

DUBLIN 1991

1. AIMS AND OPERATIONAL FEATURES

1.1 Background

Dublin is a capital city with a population of around 500,000. The Greater Dublin area is home to something under one million people (920,956), whilst the population of the Republic of Ireland is 3,515,000 (1989 estimates). The Republic held the Presidency of the EC between January and June 1990. The city of Dublin in 1988 celebrated its millennium.

1.2 Designation and rationale

The designation of Dublin as European City of Culture 1991 was an initiative of the Irish national authorities. Charles Haughey, Taoiseach at the time, had lobbied to try to secure an Irish designation for 1990 to coincide with the Republic's holding the Presidency of the EC. This generated, possibly for the first time, a true sense of the Republic being part of Europe rather than just a peripheral island well off the coast of the Continent, and of Dublin being both a European Capital and (for the six months) the capital of Europe. Encouraging such sentiment was in the mind of the national authorities in pursuing the designation for 1990. In the event, it was accepted that Dublin could only be designated for 1991. Whilst the possibility of Dublin's designation was known in August 1988, it was only confirmed by the Council of Ministers on 18 May 1989.

Although Cork would have been interested in pursuing designation, the assumption within government seems to have been always that it should be Dublin. Yet, although Dublin has a vital cultural life, Dublin Corporation had no cultural strategy, no professional staff in the arts field, except in museums and libraries, and only a minimal financial commitment to cultural policies and provision. The cultural sector in the city itself was unco-ordinated and not well-placed to lobby effectively. Nevertheless, the Lord Mayor of Dublin on 11 October 1990 summarised the City's intentions in the following positive statement:

"As Lord Mayor, I am particularly conscious of our international image during Dublin's year as European City of Culture. 1991 will have a definite European flavour, with many events celebrating our common European heritage and, hopefully, setting up some uncommon connections with our neighbours in both western and eastern Europe....But for me the real success of Dublin 1991 will hinge on the extent to which it catches the imagination of the people of the city as a whole. "

1.3 Objectives and broad approach

The objectives for Dublin 91 were kept simple. It was defined as a cultural celebration which: "brings Ireland to Europe and Europe to Ireland".

Uncertainties about funding and the constrained planning time meant it was prudent to focus on an attainable target and not raise false expectations for wider benefits in terms of regeneration, city promotion and cultural development. This is one reason why the ECC was treated as a "designation rather than a ranking" and why the designation "City of Culture" was preferred to the somewhat triumphalist alternative "Cultural Capital".

At the same time, there was huge pressure on the tourism sector to justify the event. All involved closely with the event were mindful of the wider benefits it might bring. Dublin, in common with Glasgow in 1990, took a broad view of its potential as a city with a strong cultural case to make, but against a background of significant urban problems. The image of the city nationally and internationally was not particularly positive, and the economic health of the country allows for only gradual tackling of widespread urban decay and attendant problems. Cultural provision has been somewhat fragmented, with major institutions and the different art forms all acting independently of each other. This has tended to inhibit the development of any co-ordinated international dimension or the degree of networking which might be expected.

The planning timescale was problematical. Following designation in May 1989, suitable structures were put in place by the Prime Minister's department in August 1989. The short lead time (14 months) meant that the event organisers eventually appointed in November 1989 were confronted with major difficulties over both finance and events. Only in March 1991 was it possible to confirm and announce a full programme of events.

In addition to a programme of events, Dublin 91 was used as an opportunity to bring forward a number of capital projects. Several of the schemes had been in the pipeline for some time, but, in more than one case, the European City of Culture was the trigger which delivered the project. The principal schemes were:

- Writers' Museum (Dublin Tourism)
- Hugh Lane Gallery (re-furbishment)
- Irish Museum of Modern Art (new institution in converted building)
- National Concert Hall (new organ)
- Temple Bar (city centre regeneration scheme; DG XVI grant)

1.4 Arrangement of the Event

The Dublin Promotions Organisation Limited (DPOL) was appointed to manage the year. This private company (limited by guarantee), was formed in 1986 by Dublin Corporation and the tourist authorities to plan for and organise the 1988 Dublin Millennium celebrations, and 'revived' for the purposes of Dublin 91. Lewis Clohessy, a former director of the Dublin Theatre Festival, was appointed chief executive on 1 November 1989. A largely new Board was created to reflect and represent the range of public, private and voluntary sector interests, with a selected smaller group acting as the Executive Committee, which met more frequently. A sub-committee evaluated submissions for community based projects.

DPOL's focused objectives, which underlay their approach and planning, were to :

- celebrate Dublin's cultural heritage as a European capital
- focus attention on the city's present cultural resources and activities
- encourage the realisation of its cultural potential
- involve the city community and other communities, where relevant, in contributing to the cultural life of the city
- promote and develop Dublin as a major centre for tourism.

In the achievement of these objectives, DPOL's concerns were to work as broadly as possible in collaboration with the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as with diplomatic and commercial links abroad, including the EC. The general categories for events and promotions were to cover (1) culture and society; (2) the arts; and (3) the urban environment.

The staffing of DPOL for Dublin 91 was very modest, with only a total of sixteen at the peak. The management team consisted of the chief executive, a commercial director and a community and information officer. Planning and programme administration, public relations, fund-raising, book-keeping and clerical support were all covered by this small staffing quota.

The policy was to use DPOL money only to "do things which the institutions could not deliver on their own". Beyond the 'core' programme mounted/funded by DPOL, a range of programme elements were contributed by institutions and organisations in the City. Particular pressure was put on the national institutions, for example, to provide special programming for the year and, without the benefit of any additional finance. The foreign institutes were especially constructive in their contribution, with the Goethe Institute and the British Council supporting 20 projects each. Several of the prime sponsors mounted their own distinctive programmes marketed in separate brochures. A number of commercial promoters were drawn to Dublin with big stars (e.g. Domingo, Sinatra). The National Lottery paid for a big screen extension to the Pavarotti concert.

This "federated programme" consisted of the following elements:

- DPOL promotions (12);
- DPOL funded projects (43, plus 6 small grants);
- special promotions mounted without DPOL funding; key examples were:

National Gallery (6 exhibitions)
National Museum (2 exhibitions)
National Concert Hall (9 concerts)
Dublin Corporation; Royal Hibernian Academy; Guinness Harp;

Dublin Theatre Festival; sponsors programmes; foreign cultural institutes (Goethe Institute and British Council were most active)

- commercial specials and parallel off-programme activity in the field of sports, events, conferences.

DPOL kept its own promotions to a minimum. These tended to be the outdoor events (e.g. celebrations such as the New Years Eve concert/laser show, the launch weekend, the Custom and Ceremony Son et Lumiere pageant at the Customs House), but DPOL also arranged the three "marker events" during the year, the Literature Festival, the Festival of Discovery (science), Mayday to Bloomsday (a theatre festival) and a major Beckett retrospective (placed alongside the regular Dublin Theatre Festival). Production managers were taken on for specific tasks by DPOL.

1.5 Framework of relationships

The Board of DPOL was the symbol of working and financial relationships. This included trade and commercial interests as well as state and local authority representatives. Artistic and cultural interests were, somewhat unusually, in a minority. The Board was chaired by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and it consisted of 4 City Councillors, 5 Government nominees (including the Director of the Arts Council), 3 Dublin Tourism representatives, 2 Chamber of Commerce representatives, 1 trades unionist and 1 representative of the sponsors.

DPOL was placed at arm's length from the City and the State, but this also created some feeling of working in isolation. The Republic of Ireland has a highly centralised political system. Local government is almost entirely dependent upon central government for its resources and its officials are in a rather powerful position in relation to their elected members. Over Dublin 91, perhaps the City simply waited for serious leadership and money to be forthcoming from the Government. Neither really arrived, although there were crucial and timely interventions by particular individuals (e.g. in securing lottery proceeds) and the eventual programme included major contributions (e.g. Treasures of Dublin, Modern Irish Prints, Library Programme) from the Corporation. At the same time, political changes led to permutations in the Chair of the Board. Over the three years of negotiation and then planning for the event, three different individuals under two different sets of political control held the post, with some of the discontinuity and varying attitudes that that implies.

Considerable efforts were made to spread Dublin 91 to local communities within the Greater Dublin area. Prior to receiving its contract even, DPOL contacted over 500 local groups by letter, inviting ideas and input, with a response rate of over 50 per cent. Dublin Corporation and the county authorities, whilst active at community level, had only minimal commitment to arts provision. This has always made for a less than ideal relationship with the Arts Council - which still spends around 70 per cent of its annual grant on Dublin-based artists and institutions. Some informants have commented on the Arts Council's having been curiously 'silent observers' on Dublin 91.

The national cultural institutions on the whole co-operated well over Dublin 91 but all shared the common problems of lack of proper lead time and of additional money. The moral obligation was readily accepted but, to give one example, the National Gallery of Ireland doubled its annual number of special exhibitions from three to six, with no additional resources from Government, in a year when its operating budget was cut by 3 per cent.

Whilst culture and tourism are mutually dependent to a large extent, they can have very different primary aims, and this did not always make for seamless co-operation over Dublin 91. Tensions created by incompatibility of aims may be illustrated by two examples. (1) DPOL wished to use Dublin 1991 to explore the full face of the City which meant conceding areas of neglect and decay and reassessing Georgian stereotypes. Neither the City Corporation nor Dublin Tourism were keen to admit this. (2) A successful event during Dublin 1991 was an all-day poetry marathon (including 40 poets) and an evening concert in Kilmainham Jail in a 75 year commemoration of the 1916 Rebellion. The tourist authorities were nervous about the market impact of profiling such points of history.

Another dimension to the framework of relationships established by Dublin 91 concerned previous and future Cities of Culture. The link to Glasgow was particularly helpful as a source of much information and professional advice, especially on community programming. Visits were made to Dublin for discussions with DPOL by groups of politicians and administrators from Antwerp and (planning well ahead) Copenhagen.

The comparison with Glasgow was ever-present in the year. The two cities have superficial similarities; both have strong cultural traditions, matched by urban problems and a "case to make". But the comparison was perhaps too close to Dublin for comfort when Glasgow 90 had a much larger budget and the committed backing of a local authority. Once the media sensed that Dublin 91 was being done "on the cheap", however unfairly, the event was faced with a public relations problem.

2. FUNDING

2.1 Income and expenditure

Spending of up to IP16 million has been ascribed to Dublin 1991. This includes over IP8 million spent on urban renewal and creating or improving the city's cultural infrastructure. Some of this money might well have been spent in any case, although the catalytic effect of Dublin 1991 - particularly in relation to the Temple Bar area - is widely acknowledged.

A sum of IP 7.9 million has been identified in respect of the Dublin 91 special events and their promotion. As noted above, the programme for the year was contributed from a wide variety of sources and no single set of accounts exists for total expenditure. DPOL, as the management company for the core operation, was only directly responsible for the promotion of a limited number of events, grant aiding other

projects and co-ordinating and presenting the event within Ireland. As such, the DPOL budget accounted for a mere IP 1.54 million, of which the programme spend was only IP 822,000. Expenditure on administration and overheads by DPOL accounted for IP 467,000. The marketing budget at IP 464,000 (DPOL domestic IP 214,000 and other overseas IP 210,000) was not large. The remaining IP 6.16 million consisted of finance made available directly to projects, and it involves estimates of extra commitments entered into directly as a result of the year by such organisations as Dublin Corporation, Dublin County and some performance venues.

The key contributions from public funding sources which provided the necessary impetus to kick-start Dublin 91 were those from the EC (DGX) and the National Lottery. The grant from the European Community consisted both of the core contribution to the European City of Culture and of additional monies made available from other cultural programmes for specific projects taking place during the year. The National Lottery was responsible for 80 per cent of the finance made available directly to DPOL.

Two further points to note on the funding of Dublin 91 are:

- the modest level of public funding was partly the result of a mistaken belief that Amsterdam 87 had been achieved on a 1-10 public private funding ratio;
- the consideration of the Temple Bar seed grant from the EC was linked to the European City of Culture (Dublin 91) as a pilot study for using culture and the environment as engines of economic and social rejuvenation in peripheral cities of the EC.

2.2 Sponsorship

Sponsorship contributions have been estimated at IP1.9 million, accounting for a quarter of programme expenditure. This represents a major sum, probably double the usual cultural sponsorship in Dublin. Sponsorship was received from 66 companies. Foundation sponsors, contributing upwards of IP100,000, numbered nine and they accounted for over four fifths of the total sponsorship support. These were recruited through sponsors' breakfasts at which a choice of events were presented for sponsors to include in their own 1991 portfolios. In a number of cases, these broadly-based programmes were publicised in individual brochures prepared by the business concerned.

Some significant assistance was given in kind e.g. computing, air tickets and hotel rooms. Countless local shops, pubs, factories and offices provided support for their local community events. An important co-ordinated event arranged by the business community was the public art programme which made lasting additions to strategic sites in the City, including the airport and the railings of Merrion Square.

Ireland, as a small country, has a limited pool of potential art sponsors and securing backing is regarded as quite difficult. Dublin 91 did create the opportunity to engage the interest of new sponsors and this interest has, in a significant number of cases, been maintained. An excellent spin-off from the year was the Irish Life sponsorship (IP400,000 over four years, plus promotion and ticket spend) of the Dublin Theatre Festival. The Dublin Film Festival, which had a successful year in 1991, also won a long-term sponsorship contract.

The back-up and professional expertise offered by many of the sponsoring companies was often a crucial factor in the successful mounting or promotion of an event. In some cases, the provision of money was the "make or break" factor which made it worth proceeding with the concept. In total, this represented a dynamic and decisive element in Dublin 91. The foundation sponsors were:

2.3 Role of voluntary sector

Given the comparatively modest budget available through DPOL to mount and support activity throughout the year, there was clearly a large amount of voluntary effort, which is too great and diverse to track and credit. The largest concentration of this is to be found in the over 150 community events specially organised during Dublin 91, which were largely ignored by the press and by the Tourist authorities.

Dublin 91 recognised the importance of this area to the overall success of the year from the outset, and designated a special budget of IP150,000 for assisting community projects. The majority of these local events were self-generating but, where gaps were identified, the "Community Projects Sub-Committee" came up with initiatives involving professionals (e.g. creative writing workshops). The stimulus of Dublin 91, and the partnership created with Dublin Corporation's Community and Environment Department and Dublin County Council's Community Development Department, resulted in widespread cultural activity in local areas.

A further major voluntary contribution to the year came in the Dublin Street Carnival, whose budget was specially increased by the Corporation during 1991. This enabled it to achieve a hitherto unprecedented scale but the event has not been subsequently repeated.

3. **PROGRAMME**

3.1 Programme timing and content

Events were scheduled from mid-March throughout the rest of the year and the range was extremely varied, with a summertime emphasis within the DPOL's 'core' programme of large scale, open air free events. The weather was, on the whole, kind. Not surprisingly, one consequence of the short planning timescale was that the second half of the year saw a greater, and more orderly, concentration of promotions

(comprehensive monthly listings were widely distributed). The limited resources had to be stretched to fill the 10 month period.

DPOL's role was to ensure that:

- a significant 'mix' of events was freely available within the total programme, ranging from Stockhausen to Sinatra;
- events were spaced with significant markers at key points of the year; these included the Literature Festival, Mayday to Bloomsday and the inauguration of the new organ at the National Concert Hall;
- over-programming was avoided: the programme supplementation had to be judged carefully in relation to market interests.

Strenuous efforts were not made in areas of known weakness (e.g. dance and new music) and so the programming strategy could be said to have been supplementary rather than gap-filling. So far as national institutions were concerned (e.g. The National Gallery of Ireland) the contribution to the year's celebrations naturally had to rely on existing plans, plus whatever touring or special provision could be put together within the short planning lead time.

The resulting programme as a whole was a mixture of 'European/International' events and exhibitions, with a strong leavening of native Irish contributions in virtually all media. The environmental aspects of Dublin 91 were important and, although the major project proposed by the landscape artist Dieter Magnus was not ultimately successful, the impetus given to Temple Bar and a number of other capital developments for the arts provide a lasting legacy for the Year.

The Year consisted of some 43 visual art exhibitions and 23 exhibitions dealing with other topics in which environmental and architectural issues were given a full airing. There were upwards of 580 performances, most of them additional to a normal year's programming in Dublin. The figure includes over 100 literary events and over 170 community arts projects. The greatest concentration was in relation to drama. Dublin 91's professional dance programming is acknowledged to have been weak.

In the short term, new opportunities arose for artists as performers, creators and exhibitors, and also in workshops and more localised events. There was a major music commission and opportunities for young Irish composers to get work publicly performed through the SCO (Scottish Chamber Orchestra) residency. The European Youth Theatre Encounter took place in Dublin during 1991 and its practice is now to coincide with the City of Culture.

European elements in the programme were summarised in a brochure prepared by Dublin 91. These were particularly strong in the field of exhibitions, such as In a State which explored the meaning of Europe, "both the Europe of the EC and the Europe which is splintering into nationalism", and the European Connection which

examined the development of modernism in Irish Art 1860 to 1960 and the influence of European schools of painting on this development. The work of foreign artists included WOLS, Women Artists and the Environment, Howard Hodgkin, Berlin (Dadaism, German Expressionism and Magic Realism), and Espace 91 (new developments in European sculpture as well as a survey of Irish sculpture in the 1990s). The Gold of the Kremlin was another major exhibition. The Dublin Literature Festival looked at the relationship between European literature and the literature of the rest of the world. University College Dublin presented lectures on "Changing Europe" by leading European speakers and the European Community Literary and Translation Prize was awarded as part of Dublin 91. The Dublin Theatre Festival's Circus Archaos was the largest single investment in the Festival's history (with a disappointing outcome) but otherwise its 'European' programming was not much greater than normal.

Since the 'core' programme managed directly by DPOL accounted for only a small proportion (numerically) of the Dublin 91 events and activities, there appears to have been no significant conflict between 'main' and 'fringe' programmes. The key issues to arise seem to have been more about the ability of Dublin 91 effectively to 'brand' everything - major and minor - throughout the year, and the obvious differences of opinion between the cultural planners (who wished for a range of 'authentic' programmes) and the Tourism and Local Authorities (who stuck out for a safer 'decaffeinated' product, which they would have preferred to sell).

3.2 Relationship to existing cultural infrastructure

With the obligation on DPOL to supplement its own start up money rapidly, and expectations that, on the available timescale, the available total could only be modest, most of the major or national institutions accepted the strong moral obligation to plan their own contributions. Inevitably this meant building on existing plans and supplementing them. With perhaps the sole exception of the Abbey Theatre, these institutions and arts organisations seem to have co-operated well with Dublin 1991 and DPOL, despite their knowing that their existing budgets were unlikely to receive much uplift, other than through their own sponsorship efforts. Relationships with the Chamber of Commerce were extremely positive. More might have come of joint initiatives with RTE but the broadcasting organisations still made a substantial contribution.

The direct financial involvement of the Arts Council was restricted to commissioning (together with the Dublin local authorities) the Dublin Arts Report. The report, published in February 1992, attempts to set the agenda for the various partners for the 1992-1995 period and to establish targets for them to try and achieve in improving infrastructure and co-ordination, and in improving access and opportunity in the arts for the whole population of the area.

4. IMPACT OF THE EVENT

4.1 Promotion

The budget available to DPOL for marketing and public relations was very limited, and we suspect the scale of the task of holding together a diverse event in the public's mind for a 12-month period was under-estimated. No convincing campaign could be mounted with minute print-runs (e.g. monthly brochures of 10,000), limited public presence in the City, virtually no consumer advertising and few staff. The conclusion was inevitable that "Dublin 91 failed to achieve consumer acceptance. Poor branding meant that many events (including successful examples) were not associated with Dublin 91".

Radio (national and local) and television had a degree of constructive involvement in the Dublin 1991 celebrations. The views we encountered on press treatment of the year was entirely consistent - namely that the attitude shown was carping, negative and cynical. The concept of Dublin 1991 had to be sold to a sceptical media and artistic community and there was insufficient political clout, funding or full time professional capability to do this effectively. This is not a criticism of DPOL's sterling efforts but rather an almost inevitable consequence of the scope afforded to journalists of exploiting the gaps and the differences of opinion between the various key players.

The press cuttings show a striking contrast between the domestic and the international coverage. Over 800 press were attracted from overseas during the course of the year, which produced a commendable quantity of good coverage for exhibitions and events, mostly understanding and friendly in tone. Whilst the Irish press did give more responsible and adequate coverage to certain individual manifestations, there was no concerted or consistent attempt to help Dublin 1991 and the National Gallery of Ireland feels that its special exhibitions are often bigger news abroad than at home. Similarly, with the coverage of the work on display at the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

There is an inescapable impression that, once the Irish media sensed that Dublin 1991 was being done 'on the cheap', the curmudgeonly tone set in and could not be shifted. The same newspapers which roundly criticised those concerned for meanness of spirit over 1991, without irony castigated them for profligacy over the sum of money being applied to Temple Bar renovations. An Irish Times leader demanded many more community and local events - but none of its reporters ever appeared at any of the 150 which did take place. Above all, DPOL had to contend with a hostile media, comparatively well informed about Glasgow 1990, which had many similar aims but over ten times the budget and a much longer planning timescale.

4.2 Attendance, participation etc.

In spite of the possible saturation of events (many of them free to the public) the Dublin 91 attendance represents a significant increase on previous years, which has

also been subsequently maintained. Attendance at the extra events mounted for Dublin 91 outside the framework of Dublin's regular venues and institutions is reported at 119,000 for the main programme and 444,000 for the free events and ceremonials. Attendance at the open-air events relies on estimates. The biggest single event - the Rock Concert - produced attendance estimates of up to 120,000. The Customs House celebration attracted at least 30,000. Within the regular institutions, including the refurbished Hugh Lane Gallery and the newly-established Irish Museum of Modern Art, large exhibitions were particularly successful. These included Kremlin Gold at around 130,000 and Berlinische close on 100,000. The National Gallery, with its six special exhibitions, achieved a record annual attendance of 1.07 million.

Museums and galleries attendance shows a particularly strong picture. The 1991 figure was 2.057 million which was 72 per cent above the previous year which itself had shown a 52 per cent rise on 1989. Attendance at the principal performed arts institutions in 1991 was 444,000. This was marginally down on the previous year and the dip is explained by closures at the Gate (2 months for repairs) and the National Concert Hall (2 months for installation of new organ). If the Dublin 91 extra main programme is taken into account, total attendance for the year was 2.62 million, 58 per cent above the equivalent figure for 1990. Adding the free events and ceremonials takes the total to 3.1 million for the year, a virtual doubling of attendance in relation to 1990.

The evidence of the subsequent years suggests that the positive stimulation of the cultural market achieved by Dublin 91 was maintained. The 1992 attendance at the performed arts/institutions was six per cent above 1991 and one per cent above the 1990 base level. The 1993 figure showed 11 per cent growth on 1990. There is little if any sign of over-programming or of any market exhaustion from the event. Visitor numbers at museums and galleries have been sustained in 1992 and 1993 at the high level achieved in 1991. The total for the cultural institutions in 1993 was marginally above the 1991 level and 58 per cent above the 1990 base, representing a step change for the City.

Community events were well patronised and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's workshops for children are reported to have advanced methods of music education in Ireland and stimulated new departures by Irish orchestras.

4.3 Relations with tourism authorities

Traditionally, the approach of the tourism authorities had been to treat Dublin as the gateway to the rest of Ireland, rather than as a tourist destination in its own right. This is now changing, and Dublin 1991 clearly brought new impetus to the existing longer term strategy to engage more interest from the off-season independent traveller, rather than expanding the low-spend mass market. Prime targets are seen as (1) the UK; (2) the USA and (3) continental Europe (especially France, Germany and Italy).

Dublin Tourism is a legally autonomous body, part-funded by the Irish Tourist Board. The ITB handles overseas promotion but this function was supplemented in 1991 by Dublin Tourism, when they tried to work effectively as a single unit. For Dublin 91, the ITB had one official working full time on co-ordinating initiatives, while Dublin Tourism handled the marketing budget (normal sums supplemented by up to IP300,000 for the year). The short lead time was again a problem - not helpful in constructing dedicated packages, quite apart from the question of compatibility of aims.

Most of the budget went towards print, trade support, and PR effort for the main activities. There was a small amount of consumer advertising in the UK, including a series of radio promotions with Terry Wogan to encourage visitors to come to the City for autumn breaks. According to Dublin Tourism at the time, "overseas offices are reporting that people calling their offices are asking for information on Dublin first and Ireland second". This must, in part, be attributable to the exceptional international media attention arising from the designation of Dublin as European City of Culture. According to Bord Failte, there were 865 media visits in 1991, the largest number in the history of the Bord and 11 per cent above the 1990 level. The Lord Mayor of Dublin undertook a helpful promotional tour of the USA.

During 1988, the Dublin Millennium year, out of state tourism is said to have increased by 18 per cent as compared with 1987. This was a smaller scale and perhaps more focused event than Dublin 91 but the results of 1991 similarly show major increases. Foreign tourist visits to Dublin increased 12 per cent in 1991 compared with the previous year. This was at a time when foreign tourist visits to Ireland as a whole decreased by four per cent. Dublin's 1991 expansion was achieved in shorthaul leisure markets. The strongest market development was in Northern Ireland (plus 36 per cent) and the European Continental market (plus 35 per cent). There was also very positive growth in Dublin's largest market, Great Britain, which showed a strong increase of 13 per cent during the year. The city's position in North America and the rest of the world deteriorated, much as for Ireland as a whole under the impact of the Gulf War.

Following 1991, Dublin held on to its gain. The market position was consolidated in 1992 with major growth (plus eight per cent) being achieved again in 1993, when Dublin's expansion led the Irish market, accounting for almost all the year's tourism growth.

The evidence of a market profile study carried out (Tourism Development International Ltd) at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) during the summer of 1991 suggests a positive link between the Dublin 91 promotion and tourism interest. According to the survey, some 58 per cent of the public for IMMA were foreign tourists. In an equivalent survey two years' later, the figure had fallen to 36 per cent. When asked to cite the source of information about the Museum, some 34 per cent of the 1991 out-of-state visitors to IMMA cited the media. In comparison, only nine per cent of out-of-state visitors to equivalent facilities generally in Ireland learnt about the facility through the media.

Other factors in the growth of Dublin could well be:

- an Italian market expansion since the Irish success in the 1990 World Cup; and
- a fares war on the London/Dublin air route which broke out in 1991.

But according to the Chief Executive of Dublin Tourism, tourism was the major beneficiary from Dublin 91. Dublin Tourism's policy is to promote the city strongly as a cultural destination in the short breaks market, targeting Iceland, Continental Europe, with a series of city break promotions and servicing upgrades. It is believed that Dublin benefited from Glasgow's successful promotion in Britain which helped establish an awareness of Dublin's ECC designation in the UK market. In youth markets, Dublin is helped by the strength of the Irish rock scene. Dublin Tourism expects a sustained benefit from the City of Culture. "Only in coming years will we be able to truly able to assess the impact of the title".

4.4 Economic impact

It is evident that Dublin benefited from a major cultural market stimulation in 1991 and that the promotion gave impetus to the growing success of Dublin as a cultural tourism destination. The 'cultural' economy has been boosted through improvements in facilities (IMMA, Hugh Lane Gallery, opening of the Writers' Museum etc) and 1991 saw a doubling of commercial arts sponsorship, from IP2m to IP4.1m, which has been subsequently maintained. The very significant Irish Life sponsorship for the Dublin Theatre Festival was the first of a four year agreement. The effect of the improvements to the Temple Bar cultural quarter could in due course be very significant, although allowing for an element of 'displacement' elsewhere.

There are no reliable data on net expenditure by all relevant cultural organisations within the Dublin area or on patterns of consumer spending by residents which could be used for comparative purposes. However, there are clear signs from both the Government and the local authorities (especially out of the Dublin Arts Report) - which are now obliged to produce three year cultural plans - that the arts are now perceived as a more significant economic generator. Dublin 91, and the EC cachet in particular, has given increased legitimacy to this notion and also helped to build a more credible profile of the city as a cultural destination in its own right.

4.5 Social impact

The question of any measurable social impact of Dublin 91 is inextricably bound up with the degree of success achieved in 'branding' the event. In the light of DPOL's limited budget for marketing and PR, and marketing for a wide range of promotions during the year being in other hands, it would be over optimistic to expect to find a wholly consistent or convincing outcome. Dublin 91 almost inevitably raised urban/suburban/rural questions and conflicts nationally, and particularly in the county surrounding the capital.

Research conducted for 'Irish Economic Advisers' after Dublin 91 claimed that virtually 90 per cent of the population of the city was aware of the celebrations. On the other hand, less than 5 per cent could identify a specific event they had attended associated with the City of Culture, and fewer than one in eight felt that the city's image was improving as a specific consequence of Dublin 91. Additional comments received suggested that the more focused 1988 Millennium celebration had made a bigger impact. Some people confused both. However, many people who had participated in and enjoyed a range of the summer open air events were unaware of the branding or that their involvement had been in Dublin 91. It can therefore be deduced that the difficulties encountered over 'branding' to some extent lost the special 'European' dimension and intention.

A more generously funded initiative with, for example, a specific keynote exhibition, which could have been used as a focus of interest and filter for other events and activity might well have engendered more sense of pride and ownership amongst the community generally. Nevertheless, at the local level, substantial activity took place which would not have happened but for the City of Culture designation. So far as the press and politicians are concerned, one suspects the organisers could not win. One lesson of the Year may well have been to heighten the European dimension, even if that were not as apparent as it might have been through 1991. Treating the year as a rite of passage and Dublin 91 as a point of departure rather than arrival, it would be wrong, as much press comment did, to dismiss it as a missed opportunity.

4.6 Protocol and Europe

Protocol was involved at the formal opening of the event on 16 March 1991. Invitations to representatives of foreign governments of the EU were extended by the Minister and to representatives of Glasgow and other European Cities of Culture by the Lord Mayor of Dublin. Various cultural functions included the opening of the "Berlin Exhibition" which was attended by the Senator for Cultural Affairs of the City of Berlin. The opening ceremony took the form of an hour long concert featuring various aspects of Dublin culture. The then Prime Minister made a speech and there followed the official handing-over to the Lord Mayor of Dublin of the European City of Culture plaque by the Lord Provost of Glasgow.

Dublin 91 had no closing ceremony but, in January 1992, a delegation consisting of the Lord Mayor, the Minister of State for Culture, the Director of DPOL, the head of Dublin Corporation's Cultural Committee and civil servants from the Minister's department travelled to Madrid for the ceremony of handing over the plaque to Madrid 92.

Active EU involvement in Dublin 91 was minimal. A representative of DGX was invited to every board meeting of DPOL but never attended. The Director General for Culture attended for the presentation of the European Literary Awards. The relationship of the EU to the event was emphasised through a number of projects where the EU link was stressed, such as a concert jointly organised with the EU office in Dublin, the display of EU and Dublin 91 flags together at public events and acknowledgement in all publicity material of the support and involvement of the EU.

Despite any frustration in not having achieved the desired year, it can be argued that the timing of Dublin 91 was good for the consolidation and further development of a sense of main stream European involvement in the minds of both Irish and other European citizens. As a result of media coverage throughout the EC presidency, the level of awareness was certainly higher than previously. On the other hand, the suggestion to us was that Dublin 91 did not do much for Euro-sentiment pro or ante in the city.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Concentration of effort

Despite some of the disappointments, it is clear that Dublin 91 engaged and excited a range of key players in the city. If their high expectations were less than fully realised, the concentration of effort and the various attempts to raise the cultural profile of the city, both at home and abroad, did generate positive progress on several important fronts, including the recognition that there was an urgent need for improvements in the cultural co-ordination and infrastructure of the city.

5.2 Co-ordination in the city

The opportunity to learn necessary lessons and devise constructive solutions was channelled into the Dublin Arts Report, which has had a positive response to date. So far as the Corporation is concerned, the Report recommended a higher-powered stand-alone arts department. An arts officer has now been appointed - but only in a more junior capacity than recommended, and under the city librarian. It also has to be noted that this officer's budget (1994/95 - at IP170,000) is IP30,000 lower than the corporation's arts budget in 1991. Most of the money is given out in small grants to arts organisations. On this evidence, it is likely that the Arts Council will inevitably continue to regard the Corporation as a rather minor arts player, which is unlikely to assist joint planning and development in a significant way. The new national government has adopted the Report's recommendations on local authority cultural plans, which is now being applied nationally.

5.3 Constructive international thinking

Although the financial limitations of Dublin 1991 and the short lead time did not allow for any major development of truly 'European' themes, the lessons of the opportunity for Dublin and Ireland to see what they have to offer culturally within a more mainstream European context was noted. Dublin 1991 may well therefore prove to have been a catalytic point of departure for more constructive thinking and international links and networking in the future.

5.4 Infrastructure investment

Developments in gallery and museum provision have been referred to above. The year also accelerated the prospects for the Temple Bar cultural quarter, which will be a lasting outcome with an estimated IP37 million (IP21.7m from ERDF) invested over a five year period (up to 1995). In addition to the potential improvements to infrastructure (and co-ordinated working which might yet result from implementation of recommendations in the Dublin Arts Report), there have been gains for museums, galleries and institutions from database developments and the expansion of sponsorship horizons.

5.5 Know-how

Useful developments in know-how did take place but much of the value - other than that retained within particular cultural institutions - was dissipated through the break up of the DPOL team after the conclusion of the year. Some of those messages will exist within the Arts Report but the time-lag is now probably an unhelpful feature. A Dublin Forum could have been usefully set up under civic leadership immediately following 1991 but the opportunity was not taken, although this could still be done at any time. A Dublin Tourism initiative to set up a marketing consortium for the cultural institutions of the city was followed through. On the evidence we saw, the institutions themselves are sceptical about any real benefits to them from this so far.

5.6 Good leverage and sponsorship growth

DPOL was obliged to spend comparatively moderate resources over a large variety of projects, a number of them already in train prior to Dublin's 1991 designation. The leverage which the designation and the broader programme created - particularly in relation to sponsorship - was impressive, and much of this benefit has been consolidated. During 1991, the Film and Theatre Festivals had particular success and have subsequently built on this and - along with other organisations - consolidated new levels of commercial sponsorship secured during 1991.

5.7 Value

Whilst possible developments (e.g. in the audio-visual sector) were not capable of being fully exploited, the money expended on Dublin 91 seems to represent good value. This is both in relation to possible longer term benefits and numbers of people involved in the actual celebrations within 1991. The rejection of the urban renewal proposals for the Blessington Street Basin by the local community is cited by DPOL as the most significant failure of the year.

5.8 Erroneous impression

Whilst there seems to be a general feeling in Ireland that Dublin 91 was an opportunity not fully embraced, virtually all key informants praised the efforts of DPOL which, against the odds, made a great deal of the year. The lead time, proximity to the 1988 Millennium and juxtaposition to Glasgow 1990 were felt to be unfortunate features. The under-powered promotion campaign within the city itself led to difficulties compounded by the absence of obvious civic leadership or money. The notion of Dublin as European City of Culture was introduced somewhat elliptically into local life and consequently the City Corporation perhaps never really adopted Dublin 1991 as its own event in the way it had with the Millennium in 1988. This lack of 'rooting' or civic ownership tended to leave citizens with the erroneous impression of an amorphous event which came and went, without leaving many permanent memorials.

5.9 Market stimulation

It is to be regretted that the important achievements of Dublin 91 in community programming have not been followed through with full force. The "federated" main programme was a major collective achievement which excited considerable additional public interest. The stimulation of the cultural market represented a significant boost (up 58 per cent in 1991), even a step change for Dublin. Tourism was a major beneficiary of the Year (12 per cent traffic growth in a poor year for Ireland) which gave added impetus to Dublin's development as a destination. It should now be recognised that fears about the market implications of deviation from "Georgian stereotypes" were unfounded. Such acceptance would represent an important rite of passage for Dublin. It is possible to view the 1988 Millennium Celebrations and Dublin 1991 as part of a continuum which, despite the problems outlined above, does mark real progress both in the city's cultural infrastructure and in positive perceptions of the city. Above all, Dublin 91 helped emphasise how strategic and vital the cultural sector is to the city, its life and economy and leads to the conclusion that, in total, it remains undervalued.

Dublin museums and galleries, attendance

	Thousand				
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
National Gallery	506	812	1,074	981	962
National Museum	150	334	482	624	675
I M Modern Art	na	na	220 ^a	156	185
Hugh Lane Gallery	<u>131</u>	<u>47^b</u>	<u>191^c</u>	<u>253</u>	<u>296</u>
Total	787	1,193	2,057	2,014	2,112

Source: The institutions concerned.

^a Opened March 1991.

^b Jan-March only.

^c March-December only.

Dublin performed arts, principal institutions, attendance

	Thousand				
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
National Theatre ^a	128	130	130	133	136
Gate Theatre	89 ^b	89	67 ^c	93	85
Dublin Theatre Festival	41	38	52 ^d	47	56 ^e
National Concert Hall	<u>220</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>195^f</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>241</u>
Total	478	467	444	471	518

Source: The institutions concerned.

^a Abbey and Peacock Theatres.

^b 1990 figure; no figure available for 1989.

^c 10 months only; closed 2 months for repairs.

^d Excludes Mayday to Bloomsday.

^e Smaller festival.

^f 10 months only; closed 2 months for installation of new organ.

Dublin cultural events and institutions, attendance

	Thousand				
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Institutions					
Museums, galleries	787	1,193	2,057	2,014	2,112
Performed arts	478	467	444	471	518
Dublin 1991 extra*	<u>n/a</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>n/a</u>
	1,265	1,660	2,620	2,485	2,630
Free events/ceremonials	n/a	n/a	444	n/a	n/a

Source: Institutions themselves; DPOL.

- * Drama, commercial specials (Sinatra, Domingo, Pavarotti), Literature Festival, Festival of Discovery; excludes extra events in institutions.

Out of state tourist market, Dublin and Ireland

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Out of state tourists (thousands)					
Dublin	1,291	1,364	1,529	1,531	1,667
Ireland	3,484	3,666	3,535	3,666	3,814
Out of state tourists (1989 = 100)					
Dublin	100	106	118	119	129
Ireland	100	105	101	105	109

Source: Bord Failte.

Dublin 1991, extra attractions*, attendance estimates

	Thousand	
Drama		
Mayday to Bloomsday	14	
Independent companies	<u>6</u>	20
Literature Festival	20	
Festival of Discovery	<u>6</u>	26
Other Exhibitions		
World Press	18	
Hungarian exhibition	<u>10</u>	28
Commercial specials		
Sinatra	15	
Pavarotti	25 ^b	
Domingo	<u>5</u>	<u>45</u>
	119	
Free events/ceremonials		
Custom and Ceremony	30	
New Year's Eve	7	
Dublin Street Carnival	250	
Set Dancing	7	
Music City	120	
Guinness Summer Season	25	
Rock Platform	<u>5</u>	444

Source: DPOL.

* Events for which attendance estimates available; excludes special programming taking place in institutions (e.g. National Gallery, National Concert Hall).

^b Includes 20,000 at College Green.

Out of state tourist market, visits by region of origin, Dublin and Ireland, 1991

	Thousand		Percentages	
	Dublin	Ireland	Dublin	Ireland
Great Britain	620	1,710	41	48
Northern Ireland	150	520	10	15
Continental Europe	470	841	31	24
North America	219	356	14	10
Other	<u>70</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	1,529	3,535	100	100

Source: Bord Failte.

Dublin 91, available financial resources*

	IP thousand
National Lottery	1,456
Prime Minister's Department	500
Dublin Corporation	599
Dublin County	1,300
European Union	200
Merchandising (net)	(23)
Other	37
Sponsorship	1,900
Cultural Institutes	700
Performance venues	1,200
Tourist bodies (net)	<u>58</u>
Total	7,927

Source: DPOL.

- * Includes funding of DPOL (IP1.56 million) and estimates of resources paid directly to promoters of events/programmes (IP6.37 million).

Dublin 91, expenditure

	IP thousand
DPOL administration/overheads	467
Marketing	
DPOL (domestic)	254
Other (overseas)	210
Projects/programming	
DPOL	822
Direct funding from other sources*	<u>6,156</u>
Total	7,909

Source: DPOL.

- * Estimate of funding of Dublin 91 events and programmes paid direct to promoters not through DPOL.

Dublin 91, DPOL income

	IP thousand
National Lottery	1,250
Dublin Corporation	90
Tourist bodies (net)	58
European Union	132
Sponsors	17
Merchandising (net)	(23)
Other	<u>37</u>
Total	1,561*

Source: DPOL.

- * Expenditure amounted to IP 1.54 million, and so a small surplus was returned on the year.

Dublin 91, capital projects*

	IP million
Writers' Museum	2.50
Temple Bar (DGXV grant only)	3.60
Hugh Lane (refurbishment)	1.00
Irish Museum of Modern Art (conversion)	0.50
National Concert Hall (new organ)	<u>0.65</u>
Total	8.25

Source: DPOL.

- * Related to Dublin 91.

Dublin 91, extra attractions^a, attendance estimates

Drama		
Mayday to Bloomsday	14	
Independent companies	<u>6</u>	20
Literature Festival		
Festival of Discovery	<u>6</u>	26
Other Exhibitions		
World Press	18	
Hungarian exhibition	<u>10</u>	28
Commercial specials		
Sinatra	15	
Pavarotti	25 ^b	
Domingo	<u>5</u>	<u>45</u>
		119
Free events/ceremonials		
Custom and Ceremony	30	
New Year's Eve	7	
Dublin Street Carnival	250	
Set Dancing	7	
Music City	120	
Guinness Summer Season	25	
Rock Platform	<u>5</u>	444

Source: DPOL.

^a Events for which attendance estimates available: excludes special programming taking place in institutions (e.g. National Gallery, National Concert Hall).

^b Includes 20,000 at College Green.