and its successful development over the years also has consequences for the issue of ECOC as a brand. The question of ECOC 'brand equity' (or value) warrants more attention than it has been possible to give it here but it is clear that it presents something of a paradox. On the one hand, the ECOC title can have huge symbolic value as it clearly did both for Liverpool, seeking to reposition itself as a world-class city[101] and Sibiu, a cultural centre in a country just joining the EU. On the other hand, each ECOC needs to define its own programme of events and also create its own brand from scratch. ECOC can thus be contrasted with an international event such as the Olympics which is both a strong brand and has clear and understandable content, and where the task of establishing local meaning is less weighty.

Does this matter for ECOC? It appears that it does in both general and specific ways. Most critically, it can be seen from the ECOC covered in this evaluation that the rewards of a successful title year are potentially enormous. Equally though, a weak ECOC risks creating great damage to the confidence and reputation of a city, though this was not a problem for any of the 2007 and 2008 ECOC.

But even for 2007 and 2008, the need to create an ECOC brand locally poses problems. In the absence of much specific cultural content at application stage, initial local euphoria at winning the title can give way to scepticism in the news media about what is actually going to be delivered, which makes the development path all the more difficult for ECOC. More specifically, it can be difficult for ECOC to secure business sponsorship until a clear programme is developed.

An important lesson to be learned from the 2007 & 2008 experience is thus the importance of a city determining for itself how it intends to interpret the ECOC concept *and in a way that is best suited to that city*. Long before detailed plans for cultural events are prepared, the 2007 and 2008 ECOC show that there needs to be the establishment of a clear vision for how an ECOC might operate within the city and also how the city might best "handle" the ECOC concept. Success is ultimately founded on a vision that is firmly rooted in the history and day-to-day reality of a city, yet which also offers a clear picture of what that city could achieve. The vision needs to be realistic and yet also challenging: above all, all of the ECOC we covered delivered successful programmes *because* they used the ECOC to *lever change*.

To achieve this vision typically requires a small number of prominent individuals within the city – typically representing both the civic and cultural life of the city - to come together to begin to generate that vision. A first step is usually for these individuals to ensure the active support of local stakeholders, most notably, the municipality and the key local cultural institutions and, where necessary, the support of higher tiers of government, such as the regional and central governments – to the extent that these authorities have responsibility for cultural policy and associated activities. As this point, a diverse range of interests begin to exert themselves on the process – creating the need for different agendas to be carefully managed. As one interviewee commented, 'Compromise is inevitable if you're going to market the ECOC.' Of particular significance is the "location" of responsibilities and budgets for public expenditure on cultural and associated activities. This is perhaps the primary influence, at least at the outset, on the overall aims and objectives of any nascent ECOC, determining, for example, whether the ECOC will be more focussed on specialist or popular culture or the extent to which it adopts economic and social objectives.

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[101] As one interviewee noted, partners in Liverpool saw the ECOC as an international accolade that the city could win.

As the vision is developed, it needs to be matched to local priorities and aspirations, not only of the key stakeholders but also of the local population. It is important to use imaginative approaches to get the views of the public as to the objectives, themes and activities of the ECOC. A variety of approaches is possible, using local media and existing consultation mechanisms, such as local fora. But the 2007 and 2008 experience suggest that there are huge benefits to be derived from getting as close as possible to local people in order to listen to their needs and aspirations. At some point in this process, it will be essential to get local media interested in and committed to the emerging vision but realistic about the extent to which expectations should be raised.

7.2 Putting in place an effective delivery body

The development phase is a critical and also challenging time for any ECOC. Promises that were set out in the application need to be turned into reality – an efficient delivery structure, an exciting cultural programme, real participation of stakeholders and residents and effective communication. The precise characteristics of the development trajectory will depend on the local circumstances. For a larger city, a high priority may be to generate the support and interest of local people. For a smaller city that is less "self-sufficient" in terms of the governance of culture, a higher priority may be to work out the details of the relationship between the local and national level.

For all the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, however, an important lesson is that they all set up delivery vehicles that were distinct from existing organisations. This was a recognition of the need – which we have discussed above – to bring together a broad range of different skill sets; to reconcile different interests; and to ensure collective ownership by the partnership needed to deliver a successful ECOC[102]. Putting in place the right organisational arrangements is not an easy exercise and none of the ECOC experienced smooth trajectories in getting the right structures and processes in place; all had their 'ups and downs'. Three areas are especially worthy of attention:

First, running an ECOC requires a wide range of skills but especially important are competences in:

- management and financial planning;
- artistic leadership; and
- marketing and promotion.

An ECOC also involves task-based and time-limited tasks. Clearly this is nothing new for people involved in the cultural sector for whom the ability to muster people with different skills sets in order to put on productions and collaborative ventures is part of their 'stock in trade'. What is different about an ECOC, as we have already noted, is the scale and scope of the venture, which normally far surpasses anything a city has normally attempted. Critically, this means staffing a delivery vehicle with individuals from different backgrounds. Quite typically, this is done through a combination of secondments and new recruitment, the latter for senior posts in particular. This again is not without its difficulties and a particular tension can be between, on the one hand, the culture of government, which is concerned with the provision of fairly regularised services and the administration and enforcement of laws and regulations, and, on the other hand, the culture of the cultural community which is more task-based and more attuned to risk-taking.

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[102] It may also be because the legal framework within which municipalities operate preclude them from running an event like an ECOC, as in Sibiu.

It typically takes a while for these tensions to find an equilibrium and on occasions can be quite explosive; staff reshuffles, resignations and reappointments seem to be part of a common pattern. Whether such things could be avoided through the provision of guidance is a moot point, as they may be a necessary part of bedding down the organisation. Everyone we spoke to was clear of the need for clear roles for example but achieving them was another matter and often inextricably interwoven with the local 'politics'.

A second important issue is the structure and composition of the boards appointed to oversee each ECOC. Here, the clearest lesson is that they seem to be less vital to the success of an ECOC than might be imagined a priori. Indeed, one of the difficulties that was commonly identified was that of ensuring clarity of leadership and direction. It seems that the most important functions of boards are in ensuring the legitimacy of the ECOC by linking it with political structures and key stakeholders in the artistic and cultural community and in ensuring all the key interests are represented – rather than in providing strategic direction and purpose. The latter seems to be provided in the main by senior management in this instance, with the board having the role of ratification. In short, the overall structure and role of a board does not appear to play a decisive role in the success of an ECOC, although having a chair who can act as a figurehead can be key, and a poorly configured Board can hamper progress, e.g. if it is too large or has to handle representation from across a wide area. More important in this context is clarity in roles in senior management. This brings us to the final issue which concerns artistic direction.

The need for effective artistic direction is naturally important for any ECOC since it provides a sense of coherence and purpose. Experience shows that achieving it can be difficult however. Whether it should come from an individual 'artistic director' is a moot point. The ECOC covered show that finding the right individual to carry out this function can be difficult since the pool of people internationally with requisite experience is not large – another consequence of the distinctiveness/uniqueness of the ECOC concept. Even individuals with backgrounds in running arts festivals can fall foul of the scale of the ECOC and the need to balance all the different interests. But having a prominent and influential artistic director can make all the difference, as Stavanger's experience shows; the right experience and international connections can pay dividends in terms of artistic content and profile.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

As noted earlier, the legal basis for the 2007 and 2008 ECOC was Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council. The 1999 Decision set out the overall objective of the Action (Article 1) and a set of objectives that each city must address (Article 3). It also included a requirement for 'a report evaluating the results of the previous year's events'. The 1999 Decision thus serves as the reference point for this evaluation and it has been against the aims and objectives of the 1999 Decision that the success of the 2007 and 2008 ECOC have been formally evaluated. The evaluation also gives some consideration to the relevance of the 2007 and 2008 ECOC to objectives of the 2006 Decision, as these objectives are articulated in a more concise way than those of the 1999 Decision and better reflect trends in cultural policy in the years leading up to 2007 & 2008.

Sections 3-6 have presented evaluation findings relating to the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of each of the 2007 and 2008 ECOC. This section presents conclusions and recommendations relating to the ECOC Action more generally, drawing on the evidence and conclusions emerging from all four ECOC as well as additional research undertaken at EU-level. Conclusions and recommendations relate to the key themes of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability and, as such, represent answers to the Evaluation Questions set out in Section 2.3.

8.2 Relevance

8.2.1 Relevance of the ECOC Action

In considering the overall relevance of the ECOC Action, we have to consider the relevance to the *needs* to which the Action responds as well as the relevance to *policy objectives*. In terms of relevance to need, each ECOC responds primarily to local needs and opportunities and develops objectives in response – which vary from ECOC to ECOC. In terms of relevance to policy, there is a hierarchy of relevance, by which we have to consider the extent to which the objectives of the ECOC Action (as set out in the Decisions) are relevant to Article 151 of the Treaty, the extent to which the objectives of individual ECOC are relevant to the objectives of the Action and, finally, the extent to which the activities of the ECOC are relevant to their own objectives.

In approaching this evaluation, we have created an intervention logic that identifies three specific objectives of the ECOC Action, against which were plotted activities, outputs, results and impacts. In considering the relevance of the ECOC Action (and of the individual ECOC), we therefore return to these three specific objectives (as a means of creating three broad groupings of objectives). Whilst these are presented here as distinct, they are in practice overlapping and inter-related.

Based on these three specific objectives, Table 8.1 below illustrates the relevance of the objectives of the ECOC Action to Article 151 of the Treaty. In so doing, we also show how the objectives have evolved between the 1999 and 2006 Decisions.

Table 8.1 Hierarchy of relevance

Specific objectives (from intervention logic)	Develop cultural activities	Promote the European dimension of and through culture	Social and economic development of the city through culture
Article 151 of the Treaty	Flowering of cultures of Member States and bringing common cultural heritage to the fore	Encouraging co-operation between Member States	
Overall aim of the 1999 and 2006 Decisions (Article 1)	Highlight richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share	Promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens	
Criteria of the 1999 Decision (Article 3)	Highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans Support and develop creative work	Promote events involving people from other Member States Reception of citizens of the Union and dissemination of events Dialogue between European cultures	Mobilisation and participation of large sections of the population Exploit the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city
Criteria of the 2006 Decision (Article 4)	Highlight richness of cultural diversity in Europe and bring common aspects of European cultures to the fore	Foster co-operation between cultural operators, artists and cities in different Member States	Foster participation of citizens Long-term cultural and social development of the city

From the table, we can see how the objectives of "developing cultural activities" and "promoting the European dimension of and through culture" have featured strongly in the ECOC Action. In addition, we can see how these two objectives of the ECOC Action have remained relevant to the text and the spirit of Article 151 of the Treaty. **(EQ10)**

The preamble to the 1999 Decision featured some reference to the development of culture and tourism, but it was only in the 2006 Decision that "long-term development" became an explicit criterion – even here, economic objectives were not explicitly mentioned. Similarly, the 1999 Decision referred to the need to mobilise large sections of the population, but it was only in the 2006 Decision, that "social development" became an explicit criterion.

The introduction of social and economic objectives into the ECOC Action (both within the Decisions and within the objectives of individual ECOC) reflects broader trends in cultural policy and in public policy more generally. Indeed, whilst cultural policy primarily focussed on developing culture as an end in itself until about the 1980s, since then, cultural expenditure has increasingly come to be justified in some countries (notably the UK) as an investment that will yield certain economic and social returns, rather than (solely) in terms of its intrinsic worth. In considering the objectives of the ECOC Action, we can therefore see how they have responded, over the years, to these trends in the broader context. Moreover, there is strong evidence that the ECOC have helped shape these trends, the examples of Glasgow 1990 and Lille 2004, in particular, being widely quoted in the academic literature as examples of culture-led urban regeneration. That said, there remains opposition to the view that cultural policy should be justified in this way, since it risks skewing policy and practice towards those activities that have maximum wider impacts, which arguably militates against the funding of 'risky' and/or avant garde cultural activities.

> **Key conclusion:** the ECOC Action has been consistent with and relevant to the objectives of Article 151 of the Treaty, particularly the broad objectives of "developing cultural activities" and "promoting the European dimension of and through culture" although such an objective does not explicitly feature in Article 151 of the Treaty; in addition, it appears from our findings that cities holding the ECOC title have adopted over the years a new dimension, i.e. the economic and social; this reflects broader trends of cultural policy (and public policy more generally) that have emphasised the possibility of putting culture at the service of non-cultural objectives; whilst the 1999 and 2006 Decisions have reflected this dimension, they have, to a certain, "lagged behind" the situation on the ground, i.e. within the ECOC themselves.

8.2.2 Relevance of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC **(EQ11)**

As noted above, the 1999 Decision sets out a number of broad objectives that ECOC should address. Palmer/Rae Associates (2004) note that most of the 1995-2004 ECOC did indeed adopt multiple objectives that were broadly consistent with Article 3 of the 1999 Decision. However, they go on to note that ECOC often do not meet the objectives they set for themselves. Whilst the process of agreeing and defining objectives can be fraught with tension, it is vitally important, nonetheless, that any ECOC formulates its expectations precisely.

With this in mind, this evaluation has considered the overall motivation of each of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC and the process by which that motivation was converted into a set of workable objectives and the changes to those objectives during the development phase. Whilst these objectives are different for each ECOC, they can be broadly grouped under the three specific objectives set out in intervention logic, i.e. "developing cultural activities", "promoting the European dimension of and through culture" and "social and economic development through culture". We thus consider here the relevance of the four ECOC against those three specific objectives.

"Developing cultural activities": whilst all four ECOC were relevant to the objective of developing cultural activities, it is perhaps in Stavanger that the treatment of culture as an end in itself was most apparent. Stavanger appears to have been the ECOC with the strongest and most consistent artistic themes and the fact that it was also the only ECOC to have an artistic director in place for a large part of the development phase and throughout the title year is likely to have been an important factor behind this.

"Promoting the European dimension of and through culture" **(EQ9)**: the 1999 Decision gives no explicit definition of the European dimension, whilst the 2006 Decision sets out three different criteria that are open to interpretation. It is perhaps no surprise therefore, that the 2007 & 2008 ECOC have also interpreted the European dimension in different ways and demonstrated differing degrees of relevance. Only two of the ECOC (Luxembourg GR and Sibiu) specifically included one or more objectives relating to the European dimension. In the case of Liverpool and Stavanger, the "European dimension" was addressed as part of a more general "international dimension"[103] (although Stavanger in fact included no explicit objectives related to either the European or the international dimensions).

The objectives of all four ECOC were most relevant to the first criterion of the 2006 Decision, i.e. "fostering co-operation with cultural operators, artists and cities in other Member States", although this was expressed in different ways. Indeed, all four ECOC put a strong emphasis on developing cultural links with cities and operators in other European countries, although the emphasis was strongest in Luxembourg GR. Whilst the cultural programme of Lille 2004 had demonstrated a significant cross-border dimension, the structuring of Luxembourg GR's entire ECOC as a cross-border ECOC was highly innovative in its European dimension. Indeed, the European dimension was at the heart of Luxembourg GR's ECOC in that it attempted to implement a cross-border cultural programme covering territories in four countries and featuring co-productions and collaborations. In so doing, Luxembourg GR aimed to help develop a cross-border cultural sector and forge the image of a cross-border region.

All four ECOC were less relevant to the other two criteria of the 2006 Decision, i.e. "highlighting the richness of cultural diversity in Europe" and "bringing the common aspects of European culture to the fore". This perhaps reflected, in three cases, the lack of an artistic director and, in all cases, the tendency for the objective of developing cultural activities to be seen through the lens of other objectives, such as raising the cities' profiles, attracting tourists or urban regeneration.

"Social and economic development through culture": as in previous years[104], all of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC included some objectives with an economic, tourism, or image dimension. Such objectives were especially important for three of the ECOC although in very different ways. For Sibiu – a cultural centre within a country just joining the EU - raising European profile and attracting tourists, particularly cultural tourists, was a key goal. For Liverpool, the ECOC was primarily a means of furthering the city's regeneration and the most pertinent objectives were thus those related to image, urban development and social inclusion (in Binns' (2005) terms a "cultural consumption model"[105]). For Stavanger, a wealthy city with low unemployment, the economic objectives were perhaps less pressing but still important, with a

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[103] As shown in Section 5, Liverpool's objective of confirming itself as a "premier European city" at application stage had evolved by the start of the title year into the objective of repositioning Liverpool as a "world class city".

[104] According to Palmer/Rae Associates (2004), most ECOC between 1995-2004 stated as priorities the development of tourism, enhancement of the city's image, urban revitalisation and an expansion of creative industries and jobs.
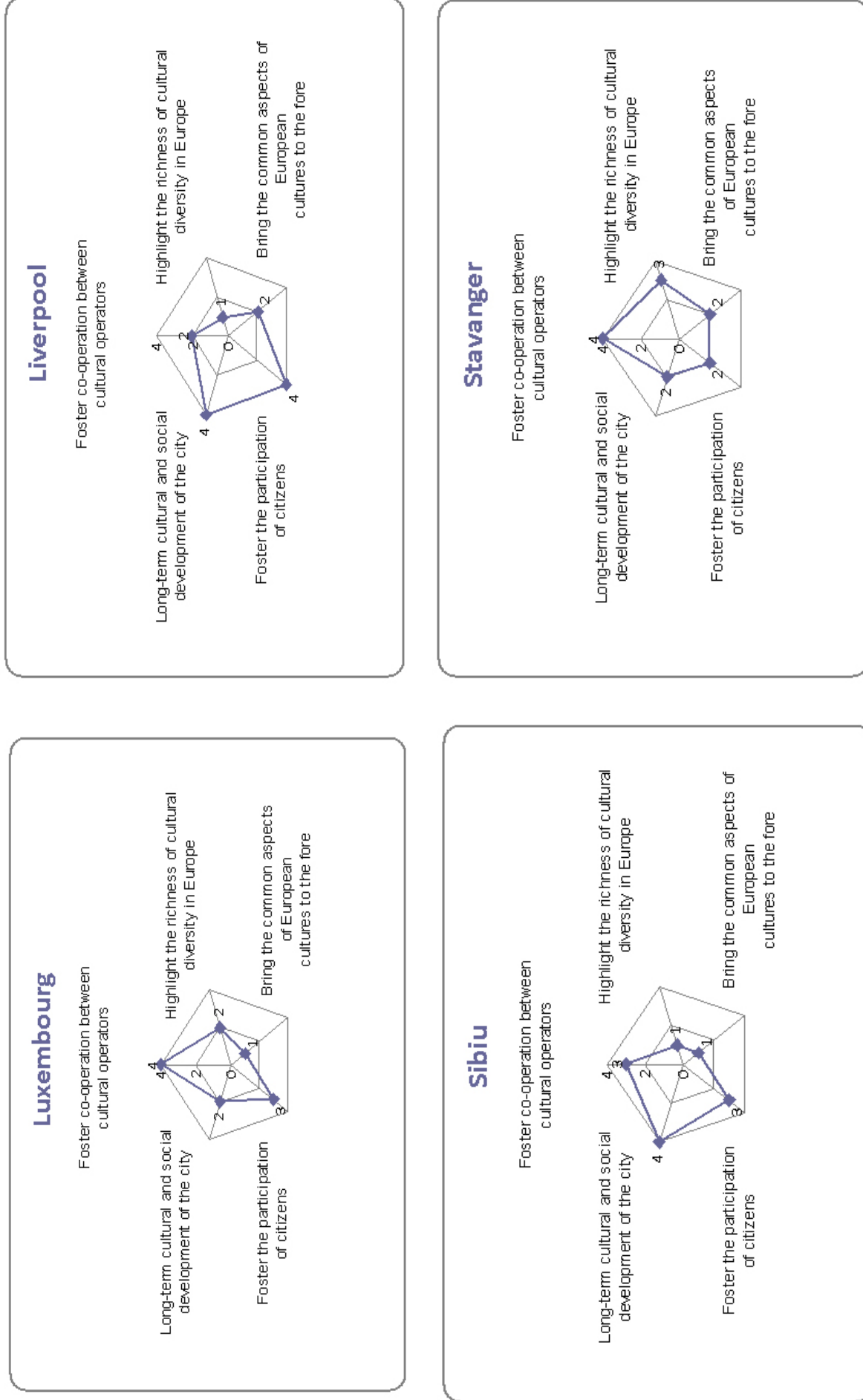
[105] Binns, L. (2005), *Capitalising on culture: an evaluation of culture-led urban regeneration policy*. Articles, Paper 5, Futures Academy Dublin Institute of Technology.

twin focus on enhancing image and profile as a means to attract workers and developing a cultural sector and profile in order to diversify the local economy away from a reliance on finite reserves of oil. Luxembourg GR had the least focus on economic objectives, with only tourism featuring as a secondary objective.

All four ECOC were relevant to the social dimension of the Action. For Luxembourg GR, in particular, its social objectives were important and reflected much of the ethos of the ECOC (at least in Luxembourg itself), which was to attract young people and "young audiences". However, in all four ECOC, the social dimension related primarily to widening access to culture, as opposed to social inclusion *per se*, i.e. the ECOC were not, in general, seen as instruments of local social policies, although the objectives of Luxembourg GR (and Liverpool to a lesser extent) did bear some relation to "cultural inclusion", i.e. extending opportunities for creation to people whose cultural values are marginalised by, or excluded from, the dominant cultural landscape.

The diagrams below illustrate the relative prominence of the characteristics of each ECOC. For the sake of consistency and simplicity, the characteristics are based on the criteria for cultural programmes set out in Article 4 of the 2006 Decision. For each characteristic an overall judgement has been made - based on all the available evidence - as to the relative scale and scope of activity. The scale used ranges from 'least prominent' (1) to 'most prominent' (4) and has been designed to capture the similarities and differences between the ECOC and for this reason a score of '1' does not necessarily mean that a certain characteristic was not significant. Overall, the charts highlight the considerable diversity amongst this group of ECOC.

Figure 8.1 Comparison of characteristics of the ECOC

Luxembourg

Foster co-operation between cultural operators

Highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe

Bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore

Long-term cultural and social development of the city

Foster the participation of citizens

Liverpool

Foster co-operation between cultural operators

Highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe

Bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore

Long-term cultural and social development of the city

Foster the participation of citizens

Sibiu

Foster co-operation between cultural operators

Highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe

Bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore

Long-term cultural and social development of the city

Foster the participation of citizens

Stavanger

Foster co-operation between cultural operators

Highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe

Bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore

Long-term cultural and social development of the city

Foster the participation of citizens

> **Key conclusion:** all four ECOC were strongly relevant to at least one of the three specific objectives of the intervention logic and demonstrated some relevance to all of them; whilst they were all relevant to the objective of developing cultural activities, this was most apparent in Stavanger and in the other three cases, this was seen through the lens of other overall aims, i.e. building a cross-border region (Luxembourg GR), raising the international profile of the city (Sibiu), and urban regeneration and inclusion (Liverpool); all four ECOC were relevant to the objective of promoting the European dimension of and through culture, primarily through their objectives of fostering co-operation with cultural operators, artists and cities in other Member States; all four ECOC were relevant to the objective of pursuing "economic development through culture", primarily through using the ECOC to improve the image of the city (the GR in the case of Luxembourg) and to the objective of pursing "social development through culture" through widening access to culture.

> **Recommendation 1:** the current objectives of the ECOC Action are relevant to the wider context in which it operates, e.g. cultural policy, aspirations of cities; it may be inevitable that each ECOC will tend to prioritise one of the three specific objectives over the others, but the Action should continue to allow "space" for cities to interpret the objectives of the Action in their own way.

8.3 Efficiency

Consideration of efficiency involves looking firstly at the process of converting inputs – of time, human resources and money – into activities that produce outputs and secondly at the cost of producing those outputs. The €1.5m EU funding of ECOC is very modest and never intended to be enough, by itself, to produce the desired effects. We therefore have to look at the efficiency of ECOC in a broader sense, exploring the extent to which the operations and management of ECOC were efficient from the point of view of the cities themselves.

Common problems in the operations and management of the 1995-2004 ECOC include changes in key staff such as the directors, artistic directors or managers, personality clashes, communication problems, inappropriate experience, unclear responsibilities, excessive workload and weak management/leadership[106]. With this in mind, we consider the efficiency of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC in terms of the governance structure, leadership and membership of the partnership. We then go on to consider the efficiency of the processes operated at EU level and also the potential for using other policy mechanisms to achieve the same results **(EQ29)**.

8.3.1 Governance

The nature of ECOC is that most cities do not have direct prior experience of running such a programme (Luxembourg being the exception, having held the title in 1995). The need to implement an extensive but one-off cultural programme poses challenges for the existing organisations within any city. ECOC have typically chosen to establish special management structures dedicated to co-ordinating day-to-day

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[106] Palmer/Rae Associates (2004)

operations of the cultural programme and associated activity.[107] This approach was also taken by the 2007 and 2008 ECOC, each of which devolved the implementation of its cultural programmes to newly-created delivery agencies, though the municipalities were important players in all four. There is consensus from all four cities that such an approach was essential, though not without its difficulties.

In at least two of the ECOC, a poorly configured Board hampered progress and required restructuring, for example, to reduce the number of members to a more manageable size or to make the members less remote from the day-to-day activity. However, the importance of the Board in all ECOC was as a means by which to accommodate a wide range of interests – civic and political, cultural and commercial. But what was more important than the precise configuration of the Board was the inclusion of one or more "figureheads" that can bring political support, artistic credibility, international connections and experience with the media. The most appropriate nature of that figurehead will vary, according to the context of each city, its objectives and the personalities involved. **(EQ14)**

The most efficient and effective role of public authorities in the governance of the ECOC has been demonstrated to depend on the governance context of each country and in, particular, on the different levels at which responsibilities are held for cultural policy and expenditure. Three of the ECOC, Luxembourg GR, Sibiu and Stavanger featured very strong involvement from the national level, in all three cases, reflecting the very prominent role of the Ministry of Culture in the governance of culture. The Ministry provided a significant proportion of the funding of the cultural programme and, in Sibiu, of the infrastructure improvements. The Ministries also played a prominent role in the governance in those three ECOC. In contrast, the national Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) played a much less significant role in Liverpool beyond the point of designation, reflecting the very significant cultural role fulfilled by municipalities in the UK.

As we have explained in the previous section, the experience of 2007 & 2008 shows that a different set of skills is needed to develop the ECOC from that which prepared the successful application. This skill set consists of management and financial planning (including the ability to satisfy EU and other public funding requirements as well as attract commercial sponsors); artistic leadership (able to make strong decisions and challenge local politicians on occasion); and marketing and promotional expertise (to reach local neighbourhoods and international cultural audiences). Added to this is the need for diplomacy to handle the different interests that will come to bear on the ECOC. This skill set is usually best acquired by a mix of existing staff seconded from one of the key stakeholders and new staff, including some of the best international talent that can be attracted.

The experience of 2007 & 2008 shows that an artistic director is not necessarily essential but does have a significant bearing on the nature of the ECOC and its cultural programme. Indeed, of the four ECOC, we have already noted that Stavanger – the only ECOC that had an Artistic Director throughout the title year - demonstrated the strongest and most consistent artistic themes. The absence of an artistic director in the other three ECOC allowed the cultural operators more freedom to develop their own artistic themes, but some kind of artistic support still needed to be offered to many projects. Given the three-fold set of skills required as noted above, the experience of 2007 & 2008 also shows that an overall executive director and general co-ordinator (or equivalent) are also essential, even for those ECOC that employ an artistic director. **(EQ15)**

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[107] See for example, Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).

The delivery agencies of all four ECOC have been recognised as efficient by the majority of stakeholders in each case, but not without a significant degree of criticism in at least three cases (Luxembourg GR, Liverpool and Stavanger). The most intense criticism was received mostly in the development phase, when the euphoria of receiving the nomination had faded but a tangible cultural programme had not yet been announced; some of that criticism was justified, because expectations had been raised that could not later be satisfied, for example, through poorly-designed calls for projects, or because the delivery team had not effectively engaged with the local cultural sector. Other criticism was less justified and merely reflected an "information gap" that was filled by negative reporting in the media. At least two of the ECOC suffered significant difficulties in promotions and marketing, in part because of a lack of resources and experience but also, in the case of Luxembourg GR, because of the nature of the ECOC not lending itself easily to international marketing.

Key conclusion: all four ECOC faced difficulties in establishing efficient governance arrangements, particularly during the development phase. These difficulties primarily related to the challenge of establishing an organisational structure and building a team with the appropriate skills to implement the cultural programme. In each case, this required a wider set of skills and thus a different structure from the team that had prepared the successful application, albeit retaining most of the key individuals. Issues that played an important role were: the need to balance artistic and political interests and to ensure that any new delivery mechanism was welcomed by the existing stakeholders as a co-operative partner; and getting the right mix of existing and seconded staff as well as new talent. Each ECOC did eventually establish an efficient governance structure, as was recognised by the majority of stakeholders. The experience of 2007 & 2008 demonstrates that a new and independent structure is usually advisable, one that is carefully customised to reflect the political and cultural context of the city and, indeed, the country more generally. Another important lesson of 2007 & 2008 has been the importance of the evaluations commissioned by the ECOC themselves. Since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, the Commission has published a guide for applicant cities with recommendations on governance. The Commission also provides additional support in the form of information sessions with applicant and designated cities.

Recommendation 2: Future evaluations of the ECOC Action should consider the effectiveness of the support put in place since the designation of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC.

Recommendation 3: the Commission should require all ECOC to commission evaluations of the impact of their cultural programmes and associated activities.

8.3.2 Efficiency of ECOC mechanisms at EU-level **(EQ27, EQ28, EQ30)**

Until 2004, the European Capitals of Culture were designated by the Council on the basis of intergovernmental cooperation[108]. Palmer/Rae Associates (2004) report that almost all the respondents from its survey of 1995-2004 ECOC, believed that it was correct to discontinue this method of selection based on nomination and lobbying, in part because of the perception that the designation was too motivated by politics. The 1999 Decision therefore introduced a new selection process, for the 2005 title onwards, based on the formation of a selection panel to consider the nomination(s) for each year.

Whilst all the 2007 & 2008 ECOC, perhaps unsurprisingly (since they were winners), expressed broad satisfaction with the new process, it is too early to draw robust conclusions on the effectiveness of that process. This is because of the specific circumstances of 2007 and 2008, particularly the fact that the selection panel did not receive competing nominations. The panel was only required to give a view on the absolute merits of each bid, rather than its merits relative to competing nominations, since there were none. Whilst the panel did more than merely "rubber-stamp" the applications, its only choice was whether to accept these nominations or not – not to choose between different nominated cities.

However, it is worth noting here the value of the selection process operated by the UK. Some twelve cities competed, which generated considerable public and media interest in the ECOC Action and in the imminent award of the title to a UK city. Moreover, interviewees from Liverpool reported that it would have benefited from the application process alone, even if it had not secured the designation, in terms of stimulating co-ordination between different activities and giving a focus for the regeneration of the city.

> **Key conclusion:** whilst the 2007 & 2008 ECOC expressed broad satisfaction with the nomination process at EU level, it is, in the view of the evaluator, too early to draw firm conclusions as to the efficiency, effectiveness and impartiality of the process introduced by the 1999 Decision, particularly since there have been no unsuccessful candidates under this process.[109] In any case, this process is no longer operative, having been replaced by a new process introduced by the 2006 Decision.[110]

> **Recommendation 4:** future evaluations should consider the efficiency, effectiveness and impartiality of the selection process introduced by the 2006 Decision.

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[108] Report On The Nominations From Luxembourg And Romania (2004).

[109] There were 11 unsuccessful candidates for the UK's nomination in 2008; however, these candidacies were put forward within a process operating at national level within the UK; of the UK's 12 candidate cities, only Liverpool was subject to the nomination process at EU level.

[110] The key elements of this new process include a call for submission of applications published by each of the Member States listed in the Order of Entitlement no later than six years before the title year, and a European selection panel for each Member State to assess the applications of the candidate cities.

Although the Commission did not play a significant support and monitoring role in relation to the 2007 and 2008 ECOC, the predominant view from three of the four cities is that such a function would have brought benefits. Indeed, some monitoring points might have introduced important checks that would have highlighted potential problems and allowed for earlier remedial action (e.g. late start of communications in Sibiu, need to restructure the Liverpool culture programme). The networking between past, present and future ECOC is active and was welcomed by all four ECOC. However, it can be hard for past ECOC to offer support, e.g. in Sibiu, where the delivery agency had finished operations and staff had moved on.

The 2006 Decision foresees a two-phase monitoring process for the ECOC as of 2010 which should help in this regard (two years and eight months before the start of the year). It should be noted that the Commission is currently trying to step up the support to cities further still. Indeed, as a result of feedback from stakeholders it is seeking to introduce voluntary informal monitoring six months after the designation. The Commission is also facilitating advisory visits by members of the panel to future cities requiring help.

> **Recommendation 5:** future evaluations should consider the efficiency and effectiveness of the new monitoring process implemented by the Commission.

Each of the ECOC received EU funding in the region of €900k - €1.5m from the EU's Culture Programme for specific projects within their cultural programme. These specific projects promoted transnational mobility of cultural players in three cases (Sibiu, Liverpool and Stavanger), particularly in the case of Stavanger which used the EU funding to host four companies from other countries as "artists-in-residence" throughout the year. Only in Liverpool did the EU-funded project explicitly promote the transnational circulation of works and cultural and artistic products and encourage intercultural dialogue. In the case of Luxembourg GR, the EU-funded project (exhibitions at the Rotundas) demonstrated relevance to the aim of "activities stressing European visibility".

In three cases (Luxembourg GR, Liverpool and Stavanger), the EU funding formed a very modest proportion of the total expenditure on the cultural programme of each ECOC and in no cases did it significantly influence the decision to apply or the content of the application. A comment made by all four ECOC is that the administrative processes attached to the EU funding are onerous. But these conditions did not stop any of the cities from applying for the funding and they are not, in the view of the evaluator, any more onerous than those relating to other EU funding programmes.

> **Key conclusion:** the criteria for the €1.5m EU funding of ECOC were clear and the administrative processes not dissimilar to those of other EU programmes. Each ECOC received funding from the EU's Culture Programme for specific projects. The EU funding had very little influence on the decision to apply or on the detail of applications. In the view of the evaluator, the purpose of the EU funding should be to facilitate efficient and effective implementation of the cultural programme; the task of ensuring that ECOC "implement activities stressing European visibility and trans-European cultural co-operation" is and should be addressed by the selection panel. Given the modest amount provided from the EU budget, the ECOC designation nevertheless has a very effective leverage effect.

> **Recommendation 6:** future evaluations should consider the effectiveness of the awarding of the prize including whether the award of the prize before the beginning of the year in a lump sum is appropriate. They should also examine the relevance of the prize concerning the decision of cities to apply and to the quality of the ECOC implementation. Consideration should also be given to other EU funds, such as the EU structural funds.

8.3.3 Sufficiency of resources / potential for other policy mechanisms

Given the diversity of the ECOC, any conclusions about the sufficiency of resources need to be offered firmly within the context of each particular city. The resources devoted by three of the ECOC to their cultural programmes were within the range of spend of the 1995-2004 ECOC (€7.9m-€73.7m), although Sibiu was towards the lower end. Liverpool was exceptional, having expended far more than the average for previous ECOC. The €45m expended within Luxembourg was sufficient to achieve impact within that country, although the €12m expended within the rest of the GR was limited in the extent which it could achieve objectives other than the cross-border objectives; for example, only €60k was expended in Wallonia.

As we have noted above, the EU funding forms a very modest proportion of the total expenditure on the cultural programme and in no cases did it significantly influence the decision to apply. However, the ECOC Action does generate high demand from candidate cities, substantial investment in the cultural programmes and in the cities more generally and high profile in the media and with the public. Indeed, the ECOC brand is potentially one of the best known – and valued - of all EU programmes or initiatives.[111]

> **Key conclusion:** the ECOC title remains highly valued by ECOC, generates extensive cultural programmes and achieves significant impacts (as we shall we see in the next section); it is doubtful if any other policy mechanism could have achieved the same impact for the same level of EU-investment in terms of financial resources and effort. However, (as we shall explore below), it may be that "returns" start to diminish in future years and that alternative policy mechanisms are required, albeit drawing on many of the concepts underpinning the ECOC Action and the experiences to date.

> **Recommendation 7:** future evaluations should consider the continued value of the ECOC "brand", as viewed both by the title holders and by the wider world (media, cultural sector bodies and the general public); in the event that the value of the brand is perceived to be diminishing, the Commission should explore alternative approaches and compare their relative merits with those of the ECOC.

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[111] The scope of this evaluation did not extend to assessing EU citizens' awareness of ECOC. However, the extensive media coverage of ECOC suggests high awareness. For example, Palmer/Rae Associates (2004) reported that the 1995-2004 ECOC attracted extensive "media attention", in the form of at least 125 000 newspaper and magazine articles and 9 200 television and radio broadcasts.

8.4 Effectiveness

8.4.1 Developing cultural activities

The first five ECOC (1985 Athens, Florence 1986, Amsterdam 1987, Berlin 1988, Paris 1989) were already established cultural centres of European significance in their own right; indeed, they had been recognised as such for centuries or even millennia (in the case of Athens). As Binns[112], notes the ECOC title reflected and was given value by their artistic heritage. The emphasis in these cities could thus be very much about "bringing the common (European) cultural heritage to the fore" – and highlighting the importance of these cities to that cultural heritage. However, the trend in recent years has been for smaller, provincial cities to hold the title (e.g. Patras 2006, Cork 2005, Graz 2003). For many of these places, the emphasis has been on raising their profile, through culture and as cultural cities. For some, the desire has been simply to put the city "on the cultural map" (Luxembourg 1995, Avignon 2000, Bergen 2000); for others (such as Graz 2003) it may have been to challenge the dominance of the capital city. For the most ambitious (e.g. Bruges 2002), the ambition may even extend to breaking into the cultural "elite".

In line with that trend, none of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC would be recognised as being amongst the "first tier" of European cultural destinations, even after a successful title year; indeed, of the four host cities, only Luxembourg could indisputably claim to be the leading cultural destination within its own country. As a consequence, the 2007 & 2008 ECOC have tended not to focus primarily, therefore, on bringing the common European cultural heritage to the fore. Whilst there were many instances of drawing on that common heritage and the cities' historical contributions to it, the cultural programmes tended to be more focussed on contemporary, innovative and participative forms of culture.

In each ECOC territory, a more extensive cultural programme has been implemented than would have been the case in the absence of ECOC designation. As one interviewee noted, "the advantage for cultural institutions of an ECOC is that the press and politicians are for one year more focused on culture and more money is made available". Many genuinely innovative projects and new commissions have been undertaken, across a broad range of cultural genres. Audiences for cultural activities have, in general, been far greater than in the years preceding the ECOC and, where evidence is available it suggests a high level of audience satisfaction. The cultural scene of each city is now more vibrant and more recognised nationally and internationally than previously. Whilst each cultural programme has featured many established international and national artists, a significant number of local cultural operators has been supported in each case. As well as enjoying greater profile and contacts, one of the most important benefits reported across all four ECOC is the greater professionalism and operational capacity of such operators. In many cases, the mere fact of working more closely with cultural institutions and authorities has enabled greater support to be provided than would otherwise have been the case. For example, increased public funding has typically been accompanied by practical help to enable smaller organisations to enter into contracts and account for grant funding more effectively.

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[112] Binns (2005).

Key conclusion: Overall, each ECOC, and thus also the ECOC Action more generally, was broadly successful in achieving its objectives relating to the development of cultural activities during the title year. Of course, not every element of the cultural programmes was completely successful and some stakeholders were disappointed (such as some cultural institutions for whom the ECOC offered limited relevance), some local artists felt there was an undue bias towards international artists, and the expectations of some local cultural operators for financial and other support could not be met. But the Action has enabled four extensive cultural programmes to be implemented that include many exciting and innovative projects.

8.4.2 Promoting the European dimension of and through culture

The 1999 Decision offers no explicit definition of the "European dimension" and the criteria of the "European dimension" as set out in the 2006 Decision are open to very different interpretations. Indeed, as noted above, the European dimension of the ECOC Action was interpreted in very different ways by different title holders in 2007 & 2008. Drawing on the six categories highlighted by Palmer/Rae Associates (2004), we draw some conclusions about the effectiveness of the four ECOC in "promoting the European dimension of and through culture".

In terms of activities that focus on the talents of European artists[113], we conclude that all four ECOC were effective in attracting such artists to perform within the context of their cultural programme. However, in the case of Luxembourg GR, it must be noted that, whilst many such artists were attracted, this dimension of the ECOC was less significant than the activity devoted to supporting local creativity and cross-border cultural collaboration. Whilst these activities were no doubt intended to help increase the vibrancy of the cultural life of the other three cities, it is perhaps only in Stavanger that they formed part of a strong artistic theme. Moreover, in all three cities the focus was as much on attracting the best international artists possible, rather than specifically European artists.

In terms of collaborations, co-productions and exchanges, this was at the heart of the Luxembourg GR ECOC which was effective at encouraging collaborative projects featuring cultural operators from different parts of the GR. Liverpool and Stavanger also developed extensive collaborations with cities in other countries, in Liverpool's case using the EU funding specifically attached to the ECOC designation. In the other ECOC (Sibiu), such collaboration was less central and mostly consisted of co-operation with the other title holder (Luxembourg GR), although this collaboration was more extensive than would typically be the case.

There was very limited coverage of European themes and issues. Indeed, only two ECOC could be said to have given significant coverage to them, in the case of Luxembourg GR through its focus on themes such as migration and great European personalities. However, the large number of themes and topics in Luxembourg GR and the decentralised nature of its co-ordination meant that these themes did not permeate the majority of the cultural programme. The two other ECOC were not entirely lacking in individual projects and events that focussed on particular European themes or issues. But again, these did not permeate the majority of the cultural programme.

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[113] "European artists" is understood here as artists of European significance rather than merely artists of European origin.

Given the focus of Luxembourg GR and Sibiu on improving their image and raising their profile, it is not surprising they were effective in "identifying and celebrating aspects of European history, identity and heritage already present in the city". This was particularly the case in Rhineland-Palatinate (Luxembourg GR), which emphasised its links with "Great European Personalities", for example, through a major exhibition in Trier about Constantine. Sibiu was effective in promoting its multi-cultural and particularly Germanic heritage, in part reflected in the fact that 23% of visitors were from Germany. For Liverpool and Stavanger, this was not a prominent objective, although both were effective in promoting activity based around their identities as ports of European significance.

All four ECOC featured specific partnerships with other European cities or within a region. Luxembourg GR was particularly effective in this sense, not only succeeding in implementing a very extensive cross-border cultural programme but also in establishing the basis for long-term co-operation, i.e. through the Espace culturel Grande Région. Luxembourg GR and Sibiu were also effective in establishing a partnership with each other that went beyond the exchanges and networking typically undertaken by all ECOC. Indeed, the partnership was established at an early stage, as noted by the selection panel, which highlighted the "confidence, interest and total support for Sibiu" demonstrated by Luxembourg GR. According to interviewees in Sibiu, this support was invaluable in Sibiu both receiving the nomination and in managing the ECOC efficiently. In Liverpool and Stavanger, the specific partnerships with other European cities were sizeable in their own right although less central and tended to be focused mainly on a small number of specific projects, notably the Cities on the Edge project (in the case of Liverpool) and the North Sea project (in the case of Stavanger).

Lastly, three of the ECOC focussed on promoting European tourism. There is evidence that all four were effective in attracting tourists (even if, in the case of Stavanger, this was not an explicit objective), as we discuss in the next section.

We summarise the effectiveness of the European dimension in each ECOC in the table below.

Table 8.2 Effectiveness of ECOC in respect of the European dimension

Category of European dimension	LUXEMBOURG	SIBIU	LIVERPOOL	STAVANGER
Events that focus on the talents of European artists	✓ Involvement of many international artists	✓✓ Specific targeting of international artists, e.g. for Jazz and Theatre Festivals	✓✓ Specific targeting of international artists	✓✓ Specific targeting of international artists, e.g. artists in residence from other European countries
Collaborations, co-productions and exchanges	✓✓✓ Collaboration between cultural operators in different parts of the GR and with SIB	✓ Co-productions with LUX	✓✓ Collaboration with STV, High Hopes exchange project, Streetwaves music festival	✓✓ Collaboration with LIV, High Hopes exchange project, co-productions between residencies and local artists
Developing European themes and issues	✓ Strand of cultural programme focussed on the theme of migration		✓ Intercultural Capital projects	
Identifying and celebrating aspects of European history, identity and heritage already present in the city	✓✓ Some specific projects related to Great European Personalities, e.g. Constantine	✓✓ Promoting the city's cultural heritage, e.g. Germanic heritage, churches of different European denominations	✓ Cities on the Edge	✓ North Sea Project
Specific partnerships between two or more cities or within a region	✓✓✓ Grande Region Partnership with SIB	✓ Partnership with LUX	✓ Cities on the Edge	✓ North Sea Project
Promoting European tourism	✓ Link to strategy of promoting GR as a tourist destination	✓✓✓ Large focus on raising profile of Sibiu and putting the city on the "European map"; associated infrastructure developments, e.g. airport, hotels, renovation of city centre	✓✓✓ Specific marketing strategy and activity; 08Welcome programme supporting local businesses	✓ Activities undertaken by regional tourist agency (although not an explicit ECOC objective)

Key

✓✓✓ Category was a primary objective of the ECOC and extensive activity was undertaken effectively in support of this objective

✓✓   Category was an important objective of the ECOC and significant activity was undertaken effectively in support of this objective

✓   Category was a secondary objective of the ECOC and some activity was undertaken effectively in support of this objective

Key conclusion: all four ECOC have been effective in implementing a wide range of activities with a European dimension; however, the nature of that dimension and the extent of effectiveness varied:

- the visibility gained by the title helped all four to be effective in generating a significant increase in tourism, although this had been an important objective for only two of them;
- all were effective in undertaking collaborations, co-productions and exchanges, although this activity was only extensive in Luxembourg GR; in the other ECOC, collaboration was peripheral to the main cultural programme and primarily took place only with the other title holder;
- similarly, all were effective in establishing transnational partnerships with other cities or regions, but this activity was only extensive in Luxembourg GR;
- three of the ECOC were effective in meeting their objective of attracting artists of European significance; in the other (Luxembourg GR), this was a less prominent objective although many artists from other European countries were attracted;
- activities related to "European history, identity and heritage already present in the city" were only extensively implemented in Luxembourg GR and Sibiu, although both were relatively effective;
- all ECOC gave only modest attention directed to developing European themes and issues.

8.4.3 Economic, urban development and tourism impacts

As noted earlier, most ECOC have "stated as priorities the development of tourism, enhancement of city's image, urban revitalisation and expansion of creative industries and jobs"[114]. This reflects a wider shift in the expectations of cultural policy in (western) Europe; instead of being deemed to "have its own intrinsic value and thus an end in itself", cultural expenditure was now expected by some to deliver "tangible, quantifiable returns on investment" (Binns 2005).

Despite the 1995-2004 ECOC having these economic and urban development objectives, there was little reliable independent data available to make informed comments about the total value of economic benefits flowing from ECOC.[115] It is therefore worth noting the very extensive programme of research being undertaken in Liverpool to identify the impacts of the ECOC. Whilst the full results are not yet available, the research programme itself is intended to be a model that future ECOC can follow.

Looking across all four ECOC, there is independent data that suggests a number of economic and urban development benefits.

First, as we have noted above, three ECOC had the objective of promoting tourism, with a better image and higher profile being particularly important. There is evidence that rate of increase of tourist visits to all four cities was greater than the increase in tourism across Europe more generally in the title years; this was the case even in Stavanger, which had not explicitly targeted such an increase. Moreover, there is evidence that the ECOC have enjoyed more extensive and more positive press and media coverage than previously.

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[114] Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).
[115] Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).

Second, there was very significant infrastructure investment either within the programme of the ECOC or through the impetus provided by the ECOC, for example in terms of conversion of industrial premises into cultural venues, purchase of equipment, renovation of town centre, associated tourist developments.

Third, there is evidence of direct impacts on the local economy (or sectors therein), for example, the estimated increase in tourist expenditure of €56.4m in Luxembourg GR and an increase in turnover of 9.5% in various sectors related to the ECOC in Sibiu. More extensive evidence of economic impact is expected to emerge from the Impact08 programme in Liverpool, but the increase in tourism alone already demonstrates significant impact.

Whilst all four ECOC have demonstrated economic, tourism and urban development impacts, these impacts are at risk of diminishing for future ECOC. To the extent that there are reductions in public expenditure and private investment (due to recession and the "credit crunch"), future ECOC will find it harder to finance their cultural programmes and associated infrastructure development. They may also find it harder to generate an increase in tourism and in cultural audiences, although it is hard to establish a direct correlation.[116] The evaluations of the 2009 ECOC will provide an early opportunity to research these issues.

It may also be the case that the ECOC concept exhausts its potential to generate economic impacts more generally. In terms of using culture to attract investment, Binns (2005) notes that businesses have an ever growing list of "culturally vibrant" cities in which to invest and that it, in any case, it is far from certain that the provision of cultural amenities significantly influences business relocation decisions. Whilst, culture-led urban regeneration has seemingly proved successful in many cases, there is a need for cities continually to reinvent themselves and their cultural "product" in order to generate repeat visits. Moreover, Griffiths (2006) suggests that there are clear limits to the extent to which former industrial centres and other newcomers can hope to break into the established hierarchy of urban cultural destinations.

Key conclusion: all four ECOC were effective in achieving impacts related to economic, tourism and urban development objectives; tourism increased in all four cases (though unevenly across the GR) and there is evidence of impact on the local economy; all four ECOC either directly funded cultural infrastructure and urban development investments or gave them greater impetus. However, there are some reasons to believe that the economic impacts of future ECOC may be less certain in current economic circumstances in which there may be reductions in public expenditure and private investment as well as reduced consumer expenditure in the tourist and cultural sectors. Moreover, there may also be a natural limit to the extent that the ECOC concept can continually drive urban regeneration. At this point, it may be that purely cultural objectives recover the prominence that they enjoyed in the early years of the ECOC – or that the ECOC concept requires to be revisited.

[116] For example, parts of the UK tourist industry have enjoyed increased revenues as the recession and a weak currency have encouraged UK residents to take domestic rather than foreign holidays.

> **Recommendation 8:** in forthcoming debates, the European Commission should explore the extent to which the ECOC concept (and culture more generally) can (continue to) and should be used to stimulate urban regeneration and economic development or whether to return to an approach that is more about culture as an end in itself – or whether to retain the flexibility for cities to strike their own balance.

8.4.4 Supporting social development through culture

The social dimension of ECOC has grown in recent years, in part as a response to the critique that ECOC' cultural programmes were "elitist" and did not involve the majority of the local population or reflect the reality of their everyday lives. Indeed, some of the stronger criticism of ECOC has described them as "regressive taxation of the poor" (elite cultural events funded by taxes or lottery money), which served the needs of businesses and tourists but hid the real culture and social deprivation of residents.

In response, the social dimension of ECOC has been increasingly emphasised in recent years - culture as a means of social renewal "from the bottom-up". This approach puts more emphasis on viewing culture as something emerging from and contained within the day-to-day lives of ordinary citizens. Indeed, the need to mobilise large sections of the population and achieve a positive social impact was subsequently incorporated into the 1999 and 2006 Decisions.

The 2007 & 2008 all undertook activities with a social objective. These included activities to widen access to culture, such as holding events in unusual venues or in different neighbourhoods across the city or in, free or subsidised tickets and laying on transport to events. Liverpool and Luxembourg, in particular, attempted to present a cultural programme that reflected the diversity of their populations, particularly, young people, ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups. Support was also offered to NGOs, community organisations and schools to enable them to reach out to different segments of the population. Volunteer programmes were also an effective way of widening participation in culture, particularly in Liverpool and Sibiu.

> **Key conclusion:** as noted above, all four ECOC demonstrated relevance to the social dimension of the Action. There is evidence that each was effective in implementing activities intended to achieve social objectives, notably the widening of access to culture and participation in volunteering (particularly in Sibiu and Liverpool). There is also evidence of an increase in attendance at cultural events and participation in cultural activities, including amongst target groups (in the case of Luxembourg). Moreover, many new ways to involve such groups have been developed, for example, through the creation of new venues in Luxembourg, the organisation of cultural events in different neighbourhoods in Sibiu and the creation of community arts projects in Liverpool. However, the social dimension of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC has consisted primarily of widening access to culture, rather than of cultural inclusion or social inclusion *per se*.

> **Recommendation 9:** in forthcoming debates on the ECOC the European Commission should explore the extent to which the ECOC concept (and culture more generally) can (continue to) and should be used to stimulate the social renewal of cities, as opposed to merely widening access to and participation in culture, or whether to retain the flexibility for cities to strike their own balance.

8.5 Sustainability

In one sense, ECOC are intended <u>not</u> to be sustained; cities hold the title for a year before being replaced by another pair of title holders. So consideration of sustainability has to take into account the one-off nature of the cities' cultural programmes; some activities cannot (and perhaps should not) be expected to continue. We would therefore expect the level of activity (cultural, transnational, etc.) to be lower in the year following designation than in the year itself. At the same time, the 1999 Decision refers to the need to "integrate the cultural project into a dynamic medium-term process". It is therefore necessary to consider not simply whether impacts are sustained but also the effects on governance in the long-term.

With regard to governance, it is clear that the end of the title year leads to the disbanding of the dedicated delivery agencies and inevitably some loss of the experience that has been built up. However, it is clear that in the main the ECOC has brought about important shifts in the governance of culture within their respective cities. Not only is much of the experience retained (with many individuals remaining involved in the cultural governance of the city, having returned to their previous employers, e.g. municipalities or taken up new posts, e.g. with cultural institutions); ECOC have also led to the introduction of new ways of working, new partnerships, and new strategies. In many cases, the ECOC has ushered in a new set of relationships between local municipalities and cultural operators, and pushed culture up the agenda of local political debate. In the case of the Luxembourg GR, two dedicated legacy bodies have been established – one to continue the cultural programme for young people in Luxembourg and the other to continue the cross-border cultural collaboration.

With regard to activities, whilst the level of cultural activity has, naturally, decreased following the end of the title year, there is evidence in all four ECOC that many of the activities initiated in the title year have been sustained and, in some instances, public authorities have provided ongoing funding. For example, Liverpool will continue to operate a large events programme, Luxembourg has initiated further refurbishment of the Rotundas, the Conseil Régional de Lorraine has provided continued funding for cross-border projects and a dedicated co-ordinator (retained since the title year) and Sibiu has retained an extensive volunteer programme. There are also numerous examples of festivals, first initiated in the title year, continuing to be held in future years. In addition, there are many examples of cultural institutions and independent operators that are undertaking a higher level of activity than before the title year, although some opportunities have been lost in that respect.

At this stage, it is too early to evaluate the sustainability of economic and tourism impacts. Previous research suggests that higher visitor flows continue for at least one year after the event, before declining.[117] However, in Glasgow, the decline was immediate and severe; overnight stays in 1991 dropped by 20% on the title year (1990) and to a level below that of 1989.[118] Whilst all the 2007 & 2008 ECOC enjoyed increases in tourism and higher international profiles during their title years, with much of the developed world suffering a recession, there is a risk that these benefits will be difficult to sustain in current economic circumstances – though the title holders may, of course, enjoy more visitors than they would have done in the absence of ECOC designation and be in a better position to capture future benefits once the global economy recovers.

> **Key conclusion:** in general the ECOC have seen significant changes in the way cultural activities are brought about which have established new platforms for activity which are likely to be sustained into the future. Whilst the level of cultural activity is inevitably less in the years following the title year than in the title year itself, many new activities have been sustained, the capacity of cultural operators is greater and the cultural scene of each city is generally more vibrant than previously.

8.6   Success of the ECOC Action

As we noted in Section 2, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the 2007 & 2008 ECOC and of the ECOC Action as a whole were considered against a catalogue of evaluation questions. This task has largely been achieved through the evidence presented in report so far. However, in order to summarise the success of the ECOC Action, we consider here four *fundamental evaluation questions*. The purpose of the questions is to assess whether the essence of the ECOC and their achievements fulfilled the global objective of the 1999 and 2006 Decisions, i.e. the "highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens". If the overall answer to all four of these questions is "yes", the ECOC Action can be judged to have satisfied the requirements of the Decision.

Did the ECOC have extensive, exciting and innovative cultural programmes?

The cultural programme of each ECOC varied widely, reflecting the unique context and circumstances of each city. Liverpool's cultural programme was by far the biggest yet implemented by any ECOC and encompassed incredible diversity – from the opening and closing ceremonies that brought thousands of people onto the city's streets to the many small community arts projects operating in neighbourhoods across the city. The programmes of Sibiu and Stavanger were far smaller, but still far more extensive than either city had previously undertaken and attracted a diversity of international talent that would not otherwise have come to the cities. In the case of Sibiu, the opportunity was taken to use much of the city centre as an open-air stage for events throughout the year. The very essence of Luxembourg's cultural programme was innovative, both for Luxembourg and for the ECOC Action more generally, in its attempt to operate across neighbouring regions in five countries.

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[117] Palmer/Rae Associates (2004).
[118] Griffiths (2006).

Whilst not having the concentration of activities that would have been visible in the other cities, the cultural programme contained many exciting and innovative elements, notably many cross-border projects that had not previously been attempted as well as the youth programme in Luxembourg and its use of innovative venues. On this basis, we conclude that the ECOC Action did succeed in stimulating four extensive, exciting and innovative cultural programmes that would not otherwise have taken place.

Did the ECOC have a distinctively European dimension?

As noted earlier, all four ECOC were effective in implementing a wide range of activities with a European dimension but the nature of that dimension and its effectiveness varied. This European dimension primarily consisted of attracting artists of European significance, as well as undertaking collaborations, co-productions and exchanges. European themes and issues tended to receive less attention, although there was better coverage of European history, identity and heritage already present in the cities. Luxembourg's European dimension was very much about enhancing European integration through culture. Sibiu's ECOC was very much about (re-)emphasising its European identity, coinciding as it did with Romania's accession to the EU. In the case of Stavanger and Liverpool, the European dimension was evidence but formed part of a broader international dimension. On this basis, we conclude that the four ECOC did have a distinctively European dimension, although this could have been strengthened in all four cases albeit in different ways.

Did the ECOC involve/enable broad participation from across the city?

All four ECOC undertook activities with a social objective, such as holding events in unusual venues and in different neighbourhoods, free or subsidised tickets, and providing transport to events. Liverpool went furthest in this respect, with its Creative Communities programme which was dedicated to widening access to culture and reported to have involved every school in the city and 160,000 people in total. Sibiu and Stavanger drew many people into culture through their use of non-traditional venues, as well as activities with local schools. Luxembourg GR reached a large number of people and in Luxembourg city drew in many young people and people of different nationalities that would not traditionally access culture. On this basis, we conclude that the four ECOC did involve and enable broad participation from across the city.

Did the ECOC create a significant legacy?

As noted earlier, the four ECOC brought about important shifts in the cultural governance of culture within their respective cities – increased capacity and experience, as well as a new set of relationships between municipalities and cultural operators. Of particular note has been the establishment of two dedicated legacy bodies in Luxembourg GR. Many activities initiated by the ECOC have been sustained beyond the title years, including festivals, new venues and volunteer programmes. Indeed, there is evidence that the level of cultural activity within each city is higher than before the title year. On this basis, we conclude that the ECOC have created a significant legacy in each city, although some opportunities have been missed both in terms of the capacity for the governance of culture and in terms of some specific cultural activities.