

What would you
do differently
if you knew what
you now know?

AN INVESTIGATION
INTO 12 FORMER
EUROPEAN CAPITALS
OF CULTURE

Rolf Norås

*“The Blue Book is a necessary guide for future European Capital of Culture.
It’s honest, it’s true, it’s blue.”*

Fredrik Lindegren
Artistic Director, Umea2014

“The Blue Book will mark a step in the history of our ECoC-family.”

Ulrich Fuchs
Member of the European Capital of Culture-Panel
and former Artistic Director of Linz2009 and Marseille-Provence2013

*“Rolf’s long term and supportive contribution to the ECoC project has
enabled him to secure some highly personal, challenging and at times
painfully honest answers to his questions.”*

Neil Peterson
Inside Track UK (formerly Liverpool 2008)

*“This unique study provides insiders’ views to the complexity of the ECOC
- openly and from the core. Recommendable for anyone working with the
European Capitals of Culture.”*

Suvi Innilä
Programme Director of Turku 2011



*“We did not have any past to refer to.
We did not have any future to compete with.”
(Bo-Erik Gyberg, Stockholm 1998)*



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Bergen



Liverpool

Maribor Puppet Theater



Festival Maribor



Preface

From 1st of April until 1st of October 2013 I was fortunate to be given sabbatical leave from my position as Director of Cultural Affairs in Stavanger. My intention for the six months was to carry out an investigation about what former European Capitals of Culture (ECC) would have done differently if they were able to use the benefit of the experiences they gained during and after their year as ECC. I selected twelve former ECCs¹ to be included in the investigation. Fortunately they all agreed to take part in my project and were willing to be informants to my questions.

As my time to spend on such inquiry was limited, and because I was alone to accomplish the investigation, it was clear that evaluating the issues needed to be at a relatively simple level. I suppose the nature of the project is that future ECCs might gain most benefit from this analysis. But I hope the results will also give valuable information to present and “has been” ECCs. By comparing the results from the different cities, we might find some common interests, issues and views.

My intention has not been to find out what went right and wrong in the ECCs, the successes and failures. Even though I was often asked about it, both from informants, from media, and from people that I met. “From your point of view, which of the twelve ECCs have been most successful”, was often the question I was asked.

Firstly, it is impossible to answer such question without connecting the results and experiences to the different cities visions, goals etc. Why did they want to become a ECC? What did they want to achieve? How?

For example, Stavanger and LiverpoolI shared the title in 2008. While Stavanger, which I have not included in this investigation, wanted to enhance the openness and hospitality and tolerance, make art and culture more important in peoples' lives and in general politics, build networks within the cultural sector and between culture and other sectors etc., Liverpool wanted to use the Capital of Culture Year to reposition the city, to raise the profile and the attractiveness of the Northwest of Britain on a national and international scale, and to enhance the economic benefits for the city and region. Of course you can't talk about how successful the two cities were without connecting each City's ECC to the very specific objectives and to the outcomes and results each city was aiming to achieve.

I have had the privilege to visit twelve fascinating cities with a huge variety of experiences from their year as the European Capital of Culture. And even more, I have met 29 informants who have shared their opinions, work experiences and perspectives in an open, honest, inspiring and thoughtful way. I am deeply grateful for everybody's generous contribution, which this investigation has been totally depended on.

I am also very grateful to Stavanger Kommune for giving me this opportunity to undertake such a fascinating and rewarding piece of work.

Introduction

I was looking for the different changes that the ECCs would have done given the knowledge that they had now and if they could do the Cultural Year one more time. It is obvious that all ECCs would have done some things differently. It could be the visions and goals, the artistic programme, the team, the budget and sponsorship, marketing and communication, the structure and independence of the foundation, the involvement of participants, the legacy and evaluation or in other ways altogether.

I started to develop a questionnaire which was sent to the informants. But I did not think that it was fully exhaustive on its own. I therefore decided to visit all of the cities with the aim of working through the implications of the questions with the informants from a more open perspective. This enabled us to ensure that we had a common understanding of the different challenges that each ECC was referring to.

There were several reasons for selecting those specific cities. From visits, exchange projects, network meetings and so on, I knew people in those cities which would make it easier for me to carry in depth interviews. The personal knowledge would also become significant because the trust between us would lead to very honest and open responses. In addition I wanted cities that were different; - in size, culture, ECC aims etc.

I promised all of the informants that the report from the investigation would not be published or presented officially in any media or elsewhere without their permission. They were all given the possibility to read what they have quoted before publication of my report.

Many well respected commentators consider that the founding and development of the ECC concept is the EU's most successful ever cultural programme. Indeed, arguably it is one of the most successful programmes of any kind launched by EU. Both designated ECCs and also candidate cities invested a huge amount of money in cultural infrastructure and projects. To a greater or lesser degree the cities and regions have experienced cultural and economic benefits, national and international partnership, visibility, attention and recognition, civic involvement and participation, development of cultural infrastructure etc., connected to the year as the European Capital of Culture.

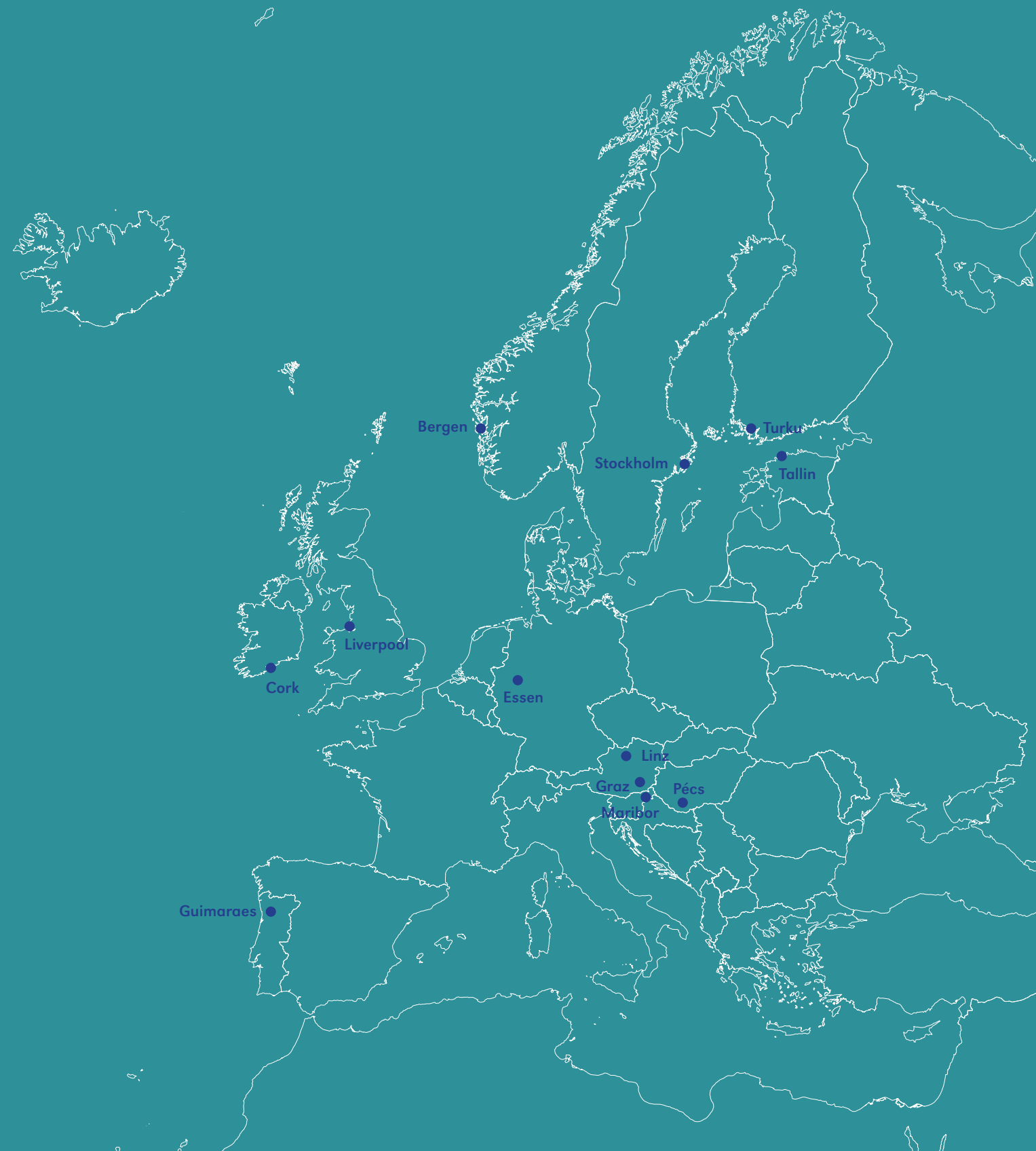
There is no golden rule to be a successful ECC. However, what is unanimously underlined from all the cities included in this investigation is the importance of gaining the involvement and participation of local people. You cannot expect support from local stakeholders if you don't connect with them or use the resources they are representing.

Nevertheless there is still a lack of common understanding and knowledge about artistic, cultural and democratic effects and tools for delivery which could lead to a common stand-point and basis for the delivery of ECCs. At the same time it is also right that standardisation should be limited. Different ECCs must be built on their own identity and local conditions. They must all try to build a programme which could not take place anywhere in the world.

At best this investigation might represent a small contribution to helping to build on the success that ECC represents.

¹ Stockholm1998, Bergen2000, Graz2003, Cork2005, Liverpool2008, Linz2009, Essen/Ruhr2010 (Essen was selected as the representative city for the entire Ruhr region, and was official named RUHR.2010 or Essen for the Ruhr 2010), Pecs2010, Turku2011, Tallinn2011, Maribor2012, Guimaraes2012.

THE TWELVE FORMER EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE



The Informants

29 informants from 12 former ECCs have been interviewed. They represented different levels and positions either in the operational teams or among collaborating partners.

The following two figures indicate what kind of position the informants had either as a member of the operational staff, as member of board or artistic committee, as politician, or as a representative from a collaborative partner.²

Most informants were from Management Teams and Programme Coordinators

Three positions amongst the informants were most frequent. So 19 of 29 the informants were either Programme advisors/coordinators, Artistic/Programme directors or CEOs. Four were Heads of International Relations, and the last six represented six different categories.

Moving on to Cultural Institutions, Universities and establishing their own Companies (2013)

I found it interesting to see what the informants are doing now. Are they still in the field of arts and culture? Have other sectors benefited from their experiences etc.?

Most of the informants (7) are now directors of Cultural Institutions. Four are directing their own companies, and three are Professor or Associate Professor at Universities. There are two respondents in each of the categories of pensioners, cultural advisors or cultural developers. Finally the nine last informants belong to nine different categories.

² On page 93 there is detailed information of all the informants positions in the company or foundation which was responsible for running the Capital of Culture Year, or as collaborating partners, and what the same informants are doing now (2013)

Figure 1
What was your position in or outside the company/foundation?

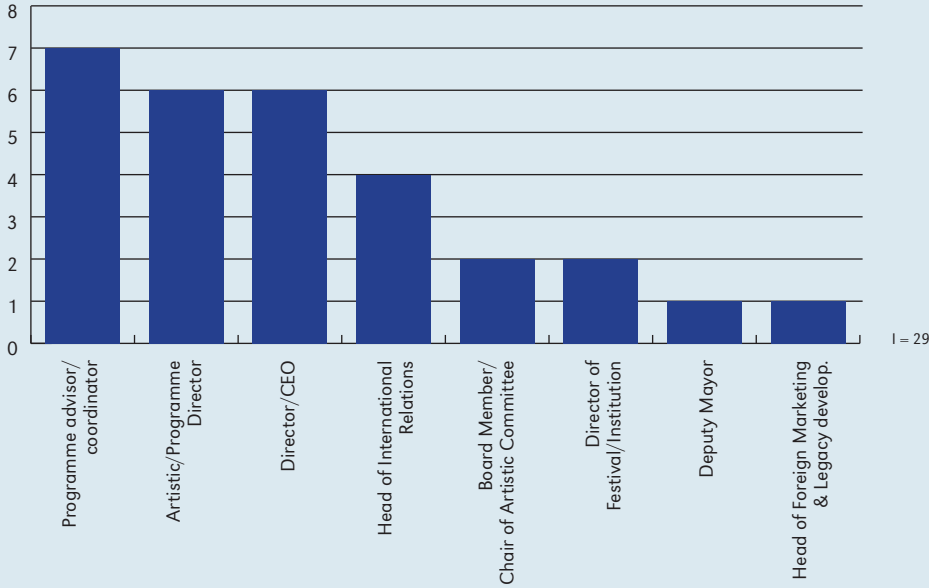
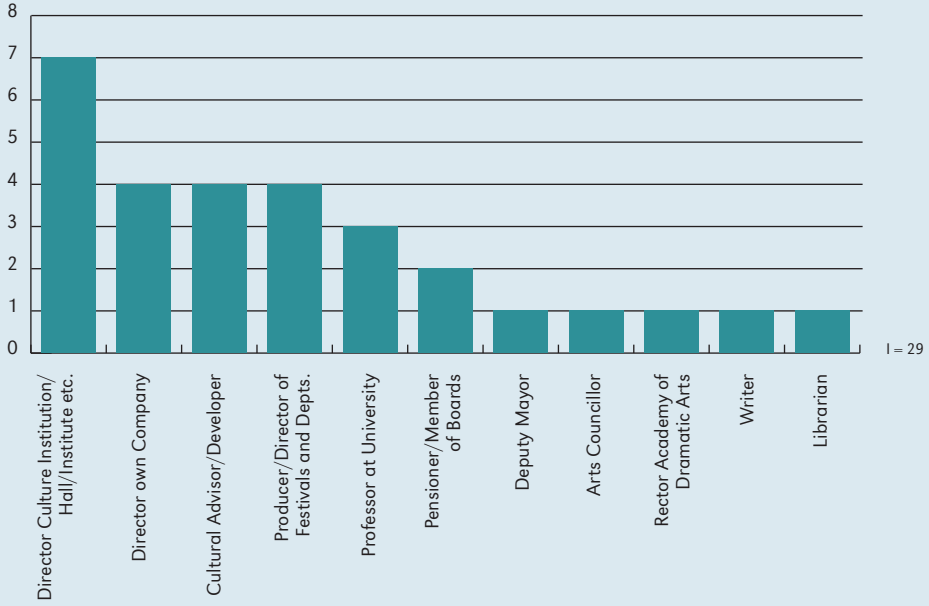


Figure 2
What are the same informants doing today (2013)?



The Structure

Different types of independence

The most frequently occurring structure to organise a ECC is through various kinds of independent foundation or body. Half of the cities - Stockholm, Bergen, Cork, Linz, Turku and Tallinn, were structured independently from the Municipality. Three cities, Graz, Essen and Guimaraes, were independent outside the Municipality, Liverpool was independently operating departments integrated within the Municipality, Pecs Management Centre was a non-profit organization, founded by the Municipality, while Maribor was the only city to establish a public institution. This seemed to result in a stronger political influence on the decisions in the Foundation.

Was it a good structure?

Half of the cities (6) considered their organizational structure to be a good one, explained by a clear mandate, broad access, good communication, a long term mission etc. Among the arguments were

“The structure itself was good with a clear mandate.” (Stockholm)

“Yes, it was a good structure. Due to a very good structure of communication, we succeeded with this structure.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“It is a good structure, if it has a long term mission, e.g. developing the legacy of the ECC, like in our case.” (Tallinn)

The 3 cities who did not find the structure good, expressed things like:

“Local authorities who administer the City were asked to integrate arts and culture, which resulted in too much interference. It is amazing how politics and bureaucracy can really damage a purpose seriously.” (Cork, artistic team)

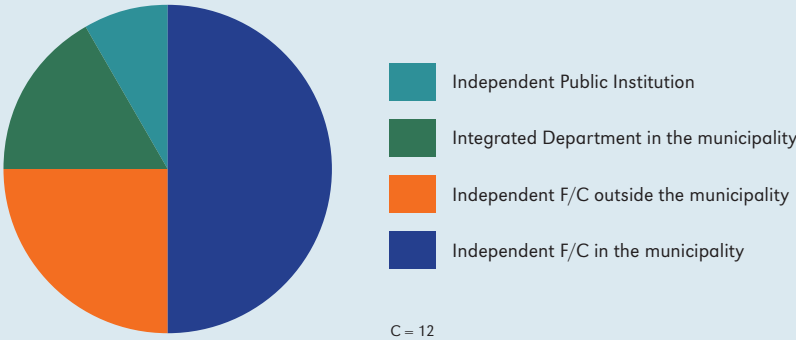
“One condition to answer that question, is connected to a deeper understanding of the differences between Eastern and Western Europe. In the East you have always been more dependent on the politicians. Involving people in East and West means totally different things.

What was very good in Pecs, was the fact that the process to become ECC, was initiated by the citizens, not the Municipality. But after a while, this became a little complicated, which also had to do with the post political socialism. It was a big challenge to establish a dialogue between the Government, Municipality and the NGOs.

From 2005 the company was an official part of the local Government. In other words, it became effectively a municipal function, and it could not be independent. A contract between the Municipality and the Government was signed, which meant that 40% of the programme budget came from the Government and 33% from the Municipality. But Pecs2010 was not allowed to use this share to fund and develop the programme, but only on events that the Municipality and Government agreed on. The politicians decided who should be recruited to enter the Board.” (Pecs)

“There are difficulties connected to being a public institution.” (Maribor)

Figure 3
How was the Company/Foundation (C/F) organized?



C = 12

Two cities found the structure both good and bad:

“Nothing’s perfect. The strong relation to the Municipality had some downsides. A little more freedom would have helped, but I wouldn’t change too much. It was a blessing and a curse at the same time. In many ways the structure worked at its best when things were at their most difficult. The relationship between the programme and other city initiatives was complex and ambitious and there were times when the understanding with the cultural and business sectors in the city was very difficult – especially in the early years, but we learned greatly from the process and from the early crises and became better for that..” (Liverpool)

“It worked well as a legal framework but due to legal changes on Foundation recognition, it is not possible to use this structure to manage the legacy, since the organisation will close in 2013. You need time to produce legacy. It deserves a deeper process of transmission.” (Guimaraes)

While one city found that the structure itself had no meaning for the project:

“It would not have meant big differences if you had organized the structure in another way. It was the Board who defined the agenda anyway, and the politicians selected their politicians independently of the structure. I tried to include the Ministry of Culture in the Board, but the Ministry did not want to have such position.” (Bergen)

The quality of the Structure

The most important aspect of quality of the structure was the relationship with the Municipality. While some cities (Stockholm, Graz) found such relation good because of the independence, others expressed the close connection as a quality (Linz, Liverpool). Other mentioned quality factors were flexibility, continuation, responsibility and transparency:

“The quality of the structure was the independence from the public administration/the cultural department in the Municipality. Stockholm98 was meant to be something different.” (Stockholm)

“The independence was good with no interference about the programme and with great freedom to hire approx. 150 people.” (Graz)

“We provided a channel to decision-makers in the City. As a practical point you need some sort of structure.” (Cork)

“A key quality was the continuity. It was more stable. And it gave lots of flexibility with the Government.” (Liverpool)

“We built the team and were free to handle contracts etc. without interference. We were rather close to the Municipality, and we had a benefit from using public services like electricity, littering etc..” (Linz)

“The good thing was that the connection with the Municipality secured a better sustainability because you felt a bigger responsibility in building a strategy for the city.” (Pecs)

“The quality was the given independence, in the beginning. We could decide quite fast about everyday things. Bigger decisions had to be discussed with the Board.” (Tallinn)

“The Foundation structure was very good. It was connected to the City of Turku, which nominated more than half of the Board members. Still it enabled a wider commitment to the process through regional and national stakeholders.

As a Foundation is an independent organization form, it – together with a strong, external chairman – made it possible to consider primarily always the cultural capital’s best interest in the decision making. This organization form was also fast and flexible. The hectic tempo of the ECC preparations would not have been possible, if e.g. the work would have been done within the Municipality.

What also is an important benefit of this organizational structure, is that it collected the whole core team working for the cultural capital process together. Although it would have been good to engage more employees of the City of Turku to the ECC process for that period, dividing the core work and team around the municipal organization would not have worked out in practice.” (Turku)

“We had to behave in respect of procedures of public institution. The work is more transparent. You can control the public finances in a more open way.

Bad thing is that because of long term procedures of public institution it is hard to react quickly and flexibly what is necessary for being efficient in the project..” (Maribor)

“We provided a channel to decision-makers in the City. As a practical point you need some sort of structure.”

Cork

“The nine persons in the Artistic Committee were independent, but they had to follow and respect the guidelines. If the CEO disagreed with their suggestions, he had the power to say no.”

Guimaraes

The Artistic Programme

Decisions made by the CEOs and/or Artistic Directors

The Artistic Programme was decided by the Artistic Directors in most of the cities:

“The programme was worked out by the Artistic Director in collaboration with the coordinators, it was confirmed and signed by the Director, who presented the decisions for the Board. Projects with accounting costs of more than 10 mill. SEK (approx. 1,3 mill. Euro) had to be decided by the Board. The programme coordinators, who represented different cultural fields, were aware of the importance of collaboration and worked together as a whole. If some of the projects needed changes on the way, the coordinators found solutions in a creative and appropriate way. The programme coordinators became a Dream Team.” (Stockholm)

“Originally it was the Artistic Director who recruited the Artistic Team. There was an interesting shift of emphasis when she left in 2006. Instead of a replacement Artistic Director, there were two Executive Producers recruited from within the existing senior team. They worked more closely with the Institutions in the city. Although they worked as a team, there was a clear dividing between them. While one of them made series of productions in collaboration with curators etc. (music, visual arts, literature etc), the other was responsible for Community and Neighbourhood Programming and other special events. “We decided together with the producers. The Board ratified, but not necessarily the content, they concentrated on budget and financing”.” (Liverpool)

“We had 2 Managing Directors who were responsible for signing contracts etc., and who were not members of the Artistic Team. Then we had 4 Artistic Directors representing different cultural fields. It is not good to have only one person on the top. But you have to find a structure where the management team don’t fight against each other.” (Essen/Ruhr)

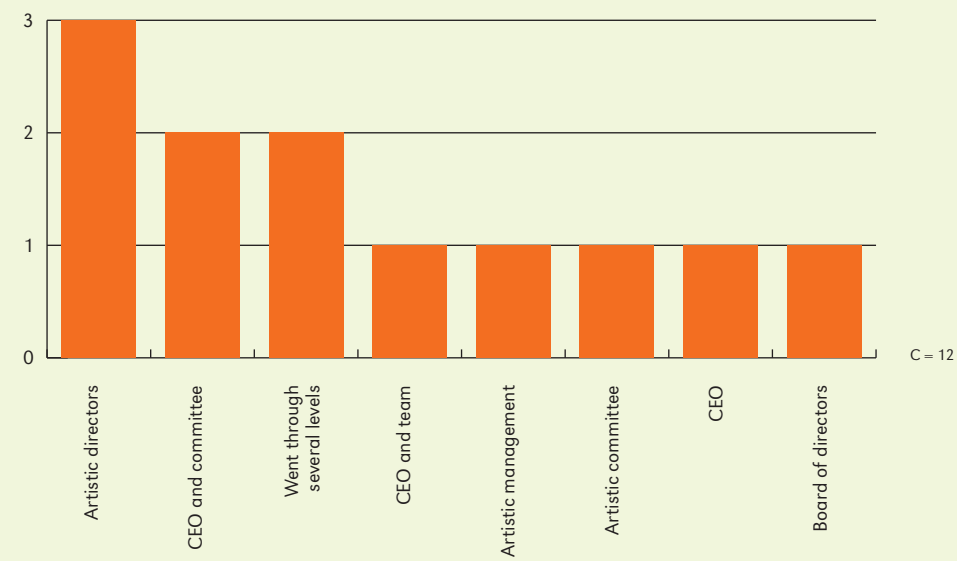
The CEO and a committee decided the Artistic Programme in two of the cities (Bergen, Graz). In two other cities (Pecs, Maribor) the development of the Artistic programme went through several levels:

“Programme was based on the mandate and an analysis of Bergen’s comparative strengths, with a specific value given to sustainability. The Director (CEO) decided, but after negotiations with the Artistic Committee, which was not selected by the Director. The Board had the last word. I tried to anchor the programme with the other 8 cities and the institutions in Bergen, with limited success.” (Bergen)

“The Intendant (CEO) had the last word. He selected a mix of people that he wanted. That study group met once a month and went through the proposals.” (Graz)

“Suggestions from the Artistic Director, who was responsible for preparing the proposals. Then approved by the Program Board who sent the decisions to the General Board. The General Board confirmed, not changed, decisions from the programme board. In the end the Director General (CEO) had the last word and signed the contracts etc.” (Maribor)

Figure 4
Who decided the Artistic Programme?



The rest of the cities developed their artistic programmes either by the CEO him/herself, the CEO and the team, the artistic management, an Artistic Committee, or by the Board of Directors:

“The three of us (Artistic Management). The Artistic Director had three heads and three brains, Mary, Tony and Tom, brilliantly led by Mary. It was difficult, it was complex, it was frustrating at times to be three persons, but we brought strengths and specific skill-sets to the table. In addition we integrated things that would have happened anyway in the programme (festivals, institutions etc.).” (Cork)

“Martin Heller and I had in our contracts our independence in building the Artistic programme. They accepted that they had to pay us a lot of money if they wanted to kick us out. But independence does not mean that you don’t discuss the programme with the artists, the institutions, the stakeholders etc. You must listen to arguments, if not, you will fail. Artistic independence means that you are both responsible and you have the freedom. But finally, the decision is yours.” (Linz)

“Turku 2011 had a Programme Director who, together with the programme team, prepared the decisions concerning the programme for the CEO or for the Board of the Foundation, depending on the level of funding. This solution was good for Turku.” (Turku)

“The Artistic Director coordinated and developed. Artistic committee made the final decision. The Board of the Directors made the financial decision. If they said no, it was no, and the new Director’s voice was doubled.” (Tallinn)

“The nine persons in the Artistic Committee were independent, but they had to follow and respect the guidelines. If the CEO disagreed with their suggestions, he had the power to say no. Sometimes it was uncomfortable, but he

carried out the situation in a good way. It was a good solution, since it brought diversity to the programme.” (Guimaraes)

Different opinions about the value of Open Calls

Stockholm, Cork, Tallinn, Turku and Maribor all held an Open Call process. While Cork and Maribor express strongly that there were difficulties with the huge gap between the produced expectations and the available resources, Turku and Tallinn were as clear on the benefits, which were connected to involvement and credibility from local people, especially artists. The Stockholm-team had different opinion about the value of Open Call.

Projects presented in the original application did not dominate the artistic programme in the actual year. There were a few reflected in the bids from Linz, Essen/Ruhr and Turku:

“It was built by the Artistic Director in collaboration with the coordinators. We did not need any Artistic Committee. We used our networks and anchored the feedbacks together, which gave a sense of security. We started very broadly via a Call for contributions. We received approx. 6.000 proposals. We realized that this situation represented many unrealistic expectations, and we spent too much time in the early phase because of this situation. There was frustration and we were abandoned. It is not easy to look at this as right or wrong. It gave us much PR and that we were better known, but at the same time the media gorge themselves on the situation: What will be the programme? Where is the money? etc. It raised frustration among people in the City.” (Stockholm)

“The coordinators in the team represented important knowledge in building the Artistic Programme.” (Bergen)

“By the Intendant (CEO) and his group. The City Councillor of Culture had some proposals, but Wolfgang (CEO) made the hard decisions. Unfortunately we did not have any bidding process.” (Graz)

“Initially we discussed what kind of ideas that could happen, and a team concentrated on sharing initiatives through an open call process which included a large scale of festivals and arts and health programme etc.

A couple of Robyn’s projects were selected, but mostly we started from scratch. We did not a traditional Open Call, but more in a moderated way and to avoid unrealistic expectations we were precise in what we wanted. We asked organizations and institutions what they wanted to do, or we said that “It would be great if we could do...” We gave them a framework, and many responded very positively. Tate for instance came up with the Klimt exhibition which was a huge success.

I think we worked in a good way. You have got to have trust in the Artistic Leaders in the City. Part of the legacy would rely on those organizations/ institutions and what they were able to deliver. Collaborative working with the City is essential.” (Liverpool)

“When we arrived there were already proposals from the bid. We did not do an open call. The artistic programme was built by the Director (CEO) and his team.” (Linz)

“Linz’09 received about 2000 projects proposals. No bureaucratic requirements and only a minimum of formal aspects were requested in order to assure broad participation. The bids were discussed in the team and in the case of positive decision, a pre-project was asked for.”³

“At the starting point there were some topics and examples from the EU-Bid. We did no Open Call. The artistic programme was built from three strands: 1) Projects initiated by E2010, 2) Co-productions, and 3) Projects totally financed from the outside, where the “owners” of the

projects only wanted the label. There were 4 main topics, connected to the different responsibility to the artistic directors: City of 1) Possibilities, 2) The Arts, 3) Cultures, and 4) Creativity. From a starting point the different fields were equal connected to resources etc., but after a while it became important to be more flexible. One team could have many productions, others could have few. Different teams had different costs.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Approx. 75% of the programme consisting of 167 projects was based on Open Call. Twenty of these projects were presented already in the bid. Besides this, the Programme team initiated some projects to fill in the missing aspects of the programme. Also many proposals were made to the foundation after/outside the open call, and some of these proposals were taken into the programme with the same criteria as the open call-projects.” (Turku)

“The artistic programme was built out of the creativity in the city. The first call was called “The City has got YOUR Face”. That touched the people and they started telling their stories, ideas and needs. From that we built the concept “Stories from the seashore” and on that we built the programme. The basis from Open Call, approx. 75%. In a small city such as Tallinn an Open Call process is a good and practical idea. The only way to make the ECC matter for all citizens. Of course we as a team could add and change some aspects of the programme. To insist on an Open Call and to approach all citizens in various ways was successful and gave Tallinn2011 a certain credibility.” (Tallinn)

“We experienced the difficulties with Open Call connected to what they expected and what we were able to deliver.” (Maribor)

A wide variety of good/strong practices

There are many good practices which informants described connected to the development of the various ECC Artistic Programmes.

Independence, a clear mandate, respect and loyalty, strong leadership, good relations, budgetary control, established databases, clear criteria, participation, democratic processes are some of the key aspects which have been expressed:

“We did not have any past to refer to. We did not have any future to compete with. Everybody had clearly defined purposes and mandates. At the same time it became a meeting place among different art-fields, where we all respected each other’s responsibility. We asked and challenged each other. It could be storm of protest on the outside, but totally solidarity internally. We all worked together as a real team. Stockholm98 was our child.” (Stockholm)

“The intendant (CEO) as a person was strong and independent. “If somebody’s disappointed, blame it on me, not others” he announced.” (Graz)

“Irish culture is based on tragedies and we believed that the ECC Year had a potential as a kind of language for the future. The Irish people are connecting people and as an edgy city by the port we wanted to be open. To a certain level it was successful.” (Cork)

“Well, after a while Phil Redmond became the Creative Director on the Board, which in a way had the last word although he didn’t interfere with the two Executive Producers. Phil was also the “creative” Board member, and he was good at articulating, he was well connected at National level and the media, and the Liverpool people looked at Phil as one of their own. There was also a good relationship between Phil as Board Member and the Executive Director. That particular relationship was important because the ED was a diplomatic guy who reduced problems and had a good control of the budget and other administrative topics.

We worked well with the municipality, the organizations/institutions, who understood what we could commission.” (Liverpool)

“The Management Team (2 Managing Directors + 4 Artistic Directors) decided the Artistic Programme, based on a permanent programme conference which took place every month. The Management Team had a clear understanding of each others roles and responsibilities, and they collaborated closely and well.

Of course there are challenges when you include so many cities, and also institutions etc. had representative forums, and there was dialogue between them. Each City in the Region also appointed one person to represent their City in the network of Essen/Ruhr representatives where strategies and projects were presented and where certain decisions were made. At the same time the cities were in charge of organizing their own cultural programmes, e.g. in the frame of the Local Heroes project.

Even though we did not have any open call, people came and presented approx. 2.000 proposals. The problem was that – since there has been no call for projects – there were no forms prepared the applicants could use to hand in their projects. This led to the difficult situation that we had to deal with many different formats containing varying information (letters, emails, publications, sculptures, art works, etc.).

Fortunately, we found a good way to handle this situation: We worked out a database in which we put all important information about every project. The database was fantastic and very helpful. You have to have clear criteria. You have to be transparent. You have to explain decisions to the people in a reasonable way. And you must know how to say no. Details matter: The two Managing Directors signed all the no’s, and in addition it was made clear that the whole Management Team agreed in the decisions. It made it easier to accept the refusals. Another thing that helped to reduce the disappointment was an initiative of some rejected applicants who created a platform for rejected projects in order to find other ways of financing besides the European Capital of Culture structures.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“A Committee represents more experience.” (Pecs)

³ Anne Kurzweg: European Capitals of Culture and the Making of Europe (2013)

“The Turku 2011 programme was based on the idea of wide participation. The open call for project proposals worked out probably better than in any other ECC before Turku. The fact that there was not a single Artistic Director making the decisions and compiling the programme made the whole process more democratic and thus better fitting to Turku. Also, although the Programme Director and team influenced the projects sometimes quite significantly while working with them, the artistic vision and leadership still always stayed within that specific project.

The solution worked well. There was a good balance with different types of projects, and still a coherent entity. The decision-making-structure gave a wider basis to lean on – the project decisions were not made by one person, but there were more people involved. Also the criteria for the projects were clear, but still wide enough for creativity and innovative project ideas. Good in this solution was also that it probably enabled projects based on wide participation, communality and wide understanding of culture better than if the programme would have been compiled by one single Artistic Director.” (Turku)

“It was dynamic. The advisors in the team came from different cultural fields. The approaches from the artistic fields were combined and the programme was built from there. First the advisors worked individually before they were connected in a good structure. But both artists and people expected this to be a huge festival with highlights, so it was a real challenge to tell them the real way of running a ECC.” (Maribor)

“It was a good solution. We had an independent, respected, cooperative Artistic Committee. The CEO could propose it to the board and it was accepted. Artistic decisions on high level, but not personalized. We had almost no public conflicts about the content of the programme.” (Guimaraes)

Lack of artistic involvement and weak leadership

The areas regarded as weaknesses in developing the Artistic Programme included - the importance of being serious on every level, lack of influence on the legacy, arrogant leaders who are not present, weak leadership, enough time to get to know a huge number of project, involvement of the cultural and artistic environment, too many people involved on too many levels; participants who are more concerned about themselves and their own ideas than building a programme for the cultural year, etc.

“I guess you need more guidance and structure to make the right programme. It’s important to be serious, especially when you say no. But I am sceptical about what we were doing with living culture and immigrants.” (Graz)

“We had no influence on the legacy.” (Cork)

“We had a tricky start. The Artistic Director had her own way of doing thing. Then she left. We went down another road, and time was upon us. But after 3-6 difficult months, we were up and running again. The AD was a quietly authoritarian Director. She wanted to do what she wanted to do. Really! I think that sometimes what can happen in a bidding process is that you get everybody on side by enabling them to see the venture as a positive one for them in the future. They then expect to play a key part in the project, and they may get extra money from it. When those things don’t play out because the Artistic Director might come in with his or her own plans about the programme, it can make people feel very left out. I think that was what happened with us initially.” (Liverpool)

“A weak leadership makes confused people. The institutions were first asked about what’s correct.” (Pecs)

“After the open call it took some time to convince the CEO and the Board of the Foundation about

the vision of the Programme Director and her team for the Turku 2011 programme. This was due to the fact that the CEO and the Board could not possibly have enough time to get to know all the proposals of the open call – those to be rejected and those to be approved. However, when this challenge was solved and there was a trust by the Board towards the programme team, the work and the decisions went on very smoothly.” (Turku)

“I think it is important to involve as many filters as possible, so that the programme represents the real urban culture conceptually, but also to give possibility to the institutions to get involved. In the beginning it was a kind of stressful, because we had to go through approx. 1000 proposals. We started negotiation with several of them, and at that time there was no conflict between the Artistic Board and the Board of Directors.” (Tallinn)

“Too many people were working with the programme. Some of them were artists who wanted to be stars themselves and many had their own ideas about the programme. That lead to too much struggling and fragmentation.” (Guimaraes)

Different kind of political influence on the Artistic Programme

The involvement of Politicians can be divided in three categories:

A) *Politician influence limited to economy and infrastructure – Five cities*

Some statements from the category:

“I suppose that what concerned them most was if something went wrong. Sometimes they wanted distance when things got hard, especially at the time when the AD left. But at the same time politicians in Liverpool were generous with strong support, e.g. when a major music festival had to be cancelled for logistical reasons 6 months before our ECC opening, and there was lots of negative

attention in the media, among the citizens etc. They were keen to always be involved. They wanted promotion and publicity which resulted in showing the City in a good light.” (Liverpool)

“They were our stakeholders, represented in the Board. They understood their role as controllers, and they limited their role to dealing with the budget. But when the year was over, the Mayor announced that “It has been a great year. Thanks to everybody involved. Now we go back to normal”. That was a political mistake, because people had become proud of the city, they were happy with what had happened, and they wanted to continue. The politicians tried once to interfere when they found a specific project too expensive. The Artistic Director said then that the project would run as planned, and I am responsible. If not, I have to take the consequences. The project went as planned.” (Linz)

“No. The politicians influence on infrastructure, not programme.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Very little. There were some attempts, but the Foundation’s independence and the decision making structure supported the programme very well.” (Turku)

“No, there was trust from the politicians. As a politician I don’t care about the programme. I care about the ideas, the philosophy, the policy.” (Guimaraes)

B) *Politicians tried to interfere, but with limited success – Four cities:*

“It was a problem that the politicians often tried to interfere in details. In addition the politicians often acted with weakness and criticism when things got tough in the media. They did not provide support when we needed help for something.” (Stockholm)

“Some tried, but the Intendant was rather too strong. He was also supported by the Mayor, who trusted in Wolfgang.” (Graz)

“Not really. Some tried, but we convinced them that it had to be under artistic control because of the exceptional year, the size, complexity etc.” (Cork)

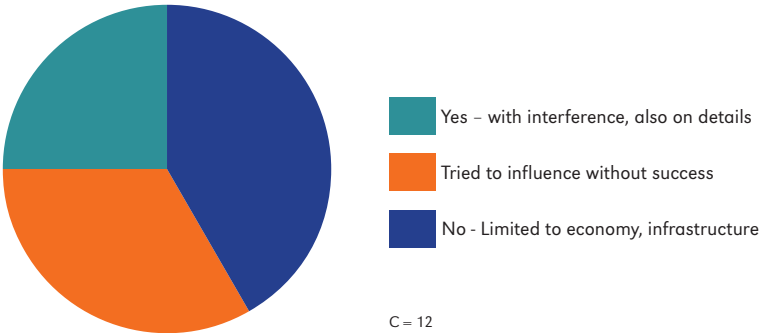
“The politicians did not interfere with the programme, only infrastructure. Well, in a soft way they tried sometimes to influence on the programme. Once the former Mayor wanted to engage an unknown amateur who he knew, and blamed me for not being interested in amateurs, which he also expressed to the media.” (Maribor)

C) *Cities where the politicians interfered on the artistic programme, also on details:*

“They interfered too much.” (Bergen)

“They interfered strongly! They decided what the leaders could mean, and it was not always based on quality and original aims, but who they knew (their own people). It was always very problematic that you had to send the programme suggestions to the municipality and to the Government, and Pecs2010 could not realize anything before the proposals were signed.” (Pecs)

Figure 5
The politicians influence on the Artistic Programme



“They interfered through the new Director, who was positioned in the Foundation by the ruling party, who wanted him to control all the decisions on the Artistic Programme.”

Tallinn

“They interfered through the new Director, who was positioned in the Foundation by the ruling party, who wanted him to control all the decisions on the artistic programme.” (Tallinn)

The sponsors did not significantly influence Artistic Programming

The sponsors did not directly influence the artistic programme. There were some attempts in some of the cities, and some sponsors were connected to specific projects. But influence on the programme further than that, did not happen.

“With one exception, all the other sponsors respected the signed contracts that made it clear that the sponsors did not have any influence on the artistic programme. The exception was connected to an exhibition at the Historical Museum. We had rented a room there, and one of the artists was Bjarne Melgaard from Norway. His art was extreme, and it raised a hell of a reaction. The Board made a claim against us to close the exhibition. I made it very clear that I refused to implement the demand. One of the sponsors threatened with withdrawing the financial support. I answered that I personally would send them the money the day after if they set up such a claim. But I reminded them that they had signed a contract which said that they did not have any influence on the programme. I received then a private letter with a death’s head.” (Stockholm)

“No influence.” (Bergen, Graz, Cork, Essen/Ruhr, Guimaraes)

“The sponsors did not influence the artistic programme, but one or two of them could raise concerns about some controversial elements of the programme. They could also be proactive in developing Sport events, and they also brought their own events (especially the community partner) to the table. But most of all they wanted to be connected with the programme, they were keen to spread the content of L08 to make Liverpool

a much more attractive city for business and tourism so things like The Welcome Programme were appreciated by sponsors as well as the programme itself.” (Liverpool)

“No influence. But every project was connected to specific projects, none were general sponsors. To find companies who would accept the whole programme would have been very difficult. It was better to link sponsors to specific projects. We felt more free, and we could connect projects to the different companies goals, vision, philosophy and values (Linz)

“We had few sponsors. The financial crisis came in 2008, and when the media was telling stories about scandals, the potential sponsors did not want to be connected with Pecs, only to a few concrete projects.” (Pecs)

“No influence on impacts. There were few good examples of a true cooperation between a project and a sponsor, but this was not impacting the artistic part.” (Turku)

“Some sponsors tried in a soft way to interfere, but most of them did not, mostly because a lack of interest in culture. If there were any pressure, it was on a very early phase and on lower level. In the end the premises were very clear.” (Maribor)

Influence of curators (not performing) and artists (performing)

“The curators had influence because a lot of freedom was given to the City’s cultural institutions.” (Liverpool)

“Mixed. Curators were dominated on the Open Call projects, artist on own projects.” (Pecs)

Some examples of best practice

The Homeless World Cup in football/soccer. World Cup for people living outside the society.

The tournament started in Graz in 2003, and takes place every year all over the world. Nike and UEFA are the main sponsors. More than 70 teams took part last year in Mexico. www.homelessworldcup.org

The strategic way to connect artistic programming to the institutions and the festivals was successful in Cork. The Foundation had to tell people who had ran their jobs for 20 years to do things differently, and they did. They experienced the value, and there was a good dialogue. The indicators were good, and the number of visitors increased.

The “Liverpool Welcome” programme was designed to ensure that the Liverpool 2008 ECC connected with a wide range of people in the tourism, hospitality, transport and retail sectors. This was central to securing long term economic benefits through positioning Liverpool as a high quality visitor destination, renowned for the friendly and professional welcome the City extended to its visitors. The programme secured a number of significant successes. Key elements of were:

- a training and awareness raising programme for front line tourism, transport and retail staff in the City, focussing on the fact that these people – from taxi drivers to hotel reception staff – were key ambassadors who could make a huge impact on the success of Liverpool 2008
- a growing series of initiatives and events to connect tourism growth and the increasing success of Liverpool as an international tourism destination with the build up to the ECC year
- the most comprehensive ECC volunteer programme designed to encourage local people to volunteer to support Liverpool 2008, and for volunteers to become the “face” of the City, creating a vibrant, friendly and connected atmosphere.

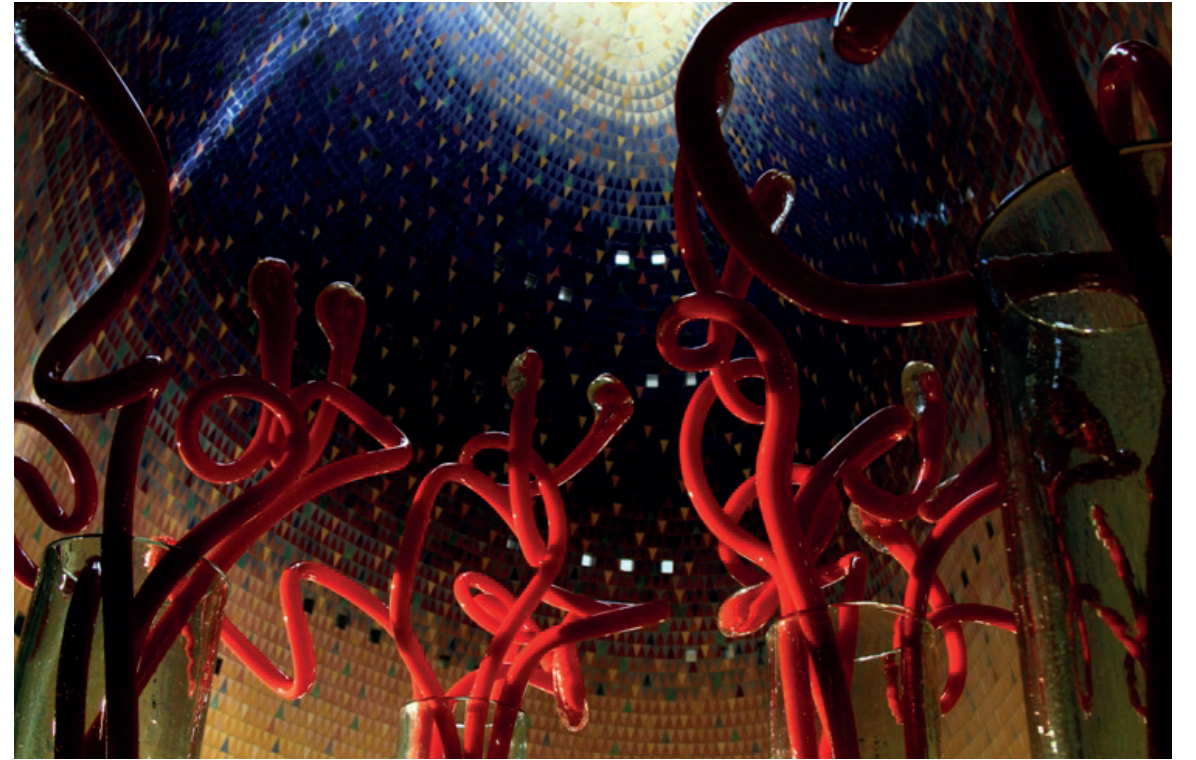
Successful ECC programmes such as Linz Welcome (2009) and the Tallinn (2011) Hospitality Programme are built on the model created by Liverpool.

In Linz the relationship between the CEO and the Financial Director was particularly successful. They had mutual respect for each other’s responsibility and competence. When the President of the Board tried to interfere with expenses, the Financial Director used to say “I’m not a cultural expert, and I have to trust the CEO, even when I find some of the projects too expensive”. In principle the two Directors were at the same level, and they found a good way to jointlymanage the company.

What was successful in Pecs was the positioning of the City as an open, tolerant, multiethnic city with collaboration of the minorities of the city/region and their origin countries/culture.



Turku



Pecs



Linz



Graz

The CEO

“I will say that I am sceptical to have artists in such positions. They are often egos, concentrating on their own and what they are doing.”

Linz

Different cities use different titles for the highest leading position in the Foundation – The Director, Director General, Artistic Director, Programme Director, Managing Director, Executive Director, Intendant etc. As a common title I will use the title CEO.

They came from festivals, institutions, universities etc.

The profile/background which was most common among the CEOs was as Director of either a festival, big event or an institution. Three of the CEOs were professor/assistant professor, and two were either Governmental officers, politicians or independent consultants. The last four were either Director of Cultural Affairs, Chief Conductor, President of Broadcasting or journalist/author.

The CEO’s competence

Understand the City and include its people

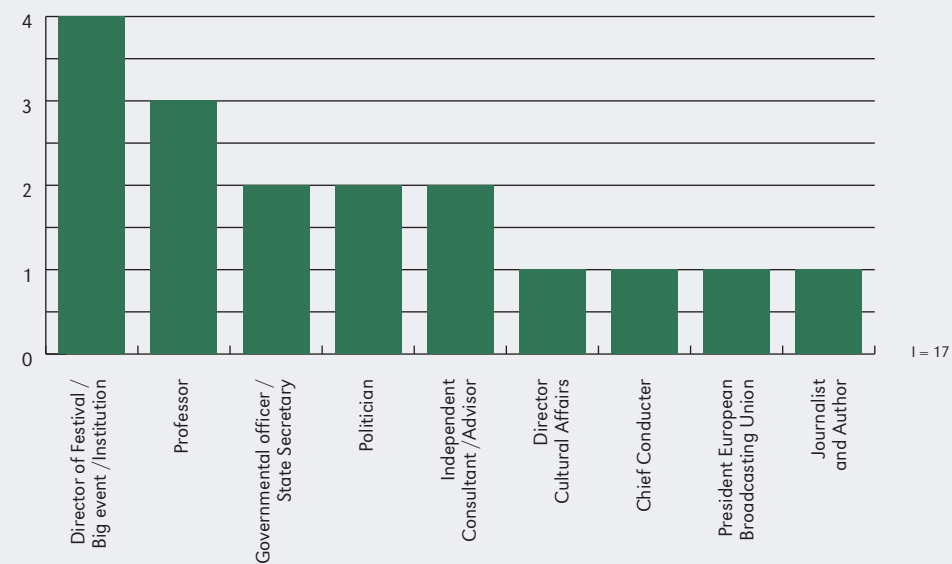
The majority of the ECCs which are included in this investigation express clearly that the most relevant competence for the CEO is to understand the City and include the people living there and the cultural environment which is in place. He or she has to be there, be present. It is also a strong opinion that the CEO has to be open, flexible and able to create enthusiasm. Other relevant competences, and the strength of such knowledge, is reflected below.

Stockholm, Linz and Essen/Ruhr are the only ECCs in my investigation where everybody with an important position in the Foundation/ Company was employed during the whole process; from the preparation (not Essen), during the implementation and still present at the closing phases. It seems like it was a successful solution in the cities, which also was connected to a strong concentration on the importance of team-working. I have to admit though, that I consider the Essen-model a bit risky. The four Artistic Directors were all employed as part-time leaders, with other external positions as well. It takes a whole lot of strength, loyalty, solidarity and interdependence on each other, to make such a structure a success.

“Even though we are all individuals, it is the team’s total knowledge, skills and ability to work complementary as a team which is important. Nobody in the team had worked together in beforehand.” (Stockholm)

“The Director must on one hand be open and inclusive, and on the other hand able to take decisions and argue for them. The Director must apprehend the ECC in a broad European context. Project oriented, flexible and able to communicate with many partners. Competence in collaboration. Two of the respondents from Bergen consider artistic knowledge as essential, while the third said it is relevant, but not decisive for the artistic programme and results. One of the respondents said that a superior community oriented perspective is most important, while another underlined that in a foundation with such

Figure 6
Which profile/background did the CEO have?



Some ECCs had more than 1 CEO. The figure above reflects the CEO who was present during the ECC Year or had the longest period in that position.

Essen/Ruhr had 6 CEOs during the preparation and implementation phase (2 Managing and 4 Artistic Directors). They are all included in the figure.

a big budget with so many contracts to sign, the financial knowledge was essential. In addition it is important to know the political structure and conditions, and a deep understanding about the business sector. Marketing knowledge was also expressed as very important, among others because there were target groups locally, nationally and internationally, especial in the 8 other cities. It was also a key challenge to understand the communication codes with the artistic and cultural environment. Experienced from media was valuable. Even if you have skilled communication people among the staff, the Director will always have the spot lightning on him or her, which you can't run away from. Finally the knowledge about urban development was underlined." (Bergen)

"They are supposed to be managers with cultural understanding and with an international perspective which comes from experience. They need the understanding of the region. You can't come and say "I do my programme whatever". Graz2003 had a tricky start with a managing director who almost broke down the company. After he left, we went into a lucky situation with the new Managing Director. In addition to his skilled managing competence, he was a great cultural lover who worked very well as the general partner to the intendant. From then on there was also the need of a Managing Director in charge of production. We hired a professional company for the marketing. The result was a very strict design. The artistic touch was missing." (Graz)

"Must understand artistic processes. Fundamentally you are a producer and a negotiator, not a creator. Our Director was a well-meaning man with lot of experience. But for him everything was a gig and to deliver spectacular moments. But he was never a really problem because he disappeared. It is important to be comfortable within the arts world and confidence in making decisions. Leadership is the key, which in this case means a strong leader. The reporting relationship to the board and local and national authorities must also be

strong. Knowledge about the city and the region is also essential. Everything must be under financial control, whether it's been taken care of by the Director or other members of the staff." (Cork)

"More flexible models where Executive Producers worked in a dialogue with the cultural board, with a freedom to build the content and the variety, could work better. There is a sense in this. A CEO, as a single person, can become a bit of a difficult and divisive figure. The CEO is very focused on the vision, and lot of the basic stuff gets left behind. We saw it in Liverpool, the broader team built a solid foundation where the artistic programme became the icing on the top of the cake, providing the magic to really make a special year. If you're not careful, and if the CEO come up with a vision or a programme which does not include the city, you're in danger and you have a problem. Our CEO's reputation was from international festivals. She felt that she had been appointed to deliver a fantastic international festival. But perhaps as a result there was a loss of contact with Liverpool's roots and the cultural organisations in the city in the early years of build up.

A lot of people found that hard since she wasn't around. And when she was around, she didn't necessarily talk to people. In a city like Liverpool, which had not had an international cultural festival on that scale before,that was a big learning curve for the city. It also became difficult politically.

You have to get to know the place. It is really important to speak internationally, but being born out of your city to receive the support from the city in return. If you don't have that position, people will feel that they are not being heard. If you want respect, you must deserve it. Artistic knowledge is most essential, but also financial and communication knowledge is important. Most of all it's a question of building a good team. You need broad competence in the team. Good relations. Complementary competences

Indeed sometimes you need to move beyond the Artistic Director/CEO/Chair of Board stuff. A version of that it almost inevitable and plays out in

the media at various points in the ECC journey. But if at the same time you ensure that the team has a core of quality “senior pros” who can get keep the show on the road whilst all the other stuff is going on, then you will have a better chance of avoiding the kind of organizational sclerosis, played out in the media glare, that hits some ECCs in the early years in particular.” (Liverpool)

“The most important competence is knowledge about different cultural and artistic disciplines. Not necessarily a deep knowledge in every field.

A strong leadership. There will be crises. Then you have to be there, and you have to be able to lead people in difficult situations.

The ability to have dialogue with different stakeholders, politicians, actors, researchers, media, government etc., also internationally. Ideas about global economy.

Charismatic and able to develop enthusiasm. At least I will say that I am sceptical to have artists in such positions. They are often egos, concentrating on their own and what they are doing, and they have obsession of how to do things. But there is no obvious answer to this, it is also a question of personality.” (Linz)

“A combination of an ego with confidence and ability to deliver skilled communication, open and listen to expressions, even when you disagree. They must know that they are part of a team. Even though the four Artistic Directors in Essen/ Ruhr were pretty different, there was not one of them who said that they knew everything, and they worked in a complementary way. It is important to come from the Region and knows the relationships in to the place. You need very good reasons to hire somebody from outside. It is not about these managers working with festivals all over, that’s a failure.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“The Director must be able and in a position to tell what to do and the limits. This has also to do with the circumstance connected to the understanding of the different between East and West. Financial knowledge is important, but not essential.” (Pecs)

“This depends on the structure and the roles in the organization. All these capacities need to be presented well within the Management team, and the CEO should have a good understanding of them all; culture and art, finances, marketing and communication.” (Turku)

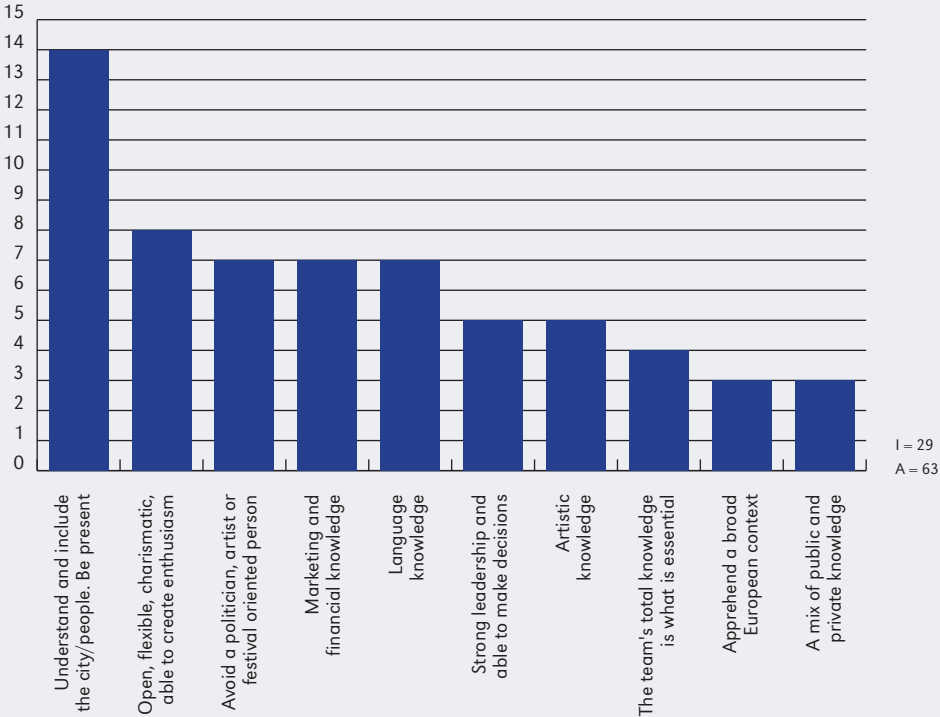
“You need someone who are able to avoid black and white thinking between East and West, and who is able to build an organization where people trust each other and where there is an open information. You need a good mixed competence in the different fields. For the General Managers operational managerial skills (marketing, communication, PR and financial) are as important as the strategic ones. A good mix of experience in private and public sector could be positive. The Artistic Manager could have knowledge from creative industries, big productions and an international experience. Definitely both should not have no political career going on, when nominated.” (Tallinn)

“International perspective is important. It is not preferred to be an artist or politician. It would be probably hard for a bank officer because of the lack of ability to understand the creative sector. It helped me that I had a background as an executive producer in broadcasting with some similar rules for production but also coming from academic field I could observe the art from the distance and with the broader context of society. And you need to know the city and to have the ability to have dialogue with different stakeholders in society.” (Maribor)

One respondent underlined the importance of music and theatre background (dramatic art), and to develop the resources and institutions that the city already have, start with them and fill the programme from their point of view.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre))

“Experience is essential. Capacity to give artistic teams all the freedom and flexibility, and to give the politicians the comfort and confidence they ask

Figure 7
The most relevant competence for the CEO



The question above was asked totally openly, and there is a reason to believe that several statements are under-communicated in the way that the informants probably would agree with more categories than what appearing in their answers.

for and deserve. And the CEOs must have a vision. Know, understand and respect the political side of things, and the relation between the political vision and the artistic side. Creative knowledge and skill as a manager. Know the city’s vision and philosophy. Unfortunately our first Director wanted to be the star. Basically it is not a question of being from the city or not, it is about the person’s will and openness to meet the people and the artists of the city with respect and human skill.” (Guimaraes)

The CEO has to speak or understand the National language

All 29 respondents agreed that it would not been acceptable to appoint a CEO who could not speak or understand the national language. The absolute majority expressed this very strongly. This is an extract from the comments:

“No, it would be very difficult. You need a deeply and prolonged knowledge about the country, and you can’t function in a good way without knowing the language, both internally and externally. We travelled around in the country to create support and enthusiasm for the ECC Year. It would never have been accepted, if we could not speak the Swedish language. You can employ curators, artists etc. who don’t know the language, but it would be totally wrong to hire a CEO. This has become a problem in European milieus as well. The subtle nuances are becoming more and more important, but they disappear and you’re ending up with accuracy problems.” (Stockholm)

“Well, even though this is a European project, and I am deeply European rooted, we have to orient ourselves in the Norwegian marked. I guess that I would not been asked to be the Director if I did not speak Norwegian.” (Bergen)

“No chance at all. Local artists, inhabitants, sponsors, politicians etc. must have the ability to express themselves in their own language. It would

never been accepted to not speak German. Not the biggest problem with the team, but pretty hopeless externally. You read a lot of papers. You listen to a lot of speeches. You speak in a lot of meetings. It would have been absurd if these things took place in other languages than your own.” (Graz)

“Is this question serious? It would have been impossible and incredible difficult.” (Cork)

“Given the fact that English is so widely used as the shared language of Europe, it is almost impossible to see how a non-English speaker would realistically apply for such a role. Outside of the UK, it may be possible to operate in a country where people are able to work in English for much of the time, but you probably need to try to learn a good knowledge of the country’s language over time. There are lots of people who run big opera houses and theatres etc. who don’t have knowledge of the national language, but probably they all try to learn it.” (Liverpool)

“Very difficult. I am personally convinced that you should speak the language when you come from outside.” (Linz)

“No, it would not work at all. Undoubtedly they have to speak and understand the native tongue. You communicate with many people, and many of them, even politicians, don’t want to, or they can-not speak other languages.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Absolutely no! Out of question not to speak Hungarian. From abroad you can appoint a curator, not a Director.” (Pecs)

“No. Absolutely necessary to speak Finnish.” (Turku)

“No, the CEO must speak the native. Beyond dispute.” (Tallinn)

“No way! Things can be said beyond language. It is simply about respect, and you cannot receive respect without understanding the stakeholders

through the language and beyond that. In addition, when you have to speak in another language than your own, the language itself become a kind of power-element in a negative sense. You must have the capacity to connect people, and communicate with staff, politicians, sponsors, institutions, artist and not at least the audiences in the city.” (Maribor)

“I have never thought of anything else than a Portugees in such position. It would have been huge problems with communication, and it would have been very difficult. It must also been seen under a cultural context. The national characteristics are also expressed in the way we speak.” (Guimaraes)

Did they stay or did they go?

Most of the CEOs in this investigation were appointed all the time, which means from the preparation phase, until the ECC Year was finished.

Different reasons for leaving

The main reasons for leaving from the CEO position were connected to disagreement with the development of either the management teams, the artistic programme, the collaboration with the Board or politicians, or quite simply looking for new jobs because the ending of forthcoming contracts.

“Mainly it had to do with integrity. KB2000 had originally a mandate to become a European Cultural City. But the Board wanted to focus on the local. It is possible to combine those two dimension, but only to a certain degree. When I presented approx. 100 proposals, it ended with much noise and fuss. I was strongly supported by the chair of the Board who understood what this was all about. But she was in the minority, and just a few of the suggested projects were accomplished.

The politicians in the Board, who were members of the City Council, had their own ideas of how to develop the programme, and there was a huge gap between the expectations I was given when they hired me, and what they now wanted. In the end enough was enough. I left the foundation, which for me was a right decision.” (Bergen)

“New jobs / Wanted to leave.” (Cork)

“Because I found it impossible to work with the new Director. I and the team tried to integrate him the best we could. I had from the beginning been keen on to put the Tallinn2011 team and the City together, and I appealed to find even better possibilities of collaboration. But of course, maintaining the independence of our Foundation. To maintain this and keep it visible was absolutely crucial to get any confidence from all the partners we worked with. But as a politician himself he was positioned in the Foundation by the ruling party of the city, Keskerakond, who wanted him to control us. It seemed that only his presence already was enough to “cool down” the visions, the use of resources, the creativity among the staff etc. Formally we were at the same level, but I couldn’t realize any ideas without his permission, even though I was the one who was responsible for the Artistic Programme. The new Director was not interested in any substantial exchange about the ECC year with me. He did not even once try to ask, what had been done internally, what were our motives etc. till the moment he entered. I did not go to Tallinn to mainly fight against politic interests, so the only solution was to leave the Foundation, after having finished to build up the structures and the 2011 programme and leave the “production” to others. I never regret that decision but it did never feel good either, of course I would have liked to stay till the end.” (Tallinn)

The situation which arose in Tallinn when the CEO left his position, has also been reflected in another report⁴: “The change of leadership of course meant a decrease in independence for the ECOC. But in a situation where the city

⁴ European Cultural Capital Report 4, 2012, Association for Tourism and Leisure Education

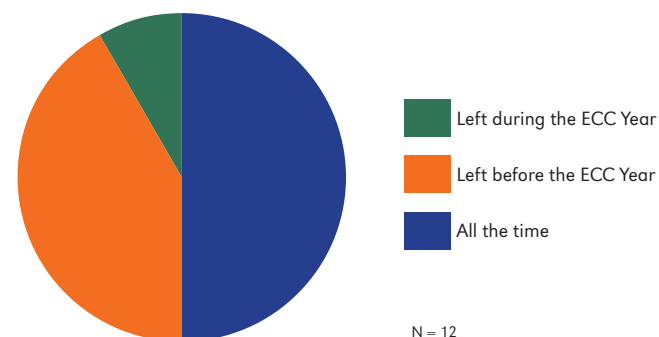
was paying almost 50% of the total costs (..), it is perhaps not surprising that they wanted to have control over the ECOC purse strings. This underlines one of the most important discussions in ECOC governance, which relates to the balance between independence and accountability for the ECOC organization.”

“I was paid to develop projects for M12. I accepted and looked at this as more than a job, more like a mission. After a few months with a new Director, I saw that my proposals were dropped, and things went another direction. She (the new Director) used to say that my suggestions were interesting, but the next day they were dropped. I was not in Guimaraes to fight against windmills. I was there

to produce art and culture. But she only wanted to raise her own ideas. Under such circumstances you can't go on. The only solution for me was to leave the foundation.

After the Director had to leave from her position, I was asked to come back. I said no. I did not feel for it anymore. I thought that I did not have the necessary energy. But after some negotiations, when they were very clear that they needed my knowledge and experience, I accepted to go back as the Executive Director if they accepted my obligations, which were: “Give me freedom and independence. Trust me and I will deliver”. There was such trust from both sides, and we signed a contract.” (Guimares)

Figure 8
When and how long was the Director (CEO) in the position?



Categories

Which category do the ECCs belong to?

UK based Italian professor Franco Bianchini has divided the European Capitals of Culture into five different categories. The respondents were asked to identify which categories which were most relevant to the cities they were representing, on a scale from 1 to 5.

It was the Category A – *Narratives of change following industrial decline and economic restructuring*, which received the highest score from the informants, followed by Category B – *Heritage cities linking heritage with contemporary creativity*. Category C – *Cities celebrating multiculturalism as an asset*, received the lowest score in general, but the highest score from Pecs.

It was in a way striking to see how important the narrative dimension was among the respondents, and the way they consider their own cities to be linked to such conception. Anne Kurzweg has in her Master Thesis underlined the same opinion:

“The ECoC narrative carries the essence of the ECoC project and provides the basic guidelines for its management. It therefore becomes the most important tool to guarantee the coherence and success of the ECoC year (..) The negotiation of the narrative is the central tool to make the project participative and to make an impact/leave a legacy. (..) The ECoC narrative increases impact and legacy and enhances participations and audience development. By focusing the project, it furthermore allows for a better

basis for the management and the evaluation of the ECoC project. (..) They must be artfully interweaved into a common story that includes pictures of the past, present and future – the European Capital narrative. This narrative then guides the management process and sustains the coherency of the project.

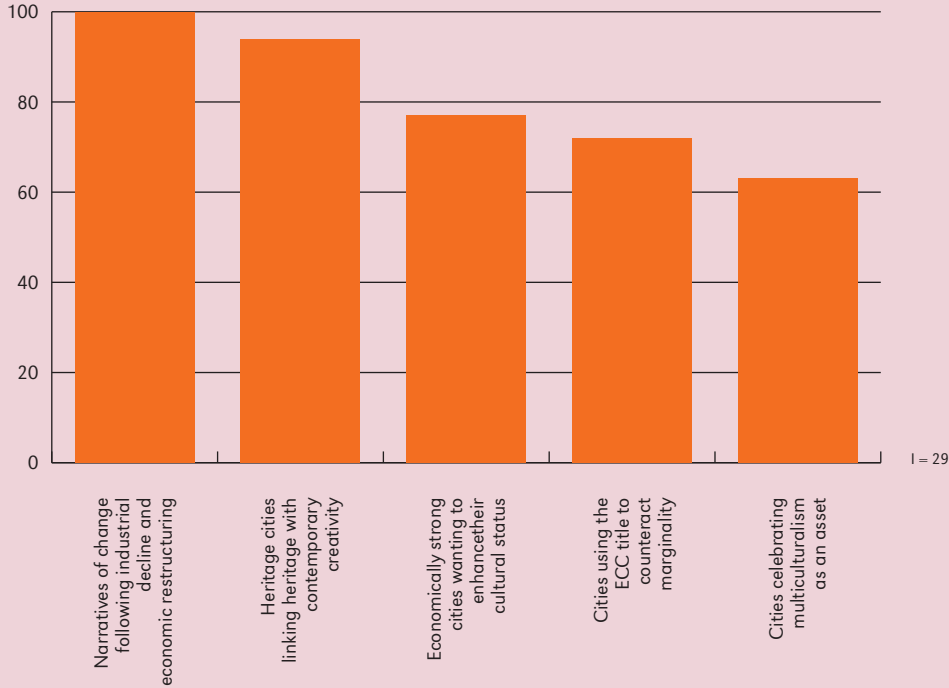
This narrative can only be accepted by all involved groups if it was elaborated and is changed with their consent; therefore, the narrative must be defended, negotiated and possibly altered in an ongoing, participative process.”⁵

On the world's map

In addition the informants were also asked if they missed other categories, which they would have connected to their city. The dominated categories which were missing on Franco Bianchini's categories, were connected to either “including the people and the city” (Bergen, Essen/Ruhr and Pecs) or “putting the city on the map” (Stockholm, Turku and Maribor). Categories which were mentioned only once, had to do with identity, things that should have been done earlier, or about growth of University and industry.

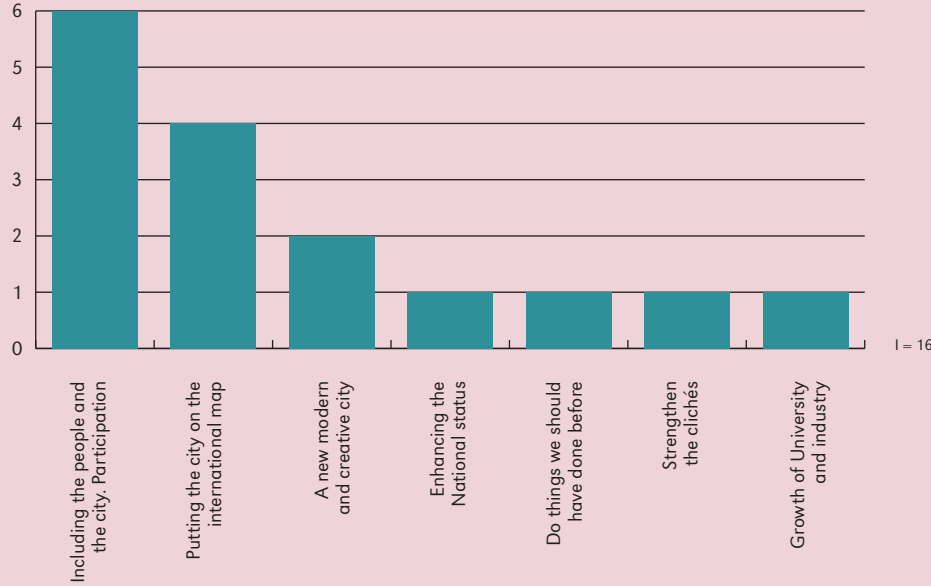
⁵ Anne Kurzweg, E-mail message to the author, August 7, 2013

Figure 9
Which of the following categories* are closest to your opinion about your ECC?



The size of the bars reflect the proportional level between the categories
* Based on Professor Franco Bianchini's 5 categories of ECCs

Figure 10
Which other categories are closest to your opinion about your ECC?



The European Dimension

The EU Commission, the ECCs and others are always talking about the European Dimension, but it is not easy to understand the actual meaning of being European in the context of the ECC. You are the nominated ECC as a European project, not just on behalf of your country. And to develop a European Dimension means more than simply developing international artistic projects. It is also about understanding other cultures and social circumstances as well as your own culture and issues, and therefore making a contribution to the debate about living in a modern Europe.

One good reflection of the concept is developed by Anne Kurzweg:
“The European dimension is a crucial aspect for ECoCs: it is the essence of the ECoC initiative, This however results all too often in enormous problems to manage the ECoCs – not to speak of the trouble of achieving and evaluating the outcome and legacy of a project that lacks measurable dimensions.

Therefore, it is one of the most important tasks for ECoCs to deal profoundly and exhaustingly with their European dimension.

It is crucial that ECoCs dedicate time and resources to give a meaning to their European dimension that goes beyond the variety of features proposed by the EU and former ECoCs.

Experience has shown that in order to be successful, the space left to identify the European dimension means not that its definition is *optional*, but rather considers a freedom within the need of definition. This freedom of defining the European dimension refers to the specific characteristics of each City, including its cultural assets, its past, present and history, but also the specific mixture of expectations surrounding the ECoC title expressed by all sorts of different stakeholders in the city.”⁶

⁶ Anne Kurzweg, E-mail message to the author, August 7, 2013

The Budget

The average budget to run the ECC Year by the twelve cities was 52 million €. Infrastructure is not included. There are difficulties in comparing the budgets of different cities. Some of them have included all the cost including the preparation, implementation and evaluation phases. Others have a budget more concentrated on the cultural year itself, and maybe a year or two before in addition. Some have included elements such as Tourism in the team, while others have a more mixed model with other municipal functions being delivered by the ECoC team.

Liverpool had overall the largest budget, although it is based on seven years expenses (2003-2009 and included funding of a number of the city’s regularly funded cultural organisations). Tallinn and Bergen had the smallest budgets among the investigated cities. In Cork, who also had a relatively small budget, the respondents found it just about adequate. “We could have done more with perhaps an extra 2 million € in cash, but the total in benefit-in-kind and cash was about enough”.

In Maribor the respondents were “convinced that the ECC Year would have been more strongly supported by the Government financially if it took place in Ljubljana.” And in Tallinn there was not a lot of money to be used, as the City’s Government and the Cultural Ministry were not able to agree a compromise between them, so every year the budget was mainly based on cultural programme needs and personnel.

Three out of four euros came from public funds

The average share of public revenue was 74% of the budget for the twelve cities, divided in 27% from the state, 38% from the city and 9% from the region. 26% of the disposable income was commercial resources, mainly from sponsors.

Two out of three euros were spent on programming

The average expenses for the twelve cities were divided in 66% spent on programming, 18% on communication/marketing, and 16% on operational costs.

The budget was adjusted

The budget was drastically adjusted in Tallinn and Maribor, and to a certain extent in Bergen.

“The budget was adjusted several times, with a major 20% adjustment down in January 1999 as the national and regional support was not adjusted up. The budget had to be adjusted also because the estimated income from sponsors was unrealistic. We also tried to enhance the support from the Government, without success.” (Bergen)

“We had to cancel one project due to cut from the Government.” (Graz)

“No, the budget was not only maintained but a surplus of approx. 2% of the budget was generated

Figure 11
How was the budget divided between public and commercial resources?

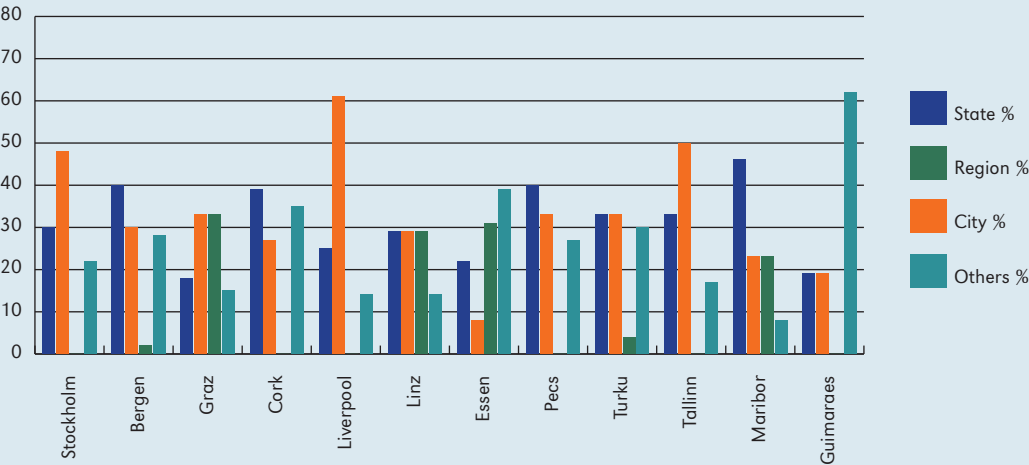
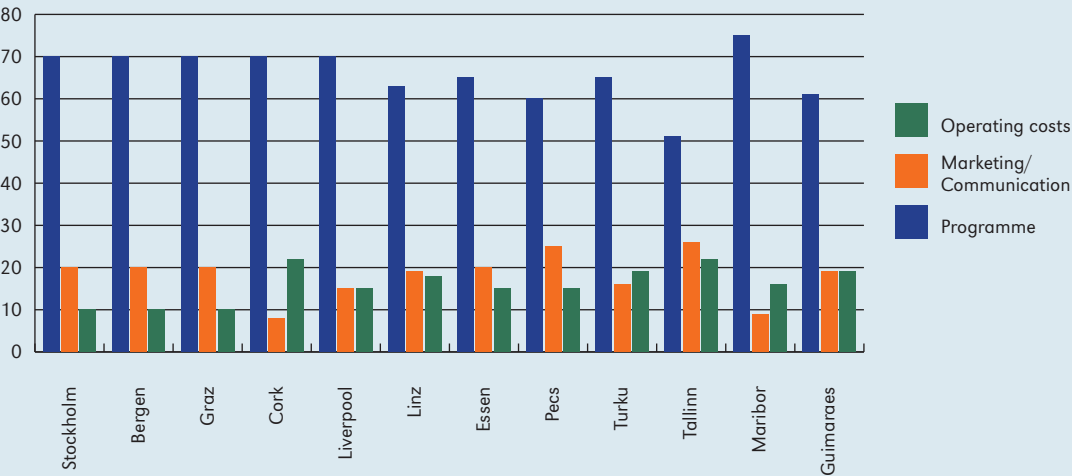


Figure 12
How was the budget divided between programming, communication/marketing and operating costs?



and enabling to make an important contribution to sustainability.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Although the world’s economic situation changed dramatically after the budget was declared in the bidding document, still the actual budget was very close or even a little bit higher than expected. There was, however, uncertainty about certain parts of the funding for rather long.” (Turku)

“Yes, the budget was dropped approx. 40%, but luckily early enough to reduce the big problems it could have caused.” (Tallinn)

“Yes, it was adjusted from 57 to 30 mill. € in the beginning of 2011.” (Maribor)

“The only difference was a cut of 1 million € in Ministry of Culture’s transfer and 1,3 in Tourism of Portugal’s transfer, due to national budget restrictions. This money was replaced by Melina Mercouri prize (1,5 million), ticketing (500.000 €) and 300.000 of other private income.” (Guimaraes)

The sponsors

Bergen, Cork and Stockholm received the highest amount of support from sponsors. Also Essen, Graz and Liverpool were strongly supported from this field. The average level was 13 per cent.

There is a broad variety between the ECCs when it comes to what kind of sponsors they had. Graz had a majority of local sponsors, Bergen and Tallinn had a majority of national sponsors, Essen had a majority of regional sponsors, while the other cities had sponsors from all categories.

Accept any kind of sponsor?

The informants were asked if they would have accepted any kind of sponsor. With the exception of Liverpool, which did not have strong feelings about it, the other said no. Among the arguments were:

“The sponsors values could not be in conflict with B2000’s values.” (Bergen)

“Don’t deal with media as sponsors. Be independent.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Sponsorships should be sustainable partnerships.” (Tallinn)

“Artistic freedom risk. Fairness (social, environment etc).” (Guimares)

“I would say that one of the best effects of the year was the increase in people’s self-esteem.”

Turku

Engagement and Impact

Local people were engaged to a considerable degree

Almost every former ECC claims that the people were engaged in a positive way:

“Yes, but they are not necessarily aware of the connection to the ECC Year.” (Stockholm)

“55% participated in an event they knew was part of the ECC-programme, 46% on more than 3 events. 54% of the citizens perceived the ECC Year as a success in retrospect.” (Bergen)

“The local population was both surprised and proud when they experienced what was coming up (The Island, the Shadow Tower etc.).” (Graz)

“The people wanted to attend and expectations were fulfilled. People’s perception of Cork have increased, and they were 100% involved in every aspect of Cork2005. The participants delivered the programme and we were with them every step on the way.” (Cork)

“Yes, many people were saying nice things about L08 - a nicer place to be and live in. But they expected to see more international visitors. Public opinion moved towards being behind L08. When the programme started to be known, people could relate to it rather than those ideas that they did not really know and what it was going to be. We became more and more supported by local people.” (Liverpool)

“The people are still missing 2009.” (Linz)

“People have more self-confidence and are saying that they are coming from Ruhr in a much more proud way than before. At the same time they are aware of the past as a part of their identity.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Wide participation was one of the main principles of Turku 2011 from the start. That was supported in many ways, e.g. 60% of the events were free for the participants, culture was brought to public spaces, a wide accessibility programme supported participation of e.g. elderly and disabled people, the volunteer programme engaged more than 400. Some of the projects were based on wide participation of the inhabitants, e.g. the Suburban weeks or the tulip planting campaign. 87% of the participants was very or quite happy about their experience.

I would say that one of the best effects of the year was the increase in people’s self-esteem. People were very positively surprised in the success of the ECC Year: “Hey, we could do it!” This gives faith and eagerness for next big challenges. However, it wasn’t like this from the beginning – the opinion of the inhabitants improved from doubt to excitement around the opening weekend.” (Turku)

“50% of the cultural programme was free and available to everybody. Culture became a usable “products” and made living condition better. They could not avoid. It was the biggest thing happen to them. They met everywhere; open events, schools, installations etc. We succeeded in that, even though we didn’t force people to take part.” (Tallinn)

“Very positively. They were invited to take part and they accepted the challenge.” (Guimaraes)

The explanations in Pecs and Maribor differ a bit from the other cities. In Pecs they notice a disappointment among the people in the years beyond the ECC Year, while in Maribor the informants from the operational team have a fairly more positive view on the people’s affection:

“2007: Pessimistic /disappointed.
2009: 80% optimistic and satisfied.
2013: A minority is satisfied. People are disappointed with the content, mainly because of the financial crisis.” (Pecs)

“People have become more proud of the city, which has become more attractive as a tourist destination. The proudness increased. The survey done by independed institution (data used in ECORYS and in Economic impact study done by University of Ljubljana) showed the figures that most of the population (98%) were proud for ECOC and were positive about it. They agreed that the ECOC contributes to development of city and region. Today they miss the cultural year.” (Maribor)

“Different affection among the people. I guess only the minority were satisfied with the programme (Maribor Festival). M12 showed the building, not the performances.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

The Cities and Regions were affected to a significant degree

Also the cities and regions were affected in a positive way, according to the majorities of the informants:

“One of the main topics was including and presenting the coastal culture in the region, and there was a close collaboration and many events with the coastal organizations along the western coastline of Norway. ECC design on manhole covers. The mast on the Ulriken Top was lightened.” (Bergen)

“North-West Region became much more attractive. We built skills and knowledge. The City feels more open.” (Liverpool)

“Turku and the Region were put on the world’s map in an exceptional way. The amount of visitors increased. New creative center Logomo emerged..” (Turku)

“Tourism growth of 28%. New city hotspots were created. International attention.” (Tallinn)

“Physical / urban transformation. International reputation. Tourism attractiveness.” (Guimaraes)

In Essen they had a successful collaboration between the museums, which still continues. Besides Essen did not experience a real change in the connection within the region:

“Not really changed. Old structures are popping up again. The whole region has not become a metropolis. The cities are still in competition with each other and they are self-sufficient. But 20 museums cooperated for the first time, and the collaboration continues. Some structures have been introduced which still continue, for example The Touristic infrastructure, the European Centre for Creative Economy, the big project “Sing – Day of Song”, which was repeated in 2012 and is supposed to be organized again, involving choirs from all over the region.” (Essen/Ruhr)

In Pecs the affection divided between the city and the region:

“The City: Yes / The Region: No.” (Pecs)

While in Maribor there was different opinion about the effect in the city:

“Because of the difficult political situation with protests against the Mayor, we did not have any closing ceremony. Instead of a positive perception of the city, Maribor became “The City of Protests”. It was a hard time, for the whole organization. We tried to say that we are beyond the city, but almost everything was connected to M2012. The city

has become more lively, people go out more than before.” (Maribor)

“I don’t believe the reports about the remarkable percentage of tourism growth during M12. The statistic data is all about quantity not about quality. The hotels themselves report that the rooms were filled up with artists, and most of the rooms were paid by M12. And it is stupid to start the marketing of the city so late.” (Maribor Festival)

The CEO has offered the following comment regarding the last statement:

“The surveys are done by local and national statistical offices and they distributed the numbers that are also used in the studies (ECORYS, study of University of Ljubljana...). They also published the income from tourism activities (hotels) that is 25% higher in 2012 (comparing to 2011). The numbers of tourist visits can be found in yearly reports of local and national tourist offices, overnights increase for more than 20% and daily visits grow for 61% in 2012 (comparing to 2011).” (Maribor)

Local politics were affected to a certain extent

Half of the cities consider that there has been a political effect as a result of the ECC Year:

“Yes. Culture has a more prominent position in general politics today compared to the years before the ECC Year. The politicians have become more open to contemporary arts and new expressions. They has also been more internationally oriented.

The financial support given by the politicians to new projects connected to film and music, gave Bergen long term benefits. Independent companies were established, and are still in a developing process. Lysverkbygningen was transformed into a nice venue for visual arts. The politicians experienced that arts and culture has a social and public asset and valuable effect on economy and reputation for the city. KB2000 made it easier for

the politicians to increase the cultural budget and to argue for the importance of culture.

The political effect was evaluated after 10 years. The conclusion was that B2000 laid the foundations for cultural politics and priorities during this decade. The successes helped make cultural policy a high status and strengthened local political support for arts and culture.” (Bergen)

“L08 has meant much by highlighting the impact of a strong cultural sector and major events on the economy. Seen as a good model, not perfect, but more powerful politically. Culture has a more prominent position in politics now.” (Liverpool)

“Yes, the new cultural development plan shows that 2009 is the basis. It has been a broad process with many participants. It is a strategic document that needs to be filled with life, but it is strongly linked to and based on the experiences from Linz2009.” (Linz)

“Aware of Ruhr as an important part of German culture on a National level.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Good effect on political decision makers.” (Pecs)

“New challenges for how to link culture with other aspects of local life (social inclusion, economic competitiveness, urban development). New financial responsibilities to keep the new ecosystem alive and dynamic.” (Guimaraes)

Four cities have a different opinion of the political effect in their cities:

“No. Uncertain about any political affection.” (Stockholm)

“Certainly not as important as one would have thought in relation to the success of the project. For example: The job as the City Councillor for culture has become less important than all other fields, and the budget has become so small that there is no chance to really create something new or work internationally.” (Graz)

“Not much. For a while yes, but not afterwards. Not a big change. The state and the city can’t agree. Tallinn is a state in the state.” (Tallinn)

“No. The political situation was far from normal in the year of ECOC. Four Ministers of Culture changed in the years of preparation of ECOC and there was no minister appointed at the time of opening of ECOC. Even without political support project was successful. Maybe because it was so far from local and national politics it was an advantage for project. Accordingly, in the long run ECOC should be part of local and national cultural long-term strategies.” (Maribor)

“I don’t know. We are not interested enough for them anyway. We do classical music.” (Maribor Festival)

“The financial crises have become an excuse for everything. Puppet theatre is not a heartfelt topic for the politicians anyway.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

In Cork there was a disagreement between the informants:

“No, there has not been a prominent change.” (Artistic Advisor, Cork)

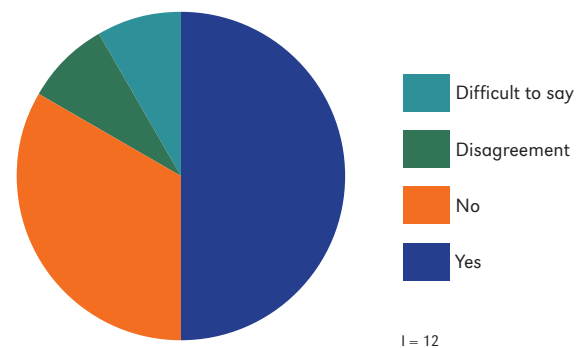
“Yes, a higher level of cultural attention (Board of Directors, Cork)

And in Turku they found it difficult to say yet if there were any impacts.

“The successes helped make cultural policy a high status and strengthened local political support for arts and culture.”

Bergen

Figure 14
Influence – Was politics affected?



Media attention

– from criticism to support

What characterises the media attention most in the different ECCs, is the development from being critical and negative to a more positive and supporting position as time went by. The media could be cruel when things were difficult (especially in the early years), and enthusiastic when there was successes. Many cities experienced a higher attention from international compared to national media, but the overall impression is that the cities are fairly satisfied with the media. The most astounding experience was probably in Linz, where the local daily news wanted to deal with money, and became very negative towards the Foundation because Linz09 refused to contribute financially to certain types of local journalism.

“Both. The attention from local media became stronger when the international media started to write about B2000, even though I noticed several brilliant articles in international media which were never published in Norwegian media. We went through all phases. In the beginning we noticed normal enthusiasm from the local media. Then we experienced a dramatic damage when the Director was replaced by the deputy Director, and there were full agreement among the national media that national support to B2000 was wrong. The Opening ceremony with 35.000 participants, changed in many ways the media’s attention into a more positive and enthusiastic way. There was not much to criticize from local media. From national media there was not much attention.” (Bergen)

“Both. There were problems connected to the close relationship between us. Media wanted their stories and sometimes we question their

motivation. But at the same time they have another point of view to us.

The media attention was astonishing. In a sense it may have overwhelmed us. I don’t mean artistically or in terms of programming. But our efforts to keep media at a distance while we examined programme ideas from the public call, our efforts to attend to the political forces bearing down upon our local journalists and our efforts to offset the orchestrated tabloid cultivation of media cynicism, all ruined our peace of mind and damaged. In a sense, for our sakes, a new Delivery team should have been brought in.

A crucial event occurred within the Corporate culture of our main media sponsor, The Cork Examiner. The newspaper decided to become a National rather than a regional daily newspaper and changed its name from Cork Examiner to Irish Examiner. This had a profound distancing effect on a number of its key journalists, including its Arts Editor. Suddenly, they needed to prove that they were national rather than provincial in outlook. Therefore, ironically, our key media sponsor became the instigator and propagator of the most serious negative media campaigns against us. Handling this chaotic lapse of local media loyalty became the overwhelming concern of the Cork2005 office.” (Cork)

“Both. Cruel when things went wrong (cancelling of Matthew Street Music Festival in 2007). Supporting and enthusiastic when successes. As time went on, they became more positive. Local media was partner.” (Liverpool)

“There were some terrible situations with the media. The worst aspect was probably that the

local daily news wanted to deal with money. We refused to be part of such corrupt way of journalism, and they were against us. We received more attention from international media compared to national media in Austria.” (Linz)

“No reason to complain. The media were critical, but they were supporting and did not work against us.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“In the beginning: Very critical, only scandals. “What happens in Hungary, happens in Budapest”. In 2010 the media became more neutral.” (Pecs)

“Mainly supporting. The local/regional media kept Turku2011 very much visible all the time, every day, especially during the year itself. There was some eagerness to criticize, but mainly before the year.” (Turku)

“In the beginning: Very critical. Later: Great.” (Tallinn)

“2011: Mostly negative. They did not know what to expect, uncertainty regarding the expectations. 2012: Changed in a very positive way. Media realized, like the people, that interesting things were going to happen and were mainly supporting. 400 foreign journalists came to Maribor and it was another challenge for home journalists.” (Maribor)

“The problem with media in 2012 was that there were not enough journalists to write about culture. We had to fight for the attention all the time. After all I am satisfied. There are some newspapers which are always negative. Others are coming if there is a very well known director or producer. To me it seems like the media has no clear strategy on writing about theatres in general, and about puppets especially.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

High profile events vs. local initiatives. How was the balance?

Five cities considered a good balance between the big, international events and the local initiatives:

“It was a topic from individuals, artists and other who were not accepted as part of the programme, but on a general level, the balance was carefully arranged and well balanced.” (Cork)

“The balance was successful. In the beginning people were worried, but it changed over time. People want to see big events they can really enjoy. But what they are not so keen on is “arty international stuff” They want to be involved. L08 did not include a lot of very expensive events with obscure international artists. Nevertheless the Liverpool Commissions allowed us to bring some really innovative yet cost effective projects from new or less well known artists – including international projects, but there had to be some connection between the project and Liverpool. We also needed to balance the different tastes of local inhabitants and international visitors.” (Liverpool)

“The balance was good. It was not a criteria to have blockbusters, and nobody asked for U2. We created pictures, not big names. There were most local and regional projects, like it should be. A good balance does not mean equal number of projects, it is what people comprehend as a good balance.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“The balance in overall was rather good, I would say. Some people, especially local artists, complained that the programme consisted of too many “outsiders”. On the other hand, there were also complains about the programme having too few international artists. However, in my opinion

some great blockbusters are needed to create the sense of “Wow”, sense of proudness, sense of uniqueness and “never before” experiences also for local people. Also, without some blockbusters the attention of the media as well as the public might be much smaller towards the whole programme. This balancing of different interests was noticed even by the media with eventually a reaction - you can never please all.” (Turku)

“Partly. Even if the investments are the same, of course the visibility of the two event profiles are different - what causes the sensation? etc.” (Guimaraes)

Four cities developed mainly local initiatives:

“You have to do both. The important task is to build a deep understanding of culture which has a broader perspective than its own folklore. But in the end it was a “City-project”, not a European project. Many people agreed that it had been a nice, but not an important celebration. You have to do things also because they are difficult. If it becomes too easy, it will soon be boring.” (Bergen)

“What’s important is to enhance the expectations of local people. The best way is not to invite blockbusters, even though there are still people in Pecs who are disappointed because U2 did not come to Pecs in 2010.” (Pecs)

“We had few international artists. We didn’t have the money.” (Tallinn)

“There were highlights, but mainly it was built from bottom-up.” (Maribor)

While three cities were pretty clear of giving priority to high profile events:

“We accomplished approx. 1200 projects. Many of them were big and international. We had the resources to do it. And it is actually important to do it. This is the opportunity, and we must succeed in such connection. It is a question of doing both, not the one or another.” (Stockholm)

“People felt that too much resource was given to international events, but it proved to be the right choice as Graz needed a lot of international presence as it has not been really on the touristic map. The best is to transform local topics into blockbusters, i.e. interesting local artists/historical topics combined with internationally known art and artists. And what is the goal for the year if it is business as usual? It is the big chance to get

an outside-view on a city, in many ways. It was a topic for discussion, but as the internet was not so strong then it was maybe less than it would have been now.” (Graz)

“I’m convinced that it’s wrong approach. What’s important is to show the European dimension. The diversity of the European dimension must be linked to the city and the region and open them for international aspects. That means being unique. The animal-project in Marseille could not take place elsewhere. The closing of the motorway was close connected to Essen. You can’t have one rule for every ECC in Europe. Bring out projects that are built from the city’s history, without being a provincial city. The senior Artistic Directors were hired as a guarantee for international dimension.” (Linz)

“And what is the goal for the year if it is business as usual? It is the big chance to get an outside-view on a city, in many ways.”

Graz

Infrastructure

Not necessary to integrate urban development?

An investigation⁷ about ECCs concluded that long term impact in ECC cities has been greater when cultural initiatives have been integrated with other aspects of urban development. A majority of my informants disagreed in such statement:

“This conclusion is made by Bob Palmer. His connection between legacy and urban development is more relevant for Glasgow than Stockholm.” (Stockholm)

“It depends on the aims and goals for the ECC Year. It must be possible to build a glittering cultural year without new buildings. There is more sense in using what you have compared with building new venues, and the mandate was to fill the arenas, not creating them. B2000 concentrated on the content, not the infrastructure.” (Bergen)

“Depending on the goals, aims, vision etc. We had other aims with the ECC Year.” (Cork)

“The invisible parts, the networks, the self-confidence, the mental thing etc. are much more important and interesting in a long-term perspective compared to buildings and infrastructure. It is unfortunate that long-term benefit is so closely connected to visible buildings and not to the mental aspects among people.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Maybe, but from my opinion ECCs are too much concerned with infrastructure. Long term benefits for me means: to develop strategic plans based on the ECC-experiences, developing soft elements as self-esteem of citizens, to support the creativity in the city in the future. Long term benefit should also

be expressed in the strategic plans for development of the city and region..” (Maribor)

“It is stupid to connect new buildings with ECCs. New buildings are infrastructure, and must be developed independently from ECCs, who must be about dreams, about enhancing the importance of arts and culture, about involving people and make them participating.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

“We don’t have enough time distance to be sure about this issue, but the first impression confirms that there’s not a “global sustainability”. The projects that are more sustainable are the ones that were supported by a strong local network.” (Guimaraes)

Those who fully or partly agreed with the connection between sustainability and urban development, said among others:

“It depends. We need both.” (Graz)

“There is an Important connection between programme development and physical changes to the City, especially culturally related so people can see the difference to how their City works after the year is over.” (Liverpool)

“Yes, I think so. The Arts Electronica in Linz is a good example.” (Linz)

“Agree. This is not a big European Festival.” (Pecs)

“To a large extent I share this opinion. But I don’t consider urban planning only as infrastructure, but something much wider.” (Turku)

“It is stupid to connect new buildings with ECCs. New buildings are infrastructure, and must be developed independently from ECCs, who must be about dreams, about enhancing the importance of arts and culture, about involving people and make them participating.”

Maribor Puppet Theatre

⁷ Palmer-Rae Associates. European Cities and Capitals of Culture.

Sharing the title

Even though there are several advantages to sharing the title with another European city, experience suggests at the same time that there is no “hot love” relationship between them. It is an “arranged marriage” which is reflected in different aims, objectives and priorities, and sometimes with lack of interest from one or both sides.

Among advantages there are different stories:

“Those who already were working internationally, strengthened their relations. Several art-projects were materialized, and the collaboration was stronger among artists and institutions than between the cities. We experienced both significant and inspiring collaboration. Our dance company Carte Blanche had greater success in some of the other cities compared to experiences from performances in Norway. Also Teatergarasjen and The Philharmonic Orchestra had great exchange programmes with similar actors and musicians abroad.” (Bergen)

“We were building friendship and alliances, we learnt from one another, and we had a great volunteer exchange programme.” (Liverpool)

“We exchanged ideas and projects. We are members of a European family. Hungary is small. Pecs is smaller. The media attention in Germany and Turkey was higher than Pecs could dream of.” (Pecs)

“We increased the cultural collaboration. Sharing of the title created cooperation between operators and organizations in Turku and Tallinn which had nothing to do with the official ECC Year.” (Turku)

“Increasing the cultural collaboration. Important to establish an informal collaboration, so you don’t have to be forced into something not worthy.” (Tallinn)

“It is possible to develop exchanged programmes and ideas, but it could have been more. In term of financial costs, it was hard because of the long distance between the two cities. We arranged a Portuguese Week with exhibitions etc. And we showed Portuguese culture for Slovenian people.” (Maribor)

“Exchanging ideas: Yes / Projects: Less / People: Not at all.” (Guimaraes)

A good example of a good and close exchange programme between two European Capitals of Culture, who had the title in different years, but they are close to each other in distance and in other ways, is a project called < rotor > association for contemporary art - based in Graz, founded in 1999 and developed two international projects in Graz2003. In 2012, < rotor > was coordinator of a one-year project supported by the city of Graz and Maribor2012 included a series of workshops, exhibitions, interventions on self-organized art education models in Maribor and Graz.

But the challenges and problems of connecting two European Capitals of Culture are many. Different sizes, identity, aims and objectives, distance between them, lack of interest in collaboration, are among the topics which have been mentioned.

The exceptional year in 2000, where nine cities were selected because of the Millennium, created many challenges. The number of cities was obviously too large. There was little similarity between them. Typically it was the three Nordic cities which collaborated most with each other, and to a much less extent with cities in the middle and south of Europe.

“Different aims, objectives and priorities, and lack of interest. The collaboration between the 9 cities was organized by the Association of European Cultural Cities 2000 (AECC), where the management decisions took place in plenary. It was of course a challenge to develop common projects and divide the resources between the cities, which were designated without any similarity between them. The ideal situation would have been to choose cities which were more comparable.” (Bergen)

“It is an “Arranged marriage”. And in reality we perhaps did less than we could have done. Intentions are good, but you don’t give it priority. Sometimes there is a real lack of understanding and empathy (although not in our case with Stavanger). Exchange projects must be considered as appropriate with common requirement and assumption among the participants. “Cities on the Edge” is an example of a good project which was less successful than it could have been because of differences in understanding and artistic and financial commitments between the partners.” (Liverpool).

“Different aims, objectives, priorities and background. There was no link between the two cities traditions, they had nothing to do with each other,

the distance between them was large, and we struggled with the changes of directors in the other city (there were three of them). We developed some smaller projects, all about literature, but we never developed a strategy for collaboration.” (Linz)

“We tried to do this, but with different experiences, and not as much as expected. We were much more closely connected to Pecs than Istanbul, even though the fact that there is a large Turkish community in our region seemed to be a good starting point for projects with Istanbul. But our experiences and the concrete results proved that the strategy and target of the European Capital of Culture Istanbul went in a different direction – it was important to position Turkey and its culture in Europe. In Pecs it was a big problem that Tamas was the only one who was stable, while 3 Directors disappeared during the process. There is a much bigger potential for successful sharing between cities when they have common identity, aims, goal and vision. Practical problems were e. g. different decision processes, different timings, different financial structures.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Differences in aims, priorities economic power. Impossible to sign contracts for more than the actual year. Could not plan for the future.” (Pecs)

“The changes in the personnel of Tallinn’s Foundation caused some challenges, but mainly the uncertainty of their financing, which at the end caused a reduction of the cooperation projects. The short distance between Turku and Tallinn gave also some challenges as both tried to allure visitors from Helsinki, but naturally it was mainly helping the partnership.” (Turku)

“Should have been more. The Estonians were not so interested in collaboration. The potential is much stronger. But - I think we had the most intensive co-operation of two ECCs ever. And it was not limited to common events, we shared a lot of experiences and helped each other on international level, with contacts etc.” (Tallinn)

“We experienced that Guimaraes had bigger political support. Unfortunately cities did not continue collaborations beyond ECOC institution. There is still potential in the future as the links were established.” (Maribor)

“I have no idea what was going on in Guimaraes. I have a broad international collaboration, but nothing with Guimaraes. But we have an exchange project with Pecs Puppet Theatre, who was part of Pecs2010. We will play there in 2014. That project was strengthened by Maribor2012.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

“Increasing the cultural collaboration: Less than we expected. Obviously there were different aims, objectives and priorities.” (Guimaraes)

“There is a much bigger potential for successful sharing between cities when they have common identity, aims, goal and vision.”

Essen/Ruhr

Legacy

Five of the former ECCs have established an organization, department or association to continue aims and values from the Cultural Year.

A core from the Liverpool08 team became effectively Liverpool's Culture Department from 2009 onwards.

In Essen/Ruhr, there are different institution continuing structures and certain projects of the European Capital of Culture: At the Ruhr Regional Association Jürgen Fischer, programme coordinator of RUHR.2010, is in charge of regional cultural projects. The Ruhr Tourism Agency and the Kultur Ruhr GmbH contribute to the sustainability of the ECC as well.

In Pecs the city is supporting an association which continue the Cultural Year legacy

The Turku 2011 Foundation will operate until 2016. Also the City established a project called the Legacy of the Capital of Culture Year (until the end of 2014)

In Tallinn they have established the Tallinn Creative Hub to secure the legacy.

None of the other cities have established any formal institution to continue the aims from the Cultural Year. In Stockholm there are some institutions and independent groups which have continued some of the values though, and in Graz there is a so-called 03-organisation to be in charge of the island in the Mur as it was the only “possession” of the cultural capital gmbh. And for it there was a rather “nice” budget left for maintenance until now.

Lack of budget to continue European collaboration

Only three former ECCs have maintained a budget or a fund to continue international collaboration, namely Linz, Essen/Ruhr and Turku. In Maribor they have saved some money which was brought back to the city and which they hope will be used to international collaboration. None of the eight other cities have maintained a specific budget for this purpose.



Networks

Ten of the cities established networks before or during the Capital of Culture year that still continues.

The two exceptional cities are Stockholm and Graz. Good examples of such networks are BIT (Bergen International Theatre), BRAK (Bergen Rock Association), LARC and COOL in Liverpool, Ruhr Art Museum in the Ruhr region, the ECoC University Network coordinated from Pecs and others.

Developing plans

Seven cities have developed strategy or acting plans based on ECC-experiences:

- Bergen, where different plans were develop by the municipality
- Liverpool, particularly around commissioning major events
- Linz, “even small cities without important heritage can develop a good programme with an important legacy”
- Tallinn, partially. The foundation is still very much involved in the process. The legacy management is in the form of Tallinn Creative Hub
- Turku and Guimaraes

They made some plans also in Cork, but it looks like they were never materialized. As one of the

respondents said: “The legacy cannot be judged because history changed. Ireland has suffered the greatest financial and social trauma in two hundred years with this Great Recession and Austerity. There is simply no capital flowing to prolong the quantity and quality of artistic activity that we envisaged in the post Cork2005 era. Do not blame our Legacy, blame History.”

Stockholm, Graz, Maribor and Essen/Ruhr have not developed strategy or acting plans based on the ECC-experiences. In addition the respondent from Essen is critical to the Culture Department in the Municipality, with regard to the maintaining of the European Capital of Culture effects, a structure envisaging sustainability is rather to be found on a regional level.

Evaluation

Four of the cities undertook evaluation both before and after the ECC Year - Liverpool, Linz, Turku and Tallinn. The other cities either did not make any pre-evaluation, they did it during the year and the year after, or they did it only afterwards. Liverpool also led a cross ECC project in 2010 called the European Policy Group⁸, funded by the Commission, which sought to develop some shared indicators for ECCs.

If we look at what kind of evaluation model that was developed, it was only hard legacies (buildings, visitors, economic impact etc.) in Graz, Cork, Tallinn and Maribor, while the evaluation model looked at both hard and softer (skills, ideas, image etc.) legacies in Liverpool, Linz, Turku and Guimaraes. Essen/Ruhr has some figures, but not a strong documentation.

In Liverpool there is an ongoing University-led body (Institute of Cultural Capital) which continues to develop research programmes on Liverpool08 and other ECCs. The cultural sector’s involvement in the city’s economic life was also given a stronger emphasis (despite deep cuts in city budgets) given the findings of the Impacts 08 evaluation which demonstrated the economic value of cultural investment.

Operational team or independently?

Half of the cities evaluated the ECC Year independently by the Universities or others in the cities, namely Cork, Liverpool, Linz, Turku, Tallinn, Maribor and Guimaraes.

Also The University of Pecs (which has also made a major contribution to the UNECC network) made an independent evaluation, but many organisations were involved in developing the model, which reduced the level of independence.

The evaluations in Bergen, Graz and Essen/Ruhr were made by the operational teams, which make them less reliable.

The municipality in Stockholm did a kind of evaluation afterwards, under the auspices of the City’s Cultural Department. According to the respondents form Stockholm98, the Cultural Department in the Municipality was negative and jealous of Stockholm98 all the time. So was the report as well. “You get what you want”.

Evaluation should be independent

From my point of view evaluation of ECCs should be research-based and independent⁹. Internal reports written by the operational team who are running European Capitals of Culture are less reliable and are much less interesting as impartial evaluations of the Cultural Capital.

Relevant topics to be which would merit from more evaluation include:

- How the local population’s attitudes and values were influenced in relation to the vision and the values on which the ECC was based?
- To what degree and in which way did the local inhabitants get involved in the events that were initiated and implemented by the ECC?

⁸ The European Capitals of Culture Policy group: An international framework of good practice in research and delivery of the European Capital of Culture programme, 2010.
⁹ For details on the scientific research on Stavanger as ECC in 2008, see: www.iris.no/S2008

- How did the year as Capital of Culture influence participation in, as well as attitudes towards, cultural life in general?

I admit though that compared to behavior people's attitudes are almost impossible to investigate!

Second Strategy

As my suggestions above indicate, the social impacts of ECCs have been covered much less comprehensively in previous evaluation models.

My ECC colleague Neil Peterson has been working with some cities on a concept which uses culture as “The Second Strategy” for the City¹⁰ (the first being the City’s Economic strategy). Essentially this focusses on using the community possibilities which arise from major event programmes like ECCs to look at innovative ways to address community priorities such as health and well-being, engaging more disadvantaged young people and promoting more active and connected communities through shared projects such as volunteering and local community cultural events. The aim would be to build evaluation models for future ECCs which find a way to capture information – soft and hard – about the

way communities operate and how people feel about the city and community where they live, and measure how this changes as a result of the impact of being ECC. This could be a useful new focus to evaluating the social impacts of major cultural investment – such as delivering an ECC.

Other areas

Other topics could be carried out on closer assessment such as the organization and management of the planning and implementation of the Capital of Culture Year, the development of specific events, media coverage, financial ripple effects, etc.

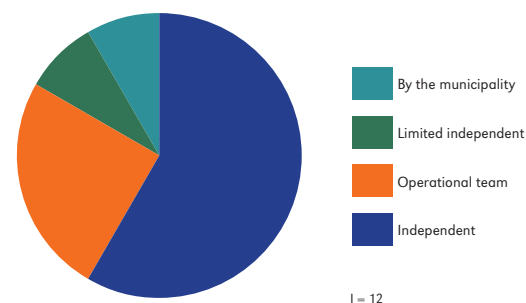
In addition I would find it sensible to appoint a reference group with the requisite knowledge of cultural subjects, finance and the media etc. The reference group should provide advice and quality assurance related to planning as well as implementation of the project.

Throughout the project, results from the individual studies could be published in scientific journals, including international ones. Publications and other information on the project should be made available to the public on the internet, and the data for use in dissertations and doctorate work.

What would you do differently if you knew what you now know?

Page 73: The Structure
Page 76: The Artistic Programme
Page 81: Success Criteria
Page 84: Lessons to learn

Figure 15: Was the evaluation made by the operational team or independent?



¹⁰ Neil Peterson, Liverpool

The Structure

“You must understand that ECC is a temporary, not a permanently city. It would have been a great mistake to consider this fact as the city’s true narrative.”

Cork

Different aspects were mentioned as drawbacks with the structure: lack of support from authorities, no bidding process, too much external interference, the connection between sponsoring and communication teams, and problems related to being a Public Institution.

It is astounding and surprising how strongly several respondents emphasize jealousy and the noticeable lack of commitment, participation and enthusiasm by the employees of the Municipality.

There were also strong opinions about the relationship between team and Boards. Some cities underlined the problems connected to such things like too many members, which leads to lack of responsibility and waste of limited time; unclear mandates; the connection with other politicians could be too close; management teams which felt lack of independence, miss-match of goals, aims and vision between the Board and the operational team which led to unclear responsibility, direction and priorities, etc.

Other aspects about structure-challenges were connected to Artistic Committees because of time-wasting and lack of clarity about mandate; too close a connection between the management teams and the cultural environment in the cities which could lead to problems with legal competence; lack of time; the European and the temporary dimension; communication, preparing good contracts; disagreements (internally and externally); acceptance, openness etc.

“Everybody wanted to position themselves instead of concentrating about the vision and goals.” (Bergen)

“Graz2003 did not apply for the title. It is Graz! After the title, the work started. I would have preferred a bidding process, which would have made the city better prepared for the year.” (Graz)

“National authorities were more supportive than the local authorities.” (Cork)

“The Council’s involvement could be too strong sometimes, but wrong people being recruited early on was a bigger problem than the structure. It was a 5-years build up, which some people thought had to be realized in 1 year, but we sorted it out after a tricky start.” (Liverpool)

“Some problems between the sponsoring and the communication teams. It is a different thing to sell messages to sponsors and to the public, and the structure here was not good enough.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“It was a difficult decision structure. First it was argued for a strong Artistic Director, and there was an open call to find someone. After a while the municipality made a change, and found it was a failure to believe that it was possible to find one Director, with too much power and not including important representatives from the local environment, both artists and others. They went from one idea to another, and they after a while decided to appoint one strong Managing Director, who was elected by the politicians. They went into a phase with a culture of power, not dialogue.

The fight and struggle came out in the media, and the company was focused in a negative way.

The Artistic Director left the company in 2007 because disagreement with the Managing Director. Two parallel structures were established, - nobody knew who was responsible.” (Pecs)

“All the decisions were brought to the politicians, where the Mayor was the chair. The structure failed in the point that the state did not have enough power and responsibility, as long as they were only represented in the Board and the people in the Board were not dedicated.” (Tallinn)

“A Public Institution is not a good model as it is not motivating and not flexible enough. We should have more possibilities to start long-term projects. A Public Institution is a pass down tradition from the socialism, with adjustment difficulties connected to projects.” (Maribor)

Some cities had strong opinions about the relation with the municipality:

“It arose at an early phase a kind of resistance from the Cultural Department in the Municipality, who acted in an enviable way against S98. The situation was really noticeable, and the Cultural Department was jealous of the resources and attention given to the Foundation. There are still good reasons to criticise the Cultural Department for not taken a bigger responsibility for what happened in the ECC Year.” (Stockholm)

“There was also a problematic situation with the Tourism office. They looked at us as competitors and could not understand why also Graz2003 was concerned about this topic.” (Graz)

“Possibly too big division between the Corporate/Fund-Raising side and the Artistic side. We were never really independent because we were dependent on the City Council for ongoing funding, logistics, Computer systems, housing etc..” (Cork – Artistic team)

“There should have been a stronger connection between the Foundation and the Municipality as a whole, and more commitment, general participation and enthusiasm towards the ECC

process by the employees of the municipality. It felt that the ECC process was too much outsourced: ‘let the Foundation work on it, it’s not my business’. Actually, based on some opinion polls made before the ECC year, the employees of the Municipality was the most critical group towards the Turku 2011 year (compared to the inhabitants of the City or other Finns). Some Departments of the Municipality were engaged in the preparations in a large scale, but many only through single ECC projects and based on the activity of some individuals. This changes only in the last months before and during the year itself.

There also appeared jealousy for the Foundation and its employees, who got to do something special and be in the spotlight. This attitude has also caused challenges for the legacy work. Could this have been avoided, is a big question.” (Turku)

The challenges with the Board were expressed in different ways:

“Reduce the number of members of the Board from 26 to e.g. 7. Formally it was the Board which had the mandate to decide the programme. With 26 members that could of course have been a cumbersome system, and we were pressed for time. The situation was solved in a pragmatic way, and the Board accepted limitations of the mandate (which they in a way had to do, as long as the projects were already signed by the Director).” (Stockholm)

“The problem with the Board was the close connection with the City Council. The Council would have benefited from given KB2000 independency. But they did not dare or want to give away that control aspect. Instead they put their own politicians into the Board, and it is very difficult to make people who represent a cross section of the Council, with their own views and hobby horses, as a good college when the vision of the project is different. It is the vision, goals and objects which are the Board’s only interest, not personal interests close to the hearts of individual members. It was not easy to be a loyal Board member for the politicians as long as they

at the same time wanted to present views and expressions from the Board meetings, instead of acting like a professional Board should do, namely act with consensus externally.” (Bergen)

“To make the importance of being ECC visible for the politicians. But at the time the Board was more interested in putting their fingers deeper and deeper into the business of the Foundation, culminating with appointing a new Director as a second head of the Foundation. He was a former vice Mayor of Tallinn, who probably had to step back a few months before, because he had a court case of corruption against him. When he entered the foundation, the court case was still going on. Imagine the public reaction! A party soldier, who probably can’t be active in politics at the moment is put into the Tallinn2011 Foundation. If you really care about the work of the foundation, you never take a decision like this as a Board..” (Tallinn)

Other challenges:

“The Artistic Committee was a challenge because their position made the whole process much more demanding and time-wasting. Whether it is right or wrong to bring representatives from the cultural organizations or institutions, I’m not sure. On one side they represent important cultural knowledge, but on the other hand there are good reasons to use the arm’s length-principle, which is of fundamental importance in many European Countries, but it was not practiced here. It was not the right time to try to build a European dimension in Norway. We have a long way to go to include European cultural mentality.” (Bergen)

“There was a Managing Director for finances who almost broke the company. He was cleared out after 1 1/2 year..” (Graz)

“You must understand that ECC is a temporary, not a permanently city. It would have been a great mistake to consider this fact as the city’s true narrative.” (Cork)

“There is no golden rule of what you put in the

book. You make decisions for 5-6 years, and you have to know the conditions in the City, and the decisions depend on the governmental and other situations in the city.” (Linz)

“The communication. How to make decisions with so many people. The project managers had to be “all-rounders” in charge of management and in charge of marketing. It is extremely important issue is to understand the importance of good contracts. We underestimated this, and we had to engage two more lawyers. You have to be aware and prepared for this. An essential question to be solved out is “Who own the copyright to projects?”.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“The Managing Director was fired in 2008, and replaced by a person who was more “under the wings of” the politicians. It was still two parallel projects running at the same time, and it was very problematic. In this phase there existed no more the position of Artistic Director - it was replaced with the position of the Cultural Director, who was me. All suggestions had to be sent to the Cultural Committee in the Municipality, who forwarded them to the Council and to the Ministry of Culture.” (Pecs)

“I would have started the process much earlier. When I arrived, 14 months before the ECC Year, there was a team for financing, not for programming. It was a complex situation, and many things had to be redefined. Many institutions and artists had their own ideas, and there was a feeling of emptiness among the cultural environment.” (Maribor)

“There was too little time left to organize all the challenges and important elements that we had to concentrate on: 1) Finish the programme, 2) Impact studies about how to produce knowledge about the City, 3) Deal with the legacy, and 4) Create new models for financial cultural development.

It is not about the capacity to produce legacy. It is about the capacity of the institutions to accept that legacy. It is critically important to be open enough to manage these challenges.” (Guimaraes)

The Artistic Programme

Some cities expressed the lack of responsibility among the cultural and artistic institutions for the artistic ECC-programme. The operational teams felt that they were looked upon as competitors who had to develop and be responsible for the ECC-programme themselves.

There was sometimes a lack of understanding or disagreement on how to promote or market the Artistic Programme. Such problems seem to be reduced in more recent years when digital and social media have a more prominent position in communication and marketing.

It seems that it is much easier to develop an Artistic Programme when it is concentrated in a City compared with when you have to include the Region, or even the whole country, as Stockholm had to do. The more participants that are included, the more participants you have to please. They will all ask “What’s in it for me?”, and they are often sceptical towards “the big brother”, which normally is the leading player in such models. During the whole process, with phases which last for many years, include political elections, changes to political majorities might also lead to lack of political support, which is a bigger problem with a “regional-model” compared to where one City runs the ECC Year alone.

The ECC Foundations need support from the cultural operators in their cities. The best way to develop such support is to be aware of the importance of inclusion and participation of the City’s creative industry and the local population. And the process have to start

early, ideally in the application phase. The expertise and knowledge comes from the artists, cultural organisers, engaged citizens etc. The ECCs can only build a great achievement from the Regional arts and cultural infrastructure, and support from the Region’s citizens, by including and using the competencies these environments are representing.

Some cities should have been more aware of the bridge from the past to the future. The challenges for cities’ futures need to be connected with identity and history. Too many ECCs are copying each other, instead of being unique and building programmes which could not happen anywhere else.

Some of the cities regret that they did not build stronger relations and creative partnerships with international artists and other partners, and maintained a post ECC budget to continue international work.

The problems connected to an Open Call-process were also expressed among the cities in this investigation. The cities that did not hold an Open Call, were fortunate with their decision and the way of building the artistic programme. Among those who did an Open Call, some regretted the solution and pointed out the big gap between expectations and resources, the frustration with all the projects which had to be estimated in a proper way, the time wasting, the negative focus from the media etc. But two cities, Turku and Tallinn, are both happy with the Open Call process, and defend the solution as the democratic best way of including the

“We produced too many projects ourselves. More than ever I am convinced that ECC should be built on the cultural sector in the Municipality.”

Linz

people in the city. It seems it is not possible to consider an Open Call process as right or wrong. It depends on how to run it, but it seems obvious that such method imply clear and easily understood criteria and what potential applicants can expect for being accepted.

Most of the cities told the same old story: “We did too many projects!” It looks like that almost every ECC is aware of the problem with developing too many projects beforehand, but without being able to limit the number of projects in a way which is better and easier to handle.

Being an ECC is a temporary, not a permanent situation. Some of the cities have a clear opinion that this fact should have been taken into consideration with a consequence of giving the responsibility of running the ECC Year to the cultural sector in the Municipality. The Foundations will disappear, while the structures that will be responsible for the continuation and the legacy are already there. Other cities strongly disagree with such a statement, and underlined that this “once in a lifetime-experience” absolutely had to be developed by an independent Foundation with skilled competence dedicated to this specific topic.

“An interesting fact is that the museums had extremely lousy exhibitions in 1998. They looked at us as a competitor, and they disclaimed all responsibility for the content of programmes that year. Communication was also difficult. There was a lack of understanding between the programme and the communication. The programme was always one step ahead, and the communication ran in panting behind. Somebody came in and said that the solution is World Wide Web. We looked at each other without having the faintest idea of what he was talking about. But in the end we were the first ECC with our own website. Anna Lind, who had supported Stockholm98 as a Chair of the Cultural Council in Stockholm, became the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Government after

the election changed the political majority. At that time Sweden got a new Minister of Culture, who decided the vision “Culture in the whole country”, which Stockholm98 had to conduct themselves to. S98 considered this as an inappropriate political interference. We said to the rest of the country: “You are welcome to participate. There are no money left for you. But you will be visual in the Capital of Culture Programme.” The good thing was that something happened around the country. But for S98 it was wrong.” (Stockholm)

“Moving from expecting to be the only ECC to sharing the title with 8 other European cities was a challenge. In addition two main institutions did not want to be a part of KB2000 (Bergen International Festival and The National Stage). The institutions are self-sufficient. The independent groups, artists and ensembles regarded this opportunity to develop their situation and status, and succeeded, while some of the institutions were sitting in their ivory towers waiting to be served. The National Stage expected KB2000 to finance their big production, if not it was out of interest to take part in the programme. In addition the Theater Director demanded himself as the stage director, artistic leader of the production etc. I tried to tell them that Bergen shared the title with 8 other European cities, and this was an opportunity to invite directors, curators, producers, actors etc. from those cities or to send own actors to the other cities. But I spoke to deaf ears.

I guess there were many reasons for that, but one problem, and this is not only the situation for Bergen, is the fact that a new Artistic Leader is coming to town, with many ideas and more money to spend on culture than there used to be. The institutions and others from the local cultural sector expect to be part of the programme, and through that receive money from those increased resources. It is easy to see that there might be developed a mis-match between the expectations and the accessible resources, and the ideas and visions among the Artistic Director and the local cultural environment.

Such situation must also be seen in the context

of what I will call a lack of collaboration-knowledge in Norway. We are spending more and more public money on culture, but without a strong demand on the possible benefits of collaboration between institutions and other actors. Common development and exchange of competence, communication, linking, infrastructure, technical equipment etc. is the only way to meet the future in a meaningful way.” (Bergen)

“The continuity broke. We got a mono-culture with dismantle of the independent scene. Several new buildings and the budget goes mainly into these institutions, and the free scene gets less and less. Culture became the scapegoat for the financial mistakes, and we’ve got a policy of savings and destruction of the cultural pluralism.” (Graz)

“The open call could have been done in a better way. We had to disappoint 90% of the proposals, and suggestions would have come in anyway. The commissioned programme was much better. We had skilled core people to decide. The open call is a tensional process which depends on a clear structure, and you have to give people a framework of the conditions. We could have had a better balance between different art fields. And we could probably have communicated the programme in a better way. From our position we knew about great things in the programme, but the people were not aware of what’s about to happen. It was not before the programme was launched, and even more, after the opening ceremony, that the population became more interested and positive

We should have had a more independent relation to the media. We experienced problems with integrity. When they wanted to fire our Director, they tried to make us as errand boys and speak ill of him. We did not do that. We did not want support their wish to get rid of the Director.” (Cork)

“We produced too many projects ourselves. More than ever I am convinced that ECC should be built on the cultural sector in the Municipality. We will disappear, and the foundation must understand

and comprehend themselves as supporters to develop the artistic sector in the city and the structures that are already there. You have to involve the people who will be responsible for the continuation of the process. We had meetings with the Directors in the Municipality every Wednesday morning, which was important

In addition we were too narcissistic. We were so proud of exhibitions etc. that we opened them all ourselves. But it is not necessary to prove that you can do the job. We allowed politicians to step aside. They saw projects made by two men from outside, and they became more audiences than participants. I guess they feel more responsible for the continuation when they are directly involved and with a kind of ownership to the content. One project that was hard to convince the politicians about was the Hitler-exhibition. This was the most important legacy project, but we had to solve the problem and the fact that Linz was so closely linked to The Führer. Hitler’s plan was to make the city the centre of the Third Reich with monumental buildings etc. It used to be a hidden question for the city. “Let’s act like this part of the history is over”. The exhibition “Kulturhauptstadt des Führers” changed the real story of the city, and now they are telling Linz’s story in a real way. But it would have been very unintelligent of us to not go into a dialogue with stakeholders and others who were very sceptical about the project. When you go deep into the identity of the city, you can’t decide complete independence. It would have damaged the situation.” (Linz)

“Some topics are essential for understanding the past. In our case we should have dealt with the Nazi history that took place in the Ruhr region. It was not that we did not want to, but we missed the possibility to tell what really happened in this important period of the past. I would have changed this.” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Challenging was the really involvement of the active people/NGO’s into the project, and what definitely was wrong was the public communication between the P10 management, civil society and

The most important Success Criteria

politics. The project lost the original aims, and changed more to a project of entertainment. A stronger link to media. We did not understand the power that we were representing. We would have used the European body stronger (media, experts etc.), and we should have changed the political context, which unfortunately is impossible.” (Pecs)

“Every event over 50.000 € had to be permitted by the Board where it was discussed in detail. That was very tiring. The Open Call is a good process, if it is enchanted by a strong lobby work and a good communication concept. If there is no long term plan, a Department in the City Council might be a better solution. It is extremely important to sign good contracts. And you have to take all partners serious and dedicate a lot of time to them. People who open up and bring in their own creativity, means most inner feelings, have to be dealt with respect. But that can be very challenging.” (Tallinn)

“From the Maribor Festival point of view the collaboration with the 5 other cities was a big problem. I contacted people in charge in every city, but each city was concerned about itself and became very self-sufficient. They financed projects in their own City, but they did not want to spend resources on common projects. Maybe I should have been looking for more compromises, but I wanted quality. It was also a problem that Maribor in many relations was considered as the big brother.

In the beginning, when there was a competition, Maribor Festival was very well

expressed for M2012. We were presented as one of the most important part of the bid. We were more interesting in the bid process than in 2012. But the real problem is 2013, when the budget was reduced with more than 50 percent.

The concept changed from attracting new audiences, enhance the number of cultural tourists etc., and instead of supporting things and plans that were already there, they redefined things into their own ideas. The Programme Director is a great and intellectual guy, but he is in charge of literature, and you can't attract big audiences with Slovenian literature. They developed too many projects for too few people. What I would have done differently was building the programme much closer to the people, more projects where people in the city were involved, including schools and other institutions.” (Maribor Festival)

“I wish we could work more as coordinators and co-producers, and I would have made the institutions more responsible for the future.” (Maribor Puppet Theatre)

“Build the programme from bottom – up. Call everybody to participate. It is new possibilities for the people, the city, artists, institutions etc. Drop the big blockbusters. Every ECC is unique and a good inspiration for future ECCs. We had to redefine the programme. Some members of the artistic committees tried to push the financial limits, but they had to respect the budget frames for each field.” (Guimaraes)

There is a big variation amongst the cities in terms of what they look at as success criteria. That makes sense, because different cities have different aims, and what makes success in one place, is not necessary a success in another place. But some criteria are common:

Make the city more international. Develop exchange programmes and agreements with artists and institutions abroad

Involve the city and the citizens. An interesting success criterion is linked to the importance to the people living in the Capital of Culture. How are they and the region affected? Will local people take a greater interest in their identity and their history? Will art and culture be more important to people? Will this give rise to new demands and expectations?

Will art and culture take a more prominent place in general politics?

Growing economy and economic control – avoid financial problems

“A wish to transmit a message which tells a story about the City's cultural life in a broader context, both on a national and European level. Make the city more international. Avoid court proceedings. Contrast the old and the new. It is always a success, because the experience itself is important. It depends on what the city wants by becoming a ECC. Every city has an identity which has to be built on

The ECC Year must not be developed as a goal, but as a means, an instrument which creates values which were not there before. Enhance the knowledge of arts and culture among the inhabitants.” (Bergen)

“Make the city more international. Involve the citizens and ensure that the city's spirit does remain. Transform the city's backyard to area for young artistic milieus. The changes in Graz were definitely connected to G2003.” (Graz)

“Partnership with international artist and organizations. Public involvement and consultation. Secure a fruitful exercise. Increase budget for arts and culture within the local authorities. Bring international artists to Cork and the other way around.” (Cork)

“How the city feels about itself. Reposition the city nationally and internationally. It can be a huge step change. Increasingly jobs in creative industries. The community's pride. The economic success. The cultural life and vibrancy of the city. Get people to take part. In the end it depends on what you set out to do.” (Liverpool)

“Define a clear statement from the beginning of what you want. In Linz it was important to develop a better image of the City.” (Linz)

“The most important success criterion is to make people feel responsible and involved. ECC is not about big names, it is about being involved, as much as possible. The concept must not come from intellectuals, it must be built bottom-up, from the people. For example for the theatre

project “Odyssey Europe”, we succeeded with the engagement of private hosts who picked up people, gave them breakfast, accommodation, presented and brought them to different programmes, get to know each other etc. You have to be specific and give the culture for your city a definition. Success means also to keep to the budget, so you don’t end up with a financial chaos after the year.”

(Essen/Ruhr)

“If you want success it is not about the content, it is what you define to be a success. The most important success criteria for Pecs10 was 2015.”

(Pecs)

“Quantity of participation – of the inhabitants, tourists and artists. Quality of the experience – the positive opinion of the participants about their experience, and that they gained something.

Long-term impacts:

- for the participants ECC should offer new ways of doing and thinking, new or improved skills, new networks
- for the city ECC should bring increase in the national and international recognition, development of the tourism and creative sectors, improvement of the city’s general self-esteem, improvements in the ways the city operates in the future
- for Europe ECC should bring more intercultural knowledge, understanding and cooperation.”

(Turku)

“Strong contemporary and voluntary programme.

A strong communication team.

Good international partnerships.

Local productions.

Clear out evaluation early - make a system of parameters before and after.

Try to build up new formats - we can prove it has happened. To make the City different, we have a voice, we can influence on what’s happening.”

(Tallinn)

“Make the people more proud of the City - more self confidence.

Growing economy because of culture, tourism and other aspects.

The people’s perception of the City becoming more European.

Success is not about buildings, it is about great ideas and creativity and innovation.

Regional cooperation.” (Maribor)

“Civic involvement.

Artistic quality.

International visibility.

Education improvement.

Economic/tourism impact.” (Guimaraes)

“If you want success it is not about the content, it is what you define to be a success.”

Pecs

Lessons to learn as strategy for future ECCs?

Several cities underline the importance of using and retaining the competence which is built among the staff in the Foundations in the years beyond the ECC Year. It is a waste of knowledge to not take care of the human resources, unique experiences and networks which have been built over the years leading to and in the ECC year.

Don't establish or build new buildings without financial resources to run them afterwards. Cultural infrastructure must be financed outside the ECC's Foundation budget.

Challenge the people. Visualize contemporary art in public spaces in strange ways. Give people what they don't know that they want.

Deal with the past. Connect future challenges with identity and history.

Define why you want to be an ECC and what you want to do and achieve. Define a clear statement and develop realistic plans from the beginning. Define arguments that you are able to defend in the future.

The ECCs need a narrative dimension. The negotiation of the narrative is the central tool to make the project participative.

The European dimension is critically important, although it is hard to find a clear definition or a common opinion of what it really means.

Being an ECC is an opportunity to celebrate multiculturalism and develop and create a more

vibrant city with a more human and healthier living environment.

It is not easy, but even though important, to find a good balance of high-profile events and local initiatives. On one hand people want to see big events with big names. And you have to build the programme in the frame of a European or international dimension. On the other hand you have to involve both people and artists in the programmes, even if the content is international or local.

Build sustainability. The years beyond the ECC Year are even more important than the Year itself.

Dare to provoke. Be bold, different and surprising. Accept failures. Otherwise you're programming is too safe and you don't take risks.

Establish and develop networks on different levels, from locally to internationally, within the cultural sector and with other sectors.

Evaluate the social impacts in an independent manner. Reports written by operational teams are not reliable.

Include local artists and productions. Aim for artistic quality.

Don't underestimate the importance of good contracts.

Be realistic. It is a major step change, but not the

only step. It is a possibility to make a change, not a miracle.

"Use the competence that the staff from the Foundation are representing. Their experiences are unique, but the Municipality did not know the true value of that specific knowledge. Instead of utilising this knowledge, the politicians decided to close down the office 3 months after the ECC Year.

Visualise contemporary art in public rooms and spaces in new ways. Such strategy will provoke, but at the same time raise important debates and meet new audiences.

Develop projects which increase competence. Listen to the intuitive feeling. If you don't understand a project proposal, the project does not work either.

Don't establish or build new buildings without financial resources to run them afterwards. There are many sad stories about financing infrastructure without operating expenses. ECCs has theatres, concert halls etc. already. There is no good reason to use the ECC resources on new buildings. There are much more left after the ECC Year than people and media are aware of, and such a list would have been very long. We started new ways of developing art and culture, but it seems like that you have to build cultural infrastructure like spectacular theater-houses, concert halls etc. to make people convinced of the legacy from a ECC Year. We did not do that, and it was a right decision. But it is such strategy that leads to a belief that nothing happened.

You have to challenge the people. You have to surprise and involve them. You have to enhance the awareness of identity, demands and expectations." (Stockholm)

"Being a ECC itself, has developed experiences which we can see today. The cultural sector in the city has become more international, and those who took part in the ECC Year have today a stronger international content and perspective compared to the years before 2000. Some of the others saw what possibility they did not get involved in too late.

Build a stronger relation and collaboration among the cultural environment in the City on many fields. It is a need for a deeper debate about the dimension of the foundation. What about connect all the communication "power" that you have in the City? The political expectations must be connected with the cultural environment in the City. The Boards in the different institutions must take part in the debate of the conditions for the ECC Year. In such situation the ECC foundation can work more on a coordinating level and secure the top financing of the projects. Among others you will avoid the experiences from several other former ECCs, e.g. Stockholm, where the competence and networks who have been developed over years, disappears. A ECC can only have a long term perspective through a good strategy on using existing resources. At least 30% of the budget should be defined for the following 3-5 years." (Bergen)

"Nobody asked the young skilled workers to stay and continue their work and experiences after 2003. It is a waste of knowledge to not take care of the competence they were representing. It is also a tragedy when there is a conflict between the ECC-organisation and the cultural environment in the city, both in the municipality, the institutions, tourism offices etc. They said that they knew best how to run their objects. But we wanted collaboration and make use of each other's competence and resources.

The Cultural Capital is the opportunity. Do magic things, not big fireworks." (Graz)

"Ask yourself what you really want from being an ECC. Set up from the start a clear definition of what you want, define arguments that you must expect to face in the future. Use everybody's language in their own way." (Cork)

"What does success really mean? Thematic years (frames) can work to grow capacity and build interest but get the balance right as you can overstress by being too operational too early. We should also have put more thought earlier on

into our legacy programme. The cultural strategy developed for this did not take as much account of the views of the 2008 team as it should have done. And any strategy is, of course, not the only step. You need to build an honest but flexible narrative about where the ECC and your city is heading... and share it. Focus on cultural tourism, engagement, creativity, talent, civic pride and well-being. Key lesson: Ups and downs – you need to learn to ride the ECC roller-coaster!” (Liverpool)

“Take care of the human resources and use them afterwards. The team had huge expectations to stay in Linz after the Cultural Year, but they had to find jobs elsewhere. Due to contracts which were limited to the end of the year, they disappeared too early. It is a waste of experience to not use the competence those people are representing. Be open and listen to the European Dimension. Admit that there are challenges.” (Linz)

It was a high ranking of the possibilities. Everybody was expecting a miracle, which is nonsense. It makes more sense to talk about the changes. Be realistic. Celebrate multiculturalism.

Every ECC must have a link to the City’s strategy. Too many ECCs act like they are something beside. Too many cities are focusing on the region, not the City itself. Create problems because of the changes at the elections.

Because of the European financial crisis the management of the new cultural institutions have to fit the contents to the financial realities: the quality of the new investments have more capacity and possibilities. There is a gap between the (maybe unrealistic) dreams during the developing period of the ECC project and the possibilities of today.” (Pecs)

“Find out how to deal with the past. Fight for culture, not only in an economic sense. Big companies who want to hire people to Ruhr, ask: “What’s the profile of the city?”” (Essen/Ruhr)

“Urban centres are in these times often in identity crises due to many issues like multicultural and

ethical diversities, lack of socially and politically active citizens, economic crises and decadent city areas. Through the ECOC title it is possible to map the urban cultural situation of the city and create from this new knowledge a strong communication process, which is accepted by all the different layers of citizens.

Through this process new partnerships (public and private), new models (creative and academic) and new city centres (hotspots) are born and create a more vibrant city with a stronger economical drive and a better more human and healthier living environment. In a way the ECC, when the title is used well, can activate and accelerate a positive urban development. Also this new identity coming from the process is more attractive and works for activating media much better. It is important to have a political and socially relevant motto or concept for the whole year, in our case to bring Tallinn closer to the Baltic Sea. Nobody could deny that necessity and at the same time it was a great background for the cultural programme, inspiring and poetic.” (Tallinn)

“Develop and define a A, B, C and D realistic plan. ECC should be independent. From 2010 until 2013 we struggled with four different Ministers of Culture and two different Mayors in the city. The Municipality waited much too long to establish the company. You got to have enough time, both the CEO and the Artistic Director were hired much too late.” (Maribor)

“Don’t invent warm water, it is already been invented. Be dedicated, flexible, tend to the needs, connect the resources, negotiate, search for skilled resources. Think always what good can it bring tomorrow. Otherwise everything will be forgotten.” (Maribor Festival)

“Besides other factors, I think Guimaraes2012 will be remembered as a good example of local people’s participation and involvement. We wanted the people to be the stars, and we fulfilled our goals. People were touch.” (Guimaraes)

“Visualise contemporary art in public rooms and spaces in new ways. Such strategy will provoke, but at the same time raise important debates and meet new audiences”

Stockholm

ECC Volunteering

What would the ECCs have done without the volunteers? The success of being a ECC is to a considerable extent depending on the work the volunteers are doing. The local participation in culture and active city life is a major bi-product of this type of programme as participants start to share what they learn about their city with their colleagues, friends and families.

It is critical important to make the volunteers feel included, noticed and appreciated. It is also important to investigate in the volunteers motivation for being a volunteer, so the there is a connection between such motivation and the correct exercises.

Liverpool's 2008 programme was the first large scale local community volunteer programme of its type amongst European Capitals of Culture. While previous programmes tended to focus on bringing younger people, especially students, into support roles in the respective ECOC programmes, the focus of Liverpool's programme was on engaging with and involving local people over a four year period between the start of the programme in 2005 to the end of 2008. The programme also continues beyond 2008, enabling local people who have enjoyed contributing their passion and enthusiasm for the City during 2008 to continue providing a special and enduring resource to support the City Welcome and to support the City's cultural programme.

The specific aims of the Volunteer Programme in Liverpool were to engage and involve local people, offer opportunities to develop skills, added value at cultural events, welcome for tourists, special projects, and spread engagement

through the City Region. Also, through relationships with partners, the programme used volunteering as one of the ways of engaging people from more disadvantaged backgrounds to build confidence and gain skills, especially in dealing with the public at cultural events.

An international Volunteer exchange with participants from Liverpool and the Stavanger2008 Volunteer programme was also a key highlight for the Volunteers from both Cities.

The volunteers are the ones that meet people and visitors on the first line, and they will represent the ECCs values and attitudes. They participate in every scale of events, they have to be helpful and show hospitality, and they work with a huge and broad variety of purposes like drivers, distributors, ticket collectors, information officers, guides, photographers, riggers, interpreters for guests and artists, different kind of hosts, etc.

Essen/Ruhr succeeded with the engagement of private hosts who picked up people, gave them breakfast, accommodation, presented and brought them to different programmes, get people to know each other etc.

Ultimately, however, the success of the programme was most strongly demonstrated by the impact the programme has had on the lives of the volunteers themselves, and the connection the programme made between them and their City. This connection between citizens and City is one of the key lessons which emerges from this study and it is not surprising that many ECCs now invest in the development of Volunteers.

Knowledge Exchange

It is important to support and sustain the spaces for knowledge advancement and exchange to build on the results from former ECCs.

Back in 2006 a number of recently nominated and former ECCs received a message inviting us to Patras, Greece, which was that year's ECC. An organisation called ECCM - European Capitals of Culture and Cultural Months - was holding a conference and we were told that we must be there! It sounded just what we were looking for - an organisation where we could connect with and learn from other ECCs. Several newly nominated ECCs attended, but on the first

day we found an organisation which - though clearly passionate about the ECC concept - was locked in the past and seemed more interested in issues of ECCM funding than it was in sharing best practice and helping with practical solutions to the challenges of being an ECC.

And yet when we spoke on the second day and about the aims of our ECCs and the hopes and fears for our own projects, we realized that others were in a similar position. So several of us, - Neil Peterson from Liverpool, Hanns-Dietrich Schmidt from Essen, Tamás Szalay from Pecs and myself - had dinner on the last

There is still a further potential to identify and explore specific opportunities and challenges to better share experiences and learn from each other.

evening of the conference and made plans for a new, different type of ECC network. A practical and informal forum where different ECCs could exchange ideas, experiences and develop collaborations between the newly nominated ECCs and those who were further along the road.

We acknowledge that even though the ECCs embrace different models of governance and structure and have different priorities according to their specific cultures, identities and demography, all have common ground in terms of meeting challenges and opportunities. So to establish a regular exchange of information and experiences could be very helpful to develop common projects.

The first meetings were held in Istanbul and then in Essen. The ECC “family” was created and still meets twice yearly - hosted by one of the group. It’s strength is that people can support each other through the challenges but also share in the sheer joy that can come from the delivery of this very special thing called the European Capital of Culture.

A declaration was made with the following intentions, objects and motivations:

1. take place regularly twice a year. The hosting city should cover the accommodation costs, meals, tickets etc. for up to 2 people per city. The participants should cover their own traveling costs
2. not be structured as a traditional organization with chair, secretariat etc.
3. not apply for EU funding to the Network on a general level, only to specific projects
4. function concrete and be a forum of action
5. not be a “show window” for the hosting city, but a forum where each city are responsible

for topics they want to present for the Network with intention of collaboration with some of or all of the other cities

Through co-commissions, co-productions and general contacts, professional co-operations and friendships, both personal and organisational, the ECoC-Family has been strong, productive and successful. Even though there is still a further potential to identify and explore specific opportunities and challenges to better share experiences and learn from each other. The ECoC-Family include all the new ECCs as soon as they have been designated. In the end of 2013 the network consists of 21 former, present and future ECCs.

Main conclusions

Artistic Programmes

Good aspects of building Artistic programmes are connected with independence of the Artistic Director without interference from politicians or sponsors, budgetary control and participation from the artistic environment. The aspects which are regarded as weak are about arrogant leaders who are not present, too many people involved on too many levels, artists who are more concerned about their own ideas than developing a programme for an entire cultural year.

The relationship with the Municipality

Many ECCs emphasize jealousy and noticeable lack of commitment, participation and enthusiasm by the employees of the Municipality, especially from the Cultural Departments. The ECC Foundations were looked at as competitors because of the resources and attention given to the Capital of Culture year, and this could give rise to a kind of resistance from some Municipalities who also distanced themselves from responsibility for the cultural programme for the ECC year.

Unique experiences disappears

Take care of human resources, unique experiences and networks that the staff from the Foundations represent in the years beyond the ECC year. It is a waste of unique competence and knowledge which has been developed over years, and which disappear if the skilled workers don’t continue their work. Instead of utilizing this knowledge, too many Foundations close down their offices when the ECC Year is finished.

Inclusion and participation

Involve and challenge the City and the citizens, as much as possible. You have to enhance the awareness of identity, demands and expectations among people. Be aware of the importance of inclusion and participation, and a narrative dimension is a central tool to making the Cultural year participative. ECCs can only build a great achievement and support from the citizens by including and using the competence they represent.

The CEO’s competence

The most relevant competence for the CEO is to understand the City and to include the people and the environment which is in place. Artistic, marketing and financial knowledge with an international perspective is essential, in addition to a strong leadership and being open, project oriented, flexible, charismatic and able to communicate. It is not acceptable to appoint a CEO who could not speak or understand the national language.

Sharing the title

There is no hot love relationship between two cities who are sharing the title. Even though some cities strengthened their relations, the experiences from the arranged marriages are reflected in different aims, objectives and priorities, with lack of interest from one or both sides. Intentions might be good, but it is not given priority. The ideal situation would have been to select cities which were more comparable.

Build sustainability

The years beyond the ECC year are even more important than the year itself. Offer the citizens new ways of thinking, improved skills and new networks. Develop the ECC year as an instrument which creates values which were not there before. Contrast the old and the new, but still the future challenges have to be built on identity and historically conditions.

Not about infrastructure

Success is not necessarily about infrastructure and new buildings. The invisible parts, the mental dimension and the self-confidence are more interesting. New cultural buildings must not be built without financial resources to run them afterwards, and under all circumstance they must be financed outside the Foundation’s budget.

The balance international vs. local

Try to find a good balance of high-profile events and local initiatives. Being an ECC means building a programme within the framework of a European dimension. But it must be combined with local involvement, both from citizens and artists. If the ECC year is not important for the local environment, if the resources and attention mainly goes to projects brought from the outside, potential supporters might end up with disengagement.

Be yourself

Be inspired of experiences from former European Capitals of Culture. But don’t copy them. What brings success in one ECC does not necessarily bring success in others. A standardized model limits innovation, originality and local culture. Different ECCs must be built on their own identity and local conditions. They must all try to build a programme which could not take place anywhere else in the world.

The Board

Reduce the number of members of the Board. Many members might lead to lack of

responsibility, time wasting, unclear mandates etc. Avoid artistic influence from the Board. It is the vision, goals, objectives and economy which should be the Board’s interest, not personal interests close to the hearts of own views and hobby horses of individual members.

The European Dimension

The European Dimension is critically important, although it is hard to find a clear definition or a common opinion of what it really means. In addition to developing European artistic projects, the European Dimension is also about understanding other cultures and social circumstances, and making a contribution to the debate about living in Europe.

Open Call

There are different opinions about the value of Open Call-processes. On one hand there are benefits connected to a huge number of proposals and involvement from the local environment which gives a certain credibility. On the other hand there are difficulties connected to a huge gap between expectations and available resources. It seems obvious that a successful Open Call depends on a clear structure where it is necessary to give applicants a clear framework of the conditions under which they should put forward their projects.

Evaluation

Evaluation should be research-based and independent. To have a qualified opinion about the benefits from the Capital of Culture year, you have to evaluate and clear out a system of parameters both before and after the ECC year. Reports written by operational teams consists normally of spectacular and successful events, accompanied with beautiful photos. But they are of limited reliability and value.

Enclosure

The informants:

The position in the company/foundation and what they are doing now

- Programme coordinator, dramatic arts and music
 - Now: Senior advisor/Culture developer
- Programme coordinator, film, media, strategies for youth
 - Now: Rector Academy of Dramatic Arts/Vice Chancellor
- Director/General Secretary
 - Now: Pensioner, living in France. Member some Boards
- Programme director
 - Now: Pensioner from Art Academy. Member of Boards. Writer
- Programme coordinator, design, architecture, urban development
 - Now: Director Culture Dept. at Embassy in Paris
- Director
 - Now: Director, Culture House
- Director
 - Now: Director Cultur Company
- Board member/Chair Artistic Committee
 - Now: Director National Museum
- PA to the intendant (CEO) / Head of International Relations
 - Now: Assistan Professor at University
- Deputy Director
 - Now: Director at National Sculpture Factory
- Artistic Advisor
 - Now: Artistic Director, Multimedia Company
- Artistic Advisor
 - Now: Librarian / Writer
- Member Board of Directors
 - Now: Arts Officer City Council
- Head of Liverpool International Relations, Welcoming and Volunteer Programme
 - Now: Independent Consultant
- Executive Producer
 - Now: Executive Director, National Theater,
- Deputy Managing Director and Programme Director
 - Now: The same position in another ECC
- Head of International and Regional collaboration / Cultural Director
 - Now: Independent Consultant for culture
- Member of preparation team 03-06 / Head of International Relations
 - Now: Professor at University
- Advisor for International Relations
 - Now: Cultural advisor in the Municipality
- Project manager of the bidding phase / Programme Director
 - Now: Project Manager of the legacy of the Capital of Culture project
- Head of Administration, Foreign Marketing, and Legacy development
 - Now: Director of EXPO Pavilion
- Director (CEO)
 - Now: Director at Goethe Institute,
- Director General
 - Now: Assistant Professor at the University
- Artistic Director
 - Now: Writer/ Literature projects
- Deputy Programme Director for International Relations
 - Now: Cultural advisor
- Director of Festival
 - Now: Still
- Artistic and Managing Director of Puppet Theatre
 - Now: Still
- Executive Director
 - Now: Managing own company for culture, tourism, business etc.
- Deputy Mayor
 - Now: Deputy Mayor

Photo: Elisabeth Tønnessen



Rolf Norås provides an important resource and continuity connected to the urban development of a successful and attractive city in the North of Europe. He was deeply involved in the process to become the European Capital of Culture in 2008. He became Strategic Director of the 2008 Foundation with responsibility for International Relations, Research and Evaluation, Legacy amongst other roles.

Rolf Norås has now returned to his full time position as Director of Cultural Affairs in Stavanger, which of course include following up the legacy of the year as the European Capital of Culture. In short he has worked at all levels during the preparation, implementation and evaluation of Stavanger2008.



CITY OF STAVANGER