



Ex-post Evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report sets out the findings of an ex post evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) action in 2014. The evaluation is focussed on the two 2014 host cities – Umeå in Sweden and Rīga in Latvia – and assesses the ways in which each city implemented their ECoC and the benefits that have flowed from the Action. The report explains how Umeå and Rīga developed their application, designed their cultural programmes and how they organised themselves to deliver the activities which made up their ECoC. The report also focusses on the benefits of hosting the title as well as issues linked to legacy and lessons learned.

This summary sets out the main findings for the two cities and draws together overall findings and conclusions.

Evaluation methodology

This evaluation and its methodology are designed to satisfy the standard requirement of the legal basis for an “external and independent evaluation of the results of the European Capital of Culture event of the previous year”. Although each city has kept in regular contact with the Commission including the provision of monitoring reports, the evaluation will help establish a more detailed understanding of the lifecycle of the ECoC, from its early inception through to its sustainability and legacy. In particular, the evaluation provides an opportunity to look back at the previous year in order to highlight lessons and recommendations going forward based on the experiences of the two host cities.

In order for results to be comparable with previous evaluations, the methodology follows a consistent approach for evidence gathering and analysis. Primary data sources include interviews conducted during two visits to each city or by telephone, as well as through an online survey in Rīga. These interviews have sought to gain a variety of perspectives on each ECoC, including those of the management teams, decision-makers at local and national level, plus key cultural operators, a range of partners involved in the delivery of ECoC and a sample of organisations either leading or participating in ECoC projects. The secondary data sources include information in the original ECoC applications, studies and reports produced or commissioned by the ECoC, events programmes, promotional materials and websites, statistical data on culture and tourism and quantitative data supplied by the ECoC on finance, activities, outputs and results.

Main Findings

Umeå

Umeå is a small but rapidly-expanding city in northern Sweden with a population of just over 118,000. Traditionally, Umeå has been a centre for trade and for the engineering and forestry industries, as well as for the production of forestry machinery. More recently, it has become home to hi-tech IT companies and research-based bio-technology and environmental technology industries. Umeå has also become an important centre for learning, since the establishment of Umeå University in 1965. The Municipality of Umeå has invested heavily in the cultural sector since the 1970s as a way of increasing the city's attractiveness as a place to live. The city's main cultural assets include Norrlandsoperan (Northlands Opera), the Bildmuseet (Museum of the Image) and a new cultural venue, Väven (open in 2014), which hosts the Umeå City Library, a new Women's History Museum, studios, a theatre and a hotel.

Umeå2014 adopted the slogan "Curiosity and Passion" and pursued three objectives: human growth, sustainable development, international relations. The cultural programme was based on the overarching concept of Umeå as the "The Northern Room" in the European "house". Within this overarching concept, a number of specific themes were explored, including some relating to the culture, lands and identity of the Sami people, the indigenous people of northern Scandinavia who have traditionally made their living from reindeer herding. The cultural programme was also structured around the eight seasons of the Sami calendar. Many events explored and highlighted Sami culture in all its forms, e.g. rock-art, music, crafts, dress. Various collaborations and events took place across the Sápmi area of Norrland, as well as in Finland and Norway. The European and international dimension was also ensured through a large number of collaborations with artists and cultural organisations in other countries, such as the Chinese TAO Dance Theatre or the Spanish La Fura dels Baus.

Umeå2014 was implemented by a team working within the Municipality of Umeå. However, a key feature was the use of the "Open Source" approach based on co-creation and participation. In essence, the Open Source approach involved setting broad themes and criteria for the programme as a whole and then inviting cultural operators to "fill" the programme themselves. The objective of the Open Source approach was, in part, to facilitate the building of capacity in the local cultural sector, thus providing long-term benefit. A specific funding instrument, the Cultural Boost, enabled a diversity of cultural operators to initiate projects, particularly organisations that were small, new and perhaps even amateur. Around one hundred projects were funded this way, each receiving SEK 20,014 (€ 2,100). The Cultural Boost enabled project ideas to be tested and developed, so that larger, more ambitious events could feature in the cultural programme.

Like most ECoC, the cultural programme presented by Umeå during the title year was more extensive, more innovative and more European in nature than the city's cultural offering in previous years. The focus on the Sami was a very significant factor in making the programme more unique, innovative and European. The ECoC also enabled Umeå to increase the European – and international – dimension of its cultural offer by collaborations with international artists. Equally, the ECoC improved the city's cultural offering in the summer. Like much of northern Sweden, the summer was traditionally a quiet period in Umeå, when many residents retire to their summer houses or go on holiday elsewhere and few cultural events would take place. The importance of summer was emphasised by the designation of two summer seasons within the cultural programme. The ECoC allowed also Umeå to implement cultural events that were bigger and more innovative than before and/or held in new and unusual venues. For example, the opening event used a stage over the River Ume and attracted an audience of 55,000 people, as well as considerable international media attention. "Back in Baby's Arms" was a choreographed performance involving 150 women on Kungsgatan shopping street in central Umeå. Another highlight key event was the outdoor performance of Strauss' Elektra on one of the biggest opera stages ever, measuring 40m x 200m, featuring more than 250 participants.

Umeå2014 had a positive effect on the access to and participation in culture of local citizens, including many that would not usually attend or participate in cultural events. According to a survey carried out by Statistics Sweden, 71% of Umeå's residents attended an ECoC even of some form and Västerbottens museum enjoyed a 63% increase in visitors (70,000 people) compared to 2011. Umeå2014 also helped widen access to culture by producing events in locations outside the city centre. This included the "River Stories" series of around 40 cultural events of different art forms and centred on the rivers of Västerbotten which flow from the mountains in the west to the sea in the east. River Stories helped build greater capacity for cultural events to be organised in these communities in the future by involving local cultural bodies in the production and performance of works. For many of the communities involved, this was the first time that they had hosted events of this nature or scale.

Umeå was successful in gaining international media attention and attracting international tourists. The "Caught by [Umeå]" promotional tour of seven European cities in 2013 attracted around 57,000 visitors and reached many foreign journalists and travel writers, some of whom went on to attend the opening ceremony. Umeå2014 received positive coverage by the New York Times and was listed as one of Rough Guide's "Top Ten Cities" in the world. As a result of these efforts and various improvements in the city's infrastructure, the number of hotel nights booked increased by 21% from 2013 to 2014 and the number of nights at all tourist accommodations increased by 24% over the same period.

Looking ahead, the Umeå2014 team is being disbanded during the course of 2015, with many staff members, however, moving to other posts in the municipality or other employers in the city, and there is no plan for a specific legacy body. However, Umeå Municipality will continue to pursue a strategy for culture covering the years 2010-2020. Per capita expenditure on culture by the municipality continues to grow and remains around twice the average of all Swedish municipalities. As a result, some of the activities that were new for 2014 will continue and some existing events will continue to operate at a higher level than before 2014.

Rīga

With a population of 700,000, Rīga is now the largest city in the Baltic States. The city dates back at least 800 years and its historic centre has a fine collection of Jugendstil (art nouveau) buildings and in 1997 was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Rīga has retained a multicultural heritage with many different communities strongly represented. It has also a relatively strong cultural offer partly due to its status of capital city of Latvia. The main motivations for bidding for the ECoC centred on growing the cultural offer in the city and alongside this, a desire to increase the profile of Rīga as a key destination for tourists as well as cultural players (including visiting artists, theatres and orchestras). Linked to this was the Council's focus on 'expanding' the cultural diversity of the city towards different genres, difficult types of audiences and different parts of the city so that a wider range of local people could become involved in the cultural agenda.

The overall programme for Rīga 2014 was divided into six 'topical' lines- these lines represent themes that helped shape the different activities attached to the ECoC programme. A total of 488 individual activities or projects fell under these six lines and made up the overall programme. Open calls for the project ideas were launched to ensure that the cultural programme was developed from the 'bottom up'.

An arm's length organisation, the Rīga 2014 Foundation, was set up by Rīga City Council to coordinate the application and development stages. It was headed by the former Head of the City Council's Department of Culture. The Foundation played a central role in the design and implementation of the ECoC programme.

The European dimension in Rīga was reflected in a range of different events and activities within the Rīga 2014 cultural programme. This included support for a variety of exchanges and other mobility programmes from across different European Union Member States. There were also a range of artists and exhibitions which used Rīga 2014 as a 'meeting place' for international artists to come together and work collaboratively on different activities. Furthermore, 40% of all activities had an international (mostly European) dimension.

The Rīga ECoC can be seen as being successful in terms of widening the participation of local residents in culture as it carried out a number of specific activities and methods to ensure that it was not simply those interested in high end culture who participated and attended ECoC activities. 'Widening participation' (in culture) was highlighted as a key objective throughout the original ECoC application; various guidelines were produced by the Foundation to help stakeholders develop their projects and this was a key aspect of the monitoring arrangements linked to projects. One of the main six lines of the cultural programme (Road Map) was precisely focussed on and devoted to the idea of participation and community engagement. The Road Map line contained 117 projects that aimed to stimulate wider participation and was the line with the highest number of projects among all theme lines. Many of the projects that fell under this line took place in places and for people that did not usually experience culture. The Road Map line contained the neighbourhoods programme that ensured ECoC activity was to be found also in industrial zones of Rīga as well as in neighbourhoods and community spaces that traditionally had little in the way of a cultural offer. A key strength of the cultural programme in Rīga was its diversity and in particular the balance between large and small activities, high profile international events and small scale local events, different types of artistic forms, different levels of artistic quality as well as being delivered in different parts of the city.

The 488 activities included in the programme ranged from world class events such as the World Choir Games through to 'pop-up' street theatre productions found in one of Rīga's 58 neighbourhoods. This diverse programme brought a number of benefits including allowing the programme to be accessible to all of Rīga's population and different types of visitors regardless of whether they were interested in high end culture or more alternative 'popular' cultural experiences such as street art or amateur neighbourhood choirs

Rīga 2014 was also beneficial in terms of capacity building cultural, helping organisations within the city to develop their skills and experience in a longer term perspective. Many of those organisations consulted through the evaluation which had run ECoC projects reported a large rise in their capacity to plan and deliver cultural activities because of their involvement in the programme. At the heart of this capacity building impact was the development of knowledge, abilities, skills and contacts that different cultural players gained from delivering their ECoC project at a scale that they had often not attempted previously.

A weaker aspect was the communication work of Rīga 2014, due to the lack of activity linked to raising the international profile of the city in order to attract visitors from abroad to attend and visit ECoC activities. Audience figures from the Foundation show that only 1.4% of audiences attending ECoC projects were international (i.e. lived outside of Latvia).

The main focus of the ECoC in Rīga was on the 'cultural' content of the programme rather than on improving infrastructure projects or other physical development either linked to culture or the wider public realm. This meant that the programme was sometimes seen as being less of a driver for physical improvements to the city. Some also felt that there was no obvious physical symbol of Rīga 2014 which people could associate with the year of culture either during 2014 or after it. This lack of a central physical 'emblem' of the year was felt by some to mean that an obvious 'impact' of the ECoC was missing.

Conclusions

The following analysis brings together the findings of the two cities to look at the overall relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the ECoC action.

Relevance

The work in Umeå and Rīga in 2014 shows that the ECoC is still a very relevant Action when it comes to a variety of EU policy areas and EU legislation more widely. In particular, its relevance to the EU Treaty and Article 167 which looks at the contribution to the 'flowering' of the cultures of the Member States remains highly relevant. Not only have the ECoC in Umeå and Rīga helped these cities and respective Member States to strengthen their original cultural offer and heritage, but they have also helped diversify their cultural offerings as well as internationalise them further. This is evidenced not only in the original bid and application document but also in terms of the individual projects which this evaluation has highlighted during the study.

The 2014 evaluation of ECoC has particularly shown that the overall Action contributes and remains highly relevant to a range of other EU level priorities and objectives. The various activities which Umeå and Rīga delivered (in total there were over 1,500 different ECoC activities in the two cities) show that ECoC supported culture, but also urban and regional development, employment, enterprise, tourism as well as general social cohesion policies. Although primarily a cultural programme, the work in both Umeå and Rīga shows that there are a range of powerful benefits that the ECoC Action has to wider policy agenda outside of the cultural dimension. Although the 2014 evaluation has shown that cities still mainly see ECoC as a 'cultural' rather than say an economic or social programme, Umeå and Rīga have used their ECoC status to tackle other aspects of their city's development.

The EU added value of the ECoC Action came particularly in relation to the 'status' and 'prestige' that the European year brought to the various activities being delivered in each city. Those stakeholders who were organising the larger events (festivals, large concerts etc.) often stated that the European 'badge' which was associated with their particular activity helped them 'hook' in more or higher profile artists or performers. This in turn meant the profile of the activity was greater which led to a larger audience and/ or higher visitor figures.

The EU added value also came in relation to the two cultural programmes encouraging projects to be much more international than they would normally have been (where relevant and possible). The guidance documents and other supporting material all evidence a clear push towards an international and in particular a European theme or an activity which includes artists from across Europe. Projects in both Umeå and Rīga that existed before the host year reported that involvement in the ECoC had helped them generate new relationships with stakeholders across Europe. Rīga in particular showed that these European relationships would be sustained post 2014.

Efficiency

Similar to other evaluation years, the 2014 evaluation of ECoC shows that the cost effectiveness of the Action is significant. The very limited amount of EU funding going to each city compared to the actual amount of activity and benefits which flowed from it shows that the Action and the Melina Mercouri Prize present good value for money. This is partly evidenced by the sheer number of activities that have been delivered (1,500+ across both cities) but also in terms of the views of project stakeholders in Umeå and Rīga who generally said that their activity would not have happened without the existence of ECoC status.

Both ECoC were designed and delivered in difficult economic times at both the city and national levels and therefore efficiency was a key aspect of their planning and delivery. Although Umeå and Rīga had different levels of resources available to them to deliver their cultural programmes, they both showed that a successful ECoC can be delivered on a relatively modest budget and in times when resources are limited. In particular Rīga (which had a budget of 27 million euros) may have been less 'ambitious' when it came to designing a programme that reached out to physical regeneration and infrastructure goals but its focus on the cultural content meant that they remained efficient and cost effective when it came to delivering a high quality 'cultural' programme. The Rīga example also shows that a city can host an ECoC without having to spend significant amounts of funding on new or improved cultural facilities.

The findings of the 2014 evaluation also show that ECoC are driven by public rather than private sector funding. This is evidenced by the fact that neither city was able to generate the private sector income they originally set in their applications as well as the fact that private sector funding represented less than 10% of total income in both city budgets. Although an ECoC is likely to always be highly dependent on public budgets, the lack of progress that both 2014 host cities made in attracting private sector funding through either direct support, sponsorship or advertising is an aspect worth noting when considering efficiency. This is again partly due to the timing of the 2014 programme and as economic situations improve the reliance on the public purse to drive forward ECoC activity may change for the better.

Despite State and city level administrations both reporting to have made significant cuts in their budgets around 2014, the existence of the ECoC ensured that the culture agenda in each city did not significantly suffer from these cuts. Having a specific and 'special' project (i.e. ECoC) which stakeholders saw as a once in a lifetime experience tended to safeguard culture from the worst of the cuts. Even though the budgets allocated to both Umeå and Rīga were 'vulnerable' there was little evidence that State and city level funding decreased as a consequence of pressure on overall budgets. It seems that the ECoC has helped those responsible for culture in both cities to put a strong enough case forward to support this 'special' project.

The delivery mechanisms and infrastructure set up to implement the ECoC generally worked well in both cities. This is evidenced by the lack of negative views stakeholders had on the delivery mechanisms, the volume of projects that were successfully delivered and the lack of any 'bad news' stories that appeared in the local press about either ECoC. Although Umeå and Rīga developed different delivery mechanisms which had their own strengths and weaknesses, there was little in the way of major issues or challenges identified around this aspect of the Action in 2014. The generally smooth delivery of both programmes was mainly down to the individuals involved, the types of bodies set up to run the programmes, the relationships that were fostered as well as the wider support they received from national and city level government.

The management arrangements of the two cities also had a number of characteristics that helped them contribute to the overall achievements of the ECoC Action (including outputs, results and impacts). Firstly the development arrangements in both cities were inclusive and transparent in terms of having open calls for project ideas that came from the 'bottom up' (so that projects came from cultural rather than strategic players). Secondly, Rīga had a co-ordination body that operated at arm's-length from the City or State authorities. Although not unique in terms of other previous ECoC, this allowed freedom to design and deliver a programme away from 'bureaucratic' systems and procedures. Thirdly the artistic control and management in the design of the cultural programmes came from experienced and trusted players who had a real and deep understanding of the cultural agenda of the city. This artistic knowledge was very much found in the coordination bodies themselves (as well as the projects) which did more than simply manage and monitor outputs and budgets.

Both cities delivered a high volume of cultural activity, with Rīga having just under 500 activities and Umeå just over 1,000. Although it is sometimes dangerous to compare one ECoC to another (a definition of an 'activity' for one ECoC might be a Carnival whereas another ECoC may count individual activities within the Carnival separately), the volume of cultural content was extremely high in 2014. Both programmes managed to design and deliver a wide ranging cultural programme which included a strong mix of cultural genres delivered across the whole year and often across various parts of the city and even beyond.

This is evidenced by the content of the cultural programmes contained in various marketing and publication materials but also through the various analysis each ECoC did to 'map' what activity had taken place in their cities. Linked to the subject of efficiency was a partial focus on delivering smaller cultural activities that were seen as being more cost effective. Although both host cities laid on a variety of high profile and 'glitzy' events which did have high costs, they also included a large number of smaller cultural activities which had lower costs but were equally well received. This was partly evidenced by the fact that when stakeholders taking part in the European evaluation in each city were asked to state their 'highlight of the year' many chose smaller and more 'personal' moments rather than the 'headline' events such as the opening ceremony. These included more local driven 'neighbourhood' activities, 'pop up' activities such as art installations and a move away from using national or international cultural 'celebrities' who demanded higher fees. As well as this having a benefit in terms of efficiency, it also helped to broaden the appeal of both cultural programmes beyond those who would have normally consumed culture in Umeå and Rīga outside of the existence of the ECoC.

Effectiveness

As would be expected, the main elements of effectiveness relate to the way in which the ECoC strengthened the cultural offer in both cities. The increased strength related to the scale of the cultural offer, the capacity of its cultural operators as well as the depth of cultural activity within the city. Although it is again sometimes difficult to evidence how much 'extra' culture was present in 2014 in the two cities compared to preceding years, many of those taking part in the evaluation felt that it was 'at least double'.

There is no doubt that both cities have seen an increase in the volume of culture on offer to both residents and visitors alike. Although this is unsurprising in the ECoC year itself, there is also evidence that this increase in volume will remain post 2014 (see sustainability below). Both cultural programmes certainly maximised the opportunity available during the ECoC year and were neither conservative nor cautious when developing their cultural programmes. They can both be seen as being particularly ambitious in their plans and should be applauded for 'making the most' of their ECoC status. The volume, scope and variety of the cultural programmes in both cities are very noticeable.

One key aspect of effectiveness in both cities is around how ECoC has widened the appeal and reach of culture to community groups and neighbourhoods that simply would not have experienced culture without the existence of the ECoC Action. Although it is difficult to understand the longer term impact of this, both programmes worked hard to provide cultural content that appealed to a wide variety of different audiences, putting on performances and activities that can be firmly classed as being popular, alternative or innovative in nature.

This is evidenced by the level of targeting that projects were encouraged to do (on underrepresented groups), the location of these activities (often outside of the centre and in non traditional settings) but also through the clear guidance that both cities had to project sponsors and designers to 'go out of their way' to widen participation. Both cultural programmes in Umeå and Rīga had specific 'themes' or 'lines' that encompassed widening participation. Although some ECoC activities took place in 'traditional' settings like theatres, galleries and opera houses, they also took place in the neighbourhoods and streets where people lived, away from the city centre. The fact that both ECoCs specifically set out to widen participation and target under-represented groups rather than simply 'hoping' that they would participate should be noted by future ECoC aiming to achieve something similar.

There is weaker evidence available on the impact of the ECoC overall in the city, particularly in relation to quantitative data on harder social and economic dimensions. However, it is perhaps too ambitious to expect true 'impact' to manifest itself fully within host cities so soon after the end of the year itself. Although both cities, like their predecessors, have undertaken monitoring and evaluation activities, the outcome of this work still largely depends on the views and opinions of different stakeholders.

There were challenges in both cities around attracting international audiences - but for different reasons. Umeå faced a geographical challenge linked to its relative isolation up in the North whilst Rīga did not undertake enough international marketing and promotion mainly due to procurement issues. Although both ECoC and their associated projects experienced high audience figures, there were fewer international visitors than was envisaged at the bid stage. Umeå did however make the most of the ECoC status in its efforts to put itself 'on the map' whereas Rīga, although partly already a firm tourist destination, has perhaps missed an opportunity to strengthen its international profile further (less than 2% of audiences were from outside of Latvia).

Sustainability

Despite key areas of success on a number of fronts, both the 2014 ECoC have tended to have weaker longer term plans to sustain their cultural offer beyond the year itself. This was evidenced by the simple fact that neither city had produced a formal legacy or sustainability plan but also that project leaders who took part in the evaluation were not currently working on future events that were similar in size or scope to those which they ran in 2014. When asked about legacy during the evaluation, many (but not all) stakeholders in Umeå and Rīga tended to view the ECoC year as a 'special' or 'one off' project. There were aspects of both cities approach to ECoC that showed they had considered sustainability, but there was a lack of a real firm plan or strategy in place to make that happen. Although thinking around legacy was established early on in the ECoC life cycle of each city (evidenced through the content of their original application), this did not manifest itself in a strong sustainability plan. Unsurprisingly, a lack of finance to sustain some of the key aspects of the cultural programme for 2014 was highlighted as the main barrier to sustainability.

The fact that both cities and in particular Rīga were so heavily reliant on State and city funds was a key contributing factor when it came to sustainability (public sector funding represented around 90% of the total budget for each ECoC). Both ECoC sometimes struggled to attract funding from other public sources, EU funding as well as the private sector meaning there was an over reliance on mainstream public funds. This made them more susceptible to the wider financial pressures that national and local government are facing (for example, Rīga City Council have made budget cuts of around 40% in recent years).

Despite the above, there was evidence that culture had risen up the policy agenda in both cities as a consequence of ECoC. The Action has allowed both cities to 'showcase' the importance and benefits of culture to a level that would not have been possible without ECoC status. This has allowed those involved in culture to firmly put their policy area on the map - evidenced by the fact that the city development plans in Umeå and Rīga now include culture alongside themes such as employment, economic growth and transport.

Umeå has seen improvements to its cultural infrastructure which will have a key legacy beyond 2014 as it provides organisations, residents and visitors with new and improved buildings for the years to come. Although Rīga has and will see improvements to its cultural infrastructure (with new or improved theatres and museums opening) these are less associated with the ECoC programme and were not finished in time to be opened during the year itself (with the exception of the National Library). As stated earlier, partly because of the limited budget, Rīga focussed more on culture rather than 'bricks and mortar'. Although this led to a very cost effective programme, it did have issues when it came to sustainability and longer term impacts.

There is also no doubt that both Umeå and Rīga, like other host ECoC cities, have built up an array of new relationships and networks that will be sustained in the future. This is evidenced by the fact that cultural players across both cities reported to have collaborated with new partners and organisations both at the city level as well as at national and international levels. These new relationships were said to stimulate longer term impacts in relation to new activities including festivals, exhibitions, concerts and films in the cities based on the collaborations generated through ECoC.

Like many previous ECoC evaluations, perhaps the biggest aspect of sustainability is around the increased capacity that cultural operators in both cities reported through their involvement in the delivery of various ECoC projects. A key benefit of ECoC overall and one which maximises its sustainability is around the new skills, experiences, track record and knowledge which is found in the city as a consequence of planning and implementing a major year of culture. Many cultural operators reported that they would build on this new capacity to develop a better and stronger cultural offer post 2014 at a level that would not have been possible without the experiences and relationships gained through ECoC.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

This report presents the findings of the ex-post evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) Action 2014. The evaluation is focussed on the two 2014 host cities – Umeå in Sweden and Rīga in Latvia – and assesses the ways in which each city implemented their ECoC and the benefits that have flowed from the Action. The report explains how Umeå and Rīga developed their application, designed their cultural programmes and how they organised themselves to deliver the activities which made up their ECoC. The report also focusses on the benefits of hosting the title as well as issues linked to legacy and lessons learned.

The report firstly highlights the methodological approach taken for the evaluation, then presents the 'city reports' for both Umeå and Rīga and finally brings together these findings to make overall conclusions.

1.2 The European Capital of Culture Action

1.2.1 Policy history

The ECoC celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2015. It remains one of the best-known EU initiatives and contributes to a range of EU, national and local objectives linked to culture, social cohesion and economic development. Fifty cities have already had the opportunity to be a European Capital of Culture since 1985 when the original European resolution was passed which originated from the Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri. This original resolution recognised that Europe had been a hub of artistic development of exceptional richness and great diversity where cities had played a vital role. In 1999, this intergovernmental scheme was transformed into a fully-fledged initiative of the European Community by a Decision of the Parliament and of the Council. This sought to create a more predictable, consistent and transparent rotational system for the designation of the title, taking as its legal base Article 151 of the Treaty (now Article 167), which calls on the EU to "contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore". The 1999 Decision was later amended in 2005 in order to integrate the ten Member States that acceded to the EU in 2004, including Latvia. A further Decision was made in 2006, which introduced new processes for selection, co-financing and monitoring for ECoC for the years 2013-19.

According to the 2006 Decision¹, host countries are responsible for the procedure leading to the selection of one of their cities as "European Capital of Culture". They do this through an open competition within their Member State. The relevant authorities in the host countries publish a call for applications (including a questionnaire to cities wishing to bid) 6 years before their turn to host and cities interested in winning the title must submit an application. A panel of independent experts in the cultural field (thirteen independent experts, of whom seven are nominated by the European institutions and six by the Member State concerned) meets approximately 5 years before the year to assess the initial proposals against the objectives and criteria of the ECoC Action as defined in the Decision and to recommend a short list of cities (pre-selection). The short-listed cities are invited to submit more detailed applications.

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:304:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

The panel then meets again approximately nine months after the pre-selection meeting to assess the final proposals against the objectives and criteria of the ECoC Action and to recommend one city per host country for the title (final selection). The recommendation of the panel is then endorsed by the relevant authorities of the Member State in question, which notifies the EU institutions.

Then the Council, acting on a recommendation from the Commission drawn up in the light of the opinion of the European Parliament and the panel's selection report, officially designates the European Capital of Culture.

Also in line with the 2006 Decision, once designated as ECoC and until the title-year, cities are submitted to a monitoring procedure directly managed by the Commission. In this context, cities have to submit two monitoring reports. Submission of the reports is followed by formal monitoring meetings convened by the Commission between the cities and the panel (respectively 24 months and 8 months in advance of the title year). The aim is to check on progress, ensure that cities are fulfilling their commitments and provide them with guidance on implementation. It is also possible to arrange additional informal meetings or *in situ* visits between members of the panel and representatives of the city should this be required.

The most recent changes to the ECoC Action related to the 2011 Interim evaluation of selection and monitoring procedures of European Capital of Culture 2010-2016². The findings of this report were used when developing the new ECoC legislation framework that culminated in April 2014 with the adoption of Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020- 2033³. The decision lays down procedures that help future ECoC as well as stimulate internal evaluations, impact assessment work and monitoring among the ECoCs.

1.2.2 Objectives of the ECoC Action

In terms of evaluating the 2014 ECoC Action, is it useful to understand the overall objectives of the ECoC. More particularly, the hierarchy of objectives is based on the objectives as stated in the 2006 Decision but has been updated from previous evaluations as laid out in the table below to reflect the content of the new legal basis for ECoC post 2019. The general and strategic objectives are taken directly from Article 2 of the new legal basis, with the operational objectives flowing logically from these. They are also informed by the selection criteria detailed in Article 5 of the new 2014 Decision.

² http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc/assignment-report_en.pdf

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014D0445&from=EN>.

Table 1.1 ECoC hierarchy of objectives

General objective			
Safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, highlight the common features they share, and foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities			
Specific objectives (SO)			
SO1: Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offer in cities, including through transnational co-operation	SO2: Widen access to and participation in culture	SO3: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sector and its links with other sectors	SO4: Raise the international profile of cities through culture
Operational objectives			
Stimulate a diverse range of cultural activities of high artistic quality Implement cultural activities promoting cultural diversity, dialogue and mutual understanding Implement cultural activities highlighting (shared) European cultures and themes Involve European artists, promote cooperation with different countries and transnational partnerships	Create new and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural events Involve local citizens, artists and cultural organisations in development and implementation Provide opportunities for volunteering and foster links with schools and other education providers	Improve cultural infrastructure Develop the skills, capacity or governance of the cultural sector Stimulate partnership and co-operation with other sectors Combine traditional art forms with new types of cultural expression	Attract the interest of a broad European and international public

1.3 Evaluating the European Capital of Culture

There is a standard legal requirement to provide an external and independent evaluation of the results of the ECoC of the previous year in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the performance and achievements of the Action. Although each city has kept in regular contact with the Commission including the provision of monitoring reports, the evaluation will help establish a more detailed understanding of the lifecycle of the ECoC, from its early inception through to its sustainability and legacy. In particular, the evaluation provides an opportunity to look back at the previous year in order to highlight lessons and recommendations going forward based on the experiences of the two host cities.

When evaluating the impact of the ECoC Action against the objectives presented in the table above, the unique nature of the ECoC Action needs to be considered. The Action is both the activities which the cities deliver as well as a set of structures which are set up to run those activities. The evaluation is therefore interested in both the separate sets of activities run by Umeå and Rīga as well as the two separate sets of institutional arrangements through which they have been delivered. Similarly, the process by which the effects of the ECoC are realised may be inseparable from those effects and is equally important. For that reason, we apply three sets of indicators to each ECoC.

The evaluation of the ECoC is set against criteria designed to capture the essence of what makes an effective ECoC (found in the table below). This is currently based on Article 5 of the new 2014 Decision.

Table 1.2 Effectiveness / success criteria

Category	Criteria
1) Long-term strategy	(a) Strategy for the cultural development of the city (b) Strengthened capacity of the cultural sector, including links with economic and social sectors in the city (c) Long-term cultural, social and economic impact (including urban development) on the city (d) Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the title on the city
2) European dimension	(a) Scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding (b) Scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history and European integration (c) Scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, co-operation with operators or cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships (d) Strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and

Category	Criteria
	international public
3) Cultural and artistic content	(a) Clear and coherent artistic vision for the cultural programme (b) Involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme (c) Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality (d) Combination of local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions
4) Capacity to deliver	(a) Cross-party political support (b) Viable infrastructure to host the title
5) Outreach	(a) Involvement of the local population and civil society in the application and implementation of the ECoC (b) New and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, marginalised and disadvantaged people, and minorities; accessibility of activities to persons with disabilities & to the elderly (c) Overall strategy for audience development, in particular the link with education and the participation of schools
6) Management	(a) Feasibility of budget (covering preparation, title year, legacy) (b) Governance structure and delivery body (c) Appointment procedure of general and artistic directors & their field of action (d) Comprehensive communication strategy (highlighting that the ECoC are an EU initiative) (e) Appropriateness of the skills of the delivery structure's staff.

The evaluation also applies a number of "core indicators" that correspond to the most important results and impacts for each ECoC, which draw on previous ECoC evaluations as well as on the work of the European Capitals of Culture Policy Group (2009-2010) funded under the former EU Culture Programme to share good practices and produce recommendations for research and evaluation by cities hosting the title. The core indicators allow a degree of comparison and aggregation of effects across the 2014 ECoC as well as with previous years.

Table 1.3 Core Result Indicators

Specific objective	Result indicators
SO1: Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offer in cities, including through transnational co-operation	Total number of projects and events € value of ECoC cultural programmes No. of European cross-border co-operations within ECoC cultural programme Number and/or proportion of artists from abroad and from the host country featuring in the cultural programme
SO2: Widen access to and participation in culture	Attendance or participation in ECoC events Attendance or participation by young, disadvantaged or "less culturally active" people Number of active volunteers
SO3: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sector and its connectivity with other sectors	€ value of investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities Sustained multi-sector partnership for cultural governance Strategy for long-term cultural development of the city Investment in, or number of collaborations between cultural operators and other sectors
SO4: Improve the international profile of cities through culture	Increase in tourist visits and overnight stays Volume and tone of media coverage (local, national, international, digital) Awareness of the ECoC amongst residents and recognition amongst wider audiences

Each city report puts forward a number of 'lessons learnt' which can be seen as useful recommendations for future ECoC cities to consider. Recommendations for the Commission have not been developed, mainly because there are no significant recommendations drawn from the 2014 ECoC evaluation for the Commission to consider.

Further details of the evaluation framework and evaluation questions are found in the Terms of Reference for this study.

1.4 Evaluation Methodology

The methodology for the evaluation of the 2014 ECoC partly followed the approach adopted in previous studies of the Action. The focus of the evaluation methodology has been on research at the city level and in particular the gathering of data and stakeholders' views from Umeå and Rīga. Key evaluation sources were as follows:

- EU level literature: this included higher level EU policy and legislative briefings, papers, decisions and other documents relating to ECoC. This also included reports of the selection panels, the original bidding guidance as well as academic literature undertaken at the EU level.
- ECoC level literature: this type of literature included the original bids and applications, internal reports linked to the application and selection processes as well as numerous pieces of promotional literature on the cultural programme itself. Key monitoring and in particular evaluation reports were also collected and analysed.
- Quantitative data: where available, evidence linked to each ECoC was collected in relation to budgets and spend details, project numbers and types, participation levels and audience figures as well as other pieces of quantitative data to show and describe the work and benefits of the ECoC in each city.
- Interviews with managing teams: those responsible for the day to day design and delivery of the ECoC were interviewed in each city both during 2014 itself as well as in 2015. Almost all of the key individuals linked to the delivery agencies were interviewed including those linked to strategic development, marketing and communication, project implementation and financial management.
- Interviews with key stakeholders: mainly face to face interviews were undertaken with stakeholders both directly and indirectly involved in either the planning or delivery of the ECoC along with those more widely linked to the cultural, social, economic or political agenda of the host cities. Stakeholders included those working in cultural organisations, city/ regional/ national level administrations, tourism and visitor agencies, media organisations as well as voluntary and community organisations. Managers of individual projects and activities supported through the ECoC Action that made up the cultural programme of each city were also interviewed.
- Survey of projects: a survey of projects was undertaken in Rīga to gain a further insight of project managers' views on a variety of different issues linked to the design, delivery, benefits and legacy of the ECoC Action both at programme and project level. The survey was undertaken on-line and had an 82% response rate. A survey had already been undertaken in Umeå meaning the results were used for this evaluation without the need for an additional survey.

1.4.1 Key research tasks

In summary, the main research tasks were as follows:

- Inception and background research including the refinement of the evaluation framework and methodology which was set out in the original tender. A review of EU policy and legislation documents as well as academic literature linked to culture was also undertaken.
- Desk research on both host cities and their ECoC programmes was undertaken to develop a good understanding of their cultural programme, their application process as well as secondary evidence they had on issues connected to design, delivery, impact, benefits and legacy.
- Online survey of projects in Rīga to gain their views on a variety of different aspects of both their project and the overall ECoC programme.
- Fieldwork in host cities was undertaken at two stages. Firstly in late 2014 a visit was undertaken to familiarise ourselves with the ECoC programmes and begin to identify the key stakeholders and organisations that needed to be consulted. A second visit was undertaken in early 2015 to undertake face to face interviews with a variety of organisations directly and indirectly involved in the ECoC and the wider policy agenda of the city.
- Analysis and final reporting including a comprehensive review of all secondary evidence and data linked to both cities as well as the views and opinions of stakeholders. Both ECoCs have been invited to comment on the city reports before the overall report is finalised in July 2015.

1.4.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the method and evidence base

This evaluation report provides a detailed understanding of the 2014 ECoC Action and within this a good assessment of the work and progress of the two host cities. There are a number of issues to consider when assessing the strengths of the evidence base used for this study:

- There are restraints to the evaluation linked to resources- both in terms of the time and budget available to undertake the work. Ideally a study which provides a 'before' (baseline) and after picture would allow the evaluation to better understand the benefits and impact of the ECoC Action. However, the timescales of the evaluation only allow an ex-post evaluation to take place and the budget allocated to the work means that only an after picture has been studied.
- Although both cities have undertaken some form of evaluation work themselves, some of the results of these studies are either in draft or are not fully analysed. The European evaluation of the ECoC Action has used as much of this secondary information as possible but more data and in particular quantitative information would have strengthened the evidence base.
- Linked to the above issue is a lack of hard evidence on the benefits and 'impact' of the ECoC on the host cities. Although this evaluation uses the data that was available, it is more dependent on the views and opinions of stakeholders rather than empirical evidence. Having said this, the impact of an Action such as ECoC will often only manifest itself fully beyond the ECoC year itself and any evaluation of this nature undertaken close to the end of the year itself is only likely to identify emerging higher level benefits rather than harder on the ground impacts.

Despite the above issues for consideration, this final report addresses all of the evaluation questions and the findings and conclusions are based on a firm evidence base that uses primary and secondary information as well as quantitative and qualitative data.

2.0 Umeå

2.1 Background

2.1.1 The city

Umeå is a small but rapidly-expanding city in Norrland, the northern region of Sweden. At the end of 2013, Umeå was the eleventh largest municipality in Sweden with a population of just over 118,000, of which around 80,000 were in the city itself⁴. The population is expanding by around 1,000 people each year. It is the capital of Västerbotten County and Sweden's most significant urban centre north of the Stockholm-Uppsala region. The city is located on the Ume River, close to the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia.

Norrland became a part of the Kingdom of Sweden in the 14th century, though the area around the Ume River has long been inhabited by nomadic Sami peoples. Umeå's first official mention was in 1314 and it was established as a city in 1622 by King Gustav II Adolf. The city grew as a commercial and trading centre in the nineteenth century around the timber industry, and even now the city is known to many as the "City of Birches" as a result of the trees that were planted in the aftermath of an 1888 fire that destroyed most of the city. The city benefits from many environmental assets including parks and open recreation areas, with beaches, lakes, forests and winter sports facilities in the surrounding area.

Traditionally, Umeå has been a centre for trade and for the engineering and forestry industries, as well as for the production of forestry machinery. More recently, it has become home to hi-tech IT companies and research-based bio-technology and environmental technology industries. Umeå has also become an important centre for learning, since the establishment of Umeå University in 1965. The university now has around 36,000 students and more than 4,000 employees. Its priority research areas include "Green Future" (notably forestry and energy), applied IT and the arts, whilst research into ageing and population studies and micro-biology is also important. Umeå is also home to one of the campuses of the Swedish University for Agricultural sciences.

2.1.2 The cultural sector

Despite its small size, Umeå has enjoyed a steady growth in its cultural life in recent decades. The Municipality of Umeå has invested in the cultural sector since the 1970s as a way of increasing the city's attractiveness as a place to live through development of a rich cultural offer. The city's main cultural assets include Norrlandsoperan (Northlands Opera)⁵, which was established as a regional opera ensemble in 1974 and has since developed into a centre for performing arts. Norrlandsoperan commissions and hosts a range of cultural activities, including a contemporary art gallery Vita Kuben (The White Cube) and moved into new purpose-built facilities in 2002.

⁴ Statistics Sweden

⁵ www.norrlandsoperan.se

Umeå's museums include the Västerbottens museum, with a remit covering the cultural heritage of the entire province, including Gammlia Open-Air Museum featuring three Sami camps. Close to the Västerbottens museum is the Sami Culture Centre Trápphie, which opened during 2013 and is operated by Sáhkie, the Umeå Sami Association.⁶ The Bildmuseet (Museum of the Image) was established in 1981 by Umeå University. In 2012, it moved into new premises on the banks of the Ume River, where it exhibits contemporary art, visual culture, design and architecture from around the world. The new building was nominated for the Council of Europe Museum Award in 2014 and won the Swedish Museum Award in the same year.

Umeå University administers Art, Design and Architecture Academies which all moved into new premises in 2012. In November 2014, Väven, a new cultural venue, opened as part of "City Between the Bridges", a wider urban development programme along the banks of the river.⁷ Väven hosts the Umeå City Library, a new Women's History Museum, workshops, film studios, a hotel and "Black Box" - a stage and facility for theatre, music, dance and conferences. The opening of Väven marks the completion of Umeå's "culture trail" along the waterfront, which also includes the University's arts campus.

As well as public investments, a number of significant private investments have been made in Umeå's cultural life. Väven has been developed on a collaborative basis between the Municipality of Umeå and the Balticgruppen real estate company. Balticgruppen has also financed the Umedalen Skulpturpark, a permanent outdoors collection of 44 sculptures situated in the grounds of its business park, Umedalsparken⁸. The same park features the private Galleri Andersson/Sandström. Umeå is also home to "Guitars – the Museum", one of the most important private collections of electric guitars worldwide and a significant tourist attraction.⁹

Umeå plays host to a number of music festivals that feature international artists, such as Umeå Open, Sweden's largest indoor pop music festival attracting between 5,000 and 7,000 visitors each year, Umeå Jazz Festival, Umefolk, MADE festival and UxU. Umeå is also renowned as an important centre for hard-core punk and heavy metal music, linked to the city's alternative and underground scene originally centred on the Galaxen (Galaxy) youth.

2.2 Development of the ECOC

2.2.1 Application

Umeå's application to be ECoC 2014 emerged from the wider drive for urban development through the cultural, creative and knowledge economies, which had characterised Umeå since the early 1970s. The impetus for the application was not therefore to kick-start urban renaissance but to build on what had already taken place and complement further developments that were planned.

⁶ www.sahkie.se/en/trahppie

⁷ www.vaven.se

⁸ www.umedalenskulptur.se

⁹ www.guitarsthemuseum.com

The decision to apply for ECoC was taken by the Municipality of Umeå in May 2005 in consultation with key stakeholders. From the outset, the development of the application was characterised by an openness to influences and ideas from a wide variety of stakeholders, cultural bodies and the general public. The emphasis was on open dialogue, including via the internet, focus groups on different cultural themes and more than 50 public meetings. The Municipality of Umeå invited the submission of project ideas through meetings, written submission and individual interviews. Some 200 project ideas were received prior to the application stage. A survey undertaken in May 2008 found that 83% of citizens in Umeå were aware that the city was bidding to become ECoC 2014.¹⁰

In order to develop the application, a political steering committee was formed from the elected members of the Municipality from the main political parties. This committee was supported by a group of administrators and by a consultative group composed of representatives of the administrative units of the Municipality of Umeå, Umeå University, Västerbotten County (Västerbotten Läns Landsting), and Västerbotten Administrative Board (Västerbotten Länsstyrelsen).

Umeå's initial application stated an overarching vision of "Culturize the City", i.e. "a city that supports and encourages a culturally aware, insightful, active and literate humanity" and with "the desire to infuse a sensitive cultural understanding into everything we do". This vision informed the articulation of three objectives for the ECoC, namely to:

- Promote human growth;
- Strengthen the role of culture as a driving force for sustainable development; and
- Reinforce the international relations and dimensions of cultural life.

These objectives were to be achieved through the implementation of a cultural programme consisting of eight seasons based on the Sami calendar, each with its own distinctive theme (see section 2.3 below).

2.2.2 Selection

In line with Decision 1622/2006/EC, Sweden was entitled to propose a European Capital of Culture for 2014. The Swedish Government established a competition to select the city responsible for organising the event, publishing the notice on 28 November 2007. Four cities applied: Gävle, Lund, Uppsala and Umeå.

At the pre-selection meeting on 8-9 December 2008, Umeå and Lund were deemed to best meet the "European dimension" and "City and citizens" criteria and were invited to submit full applications for the second round of the competition. At this stage, the selection panel considered Umeå's application to be well-prepared and containing many attractive concepts. However, the panel suggested reducing the number of themes and further differentiating between long-term and short-term objectives. The panel offered reservations regarding proposals around the celebration of the Sami Culture, highlighting the importance of dialogue with Sami leaders.

¹⁰ "Curiosity and Passion – the Art of Co-Creation", Umeå's initial application to become ECoC 2014.

The final selection meeting took place in Stockholm in September 2009. Umeå was selected as Sweden's nomination for ECoC 2014 on the basis of strong political and cross-party support, a solid governance and management model, a high quality programme and solid financial support from local authorities. The panel also expressed its sympathy with the ambition of Umeå to make the city and the rest of northern Sweden better known in and connected with the rest of Europe.

The panel made a number of recommendations regarding work to be undertaken in advance of 2014:

- Further development of the European dimension, particularly Umeå's ability to offer a new European cultural perspective from its position in the far north of the continent.
- Ensuring the full inclusion of the Sami people and Sami culture in the plans for the year.
- Building on political commitment with greater involvement and participation of the whole population, as more than audience members.
- Consideration of how to overcome problems in communicating and marketing the ECoC to the rest of Europe, given the city's remoteness and (modest) size.
- Confirmation that, while the wider region will be involved, the City of Umeå will be the centre of planning and programme development, with the active support of the Swedish Government.
- Keeping culture at the heart of the development of the city and region.
- Enabling students and young people from other European countries to participate in the cultural events and encouraging operators to provide affordable travel.

2.2.3 Development of Umeå2014

At the monitoring and advisory meeting on 8 November 2011, the panel complimented Umeå on the hard work, progress and stability of the implementation team, as well as the "Open Source" approach promoting the participation of a wide section of the population, including the Sami community. Recommendations included a request for more detail on the funding negotiations with national and regional governments and the need to further develop the European dimension through greater links to southern Europe (i.e. in addition to existing strong links with other Nordic and Baltic countries). The panel also recommended a more developed media and marketing strategy, with simple messages, clear branding and an improved proposition for visitors from other parts of Europe.¹¹

At the second monitoring and advisory meeting on 17 April 2013, the panel recognised the further progress made and registered confidence that Umeå2014 would be a successful and innovative ECoC likely to learn lessons that would be valuable for future ECoC. For example, on 31 January 2013, one year before the opening weekend, Umeå had held pre-launch events in Umeå and in Stockholm, during which the programme book had been released.¹²

¹¹ Report of the First Monitoring & Advisory Meeting for the European Capitals of Culture 2014, November 2011.

¹² <http://umea2014.se/en/event/programrelease-scharinska/>

However, earlier comments were reiterated, including the significance placed on the European dimension and maximising international interest in Umeå2014, as well as concern that a substantial part of the planned budget was not secured. Given the progress made, the panel recommended that Umeå be awarded the Melina Mercouri Prize by the European Commission.¹³

During the development phase, the governance arrangements were put in place. These included a dedicated ECoC team employed by the Municipality of Umeå and housed at Umeå Town Hall (Umeå rådhus). The team was led by an Artistic Director, Fredrik Lindegren, who had been involved in preparation of the application and had attended the final selection meeting in 2009. At the political level, the political steering committee continued to function, led by the Mayor of Umeå, Marie-Louise Rönnmark. This committee served as the "Project Board", which approved the inclusion of projects in the cultural programme, usually on the basis of a recommendation from a Project Group of managers and co-ordinators.

The Melina Mercouri Prize was used to fund the "Caught by [Umeå]" promotional tour of seven European cities, including London and Paris, in 2013. The tour was preceded by a non-commercial competition named "Artists Caught by [Umeå]", inviting creative people round the world to be inspired and interpret Umeå and northern Sweden.¹⁴ A cube structure was set up in each city to host performances and visitors. A survey was undertaken in each city to gauge interest in Umeå and the ECoC.

As noted earlier, the ECoC forms part of a wider, long-term strategy to develop the cultural, creative and knowledge economies of Umeå. In this context and in parallel to the development of the cultural programme, several new cultural facilities were established during the development phase:

- Opening of the Bildmuseet on the University's arts campus in 2012;
- Development of Väven, which then opened in November of the title-year;
- Creation of 170 metre-long glass installation covered with quotations from Västerbotten's author Sara Lidman, along a pedestrian tunnel leading to the railway station (Järnvägstunneln) in 2012; and
- Opening of "Guitars – The Museum" in January 2014 in the Vasaskolan building, which also houses a rock club, restaurant, music store and record shop, with co-financing from the Municipality of Umeå.

A number of important investments were also made in the city's transport infrastructure. Although not specifically linked to the ECoC, these reflect the growth in the city's population and its economic importance. They include:

- Improvements at Umeå Airport, reflecting and enabling growth in passenger numbers;
- Completion of the Botniabanan (Bothnia Line), a high-speed railway linking Umeå to Stockholm and reducing the journey time between the two cities to around 6 hours 40 minutes over the distance of 680 km;
- Opening of Umeå Östra (East) Station in 2010 to serve the Bothnia Line.

¹³ Report of the Second Monitoring & Advisory Meeting for the European Capitals of Culture 2014, April 2013.

¹⁴ www.caughtbyumea.com

2.3 Cultural programme

2.3.1 Overview

The eventual cultural programme retained the essence of the vision, objectives and themes of the initial and full applications. "Curiosity and Passion", the original slogan, featured prominently in the promotion of the programme. The three objectives set out in the initial application (human growth, sustainable development, international relations) remained important features of the programme and its *modus operandi*, although not explicitly stated. As proposed in the application, the cultural programme was also based on the eight seasons of the Sami calendar:

1. 30 January – 27 February: Dálvvie, Winter. The Season of Caring
2. 28 February – 29 April: Gijrradálvvie, Early Spring. The Season of Awakening
3. 30 April – 19 June: Gijrra, True Spring. The Season of Returning
4. 20 June – 10 July: Gijrragiessie, Early Summer. The Season of Growing
5. 11 July – 28 August: Giessie, Summer. The Season of Contemplation
6. 29 August – 9 October: Tjakttjagiessie, Early Autumn. The Season of Harvesting
7. 10 October – 20 November: Tjakttja, True Autumn. The Season of Desire
8. 21 November – 29 January: Tjakttjadálvvie, Early Winter. The Season of a Journey

The intention of this approach was that each of the eight seasons would have its own character and traits. A launch event marked the beginning of each season. These varied widely. The first season was launched by an open-air event at the city centre waterfront and featuring a stage over the water. Other seasonal launch events featured concerts of different musical genres.

The eventual cultural programme included hundreds of events of different sizes, cultural disciplines and art forms. Some of the large, open-air events attracted very sizeable audiences, such as the launch, which was attended by more than 50,000 people. More than 40 festivals were included in the programme¹⁵, some of which were new and others which predated the ECoC. They included:

- The Opening weekend - Umeå2014 starting point
- The Right Side of OK - comedy show by Klungan
- Eugen Onegin - opera
- Umefolk with the Folk and World Music Gala
- Horror & Art - theatre festival
- Littfest

¹⁵ Umeå2014 Fact Sheet, available at <http://umea2014.se/en/about-umea2014/information-material/>

- Umeå Open - pop festival
- Passion from Norrland - theatre collaboration
- Fair Game - football musical
- MADE - performing arts festival
- Festival Normal - performing arts festival
- A Choral Midsummer Light's Dream - choir festival
- U x U Festival - rock and pop
- Contemporary Circus Festival
- Weaving 2014 - crafts fair
- Survival Kit - art festival
- Blanche & Marie - opera
- Umeå Jazz Festival
- MOVE Film Festival
- Eight Sami Artists - exhibition series
- River Stories and Rock Art in Sápmi - two large regional projects

2.3.2 European dimension

The European dimension of Umeå2014 was based on the overarching concept of the "The Northern Room". This concept was intended to convey different ideas, such as Umeå as a room in the European "house" and Umeå as a place for border-crossing and long-term collaborations within the Sápmi area covering northern parts of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia. Within this overarching concept, a number of specific themes were explored, including some relating to the culture, lands and identity of the Sami. These themes were of European resonance for two reasons. First, the Sami are a cross-border people whose lands (Sápmi) spread across these four countries. Second, the "narrative" of the Sami reflects a wider European narrative about the experience of indigenous people and the impact on their life and culture of their interactions with other peoples and cultures.

Many events explored and highlighted Sami culture in all its forms, e.g. rock-art, music, crafts, dress. Various collaborations and events took place across the Sápmi area of Norrland, as well as in Finland and Norway. Specific projects relating to the Sami theme included:

- Sami week (an existing festival) was brought into the Umeå2014 programme and featured concerts, art and handicraft exhibitions, lectures, films, theatre performances and dance.
- Rock in Sápmi – 100 Migratory; this exhibition at the Västerbotten Museum featured one hundred glass vessels created in the Sami style and which had been exhibited in different places around the world. The exhibition was complemented by a dance performance produced by NorrlandsOperan.
- Made in Sápmi: an exhibition of Sami crafts;

- Traditional Sami Healing Then and Now: an exhibition of traditional Sami healing practices;
- Sami Treasures: an exhibition of Sami utility items at the Skogsmuseet (Forestry Museum) in Lycksele; and
- Publication of a map highlighting places in Umeå with particular relevance to the Sami, for example, traditional site for grazing reindeer.

The European dimension was also ensured through a large number of collaborations with artists and cultural organisations in other countries. These included collaborations with:

- Chinese dance company TAO Dance Theatre, in the Sami Chinese Project, a collaboration with Norrlands-Operan
- Dublin: the 12 Points Festival
- Barcelona: La Fura dels Baus
- Ljubljana: Exodus
- Zagreb: Pogon Centre for Independent Culture and Youth
- Northern Ireland Arts Council
- Joint projects with Rīga 2014 and shared communication activities, for example, Umeå hosted special “Rīga 2014 Information Days” and Umeå enjoyed a “Guest Day” in Rīga in July 2013.

Umeå2014 also sought to reach European audiences and to attract them to the city. As we describe in section 2.4.3, the marketing and communication activities were targeted at a European audience, as well as local and national audiences. Most notably, the “Caught by [Umeå]” tour brought representatives of the city and its cultural sector into direct contact with audiences in several different European cities. The cultural programme also included events of European significance and of interest to a European audience, for example, the performance of the opera Elektra (described in more detail in 2.5.1).

2.3.3 City and citizens dimension

The “City and citizens” dimension of Umeå 2014 was primarily ensured through the use of the “Open Source” approach based on co-creation and participation. The rationale for this approach was, in part, the cultural and political context of Sweden and Umeå in particular, which favoured consensus, dialogue and democracy. The objective of the open source was, in part, to facilitate the building of capacity in the local cultural sector, thus providing long-term benefit.

In essence, the Open Source approach involved setting broad themes and criteria for the programme as a whole and then inviting cultural operators to “fill” the programme themselves. The following steps were taken to facilitate this:

- A much smaller proportion of the cultural programme was directly conceived, produced or commissioned by the delivery team than has been the case in other ECoC. Indeed, aside from the eight seasonal launch events, nearly every project was proposed by cultural operators and other partners rather than by the Umeå2014 team. The team then assessed these proposals against a number of criteria, such as the European dimension;
- A rolling programme of selection, with cultural operators able to propose projects at any point without the need to wait for the publication of a call. Such projects have been considered by the Project Board for funding of between € 2,000 and € 500,000;
- Co-financing offered by Umeå2014 for some projects;
- “Cultural Boost”: an opportunity for associations and independent operators to receive up to SEK 20,014 (€ 2,000) to test or develop new ideas that might become projects within the cultural programme (see section 2.5.3 below);
- The possibility for cultural operators to propose their own projects for approval in the programme without co-financing; and
- Allowing new projects to be proposed right up to the end of 2014.

2.4 Governance and funding

2.4.1 Governance

In contrast to many ECoC, Umeå2014 was not administered by an arm's-length or independent agency, but by the Municipality of Umeå. The municipality's Capital of Culture Board took overall responsibility and oversaw the delivery team, which was comprised of employees of the municipality (of which some were existing employees transferred from other posts and others were new recruits) and led by the management team. This management team was comprised of the Executive Director (until his departure in 2014), the Artistic Director, the Head of Communication and Administrative Manager. Three sub-teams took responsibility for specific areas of activity, namely the Programme Team, Communication Team and Operations Team. Projects and events were produced by cultural operators, mostly from Umeå but also from elsewhere in northern Sweden and beyond.

Prior to the award of the title in 2009, the Board was merely an advisory body with no decision-making powers. Once the title had been awarded, the Board was then given such powers, including responsibility for the budget of the ECoC. This included the authority to approve projects receiving co-financing in excess of SEK 100,000 (€ 11,000); authority to approve co-financing for less than that amount was delegated to the Artistic Director. The Board enjoyed both cross-party support and stability: it was led by the Mayor of Umeå, Marie-Louise Rönnmark, and comprised seven elected politicians from the municipality, drawn from the main parties, each of whom served continuously from 2010 and 2015. From December 2014, the Board relinquished its decision-making role regarding the allocation of funds and reverted to an advisory and scrutiny role, particularly regarding the follow-up of projects already funded.

In contrast, the membership of the delivery team proved more unstable, particularly in the early years of the development phase. Like all ECoC, this reflects the challenge of building, in a short period, a new team with the necessary expertise and putting in place effective management arrangements where none existed before. The Head of Communication left in 2011, whilst the Administrative Manager left towards the end of 2012 and the staff member responsible for corporate sponsorship left in 2013. These departures caused some difficulties during the preparation phase, for example, in terms of handling local media, putting in place administrative systems and recruiting corporate sponsors.

During the course of 2013, the situation became more stable as these three key positions were filled. For example, the appointment of a new Administrative Manager enabled effective management processes to be introduced, freeing up the programme team to develop the cultural programme. Moreover, with a stable management team in place, it was also possible to recruit the necessary staff for the three main teams, namely the "Programme team", the "Communication team" and the "Operations team"; again, like all ECoC, there was a need to scale up in the months leading up to the title year. The situation was further improved as more financial commitments were secured during autumn 2012, notably from the Municipality, the Swedish Ministry for Culture (which allocated funding via the Arts Council) and the European Commission (i.e. the Melina Mercouri Prize). However, the amount of corporate sponsorship secured was ultimately lower than planned (as discussed in section 2.4.2).

There was one further significant change in the Umeå 2014 team. The Executive Director, Jan Björinge, who had been City Manager at the time of the first application and who had led the team from the selection stage, announced his departure in January 2014, although he remained in post until May 2014. Fredrik Lindegren, who had been the director of a local theatre company and who had been appointed as Artistic Director prior to the second selection meeting, gradually took over the main responsibility for the team. With the management arrangements in place and the funding confirmed, it seems that there was a smooth hand-over of leadership from Mr Björinge to Dan Vähä, the Administrative Manager, with little if any adverse effect on the implementation of activities during the title-year.

2.4.2 Funding

Umeå's initial application proposed a budget of SEK 410m, equivalent to just over € 44m, as shown in the table below.

Table 2.1 Proposed sources of finance (initial application)

Source	Total proposed income 2009-14 (SEK m)	Total proposed income 2009-14 (€ m)	% of total proposed income
Ministry of Culture	170	18.3	41%
City of Umeå Municipality	100	10.8	24%
Corporate sponsorship	50	5.5	12%
Region, European Union and Ticket sales	90	9.7	22%
Total	410	44.2	100%

Data provided by Umeå2014 states the eventual budget was € 45,6m for the period 2009-14, which is higher than the budget proposed in the initial application. This figure makes Umeå one of the best-financed ECoC on a per capita basis.

Table 2.2 Actual income

Financing sources	Total income 2009-14 (€m)*	% of total income
City of Umeå Municipality	9.9	22
Ministry of Culture	7.6	17
Other State funding	7.5	16
Regional funding	5.7	12
Corporate sponsorship	3.5	8
EU (Melina Mercouri)	1.5	4
Ticket sales	2.5	5
Other	4.4	10
Other EU projects	2.2	5
International partners	0.8	2
Total	45,6	100

* SEK 100 = € 9.9

Umeå2014's co-creation approach meant that the financing of the ECoC was provided according to a model that is different from most ECoC. Core funding of the ECoC was provided by Umeå Municipality (€9.9m), the Swedish State (€7.6m) and the EU in the form of the Melina Mercouri Prize (€ 1.5m). This funding was administered by the Umeå2014 team within the municipality. As well as covering the core costs of the ECoC (marketing, personnel, etc.) and projects produced by the Umeå2014 team, this funding also served as the co-financing for projects supported by Umeå2014. Other funding for projects (included in the table above) was paid by the public bodies and corporate sponsors direct to the organisations implementing the projects.

Within this total of € 45,6m, expenditure directly provided by the Umeå2014 team (part of the municipality) amounted to € 22.6m, of which €9.3m during the title year.

Table 2.3 Actual direct expenditure by Umeå2014 team

Expenditure	Expenditure in 2014 (€m)**	Total expenditure 2009-14 (€m)**	% of total expenditure
Cultural Programme	7.1	11.7	62
Marketing	0.8	2.1	11
Personnel	0.8	2.4	13
Operating expenditure	0.2	0.5	3
Reserve	-	0.5	3
"Caught by [Umeå]" Tour	-	1.5	8
Total	8.8	18.8	100
Personnel in-kind	0.4	2.1	55
Operating expenditure in-kind	0.1	1.7	45
Total Umeå2014 (project)	9.3	22.6	100

The Melina Mercouri Prize was paid by the European Commission in 2013, following the recommendation of the second meeting of the monitoring and advisory panel. The Prize money was used to fund the Art competition "Artists Caught by [Umeå]" and the campaign tour "Caught by [Umeå]" tour in the autumn of 2013. Using the funding in this way provided two benefits. First, it provided clear evidence of EU funding providing "European added value". Second, it enabled the tour to take place without funding from the municipality; this would have been difficult, given the restrictions on using municipal funds for activity taking place abroad.

Additional EU funding (not included in the totals above) was received directly by several projects within the cultural programme. For example, the CORNERS project received funding from the EU's Culture Programme to enable exchange transnational co-operations between cultural operators in different European countries, particularly those based in outer regions. Umeå's Littfest was also involved in an EU-funded project within the Culture Programme. The EU's LIFE+ programme co-financed "Trash", a musical that promoted environmental sustainability. The Green Citizens project, also funded by LIFE+, held its final conference in Umeå.¹⁶ A project based on the long tradition of storytelling in Northern Sweden received ERDF funding, as did some projects relating to the cultural and creative industries in Umeå. However, many projects found it difficult to secure EU funding, given the timing of the title-year as some of the new EU programmes for the 2014-2020 were not operational in sufficient time.

¹⁶ <http://en.greencit.se/>

The original intention was that corporate sponsorship of € 5.5m would be secured for the ECoC and its cultural programme. However, Umeå2014 faced some severe difficulties in preparing its “offer” for corporate sponsors and thus also in attracting sponsors. Umeå, as well as the wider Västerbotten county, lacked a strong tradition of corporate sponsorship of culture (Balticgruppen’s recent investments in cultural infrastructure and venues being very much an exception); considerable effort would have been required to create the necessary understanding between potential sponsors and cultural operators. Indeed, local and regional companies had tended instead to sponsor sports events and teams. As well as this difficult external environment, there were also two significant difficulties within the approach taken by Umeå2014. First, one of the key members of staff responsible for co-ordinating the corporate sponsorship strategy left the team in 2013, creating a lack of capacity. Second, a sports marketing company was contracted to secure sponsors but failed to make significant progress, perhaps lacking the necessary experience and contacts required for sponsorship of a cultural event such as the ECoC – all the more difficult, since the company was not based in Umeå but was a Stockholm-based subsidiary of a Finnish company. The contract was therefore cancelled mid-way through 2013.

At that point (around September or October 2013), the task of securing sponsorship was brought in-house to be overseen by the recently-appointed Administrative Manager, Dan Vähä, and managed day-to-day by a communication consultant, Malin Johansson. Several companies had been in negotiation with Umeå2014 (some via the sports marketing company) for some considerable time. The priority was therefore to restart these negotiations and bring them to a successful conclusion and agreements were mostly signed in November 2013. However, there was clearly very limited scope to approach and negotiate with a large number of companies at that late stage and the original targets therefore had to be scaled down somewhat. This included reducing the proposed four or five levels of sponsorship down to just two; unlike some other ECoC, Umeå2014 was not able to involve a large number of SMEs as corporate “members” providing small amounts of money. A separate company (owned by the municipality) was created to handle corporate sponsorship, in part to keep such funding separate from funding provided by the municipality. However, in practice, it proved more efficient for most funding to be paid directly by the sponsors to projects and not channelled via this company.¹⁷

The main sponsor was Balticgruppen, which provided SEK 15m (€ 1.61m) directly to projects, such as those managed by NorrlandsOperan. In return, Balticgruppen received profile and certain promotional rights, including use of the Umeå2014 logo. Balticgruppen also worked closely with the Umeå2014 team on various aspects of the communication and generally had a close relationship with the team.

The other sponsors each provided around SEK 1-2m (€ 0.11m - € 0.22m) either in cash or in kind. They included:

- Företagarna Västerbotten, a regional representative in a national organisation representing 75,000 businesses in Sweden;
- VK newspaper, which provided support for projects and free advertising space in local media;

¹⁷ This funding is included in the total income of € 45.6m of the ECoC (Table 2.2) but not the actual direct expenditure by Umeå2014 team of € 22.6m (Table 2.3).

- Motorcentralen, which made a fleet of ten cars available to organisations implementing projects and managed centrally by the Umeå2014 team;
- Swedavia, the airport management company (responsible for Umeå airport, amongst others), which provided free advertising at Umeå airport;
- Ultra, the local bus company; and
- Swedbank, which provided direct financing of projects involving children and young people.

Whilst the number of corporate sponsors was small, those that were interviewed reported their satisfaction with their sponsorship of Umeå2014 and the benefits that they gained. For example, Motorcentralen reported that it had held more promotional events in 2014, on the back of its sponsorship of Umeå2014, than in previous years. Clients of Motorcentralen had provided positive feedback on ECoC events that they had been involved in and the company had enjoyed greater visibility and profile than it would otherwise have had. Both the corporate sponsors interviewed (Motorcentralen and Företagarna) reported that they would be more likely to sponsor cultural events in future, as a result of Umeå2014.

2.4.3 Marketing and communication

Umeå2014 sought to promote the ECoC and its cultural programme to local, national and international audiences. In doing so, the Umeå2014 team faced many of the internal and external challenges that are common to most ECoC.

A first priority of the team was to build the capacity to undertake the marketing and communication of the ECoC. Activity before 2012 had been relatively limited, in part due to an unfilled vacancy in a key communication post and the lack of a specific budget for marketing and communication. As a result, some plans were in place but required further development and a mechanism to implement them. A key turning point was the appointment of the Head of Communication, Elisabeth Lind, in March 2012. From this point on, the team began to develop the necessary capacity, with the Communication Team reaching a peak of nine people in 2014. Some difficulties were faced in finding suitable staff; there was an initial expectation that communication staff could be recruited from within the municipality, although this proved not to be the case and some appointments were consequently delayed.

During 2012, the marketing strategy and plan were also developed and a dedicated budget was allocated; some 7m SEK was initially allocated in 2013, which was later increased to 18m SEK by the title year. The marketing plan was designed to reflect both the essence and the detail of the ECoC and the cultural programme. It therefore emphasised the Open Source approach based on participation and co-creation, as well as the values of "curiosity" and "passion". The plan was also intended to support the municipality's growth strategy for 2050 by helping to make Umeå2014 a catalyst for (further) culture-driven growth. More specifically, the overall goals of the marketing plan were to:

- Increase commitment for Umeå2014
- Attract co-creation
- Strengthen Umeå's profile as an interesting and attractive city of culture
- Help raise the number of visitors to Umeå and the northern room.

As with other ECoC, a major challenge in the development period was to communicate with local media and local citizens at a time when the cultural programme remained relatively undeveloped. In the absence of “good news” stories, the Umeå2014 team faced a certain amount of criticism from local media, to which it was necessary to respond. A priority in 2012 was therefore to set up a news desk to issue press releases and to publicise examples of proposed projects. Whilst the local media continued to express their broad support for the ECoC, it was perhaps not until early 2014 – when sufficient staff were in post and the opening ceremony took place – that the local coverage became more positive. Local receptiveness to the ECoC was also encouraged by the recruitment of local people as “ambassadors”, who signed formal commitments and were trained to fulfil this role within Umeå.

Internationally, a key objective was simply to make Umeå2014 known to a wide international audience and to attract tourists and visitors, who might otherwise have never heard of the city. The implementation of the international dimension of the marketing plan was based upon a recognition of the limits of what was possible within the time and budget available. Indeed, like all ECoC, Umeå2014 did not have the funds to communicate a year-long, diverse programme of events directly and extensively to all its possible international audiences. Instead, the emphasis was on working in partnership with other stakeholders and on strategic and selective communication with travel journalists and other international media. As well as the ECoC “brand”, communication activities emphasised Umeå’s remoteness, the content of the programme and Sami culture as unique selling points.

In this context, the major international communication event was the “Caught by [Umeå]” tour of European cities in the autumn of 2013 (described above), which was led by Umeå2014 and undertaken in partnership with VisitSweden, Visit Umeå, and the University of Umeå. Whilst the tour served as an event in its own right, attracting around 57,000 visitors across the different cities, it served a very important purpose of reaching many foreign journalists and travel writers. As a result of the tour, it was reported that at least 14 foreign press visits were made to Umeå to report on the ECoC, including a representation from Lonely Planet.¹⁸ The timing of the tour also proved beneficial in allowing direct promotion of the opening ceremony to foreign journalists.

The drive to attract tourists was undertaken in partnership with the local tourist office, Visit Umeå. Visit Umeå is a new destination company that started operations in 2013. It is co-owned by the municipality and by local businesses (mostly those in the tourism sector) who own about 51%. There was also collaboration with Visit Sweden, the national tourism agency, which saw the potential for Umeå2014 to contribute to its target of doubling tourist visits to Sweden by 2020. Both organisations collaborated with Umeå2014 in the Caught by [Umeå] tour. Visit Sweden also played a key role in facilitating contacts with foreign journalists and with embassies. Umeå2014 collaborated with Rīga2014 to promote the ECoC in the Culture Lounge at the Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB) travel fair in Berlin in 2013.

¹⁸ <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/sweden/norrland/umea>

Nationally, the communication activities of Umeå2014 faced the challenge of convincing a perhaps sceptical – and Stockholm-based – national media and of attracting visitors from other parts of Sweden to make the journey to Umeå. Efforts to reach these audiences were supported by a representation of Umeå2014 in Stockholm, allowing direct access to national media and cultural institutions based there. As mentioned before, a prelaunch took place in Stockholm one year before the opening weekend, held in the Kulturhuset, a public space for all people in Stockholm. This programme release was carried out with participation from partners in Umeå, project owners and national and international media. The event was also broadcasted on the Umeå2014 website. Whilst many national journalists did attend the opening ceremony, stakeholders were in broad agreement that the national media coverage of the ECoC had been disappointing, i.e. less extensive and less positive in tone than international coverage.

The Umeå2014 commissioned a media analysis study which covered eight European countries along with Russia and China. This confirmed the positive tone in the international coverage, in particular about the individual cultural events taking place, including the opening ceremony. There were also a handful of examples of critical or negative coverage, which were related to the notion of culture-driven growth and a (perceived) lack of coverage of the Sami. Most of the coverage was published in January or February 2014, with especially the German, Spanish and Danish press being active.

2.4.4 Local research and evaluation

Research into the effects and results of Umeå2014 was commissioned or undertaken by different stakeholders before, during and after the title-year. In some cases, the results of this research were made available to this evaluation and have informed the results presented in this report (most notably the various surveys commissioned by Umeå2014).

Umeå Municipality commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake an evaluation of Umeå2014. The evaluation has been underway since 2011, with annual reports submitted to the Umeå2014 board each year and a final report due in May 2015.¹⁹ The focus of the research has been the Open Source approach and, in particular, on five “empowerment goals”, namely:

- City;
- Citizens, e.g. new cultural experiences;
- Cultural life, e.g. increased expenditure on culture;
- The Northern Room; and
- International Relations.

¹⁹ The report was not available at the time of writing.

Other research commissioned or undertaken by Umeå2014 included a survey of project managers regarding the effects of projects and long-term impact on institutions, e.g. networking effects, increase in revenues, etc. and surveys of residents twice a year.²⁰ Citizens' surveys undertaken by Statistics Sweden have included questions posed by Umeå 2014. The Swedish government has also commissioned its own evaluation, which officially started in October 2014 but in practical terms began in April 2015. This national evaluation is being undertaken by the Swedish Agency for Public Management on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and focusses on the use and impacts of money provided by 20 Swedish State agencies.

Umeå University created and funded its own programme for research into Umeå2014 and ECoC in general. Some SEK 3.45m (€ 370 000) of seed funding was allocated from the Vice-Chancellor's own Strategic Fund between mid-2013 and mid-2015. This funded four calls for research projects during 2014 and one call in early 2015 for participation in conferences and travel. The research projects were modest in size, the intention being that, once established, they would attract additional funding from other sources. A diversity of issues was covered by the research including the Sami (addressed by the first call), co-creation, culture as festivals, cultural and creative industries, impact of cultural events in remote rural areas, the economics of ECoC, conception of the Women's History Museum, involvement of schools in Umeå2014 and cultural works in public places. Throughout the programme, the emphasis was on multi-disciplinary co-operation, encouragement of debate and dialogue, and dissemination of research findings. For example, a series of public seminars were held at the University, which featured presentations of research findings, lectures by visiting academics and public debate. A debate was also held at the Glasshouse, which involved academic cultural experts from several different countries. Results of the research were also shared with the Umeå2014 team and team members participated in some of the debates and seminars.

The University's research programme also involved an important international dimension. Researchers were encouraged to incorporate international networking into their projects. For example, a delegation from the University visited the Impacts08 team that had led the evaluation of Liverpool 2008. Funding was provided for a specific research project on "International networks of ECoC". The University also hosted the Eighth Interdisciplinary Conference of the University Network of European Capitals of Culture (UNECC) on "Culture and Growth - Magical Companions or Mutually Exclusive Counterparts" on 23-24 October 2014.

Some of the research undertaken has been published in international journals, for example a research paper on 'Co-creation as a strategy for program management' in International Journal of Managing Projects in Business and 'Implementing Tourism Events: The Discourses of Umeå's Bid for European Capital of Culture 2014' in the Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism. At least one research paper has been presented at international conferences.

²⁰ Some of the results of this research were made available to this evaluation.

2.5 Results

2.5.1 Cultural offer and European dimension

Like most ECoC, the cultural programme presented by Umeå during the title year was more extensive, more innovative and more European in nature than the city's cultural offering in previous years. For example, the Umeå2014 on-line calendar featured a total of 1,054 events. Of the local residents responding to a survey by Statistics Sweden, 78% felt that Umeå's cultural offer had improved during 2014, whilst approximately 0% felt it had been worse than in previous years. Moreover, 69% reported that it had been a good thing for Umeå to have been European Capital of Culture in 2014. Some of the key results were as follows.

First, the focus on the Sami was a very significant factor in making the programme more unique, innovative and European. The focus on the Sami was, in fact, a key part of the wider ambition to make the north of Sweden more visible in Europe and one of the reasons given by the selection panel for nominating Umeå. Whilst the Sami, as Europe's only indigenous people group, have an ancient culture, the choice to base the ECoC cultural programme on this culture was not without its difficulties and controversies. This was anticipated by the pre-selection panel, which suggested that the celebration of Sami culture had to be handled very carefully in dialogue with Sami leaders.

In presenting and celebrating Sami culture, the ECoC faced two potential risks. A first risk was that of misrepresenting the Sami and their culture. Although based on long-established traditions, Sami culture is, like other cultures, diverse and evolving over time. Capturing this complexity was therefore not always an easy task. The risk was of stereotyping or "disneyfication" of the Sami culture merely to satisfy the demands of the tourism industry or international media; for example, there were reports of tour groups and foreign TV crews making repeated demands to see Sami in traditional dress. To overcome this risk, the Umeå2014 team worked closely with various representatives of the Sami, particularly Umeå's Sami Association, the national Sami Association and the Sami Parliament. This included hiring one of the staff members of the national association on secondment, appointing a Sami producer and creating a Sami Artistic Board formed of four prominent Sami artists. The Umeå2014 team also did not specify what elements of Sami culture should be presented and how. Instead, the Open Source approach allowed a wide and contemporary expression of Sami culture, which did not merely commodify and exploit traditional Sami culture. The Bildmuseet invited eight Sami artists – one for each season – to exhibit contemporary works.

There was also the Sami Chinese Project, a collaboration between musicians from the northern Sápmi region and one of China's leading urban indie-folk-rock musicians to create original music for a new performance by the contemporary Chinese dance group TAO Dance Theater and which was co-produced by NorrlandsOperan.²¹ Similarly, the "San – Sápmi" project brought together San musicians, dancers and story tellers from Botswana²² with Sami musicians and storytellers from Sweden to create a new production that was performed at the Umeå Folkets Hus.

²¹ <http://www.norrlandsoperan.se/eng/events/0102-sami-chinese-project/5623>

²² The San people are members of various indigenous hunter-gatherer people groups of Southern Africa.

The other risk was that of alienating segments of the local non-Sami population, for whom Sami themes might not resonate. On this point, some tensions did arise. For example, there were reports of some Sami being verbally abused at the opening ceremony by other members of the audience. A few local citizens also expressed their dissatisfaction via social media. As one said: "no-one from Umeå would feel associated with this display [the opening ceremony] unless they have their roots from the Sami. I have lived here for 8 years and never seen a reindeer!"²³ Moreover, these specific tensions have to be seen in the broader context of long-running tensions over Sami rights and land use, e.g. tensions between mineral extraction and reindeer herding. Clearly, the ECoC by itself was unlikely to address all these tensions but important efforts were made to encourage public debate and to sensitise audiences to Sami culture. In any case, the cultural programme also included many events related to themes other than the Sami and which would also appeal with a wide audience.

Second, the ECoC enabled Umeå to increase the European – and international – dimension of its cultural offer by collaborations with international artists. Although geographically remote, the city's cultural sector already enjoyed many international links. The ambition in the title year was therefore to strengthen these links and also create new ones. This was achieved through different means. Some international artists were specifically invited or commissioned to produce or co-produce events, works and exhibitions. For example, the opening ceremony featured a number of curators from other European countries, as well as from Umeå and elsewhere in Sweden. These included the Ars Electronica from Linz, Austria (the ECoC title-holder in 2009), which produced various electronic elements of the ceremony, such as the drones that flew overhead. The opening ceremony also featured a co-production between the four Sami countries – Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The performance of Elektra (see below) involved a new collaboration between the Catalan dramatic art collective, La Fura dels Baus (the producer of the opening ceremony of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona) and the NorrlandsOperan. Overall, 195 projects featured some sort of collaboration with artists or other cultural bodies in other European countries.

CORNERS

"CORNERS: Turning Europe Inside Out" brought together professional artists from 17 European countries, schoolchildren, young people and senior citizens from Umeå to co-create new works and performances. The aim of CORNERS was to connect artists from different disciplines (photography, video, sound, new technologies, dance, theatre, performance, music) and with different geographical, social, political and professional backgrounds. CORNERS enables the artist to travel to participating regions to observe and encounter citizens and landscapes. They then prepare collective actions to interact in public spaces, addressing "hot topics" from the local context and their specific artistic perspectives. These actions (called "Piazza", "Pazar" or "Stanica") are created where people commonly meet, such as squares, markets, train and bus stations. One primary outcome of Xpeditions are the DocuArt works, responses from the artists / researchers – reflections on their own experience in one particular corner of Europe and the process.

Artists from other countries included the independent culture and youth centre Pogon (Croatia), the cultural NGO Drugo More (Croatia); the cultural festival Exodos (Slovenia), Arts Council Northern Ireland (UK), Teatro Pubblico Pugliese (Italy), ISIS Arts (UK), REX (Serbia) and the City Culture Institute of Gdansk (Poland). The co-created exhibitions and activities took place in a variety of locations in Umeå at the start of the title year.

CORNERS returned to Umeå in November 2014 to organise events in Ersboda, an area about 6 km from the city centre. In partnership with local cultural operators, such as Ersboda Folkets hus and Ersboda Slöjdförening, CORNERS organised "Kids on the Corners", a project to involve children and young people in creation and performance of art. Eight artists shared stories collected in other places across Europe, listened to stories told by children from Ersboda, taught them artistic skills and helped them to create and produce a performance. Another CORNERS event was "Papyrint", during which artists from the Skart group taught local young people how to write and paint. Within the centre of Umeå, CORNERS organised an exhibition of photographs by artists from Sweden/Sapmi and the Ukraine, focusing on the Tatar people and the Sami people.

A third important result of the ECoC was to improve the city's cultural offering in the summer. Like much of northern Sweden, the summer was traditionally a quiet period in Umeå, when many residents retire to their summer houses or go on holiday elsewhere and few cultural events would take place. The importance of summer was emphasised by the designation of two summer seasons within the cultural programme, "Early Summer: The Season of Growing" (20 June – 10 July) and "Summer: The Season of Contemplation" (11 July – 28 August). During these two seasons, there was a particular emphasis on open-air events, some of which were in new venues. The first of these seasons featured an opening ceremony in Döbelns Park, Umeå's oldest park. Other outdoor events included those at the Västerbotten Museum ("Celebrate Midsummer at Gammlia", "Midnight Light Tango Festival") and the "Shakespeare in the Park" at different parks in the city. The second of these seasons featured a new hard-core festival ("090 Hardcorefest"), an opera performance in the outbuilding of a farm ("Opera in the Sheep House") and an expansion of the UxU Festival of music.

Fourth, the ECoC allowed Umeå to implement cultural events that were bigger and more innovative than before and/or held in new and unusual venues. For example, “Back in Baby’s Arms” was a choreographed performance involving 150 women on Kungsgatan shopping street in central Umeå. Another major highlight, performed in an innovative venue, was NorrlandsOperan’s production of Strauss’ Elektra Opera, which had never before been staged in Umeå.

Elektra

Elektra is a one-act opera composed by Richard Strauss and first performed in 1909. It is based on Greek mythology but composed in a modernist and expressionist style. The opera is generally considered to be complex and challenging to perform, particularly the lead soprano role of Elektra.

As well as the musical challenge facing any production of Elektra, the production in Umeå was made all the more challenging by a decision to perform it in an unusual open-air venue (an old military command centre) and at an enormous scale. The performance took place on one of the biggest opera stages ever, measuring 40m x 200m and featured more than 250 participants. It involved cranes, mechanical giants with singers standing inside their chests and skips filled with (fake) blood. A temporary stand was created to seat the audience of 2,000 people per night; each of five nights sold out, with people attracted from across Västerbotten and beyond, including many tourists.

For Umeå, the production of Elektra stretched the boundaries of what was thought possible in the city, in terms of the scale of production, the participation of local residents in the production and the use of an innovative venue. It also provided better international profile both as an event that could be marketed to tourists and through the involvement of La Fura dels Baus. For NorrlandsOperan, the experience gained will inform similarly ambitious projects in the future, with consideration being given to staging Wagner’s Ring cycle at different open sites around Umeå, such as by the river.

2.5.2 Access and participation

Umeå2014 had a positive effect on the access to and participation in culture of local citizens, including many that would not usually attend or participate in cultural events. Indeed, according to the survey carried out by Statistics Sweden, 71% of Umeå’s residents attended an ECoC event of some form. Perhaps reflecting Umeå’s relative affluence and low rate of unemployment, the focus was mostly on widening access and participation for the population in general, with only limited consideration given to disadvantaged and excluded groups (who make up a small proportion of the city’s population). Interestingly, the same survey found that only 24% of Umeå residents estimated that they spent more money on culture during 2014 than during 2013, whilst 5% reported that they had spent less; this might suggest that many people were attracted by free events within the ECoC’s cultural programme.

The title-year saw an increase in audiences for culture across Umeå. For example, Västerbottens museum enjoyed a 63% increase in visitors (70,000 people) compared to 2011.²⁴ Data from the Umeå2014 team showed that as early as April 2014, some 67% of residents of Umeå had attended at least one ECoC event.

²⁴ The museum was closed for refurbishment during part of 2012 and 2013.

This figure was boosted by the opening ceremony in particular, which attracted an audience equivalent to half the population of the municipality of Umeå. Some of the events with the largest audiences were:

- 55,000 Burning Snow (Opening ceremony/ Seasonal Inauguration no.1)
- 47,500 Leonor Fini / Pourquoi pas? (Bildmuseet)
- 11,000 Northern Light (Closing ceremony)
- 10,500 Littfest
- 10,000 Elektra
- 8,000 Seasonal inaugurations (Seasons 2 to 7)

Umeå2014 also helped widen access to culture by producing events in locations outside the city centre, including in other towns and villages that lack the type of venues that are present in Umeå. There was a specific drive to organise cultural events in towns and villages across the Västerbotten County. This included "River Stories", projects organised and funded by Region Västerbotten, the public body responsible for growth and development in Västerbotten County with powers delegated from Västerbotten County Council and the county's 15 municipalities.

River Stories

River Stories was a series of cultural events centred on the rivers of Västerbotten which flow from the mountains in the west to the sea in the east. Its intention was to highlight the importance of the rivers to the development of Västerbotten and its culture, as a source of energy, as transportation routes for people, timber and food and as a source of recreation. The objective was to organise events across the county and thus widen access to culture for communities living along the rivers. River Stories was also intended to help build greater capacity for cultural events to be organised in these communities in the future by involving local cultural bodies in the production and performance of works. Indeed, many of the communities hosted events.

NorrlandsOperan managed River Stories with co-financing from sources that included Region Västerbotten, an executive body which handles national funding for culture on behalf of 15 municipalities and the county council of Västerbotten. The total cost was around SEK 9.5m (€ 1m). River Stories formed an integral part of Umeå2014, having been approved for inclusion in the cultural programme by the Board. It thus carried the Umeå2014 logo and was promoted by Umeå2014 as part of the overall marketing campaign. In line with the Open Source approach, the project promoter, NorrlandsOperan, was responsible for the conception and production of the project.

Around 40 different events featured in River Stories covering a diversity of art forms. They included:

- Witch Burning: a new folk music production was based on Stora Oväsandet ("The Great Noise"), the events between 1668-76 when around 300 people in Sweden were condemned to death for sorcery; the production toured Västerbotten in the early part of 2014.

- "Reindeer Raid" involved an artist and a group of Sami musicians on skis following a reindeer herd along a traditional migratory path to the winter pastures. At various points along the way, the artists held concerts or gave impromptu performances at the communities in which they stopped.
- Jukkaslåtår ("Jukka's tunes"): a tour of seven venues allowed the performance of a new music composition based on musician Gunnar Idenstam's memories of growing up in Jukkasjärvi by Torneälven (the Torne river). The music blended organ, violin, saxophone and digital computer sounds with Sami songs and joik²⁵.

For many of the communities involved, this was the first time that they had hosted events of this nature or scale. For example, Åsele (population 2,800) hosted 14 theatre shows in 2014 in the context of River Stories. Although there is no immediate continuation activity – since River Stories was a one-off event for 2014 - there is reported to be greater interest from the regional institutions to continue to collaborate with the small municipalities as a result.

The objective of widening access to and participation in culture was "mainstreamed" into the cultural programme through the use of horizontal criteria of diversity and equality (as well as sustainability) in the selection of projects. These criteria were complemented by more proactive forms of support for equality. This included a workshop for projects on how to promote gender equality in their design and implementation. There was a survey of projects before the year to see how they were ensuring gender equality, which found that the overwhelming majority promoted it in some way. A follow-up survey was also planned.

Specific efforts were made to maximise the physical accessibility of events. Specialist support was provided by a national task force involving the Arts Council and the Disability Council. The Umeå2014 team inspected all the main venues to ensure they were accessible. Information about the accessibility of venues was made available on the Umeå2014 website in Swedish and English. There was signing (for the deaf) and audio description (for the blind) at the main events, including the opening ceremony. Production grants were given to producers of 15 of the main events in order to produce audio-video recordings that were later made available on the Umeå2014 website for those who had been unable to attend.

As well as these practical steps, the Challenging Power project also produced a series of artistic events that took a "norm-critical" approach, i.e. challenging societal norms that contribute to some people being categorised as "normal" and others as not. The project raised questions about power relations within culture, about access to culture, ownership of culture and representations in culture. Support was provided to project producers for their norm-critical processes. Debate and dialogue was facilitated through networks, seminars and conferences. Projects were followed up to see how they had promoted equality and accessibility and the results of projects were disseminated.

The cultural programme included a number of other projects focussed on issues of equality and diversity. The "Cloud Shadow" project brought together women born in a diversity of other countries to read, interpret, discuss and perform the poetry of Tomas Tranströmer, whose poetry has been translated into many languages.

²⁵ Joik is a traditional Sami form of song.

The participants got to know each through a number of workshops and the project culminated in a final performance and a party. Umeå2014 also featured performances from "Generationskören i Umeå" ("Intergenerational Choir of Umeå").

Whilst Umeå's schools and its 17,200 children aged 1-15 years were already heavily involved in culture, activity in 2014 was much more extensive. Some of the existing programmes were expanded during 2014, allowing an increase in the number of children involved as shown in the table below. For example, expenditure on Umeå Municipality's "Kultur i skolan" programme ("Culture in schools") was increased from SEK 0.93m (€ 100 000) in 2013 to SEK 1.43m (€ 153 000) in 2014.

Table 2.4 Participation of school children

Programme	Children involved		Increase
	2013	2014	%
Kultur i skolan ("Culture in schools")	9,370	13,210	29
Kulturcentrum för barn och unga ("Cultural Centre for children and young people")	3,667	4,132	11
Kulturverket ("Cultural work")	2,950	13,200	78
Skapande skola ("Creative school")	6,347	8,154	22

In addition to an expansion of existing programmes, there were a number of new projects for children that were co-financed by Umeå2014. They included:

- "El Sistema", a collaboration between Umeå Music School and Norrlandsoperan, which used music as a tool for children's social and human development by involving primary and pre-primary school children from Umeå in a choir and orchestra. El Sistema began in Venezuela and now operates in many cities across the world, of which Umeå is the most northerly.
- "Give Me Five", a storytelling project organised by Umeå's libraries for five-year-olds and their parents and focussed on exciting, scary, fun and innovative picture books.
- "Theatre Festival 2014", multi-cultural ten-day theatre festival celebrating the 40th anniversary of one of Sweden's oldest children and youth theatres and which involved children and young people from Teatermagasinet ("Theatre Magazine") in manuscript-writing, improvisation, classical plays, music, acrobatics and film.
- "Plupp", a dance project based around a fictional philosopher of life and a fantasy figure called Plupp. The project was organised by Folkuniversitetet and Balettakademin in collaboration with the Norrlandsoperan, as part of the "River Stories" project. It consisted of workshops for children on dance and fairy-tales, as well as a touring performance.

In line with the co-creation approach, a number of projects were organised by young people themselves. One of the most notable was “FrostByte”, a LAN party²⁶ that had operated in 2012 but which was able to expand considerably during the title-year with help from Umeå2014. Organised by local students in their spare time through a non-profit organisation UmeLAN and UNF (Sweden’s youth temperance association), FrostByte 2014 was Norrland’s largest LAN party to date. It featured computers, programming, card games, video games, electronic sports, fun activities, and people of all ages from all over northern Sweden.

Another important form of participation was the volunteering programme operated by the Umeå2014 team in collaboration with the association Humlan. Around 250 volunteers were recruited to support the opening ceremony, many via the same website that had solicited project ideas. Each of these entered into a written agreement with Umeå2014 setting out the roles and responsibilities of both parties. This included training for the volunteers, provided by Visit Umeå, for example, in hospitality, health and safety, knowledge of Umeå. Volunteers covered a wide range of tasks at the opening ceremony, such as welcoming visitors at the airport and in the city, receiving VIPs, helping with logistics, co-ordinating car parking, etc.

Many volunteers were retained or newly-recruited for later events, particularly the opening events for the other seven seasons, each of which had about 5-20 volunteers. In total, there were around 300 volunteers in 2014.²⁷ The municipality has not maintained contact with the volunteers in any systematic way. However, volunteer positions with cultural operators and other NGOs in city continue to be advertised via a website run by sports organisations in Västerbotten and Norrbotten.²⁸

2.5.3 Cultural capacity

One of the main ways by which the ECoC sought to develop the cultural capacity of the city was through the Cultural Boost. The Cultural Boost enabled a diversity of cultural operators to initiate projects – particularly organisations that were relatively small, new and perhaps even amateur. Before 2014, the municipality had always given good support to cultural NGOs or small organisations, e.g. theatre groups, festivals, galleries, etc., but not to individuals. It had also given money to sports bodies or organisations representing ethnic minorities. This experience was therefore useful in designing the Cultural Boost.

Some 25 calls for proposals were held in total, on a monthly basis, each attracting about 25 applications on average. Of these, four were chosen each month, one hundred in all, each receiving funding of SEK 20,014 (about € 2,100). The Cultural Boost was promoted via an advertising campaign featuring posters, flyers, press releases. The campaign did not need to be extensive as news soon spread by word of mouth and by the visibility of funded projects. Another department in the municipality helped establish contacts with NGOs, e.g. via its newsletters.

²⁶ “A LAN party is a temporary gathering of people with computers or compatible game consoles, between which they establish a local area network (LAN), primarily for the purpose of playing multiplayer video games.” (Source: Wikipedia)

²⁷ <http://umea2014.se/2013/11/wanted-volunteers-for-the-opening-weekend/>

²⁸ www.ideellakrafter.se

The criteria for selection were the same as those of the main programme, including the horizontal criteria of sustainability, diversity and equality. Cultural Boost was open to anyone, including individuals and small organisations that sometimes struggle to plan far ahead or lack capacity for big projects. For many NGOs, it was the first time they had applied for funding. A lot of activities took place that otherwise would not have happened. It was reported by the Umeå2014 team that the modest sums of money available had made the recipients quite focussed.

Funding provided from the Cultural Boost covered the set up costs of small projects, including artist fees, advertising, travel, catering and salary costs. Indeed, the intention was to enable operators to try ideas that could grow into something for 2014 - not merely to write applications for bigger projects but to organise events that gave visibility to the operators concerned and to the ECoC in general. Events supported by the Cultural Boost covered a diversity of art forms, including theatre, dance, concerts, punk, and handicrafts and they took place in different locations around the municipality of Umeå. Projects funded by the Cultural Boost included: creation of a Sami film for the opening of each season, as a sort of public relations or marketing tool; funding for a Sami artist to do preparatory work and archive research in advance of her exhibition (about State-sponsored eugenics linked to the Sami) at the Bildmuseet; and the Festival Normal which, after receiving funding from the Cultural Boost, received full project funding for a theatre/performance festival about the limits placed on people with disabilities in terms of the parts they can play, etc. The UxU music festival specifically used the Cultural Boost funding to prepare an application for a bigger project and to apply to other funders, since the project idea connected well to 2014. The full event involved international artists and attracted an audience of 3,000 people.

The impact of the Cultural Boost was threefold. First, as we have explained, project ideas were enabled to be tested and developed, so that larger, more ambitious events could feature in the cultural programme. Second, the Cultural Boost has proved vital in building the capacity of small cultural organisations in the city; those supported have emphasised that not only the funding but also the advice and support offered was essential. Third, the concept of the Cultural Boost was replicated in places such as Örnsköldsvik (a small city south of Umeå, about one hour's train journey away and with a population of 29,000 people). Örnsköldsvik's Cultural Boost provided funding for 56 projects put forward by local cultural bodies, most of them relatively small in size, which enabled them to implement larger and more ambitious projects than they had previously done. Whilst the capacity and experience gained by those supported by the Cultural Boost in Umeå and elsewhere will endure, there is potential for the long-term impact to be far greater, if some kind of continuation fund can be created. With that in mind, the Municipality Örnsköldsvik reported that it was considering a follow-up to the Cultural Boost.

2.5.4 International profile

As in other small provincial cities that have hosted the ECoC, a key objective of Umeå2014 was to raise the international profile of the city and attract tourists and other international visitors. As discussed earlier, the international promotion of Umeå2014 was undertaken in partnership with Visit Umeå and Visit Sweden. It included the “Caught by [Umeå]” tour of European cities in the autumn of 2013 and representation at the ITB Berlin in the same year.

The international promotional campaign achieved some success in raising the profile of Umeå and of the ECoC by attracting the interest of the international media. At least 100 foreign journalists attended the opening and benefited from a dedicated hospitality and events programme organised by Umeå2014. As a result of these efforts, there were some 1,837 articles about Umeå2014 reported in the foreign media from November 2013 to January 2015. These included coverage by the New York Times²⁹ and the UK’s Guardian newspaper, amongst others. Umeå has also been listed as one of Rough Guide’s “Top Ten Cities” in the world.

Analysis by Umeå2014 has estimated that this press coverage has reached an audience of up to 2bn, been worth a notional value of SEK 380,000 (€ 41,000) and been of reasonable quality (i.e. a score of +9.3 on a scale of +20 to -20). There was also coverage by television stations in France, Italy and Germany (including a one-hour programme) amongst other countries.

The international promotional efforts were complemented by activities to improve the welcome of tourists arriving in the city. Visit Umeå distributed information kits to local businesses, so that they could be informed about the ECoC and thus help with the general effort to welcome tourists, for example, by passing on information about cultural events and transport timetables, etc. Västerbotten Tourism also collaborated with Umeå2014 in the preparations for the opening ceremony, for example, in providing hospitality training for local taxi drivers.

The effort to attract tourists and other visitors was assisted by a number of new infrastructure developments that took place in parallel to the ECoC: improvements at Umeå Airport, completion of the high-speed rail link to Stockholm and opening of Umeå Östra (East) Station. In 2013, a new ferry connection opened between Umeå and Vaasa, Finland.

In a context of growth in international tourism and given these infrastructure improvements, it is not possible to isolate the effect of the ECoC on tourist visits to Umeå. However, data provided from the stakeholders in Umeå demonstrates some positive trends. The ambition of Visit Umeå was to increase the number of visitors by 15% in 2014 compared to 2013. This appears to have been exceeded, as the number of hotel nights booked increased by 21% from 2013 to 2014 and the number of nights at all tourist accommodation (i.e. including hostels) increased by 24% over the same period. Hotel occupancy at weekends increased from 45% in 2013 to 55% in 2014. Passenger traffic on the Wasaline ferry to Finland increased by 5%.³⁰ During 2014, the number of hits on the Visit Umeå website also increased by 69% compared to 2013; there were 534,000 hits of which 68% represented unique visitors.³¹

²⁹ http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/01/10/travel/2014-places-to-go.html?_r=0

³⁰ Visit Umeå

³¹ Visit Umeå

2.6 Legacy

2.6.1 Continuing activities, new venues

Like all ECoC, Umeå2014 presented a cultural programme that was intended to be one-off; not all events and projects were intended to continue. There is no specific legacy funding designated, although a small surplus is expected from the Umeå2014 budget, which is yet to be reallocated. Looking ahead, per capita expenditure on culture by Umeå Municipality is around twice the average of Swedish municipalities and continues to grow. As a result, some of the activities that were new for 2014 will continue and some existing events will continue to operate at a higher level than before 2014.

2.6.2 Cultural governance

In the short-term, the management arrangements for the ECoC will be wound down, as activities come to an end. The Umeå2014 team is gradually being disbanded during the course of 2015, with many staff moving to other posts in the municipality³² or with other employers in the city. As described above, the Board has moved from a decision-making role (with the authority to allocate funds) to more of an advisory and scrutiny role.

At present, there is no plan for a specific legacy body to continue support cultural activities in the future. This plan is very much in line with the Open Source approach; some 80-90% of the cultural programme was implemented by cultural operators, rather than the Umeå2014 team and it is these operators that have built additional capacity as a result of the ECoC. The disbanding of the Umeå2014 team therefore does not represent an extensive loss of capacity for production. It does, however, represent a loss of capacity for co-ordination and nurturing of cultural activities, particularly those produced by small or new organisations, including NGOs and amateur bodies.

Such organisations benefited not only from the funding provided for the ECoC but also from the support and advice offered by the Umeå2014 team. There is some discussion of a follow-up to the Cultural Boost being supported by the municipality, although firm plans were not in place at the time of writing. Collaboration between Umeå Municipality and Visit Umeå will require new arrangements, given the disbanding of the Umeå2014 team, although the municipality remains a major stakeholder and funder in the tourist body.

2.6.3 Legacy arrangements

Umeå has invested SEK 3,669m (€ 393m) on infrastructure over the period 2009-2014, of which SEK 1,292m (€ 138m) has specifically been spent on cultural infrastructure.³³ One of the most important legacies of 2014 (and accounting for 80% of the new cultural infrastructure) is the Väven cultural centre, which opened in November 2014. Although not specifically funded by the ECoC, the Väven represents one of the main means by which Umeå will sustain the legacy of 2014. As well as hosting the City Library and the Women's History Museum, the Väven will host various cultural events throughout the year. It thus represents a significant ongoing commitment to (expenditure on) culture by Umeå Municipality.

³² Many members of the Umeå2014 team were recruited or seconded from other parts of Umeå Municipality.

³³ Umeå2014 data

The legacy for the other cultural institutions depends very much on the availability of continued funding. Funding for the Bildmuseet provided by Umeå Municipality is due to come to an end in 2015, requiring a search of additional funding, in addition to the core funding provided by Umeå University.

2.6.4 Long-term strategy

The future development of culture in Umeå is inextricably tied up with the wider development of the city. The stated ambition of Umeå Municipality is to grow the city to a population of 200,000 by 2050. Of course, this involves a growth in the economic base of the city and this is expected to come from further growth of the university, as well as from hi-tech industries that benefit from the university's presence in the city. It is also expected that the city's cultural sector and its cultural offering will continue to grow, particularly since much of the population growth is expected to consist of students and professionals, who are likely to increase the demand for culture – and for different sub-cultures - in the city. Some population growth is also expected to come from the continued arrival of refugees and other migrants, who will add to the cultural diversity of the city.³⁴

In this context, Umeå Municipality will continue to pursue the ten-year strategy for culture covering the years 2010-2020 which will be updated to take account of various lessons learnt through the ECoC year. There are also plans to exploit and build on the experience and profile gained from the ECoC by applying for the title of European Green Capital, where Umeå was selected as a finalist in 2016 and 2017. The goals of the tourism organisation Visit Umeå AB include developing, promoting and marketing Umeå and the region as a tourist, conference, trade and event city. Its vision is for Umeå to become Sweden's fifth largest event city by 2020 and that the tourism industry shall have doubled in size by this year.

³⁴ See, for example, "Welcome to Umeå region", a project co-financed by the municipalities of the Umeå Region, the European refugee fund, the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish Migration Board.

2.7 Conclusions

2.7.1 Successes

Amongst the successes of Umeå, we can highlight the following.

- **The Open Source approach.** Most title-holders establish separate delivery agencies to implement the ECoC and its cultural programme. This approach offers several advantages, such as clarity over governance and (the potential for) artistic independence in developing the cultural programme. However, the risk is that this new player is not willingly accepted by the cultural sector or other stakeholders who fear loss of influence or profile. Where this agency produces most of the cultural events, there is also the risk that very little capacity is built in the rest of the city's cultural sector. In the case of Umeå, the Open Source approach meant that most of the experience and capacity was gained by cultural operators that will remain in operation beyond 2014. The Open Source also allowed cultural sector considerable opportunity to shape the programme in a way that was authentic, reflecting Umeå, its context and its character; on the whole, it was not developed by "outsiders" that had been "parachuted" into the city for the title year and who then left – a risk that many ECoC face. At the same time, the Open Source approach represented a considerable risk; would a credible programme emerge from the city's cultural sector? Would the programme offer the necessary diversity and European dimension, whilst also being coherent? We might suggest that the Open Source approach is not appropriate for all cities: perhaps only those with an openness to co-creation and with capacity for international collaboration, and where there is also a context of trust and a tradition of consensus.
- **Presentation of Sami culture.** To base much of the overall ECoC concept and its content on Sami culture made Umeå2014 unique but created risks (as we have described). Not everything worked perfectly and not everyone was satisfied with the Sami theme and the way it was articulated. Nonetheless, Sami culture was represented in an ECoC for the first time and perhaps for the first time at this scale in a European context. New capacity for Sami culture has been developed and a new appreciation for Sami culture amongst audiences in Norrland and elsewhere. The local Sami organisations that actively participated in Umeå2014 appear to be growing in confidence and plan to increase their activities, notably to the Stockholm area.

Moreover, the ECoC has shown the scope for respecting a traditional indigenous culture, whilst also showing it can fuse with other cultures in a very contemporary way.

- **Local ambition.** Umeå was one of the smallest cities and the most northerly to date to have hosted the ECoC title. The fact that it won the nomination and implemented a successful cultural programme is a considerable achievement. Geographical remoteness did not prevent this ECoC from being innovative, contemporary and European; Umeå2014 was no cultural backwater. This success can be credited to the ambitions of local stakeholders, not only to be a successful ECoC but to creatively redesign and remake their city as a centre of growth and as a cultural destination. Looking at the evidence, we can conclude that the ECoC has made an important contribution to the fulfilment of this ambition: it has provided impetus to complete some important investments in cultural infrastructure (notably Väven), it has generated international interest in the city as a cultural destination and it has built capacity within the city's cultural sector via the Open Source approach.

- **European added value.** As we have noted, Umeå has enjoyed steady growth in its cultural life in recent decades, reflecting the policy of the municipality to promote culture-driven development of the city. Whilst Umeå did not therefore “need” the ECoC for the development of the city and its cultural sector, we can see that value was added by this European title. Local and national stakeholders made considerable additional funding available for culture during the title year. The city gained an international profile from hosting the title that it would not otherwise have enjoyed, e.g. from international press coverage, not least that offered by Lonely Planet and the New York Times. There was additional impetus to foster international collaborations, such as those through CORNERS and the Elektra Opera. Last, Umeå2014 can be said to have enriched Europe’s cultural sector and its offering, particularly by highlighting Sami culture (as discussed above) and also by giving prominence to various artists from other countries who were invited to perform or exhibit in Umeå and thus achieve international recognition.

2.7.2 Lessons in delivery

- **ECoC within a wider drive for culture-based development.** Although massively important for the city and its development, the success of Umeå2014 – and the potential for a legacy – was very much dependent on it being part of a wider strategy for urban development. Umeå2014 was not the catalyst for the development of the city, nor the end-point. The city’s cultural offering, as it stands, reflects several decades of growth and, in particular, the expansion of the university and the industries that depend on it. It is perhaps growth of this nature that has enabled Umeå’s culture life to develop in this particular way – innovative, contemporary and outward-looking. Looking ahead, the legacy of Umeå2014 will both contribute to the continued expansion of the city and be dependent on it.
- **The need for political support.** Like all ECoC, Umeå2014 inevitably had a political dimension, having required political support from the outside and having been intended as a tool to achieve local policy objectives, cultural and otherwise. Again, like all ECoC, this political dimension was present in the setting of objectives, in implementation of the programme and perhaps even in the selection of projects (e.g. via the Board’s role in the allocation of funds).

However, it does not appear that the freedom to make artistic choices and to manage operations on a day-to-day basis were unduly limited. Moreover, it would also appear that the political level offered a certain stability to the ECoC, even if the operational arrangements were slightly uncertain in the early part of the development phase. Here, we can highlight in particular the early approval of funds from the municipality and the willingness to make staff available (e.g. via secondment or recruitment). An important reason for this political stability must undoubtedly be both the cross-party support that was offered from the outset and the continuity in individual membership of the Board and the support offered, not least by the Mayor. The extent to which Umeå exploits the cultural legacy of 2014 will depend in part on the choices made by the city’s political leaders in the months and years to come.

- **The need to build a stable, effective team at an early stage in the development period.** Ultimately, the governance of Umeå2014 worked well. However, it was relatively late in the development phase that the final team was formed, with many key positions not being filled until a relatively late stage, i.e. in 2012 or even 2013. In some cases, this reflected the departure of staff from these posts, who then required to be replaced. Whilst each individual had his/her own reason for leaving, there was perhaps at the outset a need, first, to look beyond the team that had been involved in the bid and, second, to look outside the municipality for the best recruits. Moreover, as with other ECoC, there was also perhaps a need to scale up the team in general at an earlier stage. Having the team in place at an earlier stage might have allowed earlier development of much of the content of the cultural programme. This would have greatly facilitated the international communication of the programme (e.g. to tour operators planning for the year 2014) and the recruitment of corporate sponsors (who wished to see what they would be sponsoring and what the benefits to them would be). Equally, having more content of the cultural programme available at an earlier stage would also have provided more “good news” to feed to local media.
- **The limits to which international audiences can be directly reached.** Inevitably, a small city on Europe’s periphery will face an enormous challenge in reaching an international audience. An expensive global marketing campaign could very quickly exhaust the budget available to any ECoC in a city such as Umeå. Umeå built alliances with key players responsible for marketing the city and the country internationally, as well as with Swedish embassies abroad. This not only cut the costs of marketing, it also facilitated links with international media that would then report on the city and its ECoC. Where it had to invest resources, Umeå2014 did so quite strategically and intelligently: in the Caught by [Umeå] tour of European cities and in the promotion of the opening ceremony – and in the hospitality offered to visiting journalists. These were not cheap, but by reaching key targets they undoubtedly provided a better return on expenditure than would have been the case with a “conventional” marketing campaign. For example, this is reflected in the number of foreign journalists that attended and reported on the opening ceremony. This also represented a very personal approach to marketing, which perhaps resounded more effectively with foreign journalists and travel writers and, by extension, the audiences reached by those individuals. It is, of course, impossible to quantify the impact of this campaign in terms of increased visits to the city. However, as we have already noted, the impact of this marketing campaign is reflected both in the extent of coverage and its positive tone, e.g. as one of Rough Guide’s “Top Ten Cities”.

3.0 Rīga

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The city

Rīga developed rapidly as an industrial centre in the 18th century, with the city becoming a key seaport and railway junction of the Russian empire in the 19th century. The city's population grew quickly around the turn of the 20th century and again after the Second World War when its status as a naval and industrial centre brought extensive migration from other parts of the Soviet Union. With a population of 700,000, Rīga is now the largest city in the Baltic States. The city dates back at least 800 years and its historic centre has a fine collection of Jugendstil (art nouveau) buildings and in 1997 was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Rīga has also retained a multicultural heritage, with ethnic Latvians making up 46% of the population, ethnic Russians 40% and many other communities strongly represented.³⁵ About a third of the country's population now live in the city.

Although the city has been affected by a loss of manufacturing industries since the 1990s, today Rīga is an important commercial centre, accounting for over half of Latvia's total economic output and the majority of the country's foreign investment³⁶. Around 40% of Latvia's economically active units (companies and employed people) are found in Rīga³⁷. The city is also an important centre for culture and education, while tourism and the creative industries (especially the design and audio-visual/multimedia sectors) have been growing in significance in recent years³⁸.

3.1.2 The cultural sector

Rīga has a relatively strong cultural offer with a series of venues, museums, theatres and galleries along with a number of high quality cultural artists. Partly because of its status as capital of Latvia, the city has been home to the Latvian National Opera since 1923, hosting around 200 opera and ballet performances each year³⁹, the Latvian National Theatre, focussing on classical Latvian productions and comedy performances, as well as the New Rīga Theatre, Daile Theatre and Mikhail Chekhov Russian Theatre.

The city offers many art galleries and museums including an Art Museum in the former Rīga Stock Exchange which opened in 2011, the Latvian National Museum of Art, Rīga Art Space and many museums dealing with ethnography, folklore, military and maritime history. The city is also home to many music festivals and multiple concert venues including the Dome Cathedral and Mezaparks open-air stage, Kipsala exhibition centre, the House of Blackheads, Great Guild and Small Guild. The city is also home to many cultural centres and a number of creative industry facilities, including the Spikeri creative quarter and Kalncierna Street creative industry complex.

³⁵ 2011 Census, available from <http://www.csb.gov.lv/en/statistikas-temas/population-census-2011-key-indicators-33613.html>

³⁶ <http://www.liveRiga.com/en/4165-Riga-iespeju-pilseta-ikvienam>

³⁷ 2012 Central Statistics Bureau (Latvia)

³⁸ <http://www.liveRiga.com/en/4177-radosa>

³⁹ <http://www.liveRiga.com/en/1172-latvian-national-opera>

The new national library of Latvia which can also be seen as part of the cultural offer of Rīga opened in 2014 during the ECoC year. Although this project was not part of the ECoC programme (see below) it is seen as both a symbol of the year and also played host to a number of different events and activities linked to ECoC.

Many of the major cultural facilities in Rīga are funded and run either by the City Council or by the National Government. Rīga City Council has a strong Cultural Department (previous led by Diana Cīvle who is now the Director of Rīga 2014 Foundation which is a body set up to coordinate the ECoC) which coordinates the planning and implementation of various cultural activities and facilities. The national Latvian Government also fund various cultural facilities in the city whilst NGOs in the cultural sector are also active with most of the 579 cultural NGOs found in Latvia being located in the city.

Prior to Rīga receiving ECoC status the city has played host to a number of large international events and activities ranging from the Tall Ships Regatta, the Eurovision Song Contest and the NATO summit. The city and the wider country also hosted the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2015 (which had a cultural element) and is planning a series of large cultural activities to celebrate 100 years of Latvia in 2018.

3.2 Development of the ECoC

3.2.1 Application

Work on the development of Rīga's bid began in 2008, driven by the then Head of the City Council's Department of Culture. The fact that the Head of the Cultural Department became involved in the bid at an early stage and was often seen as the main driver behind it meant that the ECoC became an intrinsic part of the city's wider cultural policy and was well aligned to the overall work of Rīga City Council. The application for ECoC therefore became an important part of and influence for the city's broader cultural agenda, further strengthened when the Head of the Council's Cultural Department became the Head of the Rīga 2014 Foundation.

The main motivations for bidding for the ECoC centred on growing the cultural offer in the city and alongside this, a desire to increase the profile of Rīga as a key destination for tourists as well as cultural players (including visiting artists, theatres and orchestras). Linked to this was the Council's focus on 'expanding' the cultural diversity of the city towards different genres, difficult types of audiences and different parts of the city so that a wider range of local people could become involved in the cultural agenda.

Although the overall decision to apply for ECoC status came from within the City Council, the decision was taken in consultation with a variety of stakeholders. This stakeholders' consultation came in the form of a variety of open meetings with cultural players, informal and formal meetings with other Departments in the City Council as well as a variety of press releases to ensure local people were aware of the intentions to bid for the title.

The overall content of the bid started to be firmed up in 2008 with a series of focus groups attended by over 200 stakeholders linked to a broad range of cultural, social, economic and environmental policy areas in the city. Attendees of these open meetings consisted of individuals from the public, private and the NGO sectors who were firstly informed of the ECoC opportunity and its timescales and secondly asked to discuss and debate the various themes which a programme might include. From these initial focus groups six 'lines' or themes were developed (set out below) which helped bring shape and focus to the emerging bid.

The application stage also saw the development of the Rīga 2014 Foundation which is the arm's length organisation set up by Rīga City Council to coordinate the application and development stages. During the initial application stages the Foundation had 5 staff.

3.2.2 Selection

In line with Decision 1622/2006/EC, Latvia was entitled to propose a European Capital of Culture for 2014. The Latvian Government organized a competition to select the city responsible for organising the event, publishing a call for application in December 2007.

Four cities applied for ECoC status within Latvia: Cēsis, Jūrmala, Liepāja and Rīga, with only Jūrmala failing to make the shortlist for the next stage after the pre-selection meeting on 15-16 December 2008. The panel made a number of critical comments about the applications at this stage, with Rīga's presentation described as disappointing, with little detail on the cultural programme and unsatisfactory responses to two criteria (the European dimension and 'City and citizens'). The quality of the city's existing cultural infrastructure and importance of the city to Latvia and the Baltic region were the factors that ensured progress to the next stage.

The final meeting of the selection panel in September 2009 saw Rīga recommended as Latvia's candidate for the 2014 ECoC. In making its recommendation, the panel made a number of observations regarding their bid:

- The cultural programme should be further elaborated (and exceed the usual cultural offering in the city).
- More detail should be given on the European dimension, specifically Rīga's unique perspective on European culture.
- Support and engagement amongst citizens should be evidenced.
- More information should be given on how the challenge of communicating the year to the rest of Europe will be met.
- While the involvement of the wider region was welcomed, the city of Rīga should remain at the heart of planning and programme development for the Year.
- The Latvian Government's involvement and support should be evidenced.
- Consideration should be given to include Cēsis and Liepāja in the programme.
- Reassurances should be given that culture will remain at the heart of city and regional development.
- Ensuring should be given that Rīga 2014 would be accessible to young people from other European countries.

- Greater private sector involvement in and support for the project should be sought.

3.2.3 Development of Rīga 2014

At the monitoring and advisory meeting in November 2011, the panel complimented Rīga on their progress, albeit in the context of very limited staff resources (5 full-time staff at that time) and a comparatively small budget despite the ambitious nature of the project. Other comments included a request for more elaboration of the European dimension, more evidence of sustainability planning and more attention on communication (including to the citizens of Rīga themselves) and clear branding of Rīga 2014 as Latvia's ECoC. At the second monitoring and advisory meeting in April 2013, Rīga's delegation responded to the points made at the first meeting. The panel complimented Rīga on the stability of their administrative team and support of political structures, but again requested more sustainability planning. This included on-going funding for any new cultural infrastructure and services post 2014, as well as a renewed focus on Rīga's Cultural Strategy 2008-2025 that was highlighted at earlier stages in the process.

The development phase for Rīga 2014 was undertaken at a difficult time according to most cultural players in the city – both in terms of cuts to public funding but also in relation to the general economic climate facing Rīga and Latvia as a whole. Prior to ECoC (particularly between 2008-2011), the Cultural Department at Rīga City Council made a number of budget cuts (of approximately 40%) which directly affected the scale and scope of the cultural offer for the city as well as the various organisations involved in the culture and art sector. Although the development of the ECoC for Rīga was undertaken at a challenging economic time for the city, most stakeholders in fact felt that the timing of the announcement was very positive for the following three reasons:

- It helped raise the profile of cultural policy within the City Council at a time when it could have been 'lost and forgotten' within the wider public policy debate (i.e. at a time when other more pressing challenges were more prevalent on the policy agenda including unemployment, a lack of economic growth and other associated social problems linked to housing, crime, health and cuts to welfare).
- It helped to ensure that the budgets attached to the cultural agenda did not reduce any further than it had done in recent years because there was a defined, a unique and also a 'special project' that cultural players could use to influence and encourage budget holders to support.
- It helped to raise the 'morale' of cultural players in the city and further afield in Latvia when most had often experienced budget cuts, job losses and a general decline in cultural activity within the city. Having this 'morale boosting' focus helped stimulate and galvanise Latvia's cultural sector throughout a difficult and challenging time in its existence.

The development of the cultural programme was focussed around six lines which emerged out of the initial focus mentioned above. The six lines then informed three open calls for projects launched in 2009 which acted as the main mechanism through which organisations and individuals could put forward their ideas and express an interest in being directly involved in running an ECoC activity. Key aspects of this open call included:

- the calls being advertised in local media, via the web and also via the various cultural networks which those running the ECoC programme were linked to;⁴⁰
- clearly stating the six main lines (themes) of the programme in the open call so project ideas and proposals generated sat well within the overall focus of the programme;
- using a simple pro-forma which applicants filled in to state their idea, a basic costing, key partners and the planned outputs and outcomes of their activity; and
- the calls were completely open to any organisation (regardless of organisational type, size of organisation and their level of experience in running similar cultural activities).

A total of 350 project ideas were stimulated through the three open calls from a variety of different organisations, including State institutions, cultural NGOs, community groups and individual citizens. Following this came a period of assessment done by the programme curators working for the Rīga 2014 Foundation who short listed potential projects based on the strength of their project idea, their initial plans for implementation, the overall deliverability of their offer and the strength of alignment to the six programme lines. From the 350 initial project ideas around 200 were shortlisted for further development. This development process was more 'hands-on' and included closer joint working between the relevant programme curator associated with the line that the projects fell under and the project lead. The programme curators also worked closely together at the programme level to ensure that emerging projects came together to make a cohesive and single programme. The completed programme was ready for communication in early 2013.

Responsibility for infrastructure projects remained with the State and municipal authorities (rather than the Foundation), with the exception of the Stūra Māja (KGB building) which was coordinated from within the Foundation under the Freedom Street topical line (see below). This building was reopened for visitors as an exhibition venue on a temporary basis but has now secured a long term plan to open more permanently. A number of new cultural facilities were planned for the lead up to the title year including the new building for the Latvian National Library, a new Rīga Concert Hall, an improvement programme for the National Museum of Art and a new Contemporary Art Museum in a former thermal power plant. Of these, only the first two were fully opened in 2014 and therefore part of the ECoC programme.

⁴⁰ Particularly the six Programme Curators who helped co-ordinate each of the six lines of the programme.

3.3 Cultural programme

3.3.1 Overview

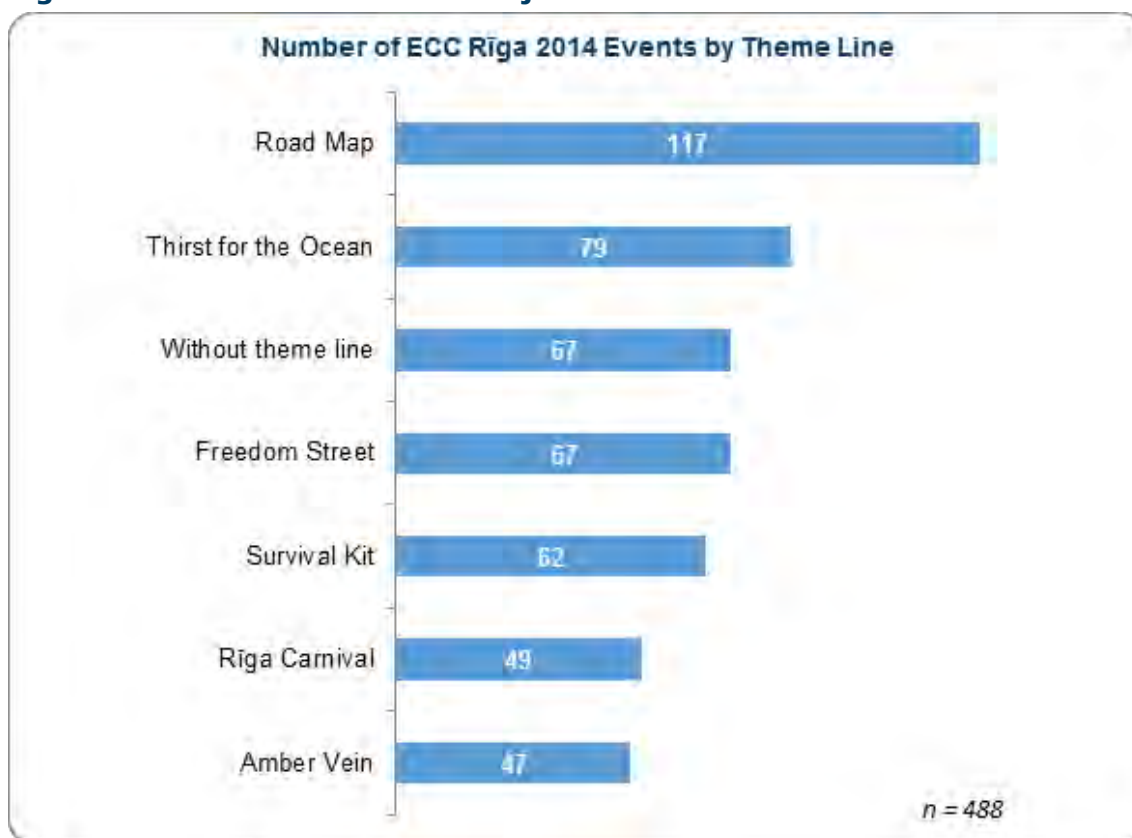
The overall programme for Rīga 2014 was divided into six 'topical' lines – these lines represent themes that helped shape the different activities attached to the ECoC programme. A total of 488 individual activities or projects fell under these six lines which were as follows⁴¹:

- **Freedom Street:** Issues of power and freedom, as well as commemorating the centenary of World War I – exhibitions, art and music events, theatrical tours, literary readings, open-air cinema, digital laboratories and trade fairs.
- **Survival Kit:** Ancient skills and modern knowledge in various cultural forms – creative workshops, seminars, research projects, interactive ecological events, art in public spaces, fairs, competitions, talent shows, performances, discussions.
- **Road Map:** Visions of city development – excursions, bicycle routes, open house days, interdisciplinary events, creative areas in the urban environment, circus performances, happenings in unusual places, anthropological documentary films.
- **Amber Vein:** The historical Amber Route from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and new European networks – interdisciplinary expeditions, presentations, international photography campaigns.
- **Thirst for the Ocean:** Intellectual themes, spirituality and wisdom – international conferences and exhibitions, multimedia events, concerts and cinema.
- **Rīga Carnival:** Celebrations, festivals, seasonal rites, concerts, traditional and unusual events and interactive games.

The graph below provides a breakdown of the events or projects split by the main themes of the cultural programme to show the balance of activity between the six lines.

⁴¹ Wording taken from the original application.

Figure 3.1 Breakdown of ECoC Projects



Source: Rīga 2014 Foundation mapping exercise (2015)

Particular large and high profile highlights of the ECoC programme according to those interviewed during the evaluation included⁴²:

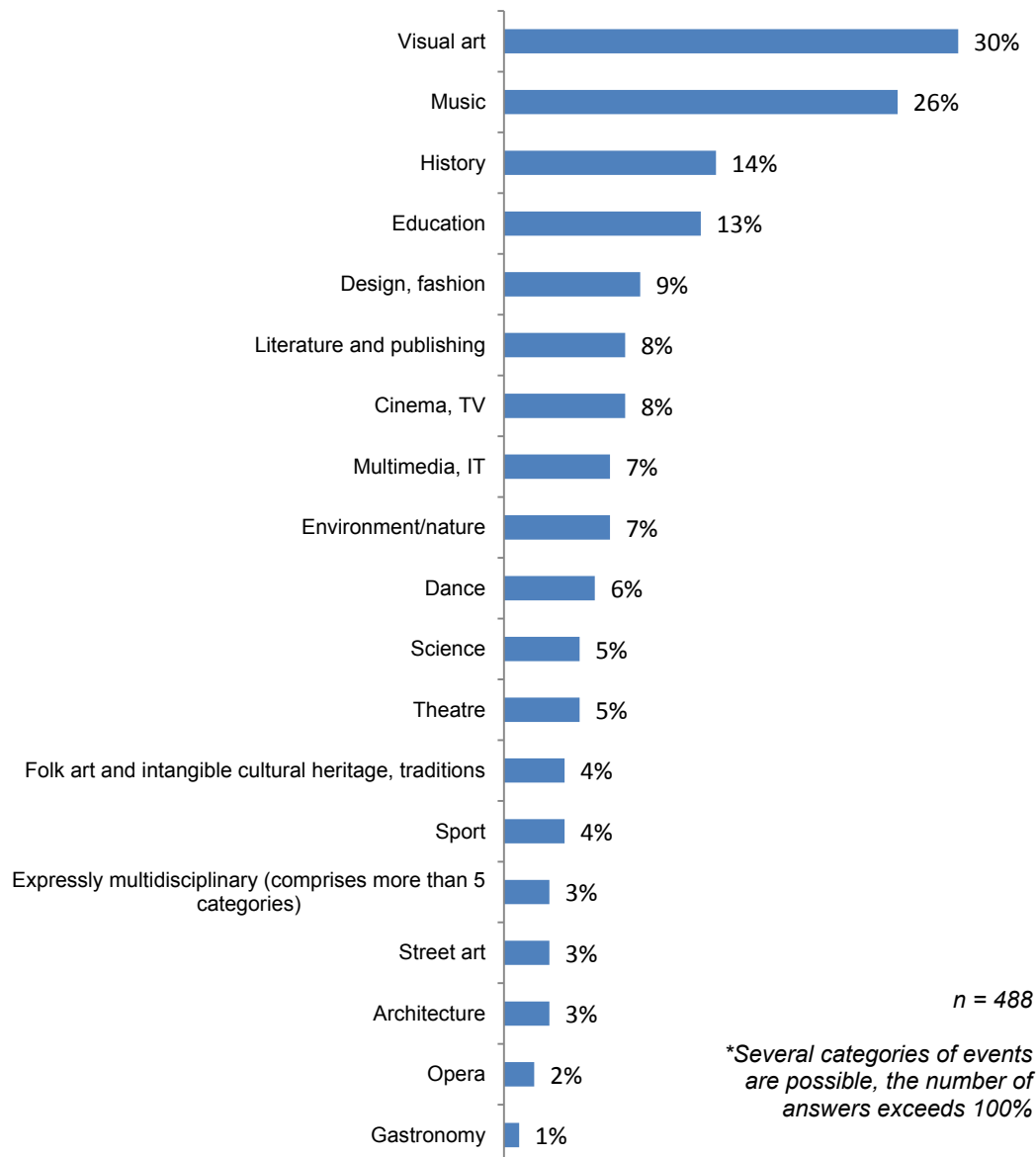
- **The World Choir Games:** The 8th World Choir Games were held in Rīga from 9th – 19th July 2014. The biennial event was the largest event in Rīga’s ECoC programme and was attended by more than 27,000 participants who represented 460 choirs from 73 countries. The Games involved choirs of different types competing in 29 contest categories spanning various musical genres. The hugely successful event occurred in multiple concert halls in Rīga and other locations in Latvia and was delivered by an international team consisting of more than 1600 people.
- **The European Film Awards:** The 27th European Film Awards were held in Rīga on December 13th, 2014. More than 600 European actors, actresses and film industry professionals gathered at Rīga’s National Opera house for the award ceremony. The awards were one of the last events of Rīga’s ECoC programme and were primarily presented by the European Film Academy and EFA productions, with support from a range of different organisations and companies.

⁴² Some of the projects mentioned did not fall under specific thematic lines and were instead part of one off activities (e.g. the opening ceremony).

- **Former State Security Committee (KGB) building:** This building found just north of the city centre had been empty and largely derelict for ten years. Through the ECoC programme, the building opened its doors to the public for the first time with a range of exhibitions linked to the time the KGB operated in the city and presenting how the communist regime oppressed Rīga's inhabitants. The exhibition was viewed by more than 45,000 visitors in its first three months. This project fell under the Freedom Street thematic line.
- **Book chain:** At the start of the ECoC year when the opening of the new National Library building was imminent, 15,000 people formed a human chain to transport (by passing by hand from one person to another) 2,000 books from the old to the new library. This event echoed the 1989's Baltic Way where two million protesters formed a human chain across Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to stimulate independence from the Soviet Union.
- **Born in Rīga:** 'Born in Rīga' consisted of a series of solo concerts held from mid-2013 to mid-2014, by world-famous artists who were born in Rīga. The solo concerts were held across various locations in the city, featuring a range of musicians skilled in various classical instruments. The series of events culminated in a major classical music concert – 'Born in Rīga' – that was held on the 6th of July. The open-air event, which brought together many Latvian-born classical musicians, took place in Rīga's 'Latvian National Opera' square and was aired live on both televisions and radio stations across Europe. This project fell under the Thirst for the Ocean thematic line.

The graph below provides an overview of the types of activities that made up the cultural programme in Rīga broken down by cultural content and highlights the mix and variety of the programme.

Categories of ECC Riga 2014 Events (%)



Source: Riga 2014 Foundation mapping exercise (2015)

The 488 projects which made up the programme were delivered at regular intervals throughout the year with a conscious effort to have at least one large project every month and an even larger project every quarter. Although there was a concentration of activity in the summer months, this regular and on-going programme of events occurring throughout the year meant that the ECoC programme maintained interest and profile across 2014.

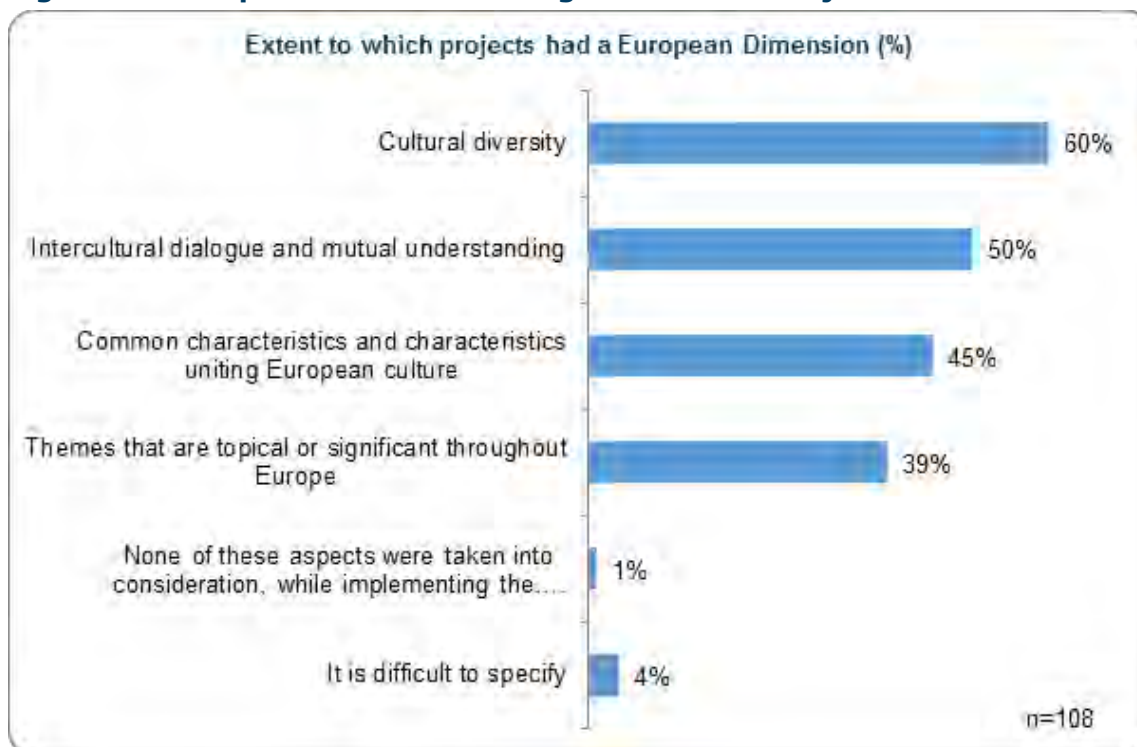
3.3.2 European dimension

The European dimension was reflected in a range of different events and activities within the Rīga 2014 cultural programme. This included support for a variety of exchanges and other mobility programmes from across different EU Member States. There were a range of artists and exhibitions which used Rīga 2014 as a 'meeting place' for international artists to come together and work collaboratively on different activities.

Findings from the project database⁴³ of the ECoC projects shows that 40% of all activities had an international dimension (i.e. involved foreign individuals in project implementation such as performers, artists and event organisers). The majority of international activities involved European individuals (26% of all events) whilst 10% of all events involved individuals from countries outside of Europe. According to the project database, 71% of the project managers stated that their ECoC projects provided them with a first opportunity to co-operate with international partners and 79% of them also felt that international cooperation would continue post 2014. This suggests that the ECoC was highly instrumental in terms of stimulating new international cooperation and that this international work will also be sustainable.

The graph below provides details on the extent to which project managers felt their activities had a European dimension.

Figure 3.2 European Dimension of Rīga 2014 ECoC Projects⁴⁴



Source: ECoC Project Managers Survey (2015)

⁴³ A project database was undertaken by the Rīga 2014 Foundation to map and record all of the activities which fell under the ECoC programme throughout 2014.

⁴⁴ Cultural *variety* was the phrased used in the survey to represent cultural diversity

Examples of projects that had a European/international dimension include:

- **Rīga Photomonth 2014 (Urban Viewfinders. Exhibitions. Film programmes. Workshops):** The Photomonth programme involved 26 events covering photography, cinema, lectures and seminars, portfolio viewings, as well as outdoor events partly in collaboration with Umeå. The European dimension came from a programme which included photographers from different countries (Sweden, including artists from Umeå, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, France, USA and Japan) and by the exhibition, seminar and workshops covering global issues such as poverty, conflict and freedom of speech.
- **International exhibition – Amber in Contemporary Design Jewellery:** The main idea behind the exhibition was to reflect amber as a material in contemporary and modern jewellery in line with professional criteria. The exhibition featured well-known jewellery designers from countries located along the historic, land-based Amber Road – Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary and Italy.
- **Born in Rīga:** Many Latvian-born classical musicians from across Europe and the world 'returned' to Rīga perform at various events throughout the year as well as on the 6th of July Born in Rīga concert in order to celebrate both Latvian born talent as well as the influence that Latvian culture has from and in Europe and further afield.
- **Freedom Street:** This theme line included a range of activities with the centenary of World War I as its central theme (a pan European event) including art and music events, theatrical tours, literary readings and open-air cinema.

3.3.3 City and citizens dimension

The ECoC can be seen as being generally successful in terms of widening the participation of local residents in culture as it carried out a number of specific activities and methods to ensure that it was not simply those interested in high end culture who participated and attended ECoC activities. In fact, 'widening participation' (in culture) was highlighted as a key objective throughout the original ECoC application; various guidelines were produced by the Foundation to help stakeholders develop their projects and this was a key aspect of the monitoring arrangements linked to projects.

One of the main six lines of the cultural programme (Road Map) was precisely focussed on and devoted to the idea of participation and community engagement. The Road Map line contained 117 projects that aimed to stimulate wider participation and was the line with the highest number of projects among all theme lines. Many of the projects that fell under this line took place in places and for people that did not usually experience culture. The Road Map line contained the neighbourhoods programme that ensured ECoC activity was to be found also in industrial zones of Rīga as well as in neighbourhoods and community spaces that traditionally had little in the way of a cultural offer. This ensured that 'culture was found next door and in the faces of marginalised communities' in a way that had not occurred before and there was also less need for these groups to travel into the centre of the city to experience ECoC activities.

Many activities were also free. According to the project database⁴⁵, 63% of ECoC projects did not require a ticket and took place in public spaces or buildings across the city. In addition, the actual content of the overall programme was very diverse and included a distinct move away from simply traditional culture towards more alternative culture such as street art, walking history tours and pop up neighbourhood performances. 'Accessible culture' was often a key word used by stakeholders when describing their projects which in turn allowed many of the activities to achieve higher than expected audience figures as a wider set of individuals became interested in those activities.

The fact that activities supported by Rīga 2014 also appeared regularly on local radio and television further helped widen participation towards different groups in society. 'Free access via media' was also encouraged by the Foundation which recognised that ticket prices may restrict some people's ability to access the cultural programme on offer. Although the socio-economic breakdown on the viewing figures is unknown, using public television and radio was as an effective way to break down barriers to access.

Some of the projects supported by the programme also targeted specific groups that were traditionally underrepresented when it came to cultural 'consumption'. Already in the original bid, Rīga 2014 stated its intention to include the young and old but also ethnic minority groups, low income groups and people with disabilities. This targeting happened partly through the way the projects were promoted (e.g. advertising in local media young people regularly listened to) but also through the actual content of the projects. For example, the 'potato opera' which brought opera to young people in the city, classic musical events which played popular (rather than classical) songs and paper sculptures held in neighbourhood parks (rather than in a city centre gallery) are examples of projects that tried to increase the participation rates for cultural genres that are usually more associated with higher level artistic audiences.

3.4 Governance and funding

3.4.1 Governance

The Rīga 2014 Foundation played the central role in the design and implementation of the ECoC programme. The Foundation was established by Rīga City Council as an independent and arm's length body to lead on the development and running of the ECoC, with a remit covering coordination, communication, development of participation and volunteering. It was felt that this model was the most appropriate for implementation, as it would reduce the administrative burden and avoid some of the bureaucratic processes which apply to State or municipal authorities in Latvia. Key benefits of setting up the Foundation in this way included:

- Providing some form of independence from the city/ national administrations and political influence so that the ECoC programme was able to be developed 'freely' without any significant external influence. Although the Foundation was owned by the City Council, the Rīga 2014 team was able to make its own decisions on the direction and focus of the cultural programme as well as on more strategic issues such as budget allocation and communication.

⁴⁵ The Rīga Foundation commissioned external evaluators to map and analyse the number and nature of activities supported through the ECoC.

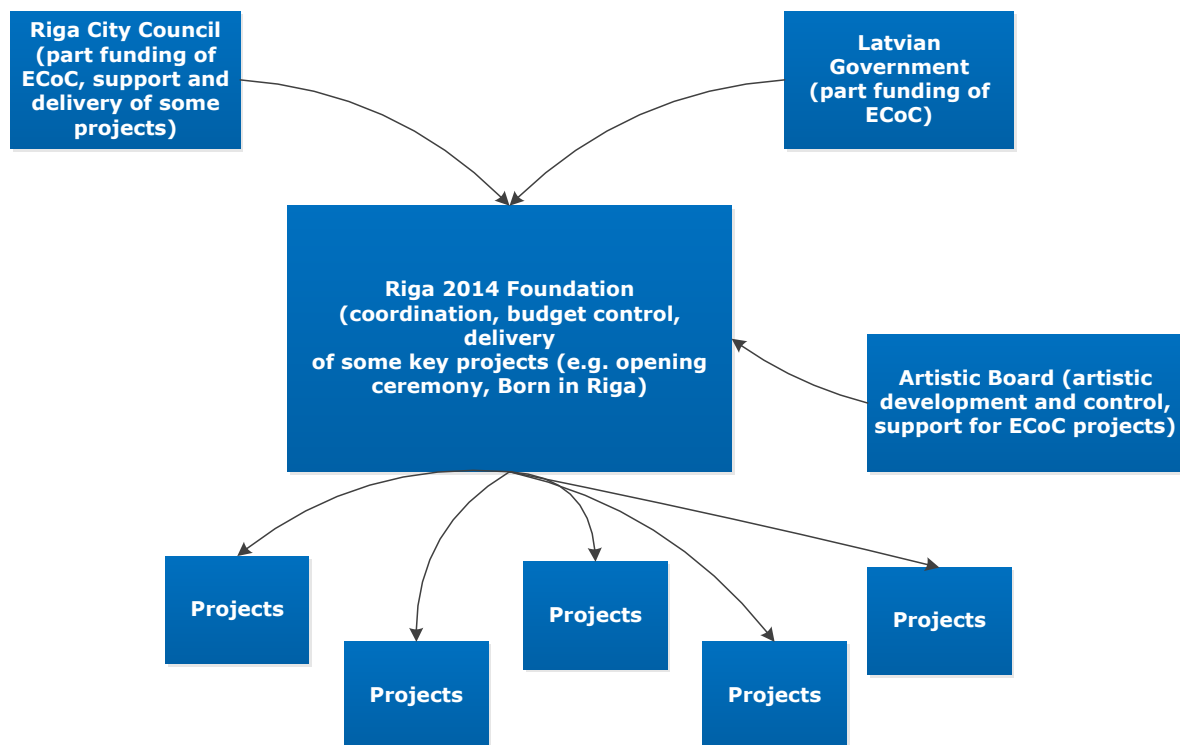
- Helping speed up various decision making processes and actions so that Rīga 2014 did not have to go through sometimes long and time consuming procurement procedures that the City Council tended to follow nor did it have to make decisions 'by committee' involving various decision making structures found within the City Council.

The Head of the Foundation was given a relatively large amount of autonomy to make quick decisions about the administration of the programme in terms of its budget, overall programme direction and delivery arrangements. The Head of the Foundation reported to a Supervisory Committee which consisted of representatives from all Departments of the City Council. Although this committee could scrutinise the work of Rīga 2014 they were generally focussed on ratifying decisions rather than on taking an active part in discussing and deciding on certain aspects. The Foundation will continue in its current form dealing with legacy issues until September 2015 when it is wound up.

Artistic direction for the content of the programme was carried out jointly by an Artistic Board composed of six programme curators (with the Head of Rīga 2014 also being responsible for curating one of the topical lines). The programme curators were key players in different areas of the Latvian cultural scene and civil society, who combined working for the Rīga 2014 Foundation with their other professional responsibilities. This meant that the curators were well known, connected experts in Latvia's cultural field who had both a practical approach to delivering cultural projects as well as a more strategic ownership of the entire ECoC programme. Their key role was to lead a line and therefore to coordinate the development and delivery of activities falling under their respective themes of the programme. This included sifting through the project ideas from the open call, working with the promoters of the projects that were shortlisted to develop their ideas into workable and deliverable concepts that could be implemented, working with project promoters during the build-up and delivery of their projects as well as working with the other curators to develop a joined up and cohesive overall programme. In addition, the programme curators also played a direct project management role in some of the larger initiatives of the programme such as the Born in Rīga concerts or the World Choir Games.

In terms of the personnel working for the Foundation, this started with two employees during the early stages of the programme gradually increasing to 33 in 2014 itself. The work of the team ranged from contract management, web site design and maintenance, to budget and financial controlling. Other staff members also worked more generally on the smooth delivery of the multitude of activities and events happening throughout the year. A key strength of the Foundation team was its continuity, with all of the key members of staff being in post before, during and mostly after 2014 including the overall Head of the Foundation who will remain in post until the Foundation finishes in September 2015.

The diagram below provides an overview of the governance arrangements of Rīga 2014.



Another aspect of the Rīga 2014 delivery process involved collaboration with Sigulda, a small city located approximately one hour away to the east of Rīga. Key aspects of this partnership included:

- Promoting Sigulda in marketing and communication material as a cultural destination that visitors could spend time in if they were visiting Rīga for an extended period of time (the city is near enough to Rīga for visitors to take a day trip there if they wanted a 'change of scenery').
- Having certain activities including small festivals, exhibitions and other events travel to Sigulda before or after the main activities of Rīga so that certain cultural offers could be seen in more than one location in Latvia. In particular, stakeholders in Sigulda contacted various international artists and asked them whether they would like to extend their time in Latvia and take part in activities in the city taking advantage of their presence in the country.

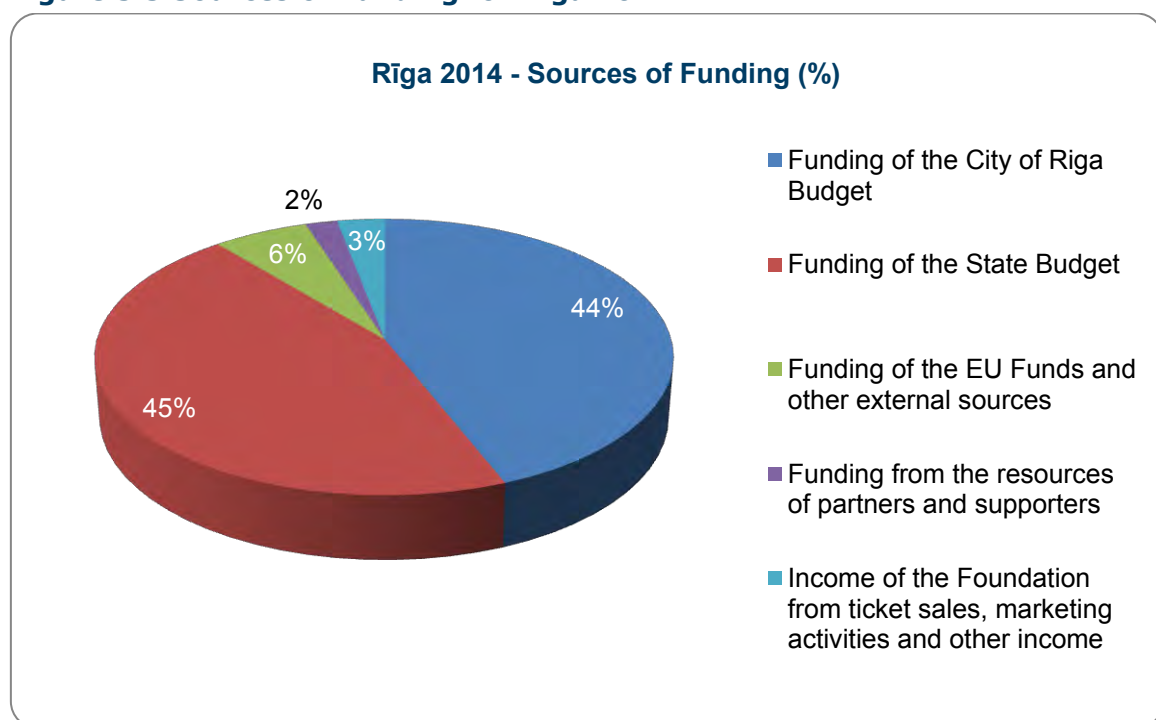
No direct funding was provided to Sigulda from the Rīga2014 programme meaning it was the 'badge and brand' of ECoC that the city used to stimulate funding from their own City Council as well as visitors to the city more generally.

3.4.2 Funding

The issue of securing finances for the programme had been a concern already in the early stages of the bid process. In 2011 finance from a number of different sources was formally approved which meant there was a solid financial basis to plan and develop the content of the programme. In particular, a financial contribution of the State budget of 8.5million euros was approved for the period 2012-2014, as well as a funding of 10 million euros by the Rīga City Council for the ECoC programme. Having longer term financial commitment allowed those in the Foundation designing the programme to have a more robust plan in relation to its size and scope as they could organise events and activities based on a firm view of available budgets. A long term commitment also allowed the Foundation to focus more on cultural content than on sourcing funding - freeing them up to become 'cultural operators rather than financial accountants'.

The final total expenditure for the Rīga 2014 ECoC programme between 2012 and 2014 was 27.3 million euros which is higher than the original budget set out in the original bid of 24 million euros but in line with the figure quoted in the second report of the monitoring panel. The breakdown of the sources shown in the diagram below:

Figure 3.3 Sources of Funding for Rīga 2014



Source: Data provided by Rīga 2014 Foundation

A relatively high level of funding (45%) came from the National State Government whilst 44% originated from Rīga City Council. It is worth noting that funding from 'other sources' (including funding from the project delivery organisations themselves) was relatively low. Funding from the private sector (mainly in the form of sponsorship) only constituted a very small proportion of the finance which was put down by the Foundation as a consequence of the economic crisis.

The majority of the Rīga 2014 budget (77%) was spent on programme expenditure whilst 16% was spent on communication and a 6% was on administration. At the time of writing this report, there is no further breakdown on the main areas of expenditure of the ECoC.

3.4.3 Marketing and communication

16% of the total overall budget for Rīga 2014 was spent on marketing and communication. This included funding for promotional campaigns for national and international visitors, support for international press which were covering various ECoC activities as well as on-line information on the cultural programmes content and further information on the city and Latvia as a whole.

Of critical importance to the marketing and communication element of Rīga 2014 was the State funded TV and radio stations which got funding from the City Council to make and broadcast a range of content programmes on the various activities and projects connected to the cultural programme throughout the year. This meant that there was a constant and on-going media coverage before and during the ECoC year. These programmes not only ensured that Rīga 2014 events were viewed by a large and diverse audience but they also helped promote the wider ECoC 'brand' throughout the year. They included 'Cultural news' which were aired five times a week on prime time TV and consisted of a 5-8 minute slot setting out the past and present highlights of the ECoC during the week.

Another aspect of the marketing and communication of the Foundation's work (mainly through the six artistic curators) consisted in supporting individual projects to promote and communicate their activity. The Foundation supported projects to advertise and promote their particular activity in order to increase the audience numbers and go beyond the 'usual suspects'. This support was often associated with hands-on advice on where and how to have effective promotion. A focus on project level promotion as well as simply the promotion of the overall ECoC programme was the Foundation's key emphasis in terms of marketing and promotion recognising that the success of the programme was mainly down to the ability of the individual projects to gain high audience numbers.

Another successful aspect of the marketing and communication work of Rīga 2014 was the establishment of a media portal by the Foundation. This portal acted as an accessible platform which provided content and visuals (articles, ready-made press releases, videos, interviews, quotes, pictures etc.) which journalists and other media outlets used when covering the various activities of Rīga 2014. Contracts were signed between the Rīga 2014 Foundation and the local media: journalists could freely use the content of the portal, which encouraged them to promote various aspects of the cultural programme using the content of the portal. This in turn helped to ensure that the local media were generally supportive of the ECoC and reduced the need for any large scale advertising activities which would have been much more costly.

The first 'big push' in terms of communication was the opening event, which was used to 'jumpstart' the promotion of the year and communicate the content of the rest of the programme throughout 2014. 150 journalists attended the opening and from that a range of on-going relationships developed between the Foundation and various media outlets. Interviews with projects supported by the ECoC programme also showed that individual relationships had been developed between cultural operators and local city level TV and radio journalists. These relationships were useful during

2014 itself but also helped establish longer term news and coverage of cultural activities delivered beyond the ECoC year itself.

3.4.4 Local research and evaluation

The monitoring of projects and activities supported through the ECoC programme was done on a quarterly basis by the Foundation. Each project lead was requested to complete a relatively simple monitoring form that explained the main activity undertaken in the quarter as well as progress in achieving their outputs and spend targets. The form also allowed the project lead to set out key challenges and issues which were then reviewed by the Foundation when they received the monitoring reports. Any corrective action or support was then provided to the project - often by the curators who were responsible for the six lines of the programme.

There was less evidence of the various activities and events supported through the ECoC undertaking evaluation work themselves, whether in terms of them having audience satisfaction surveys, tracking attendance figures or assessing the overall strengths and weaknesses of their activity post the activity itself. Although survey work was undertaken to assess what the projects thought of issues such as artistic content and the overall quality of the cultural offer there was less survey work done on audiences themselves who had actually attended these various activities.

However, the Rīga 2014 Foundation commissioned a group of independent researchers to undertake a variety of studies including:

- A database of projects, broken down by types of organiser, activity, location, target audience, level of interaction, prices and involvement of European partners;
- A survey of project promoters to understand their views on a variety of issues linked to quality, participation, impact and legacy;
- Social and economic network analysis investigating contacts and linkages between ECoC project promoters, their partners and suppliers, including those outside the cultural sector;
- Interviews with various stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in the ECoC and its projects.

The above work cumulated in the production of an independent evaluation report in May 2015. The European evaluation of ECoC 2014 including this report has drawn on much of the evidence mentioned above, particularly the database of projects and the survey of project promoters.

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Cultural offer and European dimension

The cultural programme in Rīga during 2014 was expanded both in terms of its scope and scale because of the existence of the ECoC. Overall, 488 projects made up the programme and although it was difficult for stakeholders to evidence how much more activity was present in 2014 compared to preceding years, most stated that the ECoC title had doubled the amount of cultural content within the city.

A key strength of the cultural programme in Rīga was its diversity and in particular the balance between large and small activities, high profile international events and small scale local events, different types of artistic forms, different levels of artistic quality as well as being delivered in different parts of the city. The 488 activities included in the programme ranged from world class events such as the World Choir Games through to 'pop-up' street theatre productions found in one of Rīga's 58 neighbourhoods. This diverse programme brought a number of benefits:

- It allowed the programme to be accessible to all of Rīga's population and different types of visitors regardless of whether they were interested in high end culture or more alternative 'popular' cultural experiences such as street art or amateur neighbourhood choirs.
- It spread the benefits of the ECoC programme beyond the central core of the city towards its neighbourhoods and to locations where culture and art had not existed previously. The fact that the programme was partly delivered 'outside of its traditional setting away from the opera house, theatres and galleries' was often cited as a key strength.
- It covered different forms of culture to ensure that there was 'something for everyone' helping to ensure that people did not feel excluded from the year even if their interest in culture was relatively narrow or limited.

It is also interesting to note that there were also a number of events supported through the cultural programme that were already existing aspects of the city's cultural scene or would have taken place regardless of the ECoC status. For example, the World Choir Games, though a key aspect of the Rīga 2014 programme, would have taken place even in the absence of the ECoC. This is not to say that having the ECoC status did not help Rīga's bid to host the Games but the event was secured independently from the ECoC. However, even though the cultural programme of the ECoC did contain and support events and activities already taking place on an annual basis the open call launched by the Foundation was extremely clear that such events and activities had to do something additional or 'special' to secure support from the ECoC ('doing things bigger and better than before'). Expanding the range of cultural activity within the city included:

- Delivering larger activities whether in terms of a higher number of activities, a larger audience capacity or over a longer period of time (scale);
- Delivering a different type of event - for example an art event including an educational aspect for school children or an existing street festival encompassing more artists and types of activities (scope); and
- Helping to either reduce the price of a ticketed event or making the event free in order to increase participation (price).

An example of an existing cultural activity that was enhanced by the ECoC status is found below and shows how this status helped to enhance the range and diversity of cultural activity on a scale that had not been previously possible.

The Rīga Festival

The Rīga Festival has been in existence for a number of years prior to 2014 and has continued into 2015. Previously the festival was mainly targeted at Latvian audiences with a content that was described as 'national rather than international'. The ECoC status allowed the Rīga Festival to be much bigger, more international and more innovative than before. Firstly the festival lasted over the whole of 2014 (rather than just the summer months) with five times more content and activity (20 projects) than had previously been the case. The festival also diversified into a more European festival as opposed to a Latvian one - for example food markets having a more international cuisine from other countries, the Music festival having artists from eight different countries rather than just Latvian and street artists coming to perform in the carnival from across Eastern Europe to join Latvian artists who had been part of the carnival before.

Rīga 2014 also ensured that cultural activity within the city became much more international than it was previously. The 'hook' of the ECoC title had helped encourage much more international performers to come to the city in a way that had not been seen previously - particularly from other European countries. In particular, those in the Foundation who were responsible for organising the larger events of the cultural programme were able to use the profile and status of the ECoC when contacting various international artists and performers who were all aware of the extra prestige that the ECoC would bring to their activity as well as the extra audiences that were likely to be attracted. This meant that programmes linked to festivals, performances, carnivals and other activities became increasingly diverse in terms of where the artists and performers originated from and in particular helped to promote different European cultures. An example is found below.

The World Choir Games

Latvia has long been associated with choral singing and the city's cultural scene has been home to a number of choirs as well as choral projects for many years. This included choir festivals, choir competitions and choral ensembles. However, the ECoC status provided an opportunity for Rīga City Council to take this existing cultural offer to the 'next level' through bidding for and winning the 2014 World Choir Games. The Games ensured that the scale of cultural activity linked to choirs was greatly increased within Rīga, that the scope of the offer became more international (previous choral activities in Rīga mainly focussed on Latvian choirs) and that audience figures of over 6 million were significantly higher than had previously been the case for programmes of this nature.

The event itself was attended by more than 27,000 participants who represented 460 choirs from 73 countries. The event provided opportunities for choirs to sing with one another and discuss future collaboration. The Games also gave Latvian choirs an opportunity to promote their national style and musical repertoires and to promote themselves to an international audience. The event was publicised on national television and on social media to ensure a much wider international audience than previous choral projects had received in Rīga.

In addition, there was a range of other international activities linked to promoting the city to visitors and the travel press across Europe. This work involved targeting and promoting the content of the programme to key press outlets as well as ensuring that all of the promotional material linked to the Rīga 2014 programme (including the website) was accessible in different European languages. There were also a range of networking events set up to stimulate better international cooperation between different cultural players in Europe including various events that sat around the European Film Awards. For example, these networking events included a programme that helped 600 stakeholders working in the film industry to join forces to work on specific joint projects on an international level as well as a range of international conferences and workshops that TV, radio and other journalists could attend to learn from good practice from other countries on technical issues such as sound, lighting and programme planning.

There were also a number of cultural projects found within Rīga 2014 specifically established to highlight the shared cultures and themes of Europe. One of the six lines of the cultural programme in Rīga (called Freedom Street) was focussed on a range of themes linked to 'power and freedom' with a particular focus on commemorating the centenary of World War I. The Freedom Street line had a series of exhibitions, art and music events, literary readings and open-air cinema among other activities to help highlight the impact of World War I on Europe. Although it focussed on Latvia, many of the activities showed how the war affected the whole of Europe. Another example from the same thematic line was the former KGB building that became a key aspect (and legacy) of the Rīga 2014 programme.

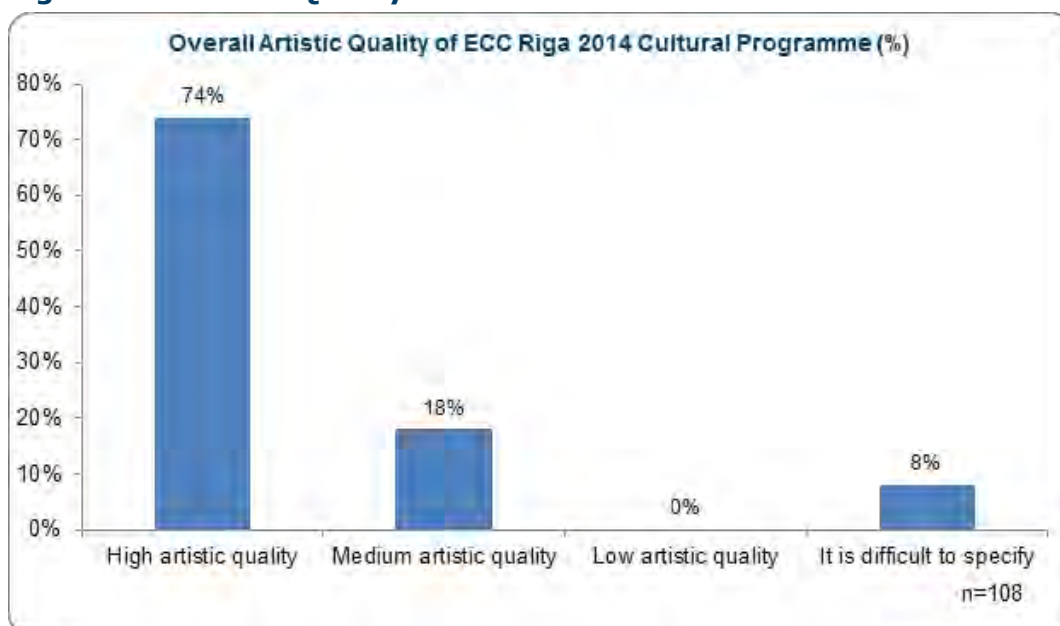
Former KGB building

During the 50 year occupation of Latvia by the Soviet Union the KGB headquarters in Rīga became a prominent symbol of oppression and mass persecutions. The KGB headquarters (known as the Corner House) had largely stood empty since the end of the Soviet occupation, partly because many stakeholders in the city felt that difficult 'memories' of activity taking place in the building should not be promoted or shared.

The ECoC year provided an opportunity to change this feeling; and cultural and political players in the city decided that the time was right to reopen the building and use it as a cultural and visitor museum. The Corner House initially open to the public from May to October 2014 and was free of charge. The museum had a wide range of different exhibitions including "(Re)construction of Friendship", "A Latvian's Suitcase", "In Spite of All", "Ten Objects' Stories of Person and Power" and "The Museum of Fateful Objects", which present different 'interpretations of the relationship between the individual and the power in the past that still affects Europe today'. The museum also included guided tours "In the KGB Basements" which took visitors around a mock-up of how it looked during the occupation. The KGB building and its featured exhibitions was one of the most visited activities of the ECoC cultural programme with 85,000 visitors over 2014. Due to this success, the museum remains open today, well beyond the initial closing date of October 2014.

There was also widespread agreement that the quality of activities was high and that this high artistic quality helped to ensure strong audience figures throughout the year. Of the monitoring information which was available from the Foundation, 75% of events were either full or nearly full and two thirds of the visitor/attendance targets that projects set themselves were either met or exceeded. All managers of projects supported by the Foundation were asked to rate the quality of the cultural offer provided by the overall ECoC programme (outside of their project). The results are shown below:

Figure 3.4 Cultural Quality



Source: Project Managers Survey (2015)

3.5.2 Access and participation

In terms of the impact of the ECoC on increasing longer term participation in culture, research generally shows a range of positive results. According to figures appearing in the internal evaluation of Rīga 2014, a total of 1.6 million people attended ECoC activities. The most attended activity from the ECoC programme was the 8th World Choir Games which brought together a total of 27,000 participants and audience figures thought to be over 100,000 over a variety of different choral sessions whilst the KGB building and its featured exhibitions was also popular with the exhibitions having 85,000 visitors over 2014.

A Latvian population survey was undertaken in 2015 among a representative sample of 1,044 residents of the country to partly understand their access and participation in ECoC activities. The results show that a large proportion of the respondents attended at least one ECoC activity over 2014, either in person or via online, radio or TV routes. Indeed, the survey showed that 51% of Latvians and 76% of Rīga's residents attended at least one ECoC activity in person. 60% of Latvia's population and 67% of Rīga's residents also accessed an ECoC activity via the web, television or radio.

The neighbourhood programme was a specific strand of the overall the ECoC aimed at spreading the activities, reach and impact of Rīga 2014 as far as possible to communities in the city that traditionally had little in the way of cultural activities or had little or no cultural profile. Activities found in this neighbourhood programme included more grass roots cultural activities including neighbourhood street festivals organised by local communities, pop-up theatres that took place in community setting such as the local park, local art exhibitions which mixed professional artists and local amateur artists and walking tours of local neighbourhoods undertaken by residents themselves.

Ideas and projects that made up the neighbourhood programme were identified through an open call for community projects similar to the main open call for the entire programme mentioned above. This particular call was undertaken in 2013 (rather than 2008/09) recognising that most of the projects were small and therefore needed less planning and development time. The call was also open to very small NGOs, community groups and individuals who were allowed to bid for a maximum of 5,000 euros with no requirement for any match funding. There was also a 100% upfront payment to project which helped encourage smaller organisations (which often had little in the way of funding reserves) to take part. An example of a project falling under the neighbourhoods theme is found below.

Active Neighbourhoods

Active Neighbourhoods was a series of events run throughout 2014 mainly by local residents and for local residents. One of its main goals was to 'make living in a city more inspiring and foster a sense of belonging and responsibility for the area we live in'. Activities were proposed and implemented by residents of Rīga living across the 58 neighbourhoods of the city. These included tours of the area planned and guided by locals, photography campaigns encouraging local residents to take pictures of their area, lectures and discussions run by local 'characters', which all centre on 'what local people want'.

Many of the activities also involved local schoolchildren in more deprived areas of the city. The project included three workshops where professional artists together with schoolchildren created audio-visual works of art, presenting their vision of the 'beautification' and development of the surrounding areas including their neighbourhoods, homes and schools. Projects which local residents supported the most and which were seen as being feasible by the designers were then implemented by the local schoolchildren with funding from the Rīga 2014 Foundation.

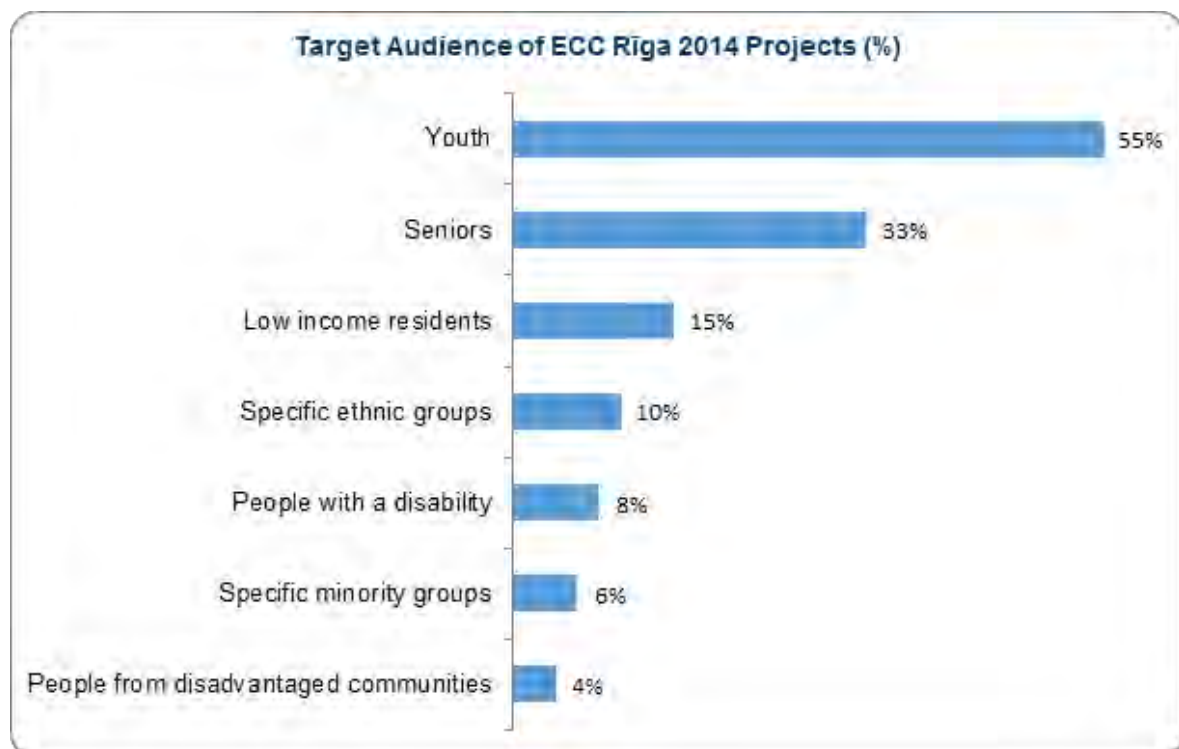
Local neighbourhood tours and walks were also a key part of the Active Neighbourhoods programme. The tours aimed to help local people living in Rīga's neighbourhoods to share their stories, experiences and cultural heritage about their neighbourhoods with other city residents, many of whom had never visited certain neighbourhoods before. The 'tour guides' received training on how best to deliver their tour and publicity material to help promote it. The project was also aimed at international visitors to Rīga who again were unlikely to visit parts of the city outside of the centre.

Central to the neighbourhood programme was the social benefits that this set of activities brought to the city and the community development impact it would have. As well as ensuring that activities within the cultural programme took place beyond the city centre, the neighbourhood approach provided an opportunity for those less interested in high artistic quality culture to take part into the Rīga 2014 programme. The neighbourhood element was also partly seen as a way of introducing culture to certain communities within Rīga who had previously not experienced it and also acted as a stepping stone to help people progress onto higher end culture found in the city centre if they wished to do so.

Another social and community impact of the ECoC identified by stakeholders related to the inclusive and consultative nature of how the Rīga 2014 Foundation ran and organised the programme which many felt helped empower local communities and neighbourhoods in a way they had previously not experienced. Even at the start of the whole programme development process, the openness of the Foundation to discuss views and ideas from local small NGOs and community groups was seen as having a significant impact on how other City Council programmes and initiatives (linked to culture but also enterprise, community development and social inclusion) approached their work. Prior to ECoC some stakeholders felt that the City Council was less open to consulting and working with community groups from the 'bottom up'. Against this background, the Foundation's work was seen as paving the way to a more consultative and inclusive approach to working with the neighbourhoods, that was relatively new in the Latvian context. Although it was difficult for stakeholders to articulate the benefits that this more open and inclusive approach will bring, they all stated that ECoC was helping to change the way the City Council approached aspects of their community and social development work.

Key to increasing participation and access towards culture was the focus of some ECoC activities on targeting certain groups. Although the majority of ECoC activities did not target a specific group the graph below shows that some projects did focus on attracting certain 'underrepresented groups'. Young people and older people were particularly targeted but also lower income residents and also specific ethnic minorities. The fact that projects specifically went out to focus on these groups show that there was some form of a concerted effort to increase access and participation from those who traditionally did not access culture in the city prior to 2014.

Figure 3.5 Targeting of ECoC projects



Source: Project Managers Survey (2015)

Finally, one of the characteristics of the Rīga 2014 ECoC programme was its use of the voluntary and community sector to deliver a high proportion of its content rather than using perhaps more 'traditional' players from the city or State public cultural sector. Although publically owned galleries and theatres did deliver various ECoC activities, organisations 'closer to the community' delivered the majority of the content including youth groups, charities, community cooperatives and neighbourhood associations. These organisations often had much closer ties with underrepresented groups throughout Rīga and therefore further helped to spread the impact to a wider set of players.

3.5.3 Cultural capacity

Rīga 2014 was also beneficial in terms of capacity building, helping cultural organisations within the city to develop their skills and experience in a longer term perspective. Many of those organisations consulted through the evaluation who had run ECoC projects reported a large rise in their capacity to plan and deliver cultural activities because of their involvement in the programme. For example, the Latvian National Museum reported that organising a major art exhibition involving galleries from across the world and transporting, showing and promoting numerous paintings had allowed them to go on and attract other similar projects beyond 2014 itself. Another example of capacity building came from the Born in Rīga concert which was produced by Peter Maniura from the BBC in the UK who oversaw the live broadcast of the event. Part of his work involved directly training professionals from Latvian TV in producing live broadcasts of large events which they will use for other similar events post 2014. This included techniques such as framing shots, camera work, lighting, planning the programme story line and editing. At the heart of this capacity building impact was the development of knowledge, abilities, skills and contacts that different cultural players gained from delivering their ECoC project at a scale that they had often not attempted previously.

It is also worth noting that the majority of Rīga 2014 projects were delivered by voluntary or community organisations rather than State or city public sector organisations or bodies. According to the project database of ECoC projects, 47% of activities were delivered by organisations from the voluntary or community sector compared to 30% by State institutions and 10% by city institutions.

This focus on the voluntary and community sector to deliver the majority of ECoC activities meant that capacity was strengthened outside of the public sector. This conclusion also emerged from the Project Managers survey which showed that 24% of organisations delivering ECoC projects said their capacity in the longer term had 'significantly strengthened' whilst 63% of organisations felt that delivering ECoC projects had strengthened their capacity in the longer term.

It was not only those who have delivered ECoC projects that stated that their capacity had grown as a consequence of being involved in the programme. Employees and staff involved in the Foundation itself also highlighted that they had developed new skills and abilities that would positively impact on the wider work of the city in terms of its cultural offer in the future. Although the Foundation will be wound up in September 2015, some of the key staff members have remained in the cultural sector within the city. This includes the 6 curators who remain deeply involved in various cultural activities as well as staff within the Foundation itself. Some of these staff members have worked or will work within the city's Cultural Department post their involvement in the Foundation while others will work for various projects or bodies connected with culture either in Rīga or Latvia as a whole.

When exploring how the ECoC has impacted the 'cultural capacity' of the city it is worth considering whether it has improved the quality and quantity of cultural buildings in Rīga (e.g. the number of venues where cultural activities can take place). The main focus of the ECoC in Rīga was on the 'cultural' content of the programme rather than on improving infrastructure projects or other physical developments either linked to culture or the wider public realm. This meant that the programme was sometimes seen as being less of a driver for physical improvements to the city and there was less in the way of joint projects between the Rīga 2014 Foundation and the departments within the City Council working on strategies linked to issues such as urban development, transport, economic development or green space. The fact that some of the main buildings within the city connected with art and culture were closed or only opened part way through the year (including the Latvian National Library and the National Museum of Art) again shows that the ECoC programme had less of a link to the larger scale physical improvements of the city, even those that were related to the cultural sector.

The focus of the programme on supporting the 'people and organisational' side of the city's cultural capacity rather than the 'bricks and mortar' element was a conscious decision made by the Rīga 2014 Foundation. Using the ECoC to support the development of new cultural infrastructure in the city was felt to bring the following benefits:

- It significantly reduced the overall budget for the ECoC programme. Any inclusion of a large capital project in the overall programme would have made the overall 'acceptability' of the programme more difficult to manage (at a time when public spending cuts were in place).
- Raising the necessary finance from various sources to support a large scale infrastructure project was deemed as being unlikely given the cuts to funding being experienced across the city and national Government. Stakeholders working in the Foundation felt that focussing limited resources on the content of the cultural programme rather than on infrastructure projects was sensible recognising that the ECoC programme was unlikely to be able to afford both types of projects.
- It reduced any risks associated with overspend, delays or further complications often associated with large scale and complex infrastructure projects. This meant that the success of the overall ECoC programme was not dependant on the completion of a single infrastructure project and those coordinating the programme could concentrate their efforts on 'culture rather than buildings'.

There was also a realisation that it would take time to plan and implement a large scale infrastructure project based on the procurement practices of Latvia's public sector (particularly at national level). Partly based on experience of the Latvian National Library which had a number of delays in its procurement and construction, the Rīga 2014 Foundation felt that it was better to again focus on cultural activities and cultural content to ensure that the programme was ready in time for the start of the year.

However, the fact that the Rīga 2014 ECoC programme did not include at least one large scale infrastructure development of new or existing cultural facilities in the city led to a number of observations from some of the key stakeholders interviewed:

- Some felt that there was no obvious 'symbol' of Rīga 2014 which people could associate with the year of culture either during 2014 or after it. This lack of a central 'emblem' of the year was felt by some to mean that an obvious 'impact' of the ECoC was missing.
- There was no physical lasting legacy of the ECoC which people would again associate with the year. Having for instance, a new theatre, an improved gallery or an extended art space in the city would have allowed more people to identify a clear legacy of the ECoC.

3.5.4 International profile

A weaker aspect of the communication work of Rīga 2014 was around the lack of activity linked to raising the international profile of the city in order to attract visitors to attend and visit ECoC activities. Audience figures from the Foundation show that only 1.4% of audiences attending ECoC projects were international (i.e. lived outside of Latvia).

Although there was some activity aiming to promote Rīga 2014 to international visitors (especially travel journalists), the main strand of work in this respect was delayed to the year itself. This delay was mainly caused by the Ministry of the Economy procurement practices where slippage and complications with tendering the communications contract meant that the main international marketing campaign (consisting of advertising through a range of different media outlets) did not take place before or during the ECoC year itself. This meant that advertising and promotional campaigns linked to ECoC specifically aimed at encouraging foreign visitors to attend the various events and activities was very limited and there was almost a complete reliance on press articles.

In terms of the impact that this had on the overall success of the marketing campaign to international visitors the evidence shows mixed results. Findings from the Central Statistics Bureau show that the number of foreign tourists visiting Latvia increased by 18.9% in the first half of 2014 which is the second highest increase in Europe for that period. However a survey undertaken by the Rīga Tourism Development Bureau which interviewed 1,852 tourists in Rīga city centre and at the airport between March and October 2014 showed that only 2.9% said that their main reason for visiting Rīga was to attend ECoC events and activities. This suggests that despite the increase in visitors, the opportunity to attract more international tourists was not maximised due to the delays in procuring the main international visitor campaign contract.

However, there were a number of more positive successes linked to the marketing and communication work of Rīga 2014. The Latvian Institute was involved in raising awareness of the ECoC before and during 2014 among international travel journalists, dealing with the numerous requests international journalists had about the cultural programme, the city of Rīga and Latvia as a whole. These requests ranged from general information and statistics about the city or the ECoC programme, hosting various delegations of foreign journalists through to support in gaining interviews with some of the top artists and performers taking part in the cultural programme. In total, the Latvian Institute serviced 400 journalists and ensured that 2,800 publications mentioned the ECoC in Rīga – of which 98% were positive.

A number of ECoC activities were also promoted via television and radio channels across Europe. Examples include the 'Born in Rīga' concert which was broadcast in 12 countries and the World Choir Games which was watched by over 6.2 million viewers across the world and was one of the highest viewed TV programme in Latvia in 2014.

3.6 Legacy

3.6.1 Continuing activities, new ventures

There are a number of 'special' events taking place over the next three years in Latvia which will ensure that culture remains on the agenda within Rīga and which will help prolong the legacy of the ECoC. This includes the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU which the country holds until June 2015 as well as the celebration of Latvia's 100 years which takes place in 2018. Both of these events include a cultural content and are either using or are planning to use staff members, organisations, methods and facilities linked to Rīga 2014.

Some of the activities and events supported through the ECoC programme were regular and on-going activities that were part of the city's annual cultural scene prior to Rīga 2014. It was estimated by those in the Foundation that most of these regular events would continue in 2015, although many will be smaller and sometimes 'less ambitious' than in 2014 because of a reduction in their funding back to levels experienced prior to ECoC. Stakeholders highlighted that one of the benefits of supporting existing events and activities was that they were not one-offs and were therefore likely to continue once the impetus of the ECoC had disappeared. As a result, making existing events and activities 'bigger and better' rather than stimulating completely new activities was seen as a key way of maintaining a longer term legacy.

3.6.2 Cultural governance

Despite the Foundation being closed in September 2015, the City Council's Cultural Department will continue to develop and run Rīga's cultural agenda in the longer term. Steered by the city's Cultural Strategy (2008-2025) it will provide funding and coordination for a range of cultural activities across the city and ensure that the cultural agenda remains in city policy well beyond 2014. According to City Authorities, funding for the Cultural Department will remain constant for the next three years and no cuts in budgets will take place within this area.

The cultural governance of the city will also be enhanced by the new skills and experience gained by those staff members who worked in the Rīga 2014 Foundation, some of whom have returned back to the City Council or now work in other cultural organisations in Rīga. The new skills developed included more strategic capacities related to running large scale events, stimulating cultural collaboration between different players or organising cultural programmes such as festivals that had multiple activities and events. Many stakeholders felt that ECoC had given the cultural governance in Rīga an 'injection' of new skills that would have been difficult to achieve in the absence of the ECoC.

3.6.3 Legacy arrangements

A lack of a physical 'symbol' of Rīga 2014 in terms of a new or improved building that can be used beyond 2014 was often seen as the key 'missing' part of any legacy to ECoC. The fact that the city was left without such a lasting and obvious legacy meant that the longer term impact as well as the longer term 'footprint' of the programme was somehow lacking. However, Rīga will enjoy new cultural facilities in the near future including the National museum that will reopen in 2015 (closed during the ECoC year). It also needs to be recognised that one of the more high profile projects of the ECoC year related to the reopening of the former KGB building that had been closed for ten years and which will remain open for the foreseeable future.

The new capacity, skills and experience of the various stakeholders involved in delivering ECoC activities was also seen as a long term legacy and impact of the ECoC. Many organisations reported high levels of new skills and abilities which are helping their longer term ambitions and work well beyond 2014 itself.

3.6.4 Long-term strategy

There was no specific legacy plan or succession strategy developed by the Foundation to help steer or stimulate the longer term impacts of the ECoC. Rīga's Cultural Strategy 2008-2025 provides an overall approach to culture in the city but there was no specific legacy plan used to help the programme or its projects think about continuation post 2014. However, the Rīga 2014 Foundation still exists and does not plan to be dissolved until September 2015 - with the Head of the Foundation remaining in post until then.

The work of the neighbourhood programme within the ECoC is also likely to continue within Rīga City Council's Cultural Department. Because this element was seen to be a particular success of the ECoC year, the City Council is currently discussing ways in which funding for this element can continue and be ring fenced.

Rīga 2014 has also had an impact on the longer term strategy of the city in terms of it increasing the profile of culture within the city's overall Development Plan. Prior to 2014 culture as a sector had limited mentions in Rīga's Development Plan in terms of both strengthening the cultural industries and reinforcing the importance of culture in its widest sense. Negotiations between the Rīga 2014 Foundation and those responsible for the Development Plan resulted in a much larger mention of the cultural sector in the Plan and the inclusion of priorities, objectives and actions specifically connected with culture. For instance, the Development Plan now includes as a priority the stimulation of a 'creative and European city with a high-quality cultural life' as well as actions related to the 'access to culture and active promotion of both residents' creativity and public participation'. The Rīga 2014 ECoC is also often named in the Development Plan as a reference for some of its priorities and actions. Prior to 2011 (when the Foundation worked with those updating the Development Plan for the city) culture was mentioned only in passing.

3.7 Conclusions

3.7.1 Successes

The main successes of the ECoC programme in Rīga can be identified as follows:

- **Achieving high levels of activity with a relatively small budget:** Rīga 2014 focussed almost all of its efforts on developing and implementing a programme that was aimed at creating a cultural rather than physical or economic impact. Although there are issues with this approach (see below) this did mean that the cultural programme contained a significant amount of activity throughout the year and throughout the city. Concentrating on 'culture rather than buildings' was the main reason why most stakeholders felt that the Foundation had achieved 'high volumes of culture content' with limited amounts of money and those who are running future ECoC programmes which also face tight budgets could learn from this focussed and concentrated approach.
- **A good balanced programme:** linked to the above success was a recognition that the cultural programme was exceedingly well balanced between different cultural genres, a mix of high end and popular culture, an equal balance of free and ticketed events as well as activities run by large and reputable cultural players through to small community NGOs. All of these activities were undertaken relatively evenly across the 12 months of 2014. This broad and very varied mix programme can be seen as a key strength of the overall approach that Rīga took which ensured that the ECoC appealed to a broad range of different players and that there was 'something for everyone'.
- **The neighbourhood element:** Rīga 2014 also had a large amount of success spreading the activities and benefits of its cultural programme throughout the city and to a set of residents and neighbourhoods that were not the 'usual suspects' when it came to consuming culture on a regular basis. The programme's engagement with organisations and individuals living in its neighbourhoods as well as the way these groups were empowered and consulted to ensure that they shaped, delivered and enjoyed the cultural programme should be seen as key successes. Helping to encourage a 'bottom up' approach to the design and delivery of the ECoC programme in a country that has a relatively embryonic approach to community development can be seen as very positive.
- **Continuity and ongoing support:** the final key success of the Rīga approach to ECoC was around the overall continuity of the delivery team in the Foundation but also the continuity of the support that the Foundation team received from its partners and projects. Compared to other ECoC programmes, the team of Rīga 2014, its finances and its cultural content remained largely unchanged and the unwavering commitment that different players had to the ECoC in the city can be seen as being particularly strong. Many other ECoCs have often suffered from the departure of key members of staff or a change in funding or political support 'half way through' its development stages. In Rīga this was not the case and the ECoC delivered in 2014 was closely aligned to what was originally planned, both in terms of process, implementation and cultural content.

3.7.2 Lessons in delivery

The main lessons drawn are as follows:

- **The need to think beyond culture:** although Rīga's 2014 focus on culture was a strength, some stakeholders felt that there was a 'missed opportunity' in relation to linking ECoC with other aspects of the city's strategy including enterprise and physical development. Compared to other ECoC programmes, the content of Rīga 2014 was less ambitious in terms of using the opportunity to stimulate wider economic growth and in particular a lack of initiatives linked to supporting the creative sector in the city. Another central opportunity which some felt was missing was around using ECoC as a way of developing new or improving existing cultural facilities in the city which would have more of a lasting legacy for the year. The fact that the Rīga 2014 Foundation did not include staff with any wider remit outside of culture (i.e. economic development, city development, enterprise experts) meant that activities beyond culture remained limited.
- **Legacy:** linked to the above lesson is the issue of legacy. Although there have been long term benefits to Rīga 2014 there was less focus on legacy throughout the programme's design and delivery. This was partly down to the programme being delivered at a time when spend on culture and the arts is greatly under pressure (meaning it was difficult to continue certain activities post 2014) but the lack of a clear legacy strategy that maximised long term benefits (even in difficult times) was again identified by many as a missed opportunity.
- **Evaluation and tracking impact:** although the final report has used evidence and data from the external evaluation of Rīga 2014, the amount of evidence on impact is still relatively limited. The level of data on attendance figures, spend of visitors, satisfaction levels as well as wider economic impacts of the ECoC seems to be relatively limited. This means a true understanding of some of the major successes of Rīga 2014 is generated from people's opinions and thoughts rather than on quantifiable evidence. Other ECoCs should consider the generation of 'impact' data useful for a number of reasons. This includes understanding the real 'difference' the ECoC has made, understanding how and where opportunities could have been maximised as well as helping to articulate to a wider audience (including the sceptics) the power that culture can have on a city such as Rīga.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This section provides overall conclusions to the ex-post evaluation of the 2014 ECoC Action, drawing together the results of both Umeå and Rīga. The chapter also draws on the results of other ECoC evaluations⁴⁶. Many of the overall conclusions linked to the 2014 evaluation are relevant and consistent with the previous evaluation of other ECoC cities, meaning this section partly updates and refreshes these existing findings. As stated in the introduction chapter, each of the preceding city reports put forward a number of 'lessons learnt' that can be considered as recommendations for future ECoC cities. Recommendations for the Commission have not been developed, mainly because there are no significant recommendations drawn from the 2014 ECoC evaluation for the Commission to consider.

4.1 Relevance

The work in Umeå and Rīga in 2014 shows that the ECoC is still a very relevant Action when it comes to a variety of EU policy areas and EU legislation more widely. In particular, its relevance to the EU Treaty and Article 167 which looks at the contribution to the 'flowering of the cultures of the Member States' remains highly relevant. Not only have the ECoC in Umeå and Rīga helped these cities and respective Member States to strengthen their original cultural offer and heritage, but they have also helped diversify their cultural offerings as well as internationalise them further. This is evidenced not only in the original bid and application document but also in terms of the individual projects which this evaluation has highlighted during the study.

The 2014 evaluation of ECoC has particularly shown that the overall Action contributes and remains highly relevant to a range of other EU level priorities and objectives. The various activities which Umeå and Rīga delivered (in total there were over 1,500 different ECoC activities in the two cities) show that ECoC supported culture, but also urban and regional development, employment, enterprise, tourism as well as general social cohesion policies. Although primarily a cultural programme, the work in both Umeå and Rīga shows that there are a range of powerful benefits that the ECoC Action has to wider policy agenda outside of the cultural dimension. Although the 2014 evaluation has shown that cities still mainly see ECoC as a 'cultural' rather than say an economic or social programme, Umeå and Rīga have used their ECoC status to tackle other aspects of their city's development. Perhaps Umeå has been more ambitious than Rīga in this respect but both host cities have used ECoC as a vehicle to develop their city beyond simply the provision of cultural events and activities. There was some debate in Rīga as to the extent to which its ECoC could have been better used to develop wider economic benefits to the city but restraints to budgets in particular meant that its main focus had to be on culture rather than the wider policy agenda.

⁴⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/actions/capitals-culture_en.htm

The EU added value of the ECoC Action came particularly in relation to the 'status' and 'prestige' that the European year brought to the various activities being delivered in each city. Those stakeholders who were organising the larger events (festivals, large concerts etc.) often stated that the European 'badge' which was associated with their particular activity helped them 'hook' in more or higher profile artists or performers. This in turn meant the profile of the activity was greater which led to a larger audience and/ or higher visitor figures. The EU added value also came in relation to the two cultural programmes encouraging projects to be much more international than they would normally have been (where relevant and possible). The guidance documents and other supporting material all evidence a clear push towards an international and in particular a European theme or an activity which includes artists from across Europe. Projects in both Umeå and Rīga that existed before the host year reported that involvement in the ECoC had helped them generate new relationships with stakeholders across Europe. Rīga in particular showed that these European relationships would be sustained post 2014.

4.2 Efficiency

Similar to other evaluation years, the 2014 evaluation of ECoC shows that the cost effectiveness of the Action is significant. The very limited amount of EU funding going to each city compared to the actual amount of activity and benefits which flowed from it shows that the Action and the Melina Mercouri Prize presents good value for money. This is partly evidenced by the sheer number of activities that have been delivered (1,500+ across both cities) but also in terms of the views of project stakeholders in Umeå and Rīga who generally said that their activity would not have happened without the existence of ECoC status.

Both ECoC were designed and delivered in difficult economic times at both the city and national levels and therefore efficiency was a key aspect of their planning and delivery. Although Umeå and Rīga had different levels of resources available to them to deliver their cultural programmes, they both showed that a successful ECoC can be delivered on a relatively modest budget and in times when resources are limited. In particular Rīga (which had a budget of 27 million) may have been less 'ambitious' when it came to designing a programme that reached out to physical regeneration and infrastructure goals but its focus on the cultural content meant that they remained efficient and cost effective when it came to delivering a high quality 'cultural' programme. The Rīga example also shows that a city can host an ECoC without having to spend significant amounts of funding on new or improved cultural facilities.

The findings of the 2014 evaluation also show that ECoC are driven by public rather than private sector funding. This is evidenced by the fact that neither city was able to generate the private sector income they originally set in their applications as well as the fact that private sector funding represented less than 10% of total income in both city budgets. Although an ECoC is likely to always be highly dependent on public budgets, the lack of progress that both 2014 host cities made in attracting private sector funding through either direct support, sponsorship or advertising is an aspect worth noting when considering efficiency. This is again partly due to the timing of the 2014 programme and as economic situations improve the reliance on the public purse to drive forward ECoC activity may change for the better.

Despite State and city level administrations both reporting to have made significant cuts in their budgets around 2014, the existence of the ECoC ensured that the culture agenda in each city did not significantly suffer from these cuts in funding. Having a specific and 'special' project (i.e. ECoC) which stakeholders saw as a once in a lifetime experience tended to safeguard culture from the worst of the cuts. Even though the budgets allocated to both Umeå and Rīga were 'vulnerable' there was little evidence that State and city level funding decreased as a consequence of pressure on overall budgets. It seems that the ECoC has helped those responsible for culture in both cities to put a strong enough case forward to support this 'special' project.

The delivery mechanisms and infrastructure set up to implement the ECoC generally worked well in both cities. This is evidenced by the lack of negative views stakeholders had on the delivery mechanisms, the volume of projects that were successfully delivered and the lack of any 'bad news' stories that appeared in the local press about either ECoC. Although Umeå and Rīga developed different delivery mechanisms which had their own strengths and weaknesses, there was little in the way of major issues or challenges identified around this aspect of the Action in 2014. The generally smooth delivery of both programmes was mainly down to the individuals involved, the types of bodies set up to run the programmes, the relationships that were fostered as well as the wider support they received from national and city level government.

The management arrangements of the two cities also had a number of characteristics that helped them contribute to the overall achievements of the ECoC Action (including outputs, results and impacts). Firstly the development arrangements in both cities were inclusive and transparent in terms of having open calls for project ideas that came from the 'bottom up' (so that projects came from cultural rather than strategic players). Secondly, Riga had a co-ordination body that operated at arm's-length from the City or State authorities. Although not unique in terms of other previous ECoCs, this allowed freedom to design and deliver a programme away from 'bureaucratic' systems and procedures. Thirdly the artistic control and management in the design of the cultural programmes came from experienced and trusted players who had a real and deep understanding of the cultural agenda of the city. This artistic knowledge was very much found in the coordination bodies themselves (as well as the projects) which did more than simply manage and monitor outputs and budgets.

Both cities delivered a high volume of cultural activity, with Rīga having just under 500 activities and Umeå just over 1,000. Although it is sometimes dangerous to compare one ECoC to another (a definition of an 'activity' for one ECoC might be a Carnival whereas another ECoC may count individual activities within the Carnival separately), the volume of cultural content was extremely high in 2014. Both programmes managed to design and deliver a wide ranging cultural programme which included a strong mix of cultural genres delivered across the whole year and often across various parts of the city and even beyond. This is evidenced by the content of the cultural programmes contained in various marketing and publication materials but also through the various analysis each ECoC did to 'map' what activity had taken place in their cities. Linked to the subject of efficiency was a partial focus on delivering smaller cultural activities that were seen as being more cost effective. Although both host cities laid on a variety of high profile and 'glitzy' events which did have high costs, they also included a large number of smaller cultural activities which had lower costs but were equally well received. This was partly evidenced by the fact that when stakeholders taking part in the European evaluation in each city were asked to state their 'highlight of the year' many chose smaller and more 'personal' moments rather than the 'headline' events such as the opening ceremony.

These included more local driven 'neighbourhood' activities, 'pop up' activities such as art installations and a move away from using national or international cultural 'celebrities' who demanded higher fees. As well as this having a benefit in terms of efficiency, it also helped to broaden the appeal of both cultural programmes beyond those who would have normally consumed culture in Umeå and Rīga outside of the existence of the ECoC.

4.3 Effectiveness

As would be expected, the main elements of effectiveness relate to the way in which the ECoC strengthened the cultural offer in both cities. The increased strength related to the scale of the cultural offer, the capacity of its cultural operators as well as the depth of cultural activity within the city. Although it is again sometimes difficult to evidence how much 'extra' culture was present in 2014 in the two cities compared to preceding years, many of those taking part in the evaluation felt that it was 'at least double'.

There is no doubt that both cities have seen an increase in the volume of culture on offer to both residents and visitors alike. Although this is unsurprising in the ECoC year itself, there is also evidence that this increase in volume will remain post 2014 (see sustainability below). Both cultural programmes certainly maximised the opportunity available during the ECoC year and were neither conservative nor cautious when developing their cultural programmes. They can both be seen as being particularly ambitious in their plans and should be applauded for 'making the most' of their ECoC status. The volume, scope and variety of the cultural programmes in both cities are very noticeable.

One key aspect of effectiveness in both cities is around how ECoC has widened the appeal and reach of culture to community groups and neighbourhoods that simply would not have experienced culture without the existence of the ECoC Action. Although it is difficult to understand the longer term impact of this, both programmes worked hard to provide cultural content that appealed to a wide variety of different audiences, putting on performances and activities that can be firmly classed as being popular, alternative or innovative in nature. This is evidenced by the level of targeting that projects were encouraged to do (on underrepresented groups), the location of these activities (often outside of the centre and in non-traditional settings) but also through the clear guidance that both cities had to project sponsors and designers to 'go out of their way' to widen participation. Both cultural programmes in Umeå and Rīga had specific 'themes' or 'lines' that encompassed widening participation. Although some ECoC activities took place in 'traditional' settings like theatres, galleries and opera houses, they also took place in the neighbourhoods and streets where people lived, away from the city centre. The fact that both ECoCs specifically set out to widen participation and target under-represented groups rather than simply 'hoping' that they would participate should be noted by future ECoC aiming to achieve something similar.

There is weaker evidence available on the impact of the ECoC overall in the city, particularly in relation to quantitative data on harder social and economic dimensions. However, it is perhaps too ambitious to expect true 'impact' to manifest itself fully within host cities so soon after the end of the year itself. Although both cities, like their predecessors, have undertaken monitoring and evaluation activities, the outcome of this work still largely depends on the views and opinions of different stakeholders.

There were challenges in both cities around attracting international audiences - but for different reasons. Umeå faced a geographical challenge linked to its relative isolation up North whilst Rīga did not undertake enough international marketing and promotion mainly due to procurement issues. Although both ECoC and their associated projects experienced high audience figures, there were fewer international visitors than was envisaged at the bid stage. Umeå did however make the most of the ECoC status in its efforts to put itself 'on the map' whereas Rīga, although partly already a firm tourist destination, has perhaps missed an opportunity to strengthen its international profile further (less than 2% of audiences were from outside of Latvia).

4.4 Sustainability

Despite key areas of success on a number of fronts, both the 2014 ECoC have tended to have weaker longer term plans to sustain their cultural offer beyond the year itself. This was evidenced by the simple fact that neither city had produced a formal legacy or sustainability plan but also that project leaders who took part in the evaluation were not currently working on future events that were similar in size or scope to those which they ran in 2014. When asked about legacy during the evaluation, many (but not all) stakeholders in Umeå and Rīga tended to view the ECoC year as a 'special' or 'one off' project. There were aspects of both cities approach to ECoC that showed they had considered sustainability, but there was a lack of a real firm plan or strategy in place to make that happen. Although thinking around legacy was established early on in the ECoC life cycle of each city (evidenced through the content of their original application), this did not manifest itself in a strong sustainability plan. Unsurprisingly, a lack of finance to sustain some of the key aspects of the cultural programme for 2014 was highlighted as the main barrier to sustainability.

The fact that both cities and in particular Rīga were so heavily reliant on State and city funds was a key contributing factor when it came to sustainability (public sector funding represented around 90% of the total budget for each ECoC). Both ECoC sometimes struggled to attract funding from other public sources, EU funding as well as the private sector, meaning there was an over reliance on mainstream public funds. This made them more susceptible to the wider financial pressures that national and local government are facing (for example, Rīga City Council have made budget cuts of around 40% in recent years).

Despite the above, there was evidence that culture had risen up the policy agenda in both cities as a consequence of ECoC. The Action has allowed both cities to 'showcase' the importance and benefits of culture to a level that would not have been possible without ECoC status. This has allowed those involved in culture to firmly put their policy area on the map - evidenced by the fact that the city development plans in Umeå and Rīga now include culture alongside themes such as employment, economic growth and transport.

Umeå has seen improvements to its cultural infrastructure which will have a key legacy beyond 2014 as it provides organisations, residents and visitors with new and improved buildings for the years to come. Although Rīga has and will see improvements to its cultural infrastructure (with new or improved theatres and museums opening) these are less associated with the ECoC programme and were not finished in time to be opened during the year itself (with the exception of the National Library). As stated earlier, partly because of the limited budget, Rīga focussed more on culture rather than 'bricks and mortar'. Although this led to a very cost effective programme, it did have issues when it came to sustainability and longer term impacts.

There is also no doubt that both Umeå and Riga, like other host ECoC cities, have built up an array of new relationships and networks that will be sustained in the future. This is evidenced by the fact that cultural players across both cities reported to have collaborated with new partners and organisations both at the city level as well as at national and international levels. These new relationships were said to stimulate longer term impacts in relation to new activities including festivals, exhibitions, concerts and films in the cities based on the collaborations generated through ECoC.

Like many previous ECoC evaluations, perhaps the biggest aspect of sustainability is around the increased capacity that cultural operators in both cities reported through their involvement in the delivery of various ECoC projects. A key benefit of ECoC overall and one which maximises its sustainability is around the new skills, experiences, track record and knowledge which is found in the city as a consequence of planning and implementing a major year of culture. Many cultural operators reported that they would build on this new capacity to develop a better and stronger cultural offer post 2014 - at a level that would not have been possible without the experiences and relationships gained through ECoC.

4.5 Recommendations

This report highlights a number of recommendations that emerge out of the findings and conclusions of the 2014 ECoC evaluation. These recommendations (presented in the table below) are useful for future ECoC to consider when developing and implementing their programmes. It is recommended that the Commission develop a compendium of recommendations from current and future ECoC evaluations and make these available to candidate cities to help them learn from past lessons and good practice.

Table 4.1 Recommendations

Recommendation	
The need for political support	Political support is important in order to gain stability to the programme. Political support is often key at both the city and national levels to help with the approval of funds and budgets for the ECoC, the secondment of staff (which often come from the City Authority) as well as the wider profile of the programme throughout both the development and implementation stages of ECoC. However, the artistic choices and content of the ECoC generally need to be free of political intervention which is better done by cultural rather than political operators.
The need to build a stable, effective team at an early stage in the development period	Unlike Riga 2014, Umeå 2014 did not establish a stable implementation team early on. Developing a team very early on within the implementation stages is vital, and scaling this team up early on is also important. Although team members might well leave, having a dedicated group of individuals involved throughout the whole process is critical in terms of encouraging the continuity and clarity of the ECoC programme and its activities. Maybe looking beyond the team that was involved in the original bid and, second, looking outside of the municipality for the best recruits is also worth consideration.

Recommendation	
The need to think beyond culture	Although ECoC should firmly remain a cultural programme, there may be a 'missed opportunity' if those involved in designing the programme do not link it with other aspects of the city's strategy including enterprise, social inclusion and physical development. Those developing ECoC programmes should try to be as ambitious as possible in terms of using the opportunity to stimulate wider economic growth, more jobs, a stronger creative sector as well as developing new or improved cultural facilities in the city. Involving stakeholders involved in economic, social and physical policy as well as just cultural policy therefore needs to be a consideration during programme design.
Evaluation and tracking impact	The 2014 evaluation has shown that the amount of evidence on the impact of ECoC is still relatively limited. The level of data on attendance figures, spend of visitors, satisfaction levels as well as wider economic impacts of the ECoC seems to be partial at best. Future ECoC should consider the generation of 'impact' data useful for a number of reasons. This includes understanding the real 'difference' the ECoC has made, understanding how and where opportunities could have been maximised as well as helping to articulate to a wider audience (including the sceptics) the power that culture can have on a city.
Actively pursue widening participation in culture	Both 2014 ECoC specifically set out to widen participation in culture by targeting under-represented groups rather than simply 'hoping' that these groups would take part in the programme. Purposely and explicitly setting out to attract groups that would otherwise ignore culture should be considered by future ECoC in terms of the type, geography and scope of the cultural offer they put on.
Plan rather than 'hope' for sustainability	Both the 2014 ECoC have tended to have weaker longer term plans to sustain their cultural offer beyond the year itself. Although there were aspects of both cities approach to ECoC that showed they had considered sustainability, there was a lack of a real firm plan or strategy in place to make this happen. Although thinking around legacy was established early on in the ECoC life cycle of each 2014 city, this did not manifest itself in a strong sustainability plan. Future ECoC need to have a well developed legacy strategy that puts in place a number of structures and importantly, practical actions that help to stimulate a longer term approach to culture in the city, beyond the year itself.

5.0 Postscript: Effective promotion of a European Capital of Culture

5.1 Introduction

A requirement of the Terms of Reference for this evaluation was to assess the impact of the two ECoC for 2014 and learn lessons from their experience. This aim has been satisfied by the reports for each city (sections 2 and 3) and by the conclusions in section 4. In addition to the findings relating specifically to 2014, there are a set of lessons that emerge from the experience of ECoC across the years. Previous evaluations of the ECoC have captured some of these lessons in a series of post-scripts covering "Lessons in delivery" (2007-08), "The European dimension" (2009), "Leaving a legacy" (2010), "Fostering the participation of citizens" (2011), "Measuring impacts" (2012) and "Financing an ECoC" (2013). Together, these post-scripts constitute a rich resource for future applicants and title-holders as well as for those responsible for the future development of the initiative at European level. To complement this resource, we now present a set of reflections on lessons learnt with respect to "Effective promotion". This draws on the experience cities holding the title in 2014, as well as those covered by the evaluation reports for 2007 to 2013.

Effective promotion is essential to the success of ECoC and has thus been a key concern of the panels that have selected the title-holders over the years. Building on this, the new legal basis for ECoC from 2020 onwards includes selection criteria that relate very directly to effective promotion: criterion 2d) stipulates the need for a "strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public"; criterion 5c) requires an "overall strategy for audience development"; and criterion 6d) states the need for a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy.⁴⁷

Whilst effective promotion is essential to the success of an ECoC, title-holders face a number of challenges. They must promote a 12-month cultural programme comprised of hundreds or even thousands of individual events of vastly different scale, covering different artistic themes and from a diversity of artistic disciplines. This programme must be promoted to a diversity of local, national and international audiences but with a budget that is usually modest in size. Moreover, the promotional campaign must usually be led by a newly-created ECoC agency with few staff in the early years of the preparation phase. This agency must also work with and through a multitude of stakeholders with potentially divergent interests and with very different levels of capacity and experience for promotion.

Drawing on the experience of previous ECoC, we present lessons from experience in developing messages to communicate, building capacity, and reaching audiences.

⁴⁷ Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 and repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC

5.2 Developing messages to communicate

The messages that are to be communicated by an ECoC promotional campaign will naturally reflect the objectives of the city holding the title. Typically, the objectives of the ECoC are not only to attract audiences for the cultural events but also to raise the profile of the city and change the way it is perceived locally, nationally and internationally. Simultaneously addressing these objectives requires careful consideration of the messages that are to be communicated. From the experience of previous title-holders, we can identify some lessons from experience.

There is a need for an overarching theme to bring coherence to the overall ECoC and to the diversity of events within the cultural programme, whilst also communicating something about the city itself. Without this, the risk is that the ECoC becomes a confusing mass of events and fails to articulate anything specific about the city. In the case of Umeå2014, the overall theme of “Curiosity and Passion” reflected both the aspirations for the cultural programme and the characteristics of Umeå as a modern, progressive, outward-looking and growing city. Three previous ECoC chose themes that reflected the coastal location of the cities: the theme of Marseille-Provence2013 was “Les Ateliers de l’Euro-méditerranée” (“Workshops of the Euro-Mediterranean”), which reflected its ambition to be a cultural meeting point between European and the other countries of the Mediterranean. The theme of Tallinn2011, “Stories from the Sea Shore” emphasised both the outward-looking character of the cultural programme and the potential of culture to open up the city’s seafront area. Stavanger2008 adopted the theme of “Open Port” as a description of its location and a metaphor for its openness to cultural diversity. The theme of Liverpool2008 was “The World in One City”, which captured the diversity of the city’s population and its cultural programme. For Turku2011, the theme of “Turku on Fire” referred to a defining moment in the city’s history (i.e. the Great Fire of 1827) and captured the city’s ambition to be a vibrant cultural destination.

The length and diversity of the cultural programme require the articulation of specific sub-themes, if the programme is to attract diverse audiences and sustain interest throughout the title-year. The most usual approach is for ECoC to define different seasons within the overall calendar; those seasons enable different themes and messages to be communicated and also allow a more logical grouping of events. For example, the programme of Umeå2014 was based on the eight seasons of the traditional Sami calendar, which served to promote the Sami culture and provide a thematic focus for events (“Season of Awakening”, “Season of Growing”, “Season of Harvesting”, etc.). The arrival of each of the eight seasons also offered the opportunity for a new programme guide to be published and a seasonal (re-)launch event to be held. In other ECoC, the sub-themes have articulated messages about particular dimensions or characteristics of the cultural programme. For example, one sub-theme of Riga2014 was “Amber Vein” which brought together various projects highlighting an ancient trade route from the Baltic Seas to the Black Sea. Liverpool’s sub-themes of “Yesterday” “Today” and “Tomorrow” enabled the articulation of messages about the city’s heritage, current offering and future ambitions.

Promotional messages can be aspirational but must be authentic. For most title-holders, the ECoC represents an opportunity to improve the way the city is perceived by communicating a more positive image. This has been particularly common for provincial cities struggling with the legacy of industrial decline. A better image offers tangible benefits, such as an increase in tourist arrivals and business investment, as well as intangible benefits, such as a greater sense of pride amongst local residents. At the same time, the experience of ECoC shows that these benefits are not maximised if the messages are not an authentic representation of the city.

One of the first cities to use ECoC in this way, indeed one of the first cities to use culture to drive urban regeneration, was Glasgow (1990). After decades of industrial decline, Glasgow not only made substantial investments in cultural infrastructure, it also implemented an extensive marketing campaign to promote a more positive image of the city. This campaign was innovative for its time and did much to sustain the momentum for change. At the same time, the campaign was criticised in some quarters for glossing over the problems facing the city and alienating some of its population, particularly the working classes and the disadvantaged. Other ECoC have learned from this experience and sought to promote a message about both what the city is and what it can be, including turning any perceived weaknesses into positives. Two of the most prominent examples have been Liverpool (2008) and Marseille (2013): port cities with significant social problems and not traditional cultural destinations. Both used ECoC to project an image that celebrates their maritime heritage, “spiky” character, ethnic diversity and underground culture, as well as “high-brow” arts; to that end, a joint flagship project between Liverpool, Marseille and four other port cities was “Cities on the Edge”. Along the same lines, Linz (2009) based its ECoC on the theme of “Culture, Industry, Nature”, with the aim of projecting an image of the city as it is and differentiating it from Austria’s traditional cultural destinations of Vienna and Salzburg.

5.3 Building capacity

A very significant challenge facing ECoC is to build the capacity for effective promotion. ECoC are, by their nature, one-off events that few cities host more than once. It usually requires a new delivery agency to be set up and such agencies have no institutional track record or contacts and few staff in the early years of the preparation phase. This agency must initiate a promotional campaign from scratch and deliver against a tight timetable and a modest budget. Given that all ECoC face these challenges, we can draw lessons from the experience of previous title-holders.

Early recruitment of specialist staff dedicated to communication is essential.

Once the title has been awarded, the priority for title-holders is usually to put in place the governance arrangements, start planning the cultural programme and progress any infrastructure developments. At this point, up to four years before the title, the promotional activity can seem a low priority when there is little to communicate. However, the communication requirements of the ECoC itself are very different to those of the bidding stage and it is usually insufficient merely to continue with the same arrangements; the scale of communication activities is much greater and the audiences wider and harder to reach. But a common experience of ECoC is that communication staff have been recruited later and in fewer numbers than necessary. Yet even in the earlier stages, there is significant work to do, in terms of developing a communication strategy, appointing contractors (in some cases), recruiting other staff and building partnerships with other stakeholders, including tourist bodies, sponsors and the main cultural institutions.

Moreover, as we explain below, some of the most important communication activities take place several months or even a couple of years before the title-year. One risk of a late start is that international audiences, in particular, are not reached, for example, as was the case in Riga2014 where there was almost a complete reliance on press articles and only 1.4% of audiences attending ECoC events were from outside Latvia.

Appointing a communication company can be effective, but the individuals must be closely connected to, perhaps even integrated into, the rest of the delivery team. Some ECoC have addressed the challenge of building capacity for communication by appointing a communication company to undertake the work. This can allow the necessary capacity to be put in place at an early stage. However, experience shows that the communication cannot be developed in isolation to the cultural programme; the cultural programme provides the content for the communication campaign and the rationale for the campaign, i.e. to attract audiences and visitors. The experience of Istanbul2010 offers an example here. Whilst the marketing campaign was very extensive (with a budget of €42m) and successful in raising the profile of the city, it was to a large extent “decoupled” from the cultural programme; one reason given for this decoupling was reported to be the weak co-ordination between those responsible for the cultural programme and those responsible for marketing.

Capacity for communication needs to be built across the different partners in the ECoC. Whilst the ECoC communication team will lead the promotional campaign, an important task is to maximise the potential of all partners to contribute to effective promotion. Indeed, the different partners in the ECoC can be supported to act as “relays” in communicating positive messages about the ECoC to a wider and more diverse set of audiences. Corporate sponsors do not just provide finance; they can act as (formal or informal) ambassadors for the ECoC, for example, by using the ECoC logo on their own marketing materials, hosting their clients at ECoC events, etc. Local hotels, shops and transport providers can be supported to promote the ECoC. For example, in Linz (2009) staff at key public transport interchanges and the main cultural institutions were trained to provide information and Linz09 passes and sell merchandise. There is in particular a need to build the capacity of small cultural operators who are implementing larger or more ambitious events than before. For such operators, such practical support can be as important as grant funding.

Partnership is vital. As we have said, the ECoC delivery agencies are usually in existence only for a few years and have modest budgets for communication. In that context, it is essential to work with existing players who have a remit for promoting the city; they have the capacity in place and will continue to promote the city long after the title-year. At the same time, the long-term priorities of tourist bodies are not necessarily identical to the objectives of the ECoC. For example, in Tallinn (2011) staff from the ECoC delivery agency reported some frustration that the tourist bodies did not make the ECoC central to their marketing campaigns and tended not to use the overall theme and branded materials of the ECoC. For its part, the Tallinn Tourist Office reported that the overall focus of its international campaigns was, and would remain, the Old Town, which it saw as the unique selling point in the long run. In Linz (2009), there was limited tradition of the cultural and tourist sectors working together to promote the city, in part because of the importance of business tourism. However, a partnership was formed between the ECoC agency and the tourist board, which led to the development of a joint marketing plan and use of the common slogan

"Linz.Verändert" ("Linz.Changed"), which continues to be used by the tourist board.⁴⁸ Another key partnership can be with agencies responsible for attracting inward investment into the city or the region. In the case of Tallinn (2011), the national agency, Enterprise Estonia, put the ECoC at the heart of its international campaigns as part of its overall focus on promoting cultural tourism in 2011.

5.4 Reaching audiences

The ambition of all ECoC is to reach a larger and diverse audience within the city and beyond. Yet the diversity of the audience and of the cultural programme make this a challenging task. Whilst all ECoC are different, some common lessons have emerged regarding the best way to reach different audiences at local, national and international level.

Local media needs to be "fed" throughout the preparation phase. As we have said, in the early years of the development phase, there is often little to communicate, as the focus is on building capacity, recruiting staff and establishing governance arrangements. Moreover, the development phase can be problematic, for example, where political objectives infringe on artistic freedom or where expectations of public funding are not fulfilled. At the same time, local media organisations are keen to have something to report on. They also see themselves as playing an important role in holding the ECoC team to account, given the significant commitment of public funds and the high expectations of local citizens. In the absence of evidence of tangible progress, the risk is that "bad news stories" fill the vacuum, particularly where there are high-profile resignations or substantial differences of opinion between different partners. The risk is that such negative reporting damages the credibility of the ECoC at an early stage and it can take time to recover. The best approach is for delivery teams to have communication officers in place at an early stage who are able to build positive relationships with local journalists and provide a steady stream of news. As we have seen in Umeå 2014, a key activity was the creation of a news desk two years before the title-year to issue press releases and publicise examples of proposed projects.

Local media want the ECoC to succeed. Despite the difficulties we have just described, local media organisations ultimately want the ECoC to fulfil its objectives, in terms of implementing a successful cultural programme, as well as attracting tourists and improving the image of the city. Indeed, a successful ECoC benefits not only the city holding the title but also local media organisations within the city. For that reason – and once more detail about the cultural programme is available – local media will usually lend their support in the approach to the title-year. This process can be accelerated if local newspapers, television and other media outlets can be attracted into a commercial relationship, e.g. acting as corporate sponsors and/or offering in-kind contributions such as free advertising in return for recognition as official media partner. For example, in Umeå the Viakor newspaper became one of the corporates partner and provided support for projects and free advertising space. Similarly, after some negative coverage concerning the departure of its director, Marseille-Provence (2013) secured the support of both the regional newspaper, La Provence, and the local newspaper, La Marseillaise, with dedicated supplements provided in both publications. At the same time, ECoC teams should note the limits to the commercial relationship,

⁴⁸ <http://www.linztourismus.at/magazinabo/>

as local media will jealously guard their editorial independence and not hesitate to report on continued difficulties facing the ECoC if they believe they are newsworthy.

National media can be particularly difficult to reach. In the case of capital cities in small countries (e.g. Riga2014, Tallinn2011), national media tend to “behave” in a similar way to local media; being based in the city, they may give negative coverage in the development phase but usually want the title-year to be a success. However, the situation can be quite different where the title is held by provincial cities, particularly those that are not traditional cultural destinations. In these cases, there may be a low level of interest in cultural events outside the capital and, at worst, cynicism about the ambitions of the title-holder. For example, industrial or port cities such as Marseille (2013), Essen for the Ruhr (2010), Linz (2009) and Liverpool (2008) faced the challenge of overcoming negative perceptions of the city and competing with traditional cultural centres, such as Paris, Berlin, Vienna and London. In the case of Umeå, the challenge came from the relatively small size of the city and the distance from Stockholm. One of the most effective ways to reach national media is through the appointment of nationally and internationally-recognised artistic directors and other staff who have the necessary profile and personal connections. For example, some of the senior staff of Marseille-Provence (2013) were high profile figures from the cultural establishment in Paris who gave both credibility and connections to the ECoC; at the same time, a careful balance had to be struck to ensure that the cultural programme was not merely “imported” into Marseille-Provence from the national level. Another approach, taken by Umeå2014, was to have representation in Stockholm, which allowed for direct contact with national media as well as with national cultural institutions and the Ministry of Culture.

Effective communication requires programme highlights to be in place at an early stage. The relatively short length of the development phase means that much of the detail of the cultural programme will not be in place until just before the title-year or even until the early months of the title-year itself. However, a common complaint from ECoC communication staff is that they have nothing tangible to communicate until a late stage. As we have just described, there is pressure from local media organisations to provide more detail about the events that will take place. In addition, the timescales of international media and international tour operators require at least some of the more important events to be defined well in advance. Tour operators will typically want to promote packages in the year before the title-year, meaning that key events need to be confirmed up to eighteen months or more before the title year. International travel writers and cultural correspondents will typically report on forthcoming events in the months leading up to the title-year or in the first few weeks of the title-year, which again requires some events to be confirmed. The key for ECoC is thus to confirm at least the “big ticket” events well in advance so that tour operators can sell packages and international journalists can provide coverage.

The ECoC brand can provide good access to international media. Broadly speaking, ECoC are of interest to two elements of the international media. In both cases, such journalists are looking for good news stories; they are more likely to ignore weak ECoC rather than give negative coverage. First, there are international cultural journalists. Such journalists are already familiar with the ECoC concept and have often reported on previous title-holders. As a result, the ECoC is already on their “calendar” and they are seeking opportunities to visit and report on title-holders in the months leading up to the title-year.

For example, the BBC has previously broadcast one-hour programmes in January or February that explore the music and culture of the cities holding the title.⁴⁹ Second, there are international travel writers. As travel becomes an ever more globalised market, there is a continual search to uncover new, “hip” destinations. In that context, international travel writers are very open to reporting on emerging cultural destinations, particularly if the ECoC offers something very distinctive in its cultural programme.

Reaching international audiences requires very specific and strategic promotional tools. The communication budget available to any ECoC is usually quite modest in comparison to its ambitions and the potential audiences to be reached. A global marketing campaign is usually prohibitively expensive. Instead, successful ECoC have tended to be quite selective and strategic in their choice of tools to reach international audiences. International journalists and tour operators are already aware of the ECoC concept and are usually open to being reached; the priority is to meet them at an early stage and face-to-face if possible. For example, Umeå2014 and Rīga2014 jointly promoted the ECoC in the Culture Lounge of the Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB Berlin) - the world's largest tourism trade fair. As we have described in section 2, the “Caught by [Umeå]” tour of European cities in the autumn of 2013 was another crucial tool in reaching international media and led to visits to Umeå by at least 14 foreign journalists.

Exploit international networks and contacts available to the city. One strategic and low cost promotional tool that most ECoC make use of is that of contacts and networks in other countries. Most obviously, these include embassies of the country hosting the ECoC abroad which can be encouraged to promote the ECoC and distribute promotional materials. Embassies can also facilitate contacts with cultural operators and journalists in other countries. As well as using Swedish embassies abroad, Umeå2014 also nominated cultural operators in other countries as “ambassadors” to promote the ECoC to their networks. Umeå also made use of the Swedish diaspora in the cities visited by the “Caught by [Umeå]” tour, particularly students studying abroad. Such individuals were invited to the various events organised by the tour and served not only as enthusiastic cheerleaders for Umeå at the events but also in the weeks and months that followed. Similarly, the Latvian Institute played a key role in raising awareness of Riga2014 among international travel journalists, which was particularly important given the very late appointment of the communication contractor.

⁴⁹ For example, “Music Matters” broadcast on 15.1.2011 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00xbf9c>) and on 13.2.2010 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00qn1lt>)

Annex One: List of Interviewees

Rīga Interviews

No.	Name	Organisation	Role / description
ECOC delivery agency			
1	Diāna Čivle	Rīga 2014	Director and programme curator - Rīga Carnival
2	Aiva Rozenberga	Rīga 2014	Programme Director
3	Gundega Laiviņa,	Rīga 2014 / New Theatre Institute Latvia	Programme curator - Road Map
4	Gints Grūbe	Rīga 2014 / Journalist and film-maker	Programme curator - Freedom Street
5	Solvita Krese	Rīga 2014 / Latvian Centre for Contemporary Arts	Programme curator - Survival Kit
6	Vita Timermane-Moora	Rīga 2014 / Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Programme curator - Amber Vein
7	Uģis Brikmāns	Rīga 2014 / Director	Programme curator - Thirst For The Ocean
8	Dace Vilsone	Rīga 2014	Head of Programme implementation unit
9	Anna Mukha	Rīga 2014	International Communications
10	Ints Teterovskis	Rīga 2014	Volunteer Programme Manager
Government			
11	Selga Laizāne	Secretariat of Latvian Presidency of Council of the the EU	Head of Public Diplomacy and Culture Programme
12	Karina Petersone	Latvian Institute	Director
13	Jolanta Borite	Sigulda municipality	Head of Culture Department
14	Andrejs Pildegovics	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	State Secretary
15	Evelina Melbarzde	Information and Public Relations Department / Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Director of the department
Cultural operators			
16	Dace Bluķe	Council of Creative Unions of Latvia.	Chairman
17	Alija Turlaja	Sarkandaugavas attīstības biedrība (Society of	Head of board

No.	Name	Organisation	Role / description
		development of Sarkandaugava district)	
18	Haralds Matulis	Association of Creative Unions	Academic
19	Māra Lāce	National Museum	Director
Media organisations/journalists			
20	Jegors Jerohomovičs	Dienas newspaper	Journalist
21	Ieva Rozentāle	Latvian public TV	Head of Cultural Department
Business and tourism			
22	Vita Jermoloviča	Rīga Tourism Development Bureau Foundation	Board Member
Education and research			
23	Gints Klasons	Researcher	Rīga 2014 evaluation team
24	Anda Lake	Latvian Academy of Culture	Rīga 2014 evaluation team

Umeå interviewees

No.	Name	Organisation	Role / description
ECoC delivery agency / Municipality of Umeå			
1	Fredrik Lindegren	Umeå2014	Artistic Director
2	Albert Edman	Umeå2014	Head of Urban Development and Sustainability
3	Dan Vähä	Umeå2014	Administrative Manager
4	Elisabeth Lind	Umeå2014	Head of Communication
5	Shauna Adams	Umeå2014	Program Producer
6	Robert Tenevall	Umeå2014	The "Cultural Boost"
7	Malin Johansson	Umeå2014	Business Partner Relations
8	Margareta Ling	Umeå2014	Program Coordinator
9	Kirsi Abrahamsson	Municipality of Umeå	EU Officer, Umeå Municipal International Office
10	Marie-Louise Rönmark	Municipality of Umeå	Mayor
National, regional, local government			
11	Pia Erson	Ministry of Culture	
12	Anna Selvåg	Statens kulturråd	
13	Per-Olof Remmare	Tillväxtverket	
14	Ola Kellgren	Region Västerbotten	Regionkulturchef
15	Ingrid Lundmark	Municipality of Örnsköldsvik	Co-ordinator
Cultural operators			
16	Eva Conradzon	Umeå2014 Sami artistic council	Sami Advisor
17	Ulrika Grubbström	Västerbottens museum	Museum director, Museichef
18	Shauna Adams	Kulturväven Cultural Centre	Program Producer at Kulturväven from Jan 2015
19	Kjell Englund	Norrlandsoperan	CEO and Artistic director

No.	Name	Organisation	Role / description
20	Katarina Pierre	Bildmuseet	Museum director, Museichef
21	Gunilla Samberg	Convoy/Molnskugga	Artist
22	Olle Sundin	FrostByte	Non-profit organisation, UmeLan
23	Adam Dahlgren,	FrostByte	Non-profit organisation, UmeLan
Media organisations/journalists			
24	Eva Eriksson*	Västerbottens-Kuriren AB	Media partner of Umeå2014
Business and tourism			
25	Anna Wikholm Kjellberg	Visit Umeå / Umeå Turistbyrå	Main partner of Umeå2014
26	Maritta Holmberg	Visit Umeå / Umeå Turistbyrå	Main partner of Umeå2014
27	Davis Melender	Swedbank	Theme partner to Umeå2014
28	Torbjörn Halvardsson	Företagarna	Partner for Umeå2014
29	Anna Ericsson	Motorcentralen	Partner for Umeå2014
30	Fredrik Forsell	Ultra	Partner for Umeå2014
Education and research			
31	Britta Lundgren	University of Umeå	Strategic involvement in Umeå2014
32	Rolf Hugoson	University of Umeå	Local research into effects of Umeå2014
33	Katrin Sten	University of Umeå	Local research into effects of Umeå2014

Annex Two: Main Topic Guide

Topic guide for interviews with managing teams

	Questions
Background	Explore background of interviewee and his/her organisation Explore role of interviewee and in the ECoC Explore views of interviewee on the background context of the city (e.g. state of cultural sector, socio-economic context, etc.)
Objectives	What was their overall motivation? (motivation of the partner organisation and of the city as a whole) What was the process of determining objectives? (How far) did they adopt each of the objectives listed in the intervention logic? In particular, how was the European dimension taken into account? To what extent was the European dimension a bolt- on or integral? What was the relative importance of each objective? To what extent did objectives change in the 4 years between the application and the start of the title year? What were the most important changes?
Application and planning/ development phases	How did the City apply to its Member States for the nomination? How effective was the selection process at Member State <i>and EU</i> level? In what ways did the ECoC take into account the recommendations of the EU selection panel? In what ways have the mechanisms applied by the Commission for selecting the European Capital of Culture and the subsequent implementation and monitoring mechanisms influenced the results of the Action? What were the main milestones in the planning/development phase? What difficulties were encountered during the planning/development phase and how were these overcome?
Inputs	What was the process of securing the necessary financial resources? What were the inputs in terms of EU, other public and private funding? How effective were attempts to raise funds through sponsorship? How helpful (or not) was the ECoC brand in this? What was the balance of expenditure on infrastructure, events,

	Questions
	management, communications, etc.? (NB We need the split between revenue and capital spend) To what extent did the actual financial inputs reflect those promised in the application? To what extent were the financial inputs sufficient to achieve the desired outputs, results and impacts?
Activities	What was the process of agreeing artistic themes and designing the programme? What were the artistic themes? What activities did they undertake? How did the European dimension feature in the themes and the activities? Again, how integral was it - or was it a bolt-on? How were activities selected, implemented and monitored? <i>What was the local approach to evaluating the impacts of ECoC?</i> How/how effectively was the cultural programme publicised (through a communications strategy)? What difficulties were encountered and how were they overcome? To what extent did the themes and activities change between the application date and the title year? (Which were achieved most/least?)
Outputs	How did the delivery mechanism contribute to the achievement of outputs? What outputs did they produce from the set in the intervention logic? (special focus on the European dimension) Any other significant outputs (not in the intervention logic)? To what extent did the ECoC achieve the outputs hoped for by the city (and as set out in the application)? (Which were achieved most/least?)
Results	How did the delivery mechanism improve management of culture in the city during the title year? What is the evidence that the results listed in the intervention logic were achieved? (special focus on the European dimension) Any other significant results (not in the intervention logic)?

	Questions
	To what extent did the ECoC achieve the results hoped for by the city (and as set out in the application)? (Which were achieved most/least?)
Impacts	What is the evidence that the impacts listed in the intervention logic were or will be achieved? (special focus on the European dimension) Any other significant impacts (not in the intervention logic)? To what extent did the ECoC achieve the impacts hoped for by the city (and as set out in the application)? (Which were achieved most/least?) What elements of the delivery structure (will) continue to operate? How will the city continue to manage its long-term cultural development following the title year? What has been the contribution of the ECoC to improved management of cultural development in the city? (in the long-term) Has there been a long term impact on levels of funding for culture in the city? Are bids to other EU sources in train or planned?

Topic guide for interviews with ECoC stakeholders and partners

	Questions
Background	Explore background of interviewee and his/her organisation Explore role of interviewee and his/her organisation in the ECoC Explore views of interviewee on the background context of the city (e.g. state of cultural sector, socio-economic context, etc.)
Objectives	What was their overall motivation for participating in the ECoC? (motivation of the partner organisation and their view of the motivation of the city as a whole) What were the key success factors and failure elements related to the process of consultation / partnership building to define aims and objectives? How relevant were the objectives chosen to the needs/potential of the city and the interests of the partner organisation? In their view, how/how far was the European dimension taken into account? To what extent was the European dimension a bolt-on or integral to the ECoC?
Application and planning/development phases	What difficulties were encountered during the application and planning/development phases and how were these overcome? If there was a new delivery agency / mechanism put in place to develop and deliver the ECoC, what were the key success factors and failure elements related to it?
Inputs	What were the key success factors and failure elements related to the process of raising the necessary financial resources (EU, public, private, sponsorship etc.)? How helpful (or not) was the ECoC brand in attracting funding and sponsorship? In their view, to what extent were the financial inputs sufficient to achieve the desired outputs, results and impacts?
Activities	What were the key success factors and failure elements related to the process of agreeing artistic themes and designing the programme? What were the key success factors and failure elements related to the process of selecting, implementing and monitoring activities, events and projects? <i>What was the local approach to evaluating the impacts of ECoC?</i> In their view, how/how far did the European dimension feature in the themes and the activities? Again, to what extent was the European dimension a bolt-on or integral to the cultural programme?

	Questions
	Explore key success factors and failure elements related to specific activities involving the interviewee's organisation What were the key success factors and failure elements related to the communication and publicity of the cultural programme?
Outputs	How did the delivery mechanism contribute the achievement of outputs? Explore key success factors and failure elements related to specific outputs involving the interviewee's organisation To what extent did the ECoC achieve the outputs they hoped for?
Results	In what ways did the delivery mechanism improve management of culture in the city during the title year? Explore interviewee's views relating to achievement of results i) involving the interviewee's organisation; ii) results in general To what extent did the ECoC achieve the results they hoped for?
Impacts	In what ways has the ECoC improved the management of cultural development in the city? (in the long-term) Explore interviewee's views relating to achievement of impacts i) involving the interviewee's organisation; ii) impacts in general To what extent did the ECoC achieve the impacts they hoped for?

Topic guide for interviews with projects

	Questions
Background	Explore background of interviewee and his/her organisation Explore background information on the project (e.g. how project idea was developed, key activities) Explore views of interviewee on the background context of the city (e.g. state of cultural sector, socio-economic context, etc.)
Development phase	What are key success factors and challenges during development phase (e.g. selection of projects, feedback on activities of the key actors/stakeholders/promoters)? To what extent ECoC objectives are relevant to culture sector in the city?
Project Activities	Did the project exist prior to the title year? What difference title year made to the activities i.e. new cultural activities, different type of activities etc? To what extent development of European dimension, citizen involvement was important for your project? To what extent ECoC resulted in changes of audience numbers and visitors characteristics taking part in activities of your organisation? What activities are likely to continue? What impact implementation of your project had on your organisation (e.g. development of partnerships, increased visibility, increased cultural offer, increased scope of activities)?
Feedback on ECoC	What effect ECoC had on culture sector in your city? How useful was support provided from the delivery agency for your project? To what extent the delivery agency/overall co-ordination organisation succeeded in marketing and communication activities especially in increasing visibility of the ECoC programme locally, nationally and internationally? Do you agree that culture programme was of high quality? To what extent ECoC achieved in attracting high numbers of visitors?
Impact	To what extent ECoC had an impact on increased cooperation among cultural operators? To what extent ECoC had an impact on increased cooperation with organisations outside culture sector?

	Questions
	To what extent ECoC had an impact on increased capacity of your organisation? What activities of your project are likely to continue? To what extent ECoC had an impact on increased vibrancy of cultural life in the city? To what extent ECoC had an impact on improvements in culture infrastructure?
Other comments	Do you have any other comments regarding effects that ECoC had on your organisation, city and/or region?

Annex Three: Terms of Reference



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE
Creative Europe programme - Culture

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ex post evaluation of 2014 European Capitals of Culture

Contracting authority: European Commission

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CONTEXT

1.1 Description of the Action

The initial scheme of 'The European City of Culture' was launched at an intergovernmental level in 1985.⁵⁰ In 1992 a new event of "European Cultural Month" was established.⁵¹ In 1999 by Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council the European City of Culture event was given the status of a Community Action and was renamed "European Capital of Culture"⁵² (hereafter referred as "the Action"). The Decision outlined new selection procedures and evaluation criteria for the 2005 title onward. The Decision was amended by Decision 649/2005/EC (in order to integrate the 10 Member States which joined the EU in 2004) and later replaced by the Decision 1622/2006/EC,⁵³ which has repealed the earlier decisions. Decision 1622/2006/EC specifies the objectives of the action and the designation process for the 2013 title onward. It set out a list of countries entitled to nominate a European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in a given year up to 2019.⁵⁴ Given the time-scale of ECOCs implementation, whose preparation starts 6 years before the title-year, the Decision maintains the application of 1999 Decision to European Capitals of Culture for 2007, 2008 and 2009 and foresees transitional provisions for titles 2010-2012.

Under the Decision 1622/2006/EC Latvia and Sweden are each entitled to host a European Capital of Culture in 2014. Under the current selection arrangements there are two selection phases: a pre-selection phase, at the end of which a shortlist of applicant cities is drawn up, and then a final selection nine months later. In both countries, bids from candidate cities are examined by an international jury of thirteen members, six of whom are appointed by the Member State concerned and the other seven are appointed by the European Institutions. The jury examines the bids on the basis of the criteria laid down in the above-mentioned Decision.

⁵⁰ The title "European Capital of Culture" was designed to help bring European citizens closer together. This was the idea underlying its launch in June 1985 by the Council of Ministers of the European Union on the initiative of Melina Mercouri.

⁵¹ Conclusions of the Ministers of Culture meeting within the Council of 18 May 1992 concerning the choice of European Cities of Culture after 1996 and the 'Cultural Month'

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:41992X0616:EN:HTML>

⁵² Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019 (OJ L 166 of 1.7.1999, p. 1). Decision amended by Decision 649/2005/EC (OJ L 117 of 4.5.2005, p. 20).

http://www.europa.eu/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/1999/l_166/l_16619990701en00010005.pdf

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_117/l_11720050504en00200021.pdf

⁵³ Decision 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019 (OJ L 304 of 3.11.2006, p. 1). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:304:SOM:EN:HTML>

⁵⁴ Annex to Decision 1622/2006/EC: 2007 Luxembourg and Romania; 2008 United Kingdom, 2009 Austria and Lithuania; 2010 Germany and Hungary; 2011 Finland and Estonia; 2012 Portugal and Slovenia; 2013 France and Slovakia; 2014 Sweden and Latvia; 2015 Belgium and Czech Republic; 2016 Spain and Poland; 2017 Denmark and Cyprus; 2018 Netherlands and Malta; 2019 Italy and Bulgaria.

The three pre-selected cities in Latvia were Rīga, Cēsis and Liepāja. The jury recommended that the ECOC title be given to Rīga. Of the two pre-selected Swedish cities, Lund and Umeå, the jury decided to recommend Umeå for the ECOC title. In May 2010, the Council of Ministers of the European Union formally designated Rīga and Umeå as the 2014 European Capitals of Culture.

1.2 Objectives of the Action

These are the general and specific objectives laid down by the current Decision 1622/2006/EC, which has articulated themes and criteria already contained in former Decision 1419/1999/EC.

1.2.1. General objectives

The overall aim of the Action is to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens.

1.2.2. Specific objectives

In accordance with Article 4 of Decision 1622/2006/EC, this Action should fulfil the following criteria.

As regards '*the European Dimension*', the Action shall:

- Foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from the relevant Member States and other Member States in any cultural sector;
- Highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe;
- Bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore.

As regards '*City and Citizens*' the Action shall:

- Foster the participation of the citizens living in the city and its surroundings and raise their interest as well as the interest of citizens from abroad;
- Be sustainable and be an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city.

ECOC 2007-2008 evaluation⁵⁵ found out that cities holding the ECOC title had adopted over the years a third broad objective, that could be defined as "*supporting social and*

⁵⁵ "Ex-post Evaluation of 2007 & 2008 European Capitals of Culture. Final Report", Ecotec 2009
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc/ecoc/ex_post_evaluation_final_report2007_08.pdf

economic development through culture". It is generally considered highly relevant to ECOCs implementation.

1.3. European Capitals of Culture 2014

1.3.1. Rīga

Rīga is the first Latvian city to hold the ECOC title. The motto of its programme is “Force Majeure” with culture acting as an irresistible force, which is able to direct changes into a positive stream, turning fear into a challenge and uncertainty into trust in a creative spirit.

The artistic programme includes almost 200 events, which are based on the following six thematic chapters connected with the overall concept of “Force Majeure”:

- Freedom Street: focuses on issues of power and freedom, and is rooted in the fact that the year 2014 will mark 100 years since the beginning of the World War I;
- Survival Kit: offers synergy of ancient skills and modern knowledge in various forms of culture;
- Road Map: invites everyone to discover the unnoticed Riga and think about the city development issues;
- Amber Vein: seeks to reanimate the historical Amber Route encompassing the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in order to create a new European cooperation network of culture;
- Thirst for the Ocean: focuses on the human striving for intellectual and spiritual values and wisdom;
- Riga Carnival: designed to help everyone forget the ordinary and at least for a moment become somebody else, mingle in the crowd and rejoice.

For information, in the progress report provided by Rīga 2014 ahead of the last monitoring meeting with the Panel of independent experts in April 2013, the budget for operational expenditure amounted to EUR 19.4 million.

1.3.2. Umeå

Umeå is the second Swedish city to hold the ECOC title after Stockholm in 1998. It is also the northernmost European Capital of Culture in the EU ever.

Umeå's programme for the year is based on the eight seasons of the Sami calendar. It will invite Europeans to enjoy the Sami as well as many other European cultures, and reflect on the challenges facing ethnic and migrant minorities across Europe. It is also very much based on an "open source" approach using modern interactive technologies to involve people directly in the year's creation process.

The title-year has been for the city the kick-off for a long term development plan aiming at a sustainable economic growth until 2050, strengthening culture as a driving force for regional development.

For information, in the progress report provided by Umeå 2014 ahead of the last monitoring meeting with the Panel of independent experts in April 2013, the budget for operational expenditure amounted to EUR 44.8 million.

1.4. Monitoring provisions

The current legal basis (1622/2006/EC) lays down a monitoring process, applying from 2010 title onwards. This monitoring phase aims at ensuring that the cities concerned fulfil the commitments undertaken at selection stage, in particular concerning the criteria of the action, and to provide them with guidance on the implementation of the event.

During this phase, the progress in the city's preparations is monitored and guided by a monitoring and advisory panel, composed of seven independent experts appointed by the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the Committee of the Regions.

The involvement of this committee of experts makes it possible to:

- assess the progress made in the preparations,
- give guidance and
- check compliance with the programme and the commitments on the basis of which the cities were selected (particularly as regards meeting the "European Dimension" and "City and Citizens" criteria).

For this purpose, representatives from the cities are convened to meet the monitoring and advisory panel twice between the designation and the start of the event.

The managers of current and future Capitals benefit from the exchange of experience for the preparation of the event. Some of them are part of an informal network which provides an opportunity to meet and to debate about the design and the management of the event. The Commission seeks to foster the sharing of best practices since it is one of the keys to success. The Culture Programme has supported a policy grouping on the sharing of evaluation methodologies and practices among past, present and future European Capitals of Culture.⁵⁶

1.4.1. First monitoring

Two years before the event, the monitoring and advisory panel meets the structures responsible for implementing the programmes and the authorities of the two designated European Capitals of Culture, on the initiative of the Commission.

⁵⁶ European Capital of Culture Policy Group <http://ecocpolicygroup.wordpress.com/>

At the latest three months before this meeting, the structures responsible for implementing the programmes of the two Capitals of Culture present a progress report to the Commission relating to the progress achieved so far in the preparation of the event on the basis of the programmes presented at selection stage and the commitments made at that time. The monitoring panel shall draw up a first monitoring report on the preparations for the event and on the arrangements which still need to be made.⁵⁷

1.4.2. Final monitoring:

At the latest eight months before the event, the monitoring panel again meets the structures responsible for implementing the programmes and the authorities of the two designated European Capitals of Culture in order to evaluate the preparatory work so far and the arrangements which still need to be made.

At the latest three months before this meeting, the structures responsible for implementing the programmes submit a progress report to the Commission, drafted according to the same principles as those outlined above. This report deals also with the progress achieved in relation to the recommendations made by the panel during the first monitoring phase.⁵⁸ The report recommends to the Commission whether to award the Melina Mercouri prize.

1.4.3. The "Melina Mercouri" Prize

On the basis of the Panel's report, the Commission awards a prize "in honour of Melina Mercouri" to the designated cities, provided that they have honoured the commitments made in the selection phase and acted on the recommendations of the panels during the selection and monitoring phases. This prize, to be awarded no later than three months before the event, rewards the quality preparation of the event. It consists of 1,5 million EUR and has a great symbolic value often triggering complementary sponsoring. Both of the 2014 European Capitals of Culture were awarded the Melina Mercouri Prize in 2013.

2. TASK SPECIFICATION FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

This evaluation is launched according to Article 12 of the current Decision 1622/2006/EC: Each year the Commission shall ensure the external and independent evaluation of the results of the European Capital of Culture event of the previous year in accordance with the objectives and criteria of the Action.

The results of the evaluation will be used to draw lessons for the future development of the initiative. It will also help to improve understanding of the impact of the initiative with a view to feeding into the policy-making process at European level in the field of culture.

The evaluation should cover the European Capital of Culture Action, the events in Rīga and Umeå that took place in 2014.

⁵⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc/ecoc/first-monitoring-report-umea-riga2014.pdf>

⁵⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc/ecoc/20130514-second-monitoring-report.pdf>

2.1. Description of Action implementation

The contractor must provide in its report:

- A brief description of the conception of the ECOC Action;
- The conceptual framework that guided the study;
- The evaluation questions that the research aimed to answer and the methodology followed;
- Core indicators to assess the two ECOC event on the basis of existing data made available by the cities. Core indicators have been developed in the ex post evaluation of ECOC 2010;
- Reports for Rīga and Umeå, including the matching of core indicators;
- Lessons in delivery from across the two ECOC;
- Overall conclusions and recommendations for the ECOC Action.

The description should provide the necessary background and reference points for responding to the evaluation questions in the next sub-section. It is strongly recommended to follow as much as possible the methodology and reporting structure used in the ex-post evaluation reports of ECOCs 2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012, in order to ensure comparability of data.

2.2. Evaluation questions

The contractor must provide answers to the evaluation questions (EQ) listed below. These questions were addressed by ECOCs evaluations 2007-2012 and should remain as far as possible stable. In order to allow comparability of evaluation results of individual ECOC evaluations over the years, the contractor should use also the same intervention logic and indicators as for ECOCs 2007-2012 evaluation.

The contractor will nonetheless be called upon to use their knowledge and experience to refine and elaborate these questions and, where appropriate, propose others to the Commission with the aim of improving the focus of this evaluation. The contractor should note that the sub-questions proposed under some of the evaluation questions do not necessarily cover the entire aspect of the questions concerned. The sub-questions deal with issues the Commission is particularly interested in and which the contractor therefore should address, in addition to any other issues which the evaluator may see as requiring attention in the case of each evaluation question.

With respect to each of the evaluation questions, the evaluation is expected to provide concrete recommendations particularly on how future European Capitals of Culture can address any deficiencies and/or gaps identified by the evaluator. As far as the conclusions for the two evaluated cities allows recommendations should also be made – if appropriate – for the future design of the Action.

Relevance, EU added value and coherence

EQ1: To what extent are the objectives of the ECOC Action, as defined in Decisions 1419/EC/1999 and 1622/EC/2006, consistent with and relevant to the objectives of Article 167 (ex-Article 151) of the EC Treaty?

- As far as the conclusions made for the 2 cities allow it, to what extent have the general, specific and operational objectives of the Action proved relevant to Article 167 (ex Article 151) of the EC Treaty?

EQ2: What is the EU added value of the ECOC Action?

- As far as the conclusions made for the 2 cities allow, what is the added value of the European Capital of Culture being an EU initiative?

EQ3: To what extent were the ECOCs complementary to other EU initiatives?

- As far as the conclusions made for the 2 cities allows it, to what extent has the Action proved to be complementary to other EU initiatives in the field of culture?
- To what extent has each ECOC been reinforced by and added impetus to investments by the EU Structural Funds?
- To what extent have ECOCs complemented other EU initiatives, e.g. European Youth Capital, European Green Capital?

EQ4: To what extent were the objectives of each ECOC relevant to the objectives set at the EU level and, by extension, to the objectives of broader EU policy?

- What was the main motivation behind the city bidding to become a European Capital of Culture?
- What was the process of determining objectives? Was there a process of consultation in each city to define aims and objectives?
- What were the objectives of the city in being ECOC? What was the relative importance of each objective?
- Have any specific objectives of the ECOC event been related to social impacts?
- In this connection, did the objectives of the ECOC event include reaching out to all sectors of society, including the excluded, disadvantaged, disabled people and minorities?
- To what extent have the specific themes/orientations of the cultural programme proved to be relevant to the objectives defined?

EQ5: To what extent were the ECOC's cultural programmes and associated activities relevant to their own objectives and to the objectives set at the European level?

- To what extent were the objectives consistent with the Decision and with the ECOC's own application? (special focus on the European dimension)
- To what extent were the activities consistent with the ECOC's own objectives, with the ECOC's application and with the Decision? (special focus on the European dimension)
- How was the European dimension reflected by the themes put forward by the ECOC event and in terms of cooperation at European level? How did the Capitals of Culture seek to make the European dimension visible? To what extent did the 2 cities cooperate?

Efficiency

EQ6: How did the management arrangements of each ECOC contribute to the achievement of outputs, results and impacts?

- How have the organisational models of the formal governing Board and operational structures played a role in the European Capital of Culture? What role have the Board and operational structures played in the ECOC event's implementation? At what stage were these structures established?
- Who chaired the Board and what was his/her experience? What were the key success and failure elements related to the work of the Board and operational structure used and personnel involved?
- Has an artistic director been included into the operational structure and how was he/she appointed? What were the key success and failure elements related to the work of the artistic director and personnel involved?
- What was the process of designing the programme?
- How were activities selected and implemented?
- How did the delivery mechanism contribute to the achievement of outputs?
- To what extent has the communication and promotion strategy been successful in/contributed to the promotion of city image/profile, promotion of the ECOC event, awareness-raising of the European dimension, promotion of all events and attractions in the city?

- To what extent has the communication and promotion strategy including the use of social media successfully reached the communication's target groups at local, regional, national, European and international levels?

EQ7: To what extent did the ECOCs manage to raise the necessary resources? How efficiently and cost-effectively were such resources used?

- What was the process of securing the financial inputs?
- What was the total amount of resources used for each ECOC event? What was the final financial outturn of the year?
- What were the sources of financing and the respective importance of their contribution to the total?
- To what extent did the ECOC title trigger complementary sponsorship?
- To what extent were the inputs consistent with the Action and with the application? (special focus on the European dimension)
- What was the total expenditure strictly for the implementation of the cultural programme of the year (operational expenditure)? What was the proportion of the operational expenditure in the total expenditure for the ECOC event?
- What proportion of expenditure was used for infrastructure (cultural and tourism infrastructure, including renovation)
- What were the sources of funding for the ECOC event? How much came from the European Commission structural funds (e.g. ERDF - European Regional Development Fund, ESF – European Social Fund)?

EQ8: To what extent were the selection, monitoring and EU co-financing procedures, introduced by Decision 2006/1622/2006/EC efficient?

- To what extent have the mechanisms applied by the Commission for selecting the European Capital of Culture and the subsequent implementation and monitoring mechanisms influenced the results of the ECOC event?
- To what extent has the informal meeting following the designation as well as other advice offered by the panel and by the Commission influenced the results of the ECoC event?
- How was the Melina Mercouri Prize used?
- To what extent did the award of the Melina Mercouri Prize create symbolic value for the cities holding the ECOC title?

**EQ9: To what extent could alternative policy instruments or mechanisms be applied?
To what extent is the total budget for the Action appropriate and proportional?**

- Was the total size of the budget sufficient for reaching a critical mass in terms of impacts? Could the same results have been achieved with less funding? Could the same results have been achieved if the structure of resources and their respective importance was different?
- To what extent have the human resources deployed for preparation and implementation of the ECOC event been commensurate with its intended outputs and outcomes?
- Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms have provided greater cost-effectiveness? As a result, could the total budget for the ECOC event be considered appropriate and proportional to what the action set out to achieve?

Effectiveness

EQ10: To what extent were the EU-level objectives achieved?

- Provide typology of outputs, results and possible impacts of the action at different levels (European, national, regional etc.)
- To what extent has the ECOC event been successful in attaining the objectives set (general, specific and operational) and in achieving the intended results as set out in the application or others (refer to list in the intervention logic)?
- Was the cultural programme perceived as being of high artistic quality? To what extent did the ECOC prove successful in bringing their chosen artistic themes/orientations to the fore?
- To what extent did the ECOC title contribute to an increased cultural offer in the cities holding the title (e.g. in terms of scope and scale)?

EQ11: To what extent were the ECOCs' own objectives achieved?

- How did the delivery mechanism improve management of culture in the city during the ECOC event? (explore role of Board, Chair, Artistic Director, decision-making, political challenges, etc.)
- What quantitative indicators (number of visitors, overnight stays, cultural participation of people, etc.) of the social, tourist and broader economic impacts of the event have been gathered by the ECOC?
- To what extent did the ECOC achieve the outputs hoped for by the city and as set out in the application (refer to list in the intervention logic)?

EQ12: What impact has the action had on the cities?

- To what extent have the ECOC been successful in achieving the intended impacts as set out in the application or others (refer to list in the intervention logic)?
- To what extent have specific objectives related to social impacts been met?
- To what extent were the objectives related to reaching out to all sectors of society, including the excluded, disadvantaged, disabled and minorities, met?
- What were the most significant economic outcomes of the Capital of Culture experience?
- What have been the impacts of the ECOC event on regional development?
- Can impacts on tourism be identified? What was the total number of visitors (from abroad and from the country) to the ECOC event: before the title year, during the title year, after the title year?
- To what extent has the implementation of the action contributed to the achievement of the objectives of Article 151 of the EC Treaty?

EQ13: To what extent has the action resulted in unintended effects?

- Are there any instances where the ECOC event has exceeded initial expectations? What positive effects has this had?
- Where expectations have not been met, what factors have hindered the development of the action?

Sustainability**EQ14: To what extent can the positive effects of the ECoC Action be considered to be sustainable?**

- Which of the current activities or elements of the ECOC event are likely to continue and in which form after the EU support is withdrawn?
- Has any provision been made to continue and follow up the cultural programme of the ECOC event after the closure?
- How will the city continue to manage its long-term cultural development following the ECOC event?
- What will be the role of the operational structure after the end of the ECOC event and how will the organisational structure change?

- What has been the contribution of the ECOC event to improved management of cultural development in the city? (in the long-term)
- What are the likely impacts of the ECOC event on the long term cultural development of the city?
- What are the likely impacts of the ECOC event on the long term social development of the city?
- What are the likely impacts of the ECOC event on the long term urban and broader economic development of the city?

2.3. Other tasks under the assignment

2.3.1. *Monitoring arrangements*

On the basis of the experience gained from the implementation of the action, the Contractor should propose a practical approach for reinforcing the monitoring of the European Capitals of Culture as well as the external evaluation undertaken by the cities and for building a database on best practice identified. Consideration should be given to the information needs of the Commission to support the execution of their main tasks. The existing and foreseen monitoring arrangements and the needs of future evaluations should be built on. The fact that each European Capital of Culture bears the title for only one year should be also reflected by the proposal.

The proposed approach must be realistic, e.g. it could basically not require additional human resources in the Commission, and it should bear in mind the short duration of the action. It is expected that a trade-off will have to be made between perfection and feasibility. If the proposed approach would have to leave any open issues, concrete advice must be provided to the Commission on how to deal with these issues.

3. REPORTING AND DELIVERABLES

3.1. General reporting requirements

Each report (except the final version of the Final Report) should have an **introductory page** providing an overview and orientation of the report. It should describe what parts of the document, on the one hand, have been carried over from previous reports or been recycled from other documents, and on the other hand, represent progress of the evaluation work with reference to the work plan.

All reports must be drafted in English and submitted according to the timetable below to the responsible body. The Executive Summary should be translated into French and German. Electronic files must be provided in Microsoft ® Word for Windows format. Additionally, besides Word, the Final Report must be delivered in Adobe ® Acrobat pdf format and in 3 hard copies. Authorized pictures of ECOC events 2014 will be welcome in the cover page and in the report.

3.2. Inception Report

The report should detail how the methodology proposed by the Contractor is going to be implemented in the light of an examination of the quality and appropriateness of existing data. It shall not exceed **30** pages, annexes excluded

3.3. Initial Bulletin

The initial bulletin to be delivered early in February 2015 should provide some first messages on the two 2014 European Capitals of Culture; e.g. main attendance figures, number and scale of cultural events and key features and qualities as observed at the end of the ECOC year. The information may be used as a basis for press releases and news reports by the European Commission on the 2014 ECOC of interest to the press and the general public.

3.4. Interim Report

The interim report must provide information about the initial analyses of data collected in the field (primary data) and secondary data. The Contractor may be in a position to provide preliminary answers on the evaluation questions.

This report will provide the basis for a dialogue between the Contractor and the Steering Group about the adequacy of analyses, the factual accuracy of observations and the realism of assertions and interpretations.

3.5. Draft Final Report

This document should deliver the results of all tasks covered by these Terms of Reference, and must be clear enough for any potential reader to understand. Upon authorisation of the Steering Group, the contractor shall submit this document for factual check to key stakeholders in the cities concerned.

The structure of the report should follow a broad classification into two main parts:

- **Main report:** The main report must be limited to a maximum of **100** pages and present, in full, the results of the analyses, conclusions and recommendations arising from the evaluation. It must also contain a description of the subject evaluated, the context of the evaluation, and the methodology used (with an analysis of the latter's strengths and weaknesses). Its cover page shall bear a disclaimer such as: "The conclusions, recommendations and opinions in this report are those of the authors and they do not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission."

- **Annexes:** These must collate the technical details of the evaluation, and must include:
- the Terms of Reference,
 - questionnaire templates, interview guides, full transcript of case studies, any additional tables or graphics, and references and sources.
 - draft minutes of the meetings with the steering group
 - a one-page statement about the validity of the evaluation results, i.e. to what extent it has been possible to provide reliable statements on all essential aspects of the Action examined. Issues to be referred to may include scoping of the evaluation exercise, availability of data, unexpected problems encountered in the evaluation process, proportionality between budget and objectives of the assignment, etc.
 - a proposal for the dissemination of the evaluation results, on the basis of the draft Dissemination Plan annexed to these Terms of Reference.

In case of need, a glossary of terms used

3.6. Final Report

The Final Report follows the same format as the draft Final Report. On top of that, it will be accompanied by an executive summary.

- **Executive summary:** It sets out, in no more than 10 pages, a summary of the evaluation's main conclusions, the main evidence supporting them and the recommendations arising from them. It should include a ½ page summary statement on the main evaluation issues covered by the evaluation (i.e. one or two sentences per evaluation issue). These last two sections – conclusions and recommendations – must be written in a maximum of 4000 characters, including spaces. Furthermore, the Executive Summary should be translated into French and German by a professional translation agency, once it has been approved by the responsible body.
- **Best practices:** they highlight any kind of practices in terms of governance, management or work organisation which contributed to the smooth delivery of the project.

The document must take into account the results of the quality assessment of the draft Final Report and discussions with the Steering Group about the draft Final Report insofar as these do not interfere with the autonomy of the Contractor in respect of the conclusions they have reached and the recommendations made.

It should be noted that the European Parliament and the Council are expected to agree on a Decision covering the European Capital of Culture action from 2020 to 2033. When drafting general recommendations about the action, the contractor should make sure that they have not been already addressed in the new Decision.

The contracting authority will publish the Final Report, the Executive Summary and the annexes on the World-Wide Web.

Graphic requirements for the final deliverables

All studies and evaluations produced for the European Commission and Executive Agencies shall conform to the corporate visual identity of the European Commission by applying the graphic rules set out in the European Commission's Visual Identity Manual, including its logo.

For graphic requirements please refer to the template provided in Annex 2. The cover page shall be filled in by the contractor in accordance with the instructions provided in the template. For further details you may also contact comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu.

The Commission is committed to making online information as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of users including those with visual, auditory, cognitive or physical disabilities, and those not having the latest technologies. The Commission supports the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 of the W3C.

For full details on Commission policy on accessibility for information providers, see: http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm

Pdf versions of studies destined for online publication should respect W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents. See: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

4. ORGANISATION, TIMETABLE AND BUDGET

4.1 Organisation

The contract will be managed by Unit E.2 of the European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture.

A Steering Group will be involved in the management of the evaluation. The responsibilities of the Steering Group will include:

- preparing the Terms of Reference;
- ensuring that the monitoring and supervision of the Contractor does not compromise the Contractor's independence;
- providing the external evaluator with access to information;
- supporting and monitoring the work of the external evaluator;
- assessing the quality of the reports submitted by the external evaluator.

4.2 Meetings

It is expected that the contractor participate in **four meetings** in Brussels with the evaluation Steering Group.

For these meetings, minutes should be drafted by the contractor within 5 working days after the SG meeting, to be agreed among the participants and approved and signed by the chair person, who will be appointed from Unit EAC/R2.

4.3 Timetable

The indicative date of contract signature is 01/07/2014.

Deadline	Task
<i>10 September 2014</i>	A kick-off meeting may be held after the signature of the contract.
<i>10 October 2014</i>	Contractor submits the inception report to Steering Group. At least one Steering Group meeting will be held in Brussels within two weeks after the submission.
<i>1 February 2015</i>	Contractor submits the initial bulletin to Steering Group.
<i>14 March 2015</i>	Desk and field research: at least 60% completion. Contractor submits the interim report to Steering Group. At least one Steering Group meeting will be held in Brussels within two weeks after the submission.
<i>21 May 2015</i>	Desk and field research completed. Analysis and drafting completed. Contractor submits the draft final report , to Steering Group. At least one Steering Group meeting will be held in Brussels within two weeks after the submission.
<i>25 June 2015</i>	Taking account of the Commission's comments contractor submits the final report and executive summary to Steering Group.
<i>15 July 2015</i>	Taking account the Commission' comments, contractor submits the very last versions (hard copies included) of the Final report and the Executive Summary including the translated versions into French and German.

4.4 Budget

The estimated maximum budget for the evaluation of the action, covering all the results to be achieved by the contractor as listed in sections 2 and 3 above, is **EUR 75 000**.

5. REFERENCES

5.1 Action documents

The following information will be made available to the contractor in the inception phase:

- The bids and progress reports of ECOCs 2014

5.2 Background and reference documents

Knowledge of the following documents is required for the tender. Unless differently specified, they are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/european-capitals-of-culture_en.htm:

- Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019;
- Decision 649/2005/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 April 2005 amending Decision 1419/1999/EC establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019;
- Decision 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019;
- Decision 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 the Culture Programme (2007-2013)
- Conclusions of the Ministers of Culture meeting within the Council of 18 May 1992 concerning the choice of European Cities of Culture after 1996 and the 'Cultural Month'
- Resolution of the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs regarding the annual organization of the 'European City of Culture';
- Study about the European Cities and Capitals of Culture, and the European cultural months (1995-2004) achieved by palmer/RAE Associates;
- Ex-post Evaluation of European Capitals of Culture from 2007-2011⁵⁹
- Ex-post Evaluation of 2012 European Capitals of Culture (as soon as available)⁶⁰
- The panel's report concerning the 2014 titles http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/current-capitals_en.htm
- Interim evaluation of selection and monitoring procedures of ECOC 2010-2016, Ecorys, 2011⁶¹

⁵⁹ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm

⁶⁰ idem

⁶¹ idem

- IMPACTS 08 - European Capital of Culture Research Programme <http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/impacts08/>
- European Capital of Culture Policy Group <http://ecocpolicygroup.wordpress.com/>

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Methodology

The contractor will have a free choice as to the methods used to gather and analyse information and for making the assessment, but must take account of the following:

- The evaluation must be based on recognised evaluation techniques.
- The choice and a detailed description of the methodology must form part of the offer submitted. There should be a clear link between the evaluation questions addressed and the corresponding methodology proposed. The evaluation questions can be further elaborated, e.g. by providing operational sub-questions under each question.
- Considerable emphasis should be placed on the analysis phase of the evaluation. In addressing the evaluation questions, quantitative indicators should be sought and used as far as possible. The contractor must support findings and recommendations by explaining the degree to which these are based on opinion, analysis and objectively verifiable evidence. Where opinion is the main source, the degree of consensus and the steps taken to test the opinion should be given.
- Comparability of results with evaluation of ECOC 2007-2012 should be assured.
- A set of core and preferably quantitative indicators should be proposed in the inception report. They should build on indicators developed for the ex-post evaluation of ECOC 2010
- It is not expected that all individual projects financed during the ECOC event will be assessed, but the sample of projects examined should be drawn up in a manner suitable for each evaluation question addressed, and should be such as to enable the evaluators to draw general conclusions on the actions.

6.3 Quality assurance

The Contractor shall, as a minimum, apply the quality assurance procedures described in the Quality Plan included in their bid for Framework Contract EAC/50/2009. The offer should describe how the Quality Plan will be applied during the implementation of this specific contract.

6.3 Resources

The Contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting resources, as well as junior experts, must be available to enable senior experts to concentrate on their core evaluation tasks.

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Annex 1 Dissemination Plan for the ex-post evaluation of ECOC 2014

Annex 2 Graphic requirements for the final deliverables

