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Case Study on European Capitals of Culture (2003 – 2007) - Geppert / Nozar

1. General information on the project “European Capital of Culture”

1.1. History and objectives

In June 1985, the Council of Ministers launched, at the initiative of the Greek Culture Minister Melina Mercouri, the European City of Culture. This project was designed to “contribute to bringing the peoples of Europe together”.¹ Starting point has been the observation that Europe is the focus of extraordinary rich and varied artistic and cultural activities and that the cities play a major role in the creation and spread of European culture. Main objective of the initiative was to make particular aspects of the culture of the city, region or country concerned accessible to the European public.

In 2001, the event changed its name from “European City of Culture” to “European Capital of Culture” (ECoC). It has become one of the most popular cultural initiatives in Europe. Thus it is strongly influencing culture and cultural tourism. Until the year 2004, the European Cities of Culture have been chosen on an intergovernmental basis – during the Culture Council meeting, the ministers of Culture of the Member States agreed on one or several city(ies) for the title. The European Commission awarded a grant to the selected cities.

In 1999 the European Commission changed the selection procedure for the event from 2005 onwards.² Since then, the ECoC is designated each year by the Council of Ministers on the basis of a recommendation of the European Commission, which takes into account the view of an independent jury. The jury consists of seven experts on cultural matters. Two of them are chosen by the European Parliament, two by the European Commission, two by the Council of the European Union and one by the Committee of the Regions. There are several predefined selection criteria that have to be fulfilled by the candidate cities. The Member States are ranked in a chronological order, which entitles them to make one or several proposals of cities in turn, between 2005 and 2019.

In order to enable the new Member States to participate equally in this project, the Parliament and the Council in 2005 adopted a modified decision.³ Due to the event’s increase in popularity and influence on culture, the Commission made a proposal in May 2005 to improve the designation process of the European Capitals of Culture. In the future, the Member States are encouraged to organise competitions between cities interested in hosting the event. Furthermore, the proposal strengthens the role of the selection panel and specifies the selection criteria that highlight the European dimension.

¹ www.ec.europa.eu

² According to Decision 1419/1999/EC, adopted in 1999

³ Decision no649/2005/EC

Moreover, it is planned to support the designated cities in their preparation work for the event by implementing a monitoring phase.

The broad aim of the ECoC initiative was well defined at the beginning: to open up to the European public particular aspects of the culture of the city, region or country concerned and to highlight the richness and diversity of European culture and the features they share as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens.

However, the concept of ECoC is open to different interpretations and the main objectives of the cities vary. Robert Palmer found out in his study for the European Commission published in 2004, in which he examined the ECoC between 1995 and 2004, that most cities had multiple objectives, often "referring to the need to raise the international profile of the city and its region, to run a programme of cultural activities and arts events, to attract visitors and to enhance pride and self-confidence"⁴. He further names "making improvements to cultural infrastructure, expanding the local audience for culture and developing relationships with other European regions, promoting creativity and innovation and developing the careers of local artists" as secondary objectives and motivations.

This points out that the European dimension of ECoC is not always sufficiently in the focus of the event programmes and that local issues sometimes stand in the foreground. Especially monetary motivations, like promoting cultural tourism, making the city better known or using the designation as part of a strategy for economic recovery compete with the objectives of European dimension. One must keep in mind that local stakes and European dimension can be complementary.

Graz for example, hosting the ECoC 2003, stated as its mission for the event: "To put Graz on Europe's cultural map and to turn around the life in the city through a programme based on a wide notion of culture that makes people understand and actually feel that culture is part of everyday life". Genoa's mission was to "redefine its cultural identity as a city with many vocations, where port, industry, touristic and cultural activities coexist"(Genoa 2004). Lille, also hosting the event in 2004, developed the following mission: "We dreamt of Lille as a spaceship changing the fabric of time, a place where everyone can live at their own pace, cross through exotic parallel worlds, stroll through the new frontiers opened up and already dissolved...a process of metamorphosis with the ability and energy to perpetually remodel the world".

1.2. Selection criteria

In accordance with the current scheme, cities interested in hosting the event have to submit an application package to the European institutions. In this package they must specify how they plan to meet the following requirements:

- Highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which they have inspired or to which they have made a significant contribution;
- Promote events involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States of the European Union and leading to lasting cultural co-operation, and to foster their movement within the European Union;
- Support and develop creative work;
- Ensure the mobilisation and participation of large sections of the population;
- Encourage visits by citizens of the European Union and reach as wide an audience as possible;
- To promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world;
- To enhance the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city.

On this basis, the candidate cities are asked to plan a cultural programme for more or less one year. It is expected that the programme stresses the cultural inheritance as well as contemporary culture, and the European dimension of the city's culture (which means to what extent the city has participated and participates in the European cultural life). In the programme, all artistic disciplines may be included (e.g. the visual arts, literature, music, architecture, performing arts etc.)

1.3. Financing of projects

⁴ Palmer RAE Associates: European Capitals of Culture, August 2004

The European Union is supporting the event by giving a financial contribution to the designated Capitals of Culture. The funding comes from the "Culture 2000" framework programme and it must range from € 200.000 to € 1.000.000 per project. During the last years, the European Commission contributed up to € 500.000 to the budget of each ECoC, on the basis of 2 projects that the ECoC can submit to the Commission. The € 500.000 grant, split over these 2 projects, cannot exceed 60% of the projects' total budget. It has proved possible for several cities to attract additional funds for specific projects under EU funding programmes (as the structural funds). Besides, the countries, regions and municipal administrations usually provide fundings that vary in their height.

There is a distinct tendency to more spectacular event programmes occasioning enormous costs. Therefore, private sponsoring is becoming more and more important to enable an all-embracing and high-quality event programme. Sponsors come from various industries and there is no dominant sector, but they are largely companies situated in the city or region. Private sponsorship is a field that still offers some potential for growth. Yet, this can only be achieved if the administration of the ECoC event manages to clearly communicate the objectives of the programme, to ensure the quality of the programme and thus develop a certain brand awareness. This brand awareness gives sponsors a clear perspective for their investments.

1.4. Lasting effects for the cities and regions

One of the main effects for the cities is the increased public awareness which leads to an improved perception by the public. When a city is designated ECoC, the international press is reporting continually about this city during the preparation phase and during the year of the event. This is a very efficient marketing campaign for the city. As a result, the ECoC of the years 1995 to 2003 reported an increase in visitor numbers of an average of 12% in the year of the event⁵. In the following year, there are still notably more visitors than in the years before the event. So the initiative is boosting the city's appeal to tourists and especially to culturally motivated tourists. In this context, it has to be mentioned that smaller cities reported a higher increase in visitor numbers, whereas large, well-known cities recorded smaller changes.

Tourism, and especially cultural tourism, can strongly benefit from the ECoC initiative. The growth of visitor numbers can be supported by a close co-operation between the local tourism industry and the cultural sector respectively the ECoC organisation. For example at Weimar (ECoC 1999), hotel owners collaborated to form a marketing company called "Weimar Kulturstadt", which aimed to market the city abroad as a cultural destination.

The cultural programmes of ECoC are unique in their large scale, scope and duration. The average number of projects is approximately 500⁶. During the last years, it can be examined that the bulk of visitors is attracted by a relatively small number of events. In Graz 2003, more than one third of the 2.7 million visitors were recorded on the Island in the Mur. The tendency towards huge, blockbusting events can be underlined by such success stories.

But there are other, longer lasting effects. During the preparation phase, a boost of investments into the development of the city's infrastructure and environment can be examined. Public spaces are rehabilitated and redeveloped, historical and cultural sites are often refurbished and new facilities are created. Many of these projects have already been planned before the city was designated ECoC. Nevertheless they benefited from the dynamism of the event and from the extra funding it entails. These investments last for much longer than the year of the event. With an improved infrastructure, the city can offer a good basis to its local artists and it can attract more important cultural events from outside the region.

⁵ Palmer, Robert: European Capitals of Culture, August 2004

⁶ Palmer, Robert: European Capitals of Culture, August 2004

Furthermore, there can be examined an extra dynamism to cultural activities that lasts. New attitudes and specific artistic activities emerge from the initiative. Especially for local artists the event represents an unique opportunity to develop their talents, to gain experience and to exchange with other artists.

2. The selected ECoC 2003 - 2007

This case study investigates the ECoC of the years 2003 to 2007, with a focus on Graz 2003, Genoa 2004 and Lille 2004. These three cities provide enough data to enable valid statements concerning the results of the ECoC initiative.

Year	European Capital of Culture
2003	Graz (Austria)
2004	Genoa (Italy)
2004	Lille (France)
2005	Cork (Ireland)
2006	Patras (Greece)
2007	Luxembourg and Greater Region (Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Germany)

2.1. Graz (Austria) 2003

2.1.1. Introduction of city and region

Graz is the regional capital of the Austrian Steiermark. One fifth of the 235.000 inhabitants⁷ are linked to the four universities. Graz was Austria's first ECoC. The historic city centre is a UNESCO World Heritage site. At the same time, Graz is known for its modern architecture. The city is a high tech science and car industry centre (Automobile Cluster Graz) and has an unemployment rate of 7.0%.

2.1.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

Graz realised 108 projects with approximately 6.000 individual events during the ECoC year. The most prominent sectors were music, architecture, visual arts and theatre. About 80% of the projects have been realised by professional artists and an estimated 30% originated from outside Graz.

The most popular event in terms of visitor numbers has been "Island in the Mur", a 21st century plaza designed by the architect Vito Acconci with an amphitheatre, playground and café. It attracted 966.000 visitors in 2003. Actually designed only for the year of the event, Island in the Mur established as a tourist attraction and place of events beyond 2003 and is still successful. However, a study about an integrated cultural locations concept for Graz comes to the conclusion that the lack of technical equipment and storage possibilities makes it difficult to promote the Island as event location.⁸ Other very popular events have been the Lift to Mary, a glass lift installed next to St. Mary's Column in the historic centre of Graz giving people a different perspective of the statue of Mary and the city, which attracted 240.000 visitors and the Tower of Babel, an exhibition on the development of language and scripture with 116.000 visitors.

2.1.3. Key figures

Operating income

City of Graz	18,2 Mio. €
Region (Land Steiermark)	19,0 Mio. €
National government (Rep. Österreich)	14,6 Mio. €
EU	0,5 Mio. €
Sponsorship	3,2 Mio. €
Ticket sales and merchandise	1,9 Mio. €
Other	1,8 Mio. €
Total operating income	59,2 Mio. €

Operating expenditure

Programme expenditure	36.0442 Mio. €
Promotion and marketing	14.1394 Mio. €
Wages/salaries	5.1034 Mio. €
On-going costs	3.913 Mio. €
Total operating expenditure	59.2 Mio. €

⁷ in 2004

⁸ Arbeitsgruppe Barnert, Bernard, Obernosterer, Rapp, Rosegger, Integriertes Kulturstättenkonzept für Graz, Graz, 2006

Visitors

Graz counted 2.5 million visitors in the year 2003. In relation to the previous year, which was the touristic record year by then, the number of day visitors doubled and the number of overnight stays increased by 25% to almost 146.000. The visitors spent € 116.5 million in the city, including accommodation, food and beverages, shopping and cultural expenditures.

Employees

A study carried out before 2003 forecasted that the ECoC event will create about 1.200 new jobs. There is no ex-post evaluation published.

2.1.4. Other benefits

The public awareness of Graz as a cultural city boosted because of the ECoC event. Graz had more than 10.000 international press articles. 35 TV channels reported about Graz in 2003 and the webpage had more than 23 million visitors. This led to an improved international profile of the city and region.

The newly developed cultural infrastructure, e.g. the Island in the Mur, the Helmut-List-Hall, the children's museum etc.) improves the position of Graz as location for cultural events in the international competition. Moreover, the know-how concerning cultural events that was acquired during the project can now be used to further develop the cultural profile of the city. This led to more professional cultural events thereafter.

According to a survey⁹ made in November 2003, 27% of Graz inhabitants and 54% of the inhabitants of the Steiermark (the region) have at least attended one ECoC event. Every ninth inhabitant of the Steiermark attended more than 5 events. This shows that Graz managed to reach many people that are not traditionally interested in culture. The inhabitants of Graz and the region thus developed a new self-conception and pride as inhabitants of a cultural city.

⁹ www.graz03.at

2.2. Genoa (Italy) 2004

2.2.1. Introduction of city and region

Genoa is the regional capital of Liguria. It is a historic and port city located at the Mediterranean Sea. In 2000, the city had 632.000 inhabitants, whereas the province of Genoa had 904.000 inhabitants. Genoa is an important industrial and convention centre (i.e. in 2001 it hosted the G8 summit). The unemployment rate in the province runs at 7.2%. Situated in the middle of Italy's most ancient and traditional touristic region, the Ligurian riviera and not far from the Alpine mountains, Genoa is also an important tourist destination with approximately 1.2 million visitors per year.

2.2.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

Genoa counted approximately 130 projects within the event programme. The main theme of the programme was "the journey", summing up the richness and variety of cultural expression within the city. There have been three different thematic lines: Genoa City of Art, Genoa Capital of the Sea and Genoa Contemporary City.

Highlights from the programme included the exhibition "The Age of Rubens: Genovese Homes, Patrons and Collectors", assembling many works of Rubens that belong to private collections as well as the exhibition "Transatlantici" focusing on the history of transatlantic ocean liners. On top of this there has been the Mediterranean Music Festival and the exhibition "Arts&Architecture 1900-2000" which investigated the cross over between artists, directors, painters, photographers and architects. Finally, the Festival of Science that promoted science through shows, conferences and exhibitions; and a season of operas based on the theme of the voyage by the Carlo Felice Theatre have been outstanding parts of the programme .

2.2.3. Key figures

Operating income

Local institutions (City of Genoa, Province, Region, Chamber of Commerce, University and Port Authority)	6-7 Mio. €
National government	12 Mio. €
EU	0,5 Mio. €
Sponsorship	11-12 Mio. €
Ticket sales and merchandise	1.5-2 Mio. €
Total operating income	31-33.5 Mio. €

Operating expenditure

Programme expenditure	19.5 Mio. €
Promotion and marketing	4.8 Mio. €
Wages/salaries	1 Mio. €
Technical support for projects	0.3 Mio. €
Overhead costs	0.6 Mio. €
Total operating expenditure	26.2 Mio. €

Visitors

Genoa has managed a growth in visitor numbers against the general trend in Liguria and Italy. Whereas in Liguria the number of arrivals in 2004 grew only slightly by 1.3%, in Genoa it grew by 15.8%.

2.3. Lille (France) 2004

2.3.1. Introduction of city and region

Lille, situated in the North East of France, at the border to Belgium, is the regional capital of Nord-Pas de Calais. The population size is 191.000. Lille is a historical Flemish city and after the decline of the former coal and steel industry as well as the textile industry it has changed into a location for the French service industry. The population is young – 42% of the city and surrounding towns that form the Lille Metropole are under 25 years old - and multi-cultural. There is an higher-than-average unemployment rate of 12%.

The ECoC 2004 was extended to encompass the whole region Nord-Pas de Calais as well as parts of the neighbouring Belgium region. This crossborder concept was up to then unique in the history of ECoC and it will be picked up and extended by Luxembourg 2007.

2.3.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

Lille realised 2500 projects during the ECoC year, counting every single event as a project. The focus was on performing arts (40%), programme in the "maisons folies" (28%) and exhibitions / installations (14%). One of the main objectives of the programme is to promote an "Art de vivre". Thus culture is defined widely, including for example cooking, sports and interior design. A key item is that of metamorphoses: artists, sculptors and designers have transformed the urban environment to generate new perceptions.

2.3.3. Key figures

Operating income

City of Lille	21.8 Mio. €
Region	10.7 Mio. €
National government	13.7 Mio. €
EU (general support)	0,5 Mio. €
EU (project support)	1.0 Mio €
Sponsorship (cash)	7.0 Mio. €
Sponsorship (in kind)	5.0 Mio €
Ticket sales and merchandise	1,2 Mio. €
Other	0.2 Mio. €
Total operating income	73.7 Mio. €

Operating expenditure

Programme expenditure	58.6 Mio. €
Promotion and marketing	7.6 Mio. €
Wages/salaries (included in others)	-
Overhead costs	7.5 Mio. €
Total operating expenditure	73.7 Mio. €

Visitors

Lille 2004 attracted more than 9 million visitors. From December 2003 to November 2004, the Lille Tourist Office has been visited by 823.000 tourists, compared to 308.000 tourists in the previous year.¹² The number of overnight stays increased by 27%. If we only count the tourists (and not the business travellers), the number of overnight stays even grew by 39.7%.¹³

¹² Questionnaire answered by Association Lille 2006-2008, Lille, 5/2006

¹³ INSEE – Assoc.Lille Horizon 2004 – Impact de Lille 2004 sur l'économie du tourisme, Lille, 2005

Moreover, during the year of the event, the occupation rate in Lille's hotel industry rose to 70.3% with a peak at 79.3% during the summer of 2004.¹⁴

Employees

In 2003 and 2004, there have been 1341 new employments directly linked to the organization of the ECoC year and an estimated personnel growth of 20% at the local economy¹⁵

Evolution de l'emploi entre octobre 2003 et septembre 2004			
	Plan National	Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais	Lille intra-muros
Secteur du Commerce Hôtel Restauration Culture	+ 1,1%	+ 1,5%	+ 7%
dont activités culturelles	+ 0,4%	+ 4%	+ 22%
dont commerce de détail	+ 1,2%	+ 1,1%	+ 3%
dont hôtellene	+ 0,5%	Stable	+ 15%
dont restauration et débits de boisson	+ 1,4%	+ 3%	+ 7% (+13% en centre ville)

*Sources : Insee - Association Lille Horizon 2004
Impact de Lille 2004 sur l'économie du tourisme*

The revenues of some segments of local economy, like trade, hotels and gastronomy raise importantly during the year 2004 and the total effect of the event is valued as thoroughly positive.¹⁶

2.3.4. Other benefits

Many additional investments were realised during the planning phase of Lille 2004, and the city benefits in the long term from these improvements: heritage buildings like the "Porte de Roubaix" and numerous churches have been restored, the "maisons folies" have been build in abandoned and partly decayed ancient buildings, the opera of Lille was re-opened and urban infrastructure was improved.

The high quality and diversity of the event programme contributed to an improved image of the city and region. The programme attracted parts of the region's population as well as many international visitors. The visitors have mainly been satisfied with their stay at Lille. A local study found out that 96% of all tourists recommended a visit of Lille to their friends and 84% of them planned to visit the city again.¹⁷ The promotion in the media is assessed as excellent by the organisation management.

¹⁴ INSEE – Assoc.Lille Horizon 2004 – Impact de Lille 2004 sur l'économie du tourisme, Lille, 2005

¹⁵ Questionnaire answered by Association Lille 2006-2008, Lille, 5/2006

¹⁶ Questionnaire answered by Association Lille 2006-2008, Lille, 5/2006

¹⁷ Questionnaire answered by Association Lille 2006-2008, Lille, 5/2006

2.4. Cork (Ireland) 2005

2.4.1. Introduction of city and region

The Irish City of Cork has a population size of 138.000 (in 2005), which makes it number two of the biggest cities in Ireland. Cork, located on the South West coast of Ireland, is a port city of trade and commerce and especially a centre of the chemical industry, hosting 8 of the top 10 global health and pharmaceutical companies. The unemployment rate is high with 12.4% (in 2002). Cork is the first ECoC selected under the new procedures agreed by the EU in 1999.

2.4.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

Cork is presenting itself as "city in the making". The main objectives of the ECoC year are to explore the culture of Ireland, Europe and beyond through programmes, events and attitudes that will confirm urban life as a creative cultural space". Cork's event programme comprised various disciplines, i.e. theatre and dance; architecture, design and visual arts; music; sport; film, media and sound; festivals; literature, publications and conferences. The main events have been La Dona Manca o Barbi-Superstar by Spanish dance sensation Sol Picó , the Cork 2005 World Writing Series, a major series of readings by literary masters and European Quartet Week: world-class performances from leading international

2.4.3. Key figures

Cork 2005 has been set up as an independent company with an operating budget of €13.5 million. Funding has been put in place by Cork City Council and the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism. Sponsorship was used to augment this budget.

There is no information available on the operating income and operating expenditure. A final report of the results is announced to be published in 2006.

During the first half of the year 2005, Cork counted more then 730.000 visitors.¹⁸

2.4.4. Other benefits

The director of Cork 2005, John Kennedy, values the ECoC as great success and comments it as follows: "The record attendance at events in the first half of 2005 is indicative of the great response to the Cork 2005 programme from local and from international audiences. The city is enjoying the economic as well as the cultural benefits of the European Capital of Culture designation and is currently experiencing an unprecedented busy summer period. We expect this positive trend to continue with an excellent programme of events scheduled for the closing months of 2005 and look forward to a spectacular send off to the year."

A new airport terminal has been built that will ease congestion. The number of arrivals at the airport grew by 15.9% in the first half of 2005 in comparison to the same period in 2004. "Cork's designation as European Capital of Culture is undoubtedly a contributing factor in the significant increase in traffic at the Airport." (Joe Gantly, Chairman, Cork Airport Authority)

2.5. Patras (Greece) 2006

2.5.1. Introduction of city and region

Patras is located at the Western part of Greece's mainland on the Northwestern coast of Peloponnesus. The city has 172.000 inhabitants (in 2001). The main industries are retailing, logistics, financial services and public sector services. There is an unemployment rate of approximately 16%. Greece was actually designated to host the ECoC in 2018, then changed with the Netherlands and thus came to host the event at rather short notice.

2.5.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

¹⁸ www.cork2005.ie

Patras focused its programme on two central ideas: "Bridges" and "Dialogue" The main artistic events are:

- Opening Days
- Carnival Days
- Days of Poetry and Music
- Contemporary Approaches to Ancient Drama Days
- Travelling with... Music, Theatre, Dance and Cinema
- Religion & Art Days
- Children's Art Days
- Closing Days

2.5.3. Key figures

The Organisation of "Patras 2006" is funded by the Greek Ministry of Culture with € 24.5 million. An additional provision of € 5 million was foreseen for the establishment of a pre-built theatre of a 1.000 people capacity and for renovation and improvement of works of already existing buildings that will host artistic events.¹⁹ The total costs for the event programme is estimated at about € 36 million. The EU is funding the ECoC project with € 500.000.²⁰ There is no information available concerning the contribution of the city, region and private sponsors.

2.5.4. Other benefits

Some important improvements in infrastructure have been realised during the preparation phase of Patras 2006, such as the Open Air Theatre of 2000 people capacity, the ASO multi-purpose cultural venue and the Old Municipal Hospital. The national government of Greece supports these projects with € 100 million. Even if the infrastructure projects will not be fully completed by the year 2006, they will offer the city long-term benefits and will contribute to the city's new cultural perspectives.

¹⁹ www.patras2006.gr

²⁰ Interview with Mrs Pacaud, Commission européenne,- Direction générale de l'éducation et de la culture, Direction C, Unité C1, 5/2006

2.6. Luxembourg and Greater region 2007 (Luxembourg and neighbouring regions in Belgium, France and Germany)

2.6.1. Introduction of city and region

The grand duchy of Luxembourg is one of the smallest European countries, situated in the heart of Western Europe between Belgium, France and Germany. The whole country has 448.000 inhabitants, 30% of them live in the urban zone of Luxembourg city. Luxembourg hosts some important European institutions, for example the European Court of Justice, the European Investment Bank, the European Court of Auditors, some departments of the European Commission and the administration office of the European Parliament. Thus the population share of foreigners – mainly from other EU countries – is at 38%. There are over 140.000 daily commuters from the neighbouring regions of Belgium, France and Germany.

Luxembourg's stable, high-income economy features moderate growth, low inflation, and a low unemployment rate (3.8%). The industrial sector, which was, until recently, dominated by steel, has become increasingly more diversified to include chemicals, rubber, and other products. During the past decades, growth in the financial sector has more than compensated for the decline in steel. Services, especially banking, account for a growing proportion of the economy.

2.6.2. Introduction of main events within the project year

Lille 2004 already gave the ECoC event a cross-boarder approach and integrated the neighbouring Belgium city of Courtrai (Kortrijk) into the programme. Luxembourg is going one step further and extends the ECoC 2007 event to the Greater Luxembourg Region, including the bordering regions of Lorraine in France, Rheinland-Pfalz and Saarland in Germany and the Wallonie (French and German-speaking communities) in Belgium. Each of the participating regions will focus programmes around 5 main themes: Migrations, Industrial Culture and Heritage, Great European Personalities, Culture and Memory and Expressions of Modernity.

More than 500 projects have been selected (83 thereof are cross-boarder projects) and offer an adventure that is structured in four seasons:²¹ some highlights are "Retour de Babel – Towering Babel", "From Pompeij to Bliesbruck: Life in Roman Europe", The Antiquity Festival in Trier and "Picasso: The opus of the 1950s.

A not-for-profit organisation "Luxembourg and the Greater Luxembourg Region, ECOC 2007" has been established – it disposed of approximately 14 employees during the preparation phase in 2006 - , and an operational management team with a General Coordinator has been appointed. The participating regions have their own management structure and regional coordinators.

2.6.3. Key figures

As the project is still in the preparation phase, it is not possible to provide final information about income, expenditure or visitor flows. However, in early 2006 it was determined that the ECoC event is funded with € 50 million by Luxembourg government and € 500.000 by the EU.²² Moreover, there are determined efforts to involve private sponsors. Four different partnership models are offered, ranging from exclusive partners over official partners to thematic partners and official suppliers.

Concerning the number of visitors, Robert Garcia, General Coordinator of Luxembourg 2007, estimates that 5-10% of the population is actively participating in cultural events and that an additional 25-30% can be motivated to visit at least one event of the ECoC programme.²³

²¹ Interview with Mrs Quilez, PR and Communications Manager of Luxembourg 2007, Trier, 2/2006

²² Interview with Mrs Quilez, PR and Communications Manager of Luxembourg 2007, Trier, 2/2006

²³ Interview with Mr.Garcia, General Coordinator of Luxembourg 2007 , www.granderegion.net

3. Conclusions

The initiative European Capitals of Culture has many positive effects. In the short term, an increased number of visitors to the city can be examined. This is due to the enormous awareness in the press and in the cultural scene.

In the long term, the city can benefit from its improved image as well as its often renewed infrastructure. This makes it easy to attract culturally interested tourists and to extend its market share at cultural tourism, which is a very sustainable form of tourism, bringing more benefits to the city than other forms of tourism (e.g. continuous flow of tourists all over the year, higher purchasing power of tourists etc.)

When the city is developing its event programme for the Capital of Culture year, the responsible persons have the unique chance to reflect the position of the city within the cultural field. They can implement a new cultural strategy very quickly and with a strong public awareness, during the year of the event. This might be a huge effort, but also a big chance for the city.

The ECoC initiative is well organised and continuously improving. Thus it has shown its flexibility and its capability to adapt to new challenges. The current discussion about the development of best practises and benchmarks to give an orientation to future host cities can make the initiative even more successful. As the importance of (cultural) tourism, and thus the importance of the ECoC initiative is steadily increasing, a long-term monitoring and analysis of results should be considered. Especially figures concerning tourist flows (number of arrivals, number of overnight stays, length of stay) and the impact on the image of a city should be recorded and evaluated. To make this possible, there is a need of lasting organisation structures in each ECoC that are linked up in a European-wide network. Such a network could enable a better transfer of knowledge between ECoC.

There are schemes afoot to improve the monitoring situation after the designation of an ECoC. A new EC Decision which is currently discussed at the European Parliament has the aim to assure that the European dimension is sufficiently taken into account and that the promises given in the ECoC designation are realized during the project year. Therefore, the designation jury should be enlarged to 13 people, thereof 7 should accompany and monitor the preparation phase of the designated city.²⁴

In spite of these improvement possibilities, the concept is regarded as groundbreaking in other parts of the world. For example, the Organisation of American States (OAS), including all 35 countries on the American continent, adopted the European idea by initiating an annual event called the American Capital of Culture in 1997. Though, there are some difficulties in pushing through the initiative. For example, the cities of Austin/US (2004), Saskatchewan/Canada (2005) and Toronto/Canada (2002) were offered the honour, only to decline it when they discovered the financial and personnel commitments the award implied. In Russia, the federal district of the Volga decided in 2001 to set up an event based on the EU concept.

²⁴ Interview with Mrs Pacaud, Commission européenne,- Direction générale de l'éducation et de la culture, Direction C, Unité C1, 5/2006

3.1. SWOT Analysis of ECoC

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well organised EU initiative, acknowledged by insiders • if it would not exist it should be invented • good promotion for EU • good awareness in press • enhances change of cities towards future-oriented image • accelerates investments in infrastructure • supports tourism by increased visitor numbers for some years • brings culture to many population groups (local audience) • strengthens self-confidence and pride of inhabitants • internationally copied concept • links tourism and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little awareness in public • small financial contribution of EU • weak commitment of EU • no responsible body at EU • no monitoring of statistics • objectives often unclear, vague, not measurable or not attainable (except in the long run) • objectives partly not focussing European but local dimension (economic and image objectives) • selection of city by rotation system, not by quality and content of application
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closer coordination of EU (clear responsibilities, coaching) • more financial contribution following uniform and transparent rules • establishing a network of ECoC to ensure transfer of know-how • developing best practices and benchmarks, more research • definition of clear objectives (specific, understandable, attainable and measureable) • strong leadership (management) • professional communication to press and public • monitoring of results • longer-lasting organisation structures • more exchange of ideas on EU level (conferences etc.) • partnerships (with tourism industry, with other cities, with sponsors) • artistic autonomy to ensure ambitious, high quality programme • using chance for long-term development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conceptual fatigue • risk of dilution of concept • indecision concerning stricter rules • political concessions • concessions to sponsors who gain importance as investors • solitary event without integration into cultural development plan • objectives are not met • results are not analysed • continuing problems of nomination and selection • partly fear of comparison with other ECoC • not sufficiently taken into account in the EU funds and programmes for the financial period 2007-2013

<p>of cultural tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration in long-term cultural development strategy • positive image effects • positive effects on local economy (job creation) 	
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This case study was designed to investigate the economically important sector of cultural tourism and to achieve quantitative results. There was a questionnaire developed (see annex) and send out to the responsible managers of the ECoC for the years 2003 to 2007. Aim of the questionnaire was to work out quantitative results for the ECoC initiative in the year of the event and beyond and to evaluate the projects by comparing income and expenditure.

Despite persistent efforts to receive results from the investigated cities, there was only little response to the questionnaires. This must be taken as a sign that our approach might have been too ambitious. But it also shows that there obviously is a lack of information concerning the results of the ECoC initiative. Sometimes there are no measurable objectives. In other cases the objectives are not communicated. And finally there is no sufficient monitoring and analysis of results.

However, the ECoC of the years 2003 and 2004 – namely Graz, Lille and Genoa – were able to provide information on the operating income and operating expenditure of the event as well as on the number of visitors respectively overnight stays. These figures have been collected by research companies charged by the cities. So, the evaluation of the ECoC initiative in this study can only be realised for those three cities. Taking into account that there can be no measurable results for Patras, hosting the current ECoC, and for Luxembourg, hosting next year’s event, we can give results for three of the four investigated recent ECoC.

Given the importance of the ECoC initiative and the enormous investments of many partners, there should be more transparency in results on ECoC, as well as more assessment and benchmarking. This could be achieved by building up a network of ECoC and coordination by the EU.

Annex: Questionnaire sent out to the ECoC 2003 – 2007

Name of the interview partner	
Function within the project "European Capital of Culture"	
Name of institution	
Today's function	
Contact (e-mail, phone)	
Date	
Other contact persons	

1. What is the amount of investment into the project European Cultural Capital?

1.1 Investment by your city

approx. _____ €

1.2 Private investment by the (domestic) industry

approx. _____ €

1.3 Investment by the EU

approx. _____ €

1.4 Your comment

2. Can you measure any impact on the employment in your city?

2.1 Direct impact at the cultural sites

positive

neutral

negative

(number of
new jobs)

(number of
lost jobs)

2.2 Indirect impact at other economic sectors

positive

neutral

negative

(number of
new jobs)

(number of
lost jobs)

2.3 Your comment

3. Did the number of visitors change since the project?

3.1 business travellers

yes, from _____ to _____

no

3.2 Tourists

yes, from _____ to _____

no

3.3 Your comment

4. Did the revenues of the local economy change?

4.1 Through spendings for cultural goods and services (e.g. museum fees, theatre tickets, related books, souvenirs etc.)

no

little

significant

growth of revenues in % p.a.: ____

4.2 Through other spendings at hotels, restaurants, transportation services etc.

no

little

significant

growth of revenues in % p.a.: ____

4.3 Your comment

5. How would you evaluate the overall effects of the project for the city?

5.1 Effects on the local economy

positive

neutral

negative

5.2 Effects on the number and demographic structure of the population

positive

neutral

negative

demographic increase

in % p.a.: _____

demographic decrease

in % p.a.: _____

5.3 Effects on the image / identity of the city

positive

neutral

negative

5.4 Your comment

6. Other remarks (e.g. best practices, publications, other contact persons, ...)
