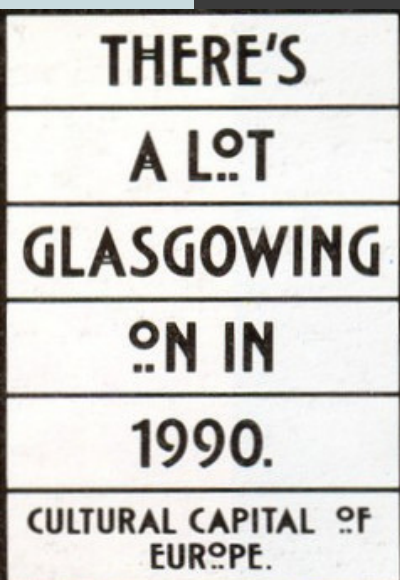Student: Milan Kovačević

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THERE'S A LoT GLASGOWING ON IN 1990.

CULTURAL CAPITAL OF EUROPE.

CAN CULTURE REGENERATE?

A Comparative Study of Glasgow, Rotterdam and Liverpool as European Capitals of Culture

MA Thesis

June 2019

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the past thirty years, there has been a shift in the perception of the role of culture. Increasingly, culture is being valued in economic terms, as a tool for growth and development, rather than something that should be good and useful *per se*. The instrumental use of culture has been especially prominent in the context of urban policy. Among urban policy-makers, culture-led regeneration is often seen as a solution not just for economic, but also social problems.

The general aim of this research is to examine how cultural policy is being used by cities as a means of enhancing urban economic growth and addressing social problems. This will be done by comparing the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) programme in three cities: Glasgow (1990), Rotterdam (2001), and Liverpool (2008). Established in 1985, the ECoC has come to epitomize culture-led urban regeneration strategies, evolving from a purely cultural initiative to an event that is being embraced by cities as a socio-economic panacea. In this regard, a discrepancy seems to exist between the overhyped narrative surrounding the ECoC and the unconvincing evidence in support of the claims about the regenerative effects of culture. Examining whether culture can truly be economically and socially transformative will therefore be the main concern of this thesis.

As stated above, the research will be a comparative analysis of the ECoC programme in three cities. Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool share a number of similarities that make them comparable. Firstly, all three are second-tier cities[1], roughly of similar size in terms of population. Secondly, all of the cities have been declining industrial hubs not commonly associated with culture, overshadowed by major cultural centres in their respective countries (such as Edinburgh, Amsterdam, and Manchester or London). In this sense, they all shared the image of 'tough', working-class cities—a notion opposite to refined that was, in fact, often stereotyped. Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool therefore all approached the ECoC from a similar starting point: the need to revive their declining economies and the desire to reshape their image were the goals common to all three cases. An additional reason to compare these cities lies in the fact that in their planning of the events, they all borrowed ideas from each other: Rotterdam used the experiences of Glasgow, while Liverpool based its programme both on the cultural strategies of Glasgow and (to a lesser extent) Rotterdam. Furthermore, the symmetric distribution of the three events on the timeline will allow for an examination of how these ideas and approaches to the ECoC have evolved over time.

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[1] Cardoso and Meijers define second-tier cities as 'the top layer of this middle hierarchy [of the European urban system]—the places lacking the economic weight, political importance and attractive pull of first-tier cities (generally capitals) but still important enough to play a relevant role in national and international contexts'. The list of second-tier cities on which their study is based includes Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool. The usage of this term should therefore be understood with reference to their work. See: Rodrigo V. Cardoso and Evert J. Meijers, "Contrasts between first-tier and second-tier cities in Europe: a functional perspective," *European Planning Studies* 24, no. 5 (2016): 997; 1004.

The social and scientific significance of this topic lies in the ubiquity of culture-led regeneration strategies, which are being put into practice by developing and post-industrial cities worldwide. With this in mind, gaining a better understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of the relationship between various types of cultural investment and socio-economic outcomes in cities is of crucial importance. Hopefully, this research can contribute to clarifying some of the unresolved discrepancies within the urban cultural policy, culture-led urban regeneration, and ECoC discourses.

1.1. Research Question and Sub-Questions

The central research question this thesis aims to address is: how do the ECoC programmes in Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool compare in terms of their approaches and economic and social outcomes, and what does this imply about the capacity of culture to facilitate economic and social urban (re)development?

The main question is explored through several sub-questions. Firstly, how did the three cities approach the ECoC? What were their main objectives and how did they address the three strategic policy dilemmas posed by Bianchini[2]? These sub-questions are considered in Chapter 3. Secondly, what were the economic and social outcomes of the three ECoC events? To what extent were the gains created by the ECoCs widespread and sustainable? Is there a correlation between different approaches and results? These sub-questions are addressed in Chapter 4.

Jointly, the analyses of these questions should contribute not just to a better understanding of the effectiveness of using culture as a tool for achieving non-cultural goals of urban regeneration, but also—and perhaps more importantly—unravel the intricate channels and mechanisms through which the cultural input is translated into economic and social outputs.

1.2. Innovative Aspects

Considerable research has been done on the European Capital of Culture programme, both in the academic literature and professional reports. Despite this, a number of research gaps and limitations seem to persist in the domain of ECoC studies. The first one concerns the lack of comparative studies, which stems from the difficulty of comparing heterogeneous cities, programme approaches and strategies. The lack of attention to long-term impacts is another gap in the literature, which tends to focus on the immediate, short-term effects.

The ambition of this thesis is to overcome these limitations by bringing together findings from previous studies and examining them through a different analytical framework. In addition to explaining the correlation between different approaches and results, a comparison based on the

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[2] Franco Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," in *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, ed. Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 200-04. The dilemmas are thoroughly discussed in section 2.2. of Chapter 2.

acknowledgement of different models should also allow for a nuanced appreciation of the channels and mechanisms through which these results have been achieved.

Therefore, this thesis focuses on the complex interrelations that exist between different pieces of the ECoC policy-making puzzle, and the sustainability of various strategies in the long run. While for technical reasons it was not possible to undergo comprehensive analyses of the programmes' long-term effects, the thesis attempts to discriminate between approaches bound to result only in short-lasting benefits and the ones that promise more sustainable results in the longer term.

1.3. Research Methodology

Generally speaking, the research was carried out in the form of a qualitative comparative analysis based on the study of literature. Both primary and secondary sources were used. Books and academic articles from peer-reviewed journals provided the theoretical foundation for discussion, official bid documents gave insight into pre-event plans, while various post-event evaluation reports catered the necessary empirical evidence. To fill the gaps caused by the relatively limited number of available English sources, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three highly-rated officials that were directly involved in the planning and organisation of Rotterdam 2001.

Since each ECoC event is unique, involving different local contexts and specific objectives, it is important to stress that this thesis did not intend to develop a universally applicable analytical pattern. Indeed, it would be unwise to judge a programme that is, for example, meant to facilitate social inclusion based on the number of jobs it created. The specific goals of each ECoC event therefore needed to be taken into account in the first place. This is what makes ECoC events difficult to compare. Looking from a different perspective, however, this is also what makes such a comparison desirable—the fact that different approaches comprise different models. This gives the opportunity to analyse what works and what doesn't, and to identify whether there are some common elements that proved effective in all cases.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical foundation of the thesis, introducing the key concepts related to the changes in cultural policy, culture-led regeneration, city branding, and the European Capital of Culture programme. The research section of the thesis comprises of two parts, one comparing the aims and approaches (Chapter 3), and the other analysing the outcomes of the ECoC programmes in the three cities (Chapter 4). The analytical framework in Chapter 3 is based on the strategic policy dilemmas pointed out by Bianchini: the spatial dilemma (tensions between the city centre and the periphery), the cultural funding dilemma (event-based versus infrastructure-based regeneration), and the economic development dilemma (stimulating cultural consumption or cultural production).[3] These three aspects serve as points of comparison between the cities. Placing them on the policy dilemma spectrum is the first step in understanding the link between the different approaches to the ECoC and their results, which are examined in Chapter 4. Here, the economic and social outcomes of the events are compared, identifying the different mechanisms

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[3] Ibid.

and channels through which the cultural input is (or was supposed to be) translated into economic and social outputs, stressing the difference between short-term benefits and long-lasting legacies. Based on this, a conclusion is drawn regarding the effectiveness of the Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool models of ECoC in producing widespread and sustainable economic and social impacts.

CHAPTER 2: MAIN THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

This chapter introduces the key theoretical concepts that define the context of this thesis. Due to the complex, multifaceted nature of the topic, the research will not rely on a single theory (understood in the traditional sense), but on a set of discourses and debates. Given that the research is focused on the economic and social effects of cultural policy, the main theoretical concepts that are applied in the thesis are the ones concerned with the instrumentalisation of culture, culture-led regeneration, city branding, as well as the European Capital of Culture discourse in general.

2.1. The New Face of Cultural Policy

One of the major debates surrounding contemporary cultural policy refers to its 'instrumentalism'. In the past thirty or forty years, namely, there has been a shift in the perception of the role of culture. Increasingly, culture is being valued in economic terms—instrumentally, as a tool for achieving non-cultural goals, rather than something that should be good and useful *per se*.

This tendency, evident in the move away from purely cultural towards dominantly economic and, to a somewhat lesser extent, social justifications of cultural policy is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the past, cultural policies of governments at all levels in most countries were chiefly concerned with the creative arts, providing financial support for cultural heritage, institutions, and individual artists, at the same time aiming to introduce more people to the benefits of artistic consumption. While today economics represents the basic principle of policy-making, until forty years ago, it was hardly mentioned in cultural policy reports.[4]

Generally speaking, there are two major factors that contributed to this transformation. The first one refers to the wide-ranging socio-cultural changes that affected the policy environment, leading to a 'broader interpretation of culture as a way of life'.[5] This coincided with the dispersal of the distinction between high and popular culture. From the 1940s to the 1970s, cultural policy was equated with the former—which was, again, synonymous with the arts. Forms of cultural production that received subsidies and institutional support were the ones that were considered to be nationally, historically or spiritually significant. This included 'classical' arts, institutions such as operas, galleries and museums, important buildings and monuments, as well as the latest, modernist forms of high art, while excluding popular culture, which was seen as a commercialized form of mass entertainment. This justification, which was based on the premise of spiritual enlightenment, began to lose ground in the late 1970s and 1980s, as new generations of artists started to show greater sympathy for popular culture, critiquing the traditional cultural hierarchies as elitist and snobbish. The assumption that mass-popular culture is inherently inferior to the traditional arts could no longer be taken for granted.[6]

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[4] David Throsby, *The Economics of Cultural Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1.
[5] Ibid., 2.
[6] David Hesmondhalgh et al., "Were New Labour's cultural policies neo-liberal?," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 1 (2015): 108.

As the view of culture expanded beyond high art, a wider range of activities—such as film, the broadcast and print media, fashion, and tourism—found its way into the scope of cultural policy.[7] Under the growing influence of market forces, this broadened notion of the cultural sector was replaced by the term cultural industries. Rather than treating culture as a realm independent from or opposed to material production and commerce, this concept highlighted its economic value, embodied in the form of 'cultural goods and services'.[8] In the late 1990s, following the prevalence of the 'creative economy' discourse[9] emphasizing the reliance of capitalist market economies on flexible production of 'creative' products, technological change, and the rise of consumption driven by symbolic motivations[10], the cultural industries have further evolved into the creative industries—a broader concept that encompasses the wider cultural (heritage services, publishing and print media, sound recording, television and radio, video and computer games) and related industries (advertising, architecture, design, fashion) in addition to the core creative arts (literature, music, performing and visual arts) and core cultural industries (film, museums, galleries, libraries, and photography).[11]

Simultaneously with the changes described above, the global economic environment was undergoing a profound transformation. With the ascension of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the late 1970s and early 1980s, neoliberalism began its rise, spreading the wave of deregulation and privatization.[12] According to McGuigan[13], neoliberalism represents the third stage in the development of modern capitalism, which followed the classical liberal capitalism of the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century, and the organised form of welfare-state style capitalism of the post-WWII era, becoming globally hegemonic.[14] In regard to the cultural sector, the 'neoliberal turn'[15] has most significantly affected its financial environment, exacerbating the cultural policy shift in the direction of economic reductionism. As the neoliberal tide started pushing governments towards cutting expenditure, arts and cultural organisations were forced to find alternative ways of justifying public spending on culture. This led to the

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[7] Throsby, *The Economics of Cultural Policy*, 2.

[8] John Hartley et al., *Key concepts in creative industries* (London: SAGE Publications, 2013), 79-80.

[9] Shoshanah B. D. Goldberg-Miller and Rene Kooyman, "From Edge to Engine," in *Entrepreneurship in Culture and Creative Industries: Perspectives from Companies and Regions*, ed. Elisa Innerhofer, Harald Pechlaner, and Elena Borin (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 184-85.

[10] Hye-Kyung Lee, "Politics of the 'creative industries' discourse and its variants," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 22, no. 3 (2016): 439-42.

[11] Hartley et al., *Key concepts in creative industries*, 58-60.

[12] As defined by Harvey, 'neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices'. See: David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1-4.

[13] Jim McGuigan, *Neoliberal Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 13-18.

[14] Following Hesmondhalgh et al., it should be noted that the actual practices of neoliberal governments—their actions and policies—can vary considerably from case to case, making the term conceptually loose. Acknowledging that the term 'neoliberalism' does not imply a precise connotation, the main motive for its use here lies in the need to denote the dominant macroeconomic paradigm, clarifying the context in which new goals for cultural policies have emerged.

[15] Jean-Louis Fabiani, "Cultural Governance and the Crisis of Financial Capitalism," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 6, no. 1 (2014): 219.

incorporation of economic, as well as social rationales in cultural policies[16], at the same time inducing greater competition for earned revenue, as well as donations and sponsorships.[17]

As noted by McGuigan, neoliberalism in the cultural field primarily manifests itself in adopting an overtly economistic view of culture. In this respect, 'cultural practices are deemed worthy of public support because they are of *economic* value'.[18] Compared to the economic benefits such practices can create, paradoxically, the cultural value is deemed secondary. Additionally, neoliberal cultural policies are often characterised by overlooking wider social concerns, and replacing issues of social policy with questions of cultural policy—which, in its turn, 'ceases to be specifically about culture at all'.[19] Hence, culture is expected to produce economic growth and, at the same time, remedy the social ills of exclusion and poverty.

2.2. Culture-Led Regeneration and City Branding

The instrumental use of culture has been especially prominent in the context of urban policy. While in the 1970s and early 1980s the main goal of urban cultural policy was to 'enhance community building' by providing greater access to cultural facilities and activities for all citizens[20], from the mid-1980s, the idea that culture can be co-opted to boost urban economic growth and address social problems has become widely advocated and put into practice by local governments and developments agencies worldwide.[21]

Although a great body of literature deals with various aspects of culture-led regeneration, little attention has been devoted to precisely defining the term. As noted by Evans, the term *regeneration* signifies the transformation of a place that has experienced 'physical, social and/or economic decline'. The desired regenerative effects, then, involve economic (competitiveness, growth), as well as social (inclusion, liveability) goals. The main vehicle for achieving these objectives is culture, understood in the broadest sense.[22] In Western Europe and the UK, culture-driven regeneration strategies began to emerge as a response to massive deindustrialization. The relocation and decline of manufacturing industries, many of which were urban-based, faced cities with severe economic, social, and spatial problems, necessitating the transition from an industrial to a service-oriented urban economy.[23]

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[16] Hesmondhalgh et al., "Were New Labour's cultural policies neo-liberal?," 108-09.
[17] Throsby, *The Economics of Cultural Policy*, 4; Fabiani, "Cultural Governance and the Crisis of Financial Capitalism," 219.
[18] Jim McGuigan, *Rethinking Cultural Policy* (Maidenhead: Open University, 2004), 1.
[19] Jim McGuigan, "Neo-Liberalism, Culture and Policy," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 3 (2005): 238.
[20] Lily Kong, "Culture, economy, policy: trends and developments," *Geoforum* 31, no. 4 (2000): 386.
[21] Steven Miles and Ronan Paddison, "Introduction: The Rise and Rise of Culture-led Urban Regeneration," *Urban Studies* 42, no. 5/6 (2005): 833-34.
[22] Graeme Evans, "Measure for Measure: Evaluating the Evidence of Culture's Contribution to Regeneration," *Urban Studies* 42, no. 5/6 (2005): 967.
[23] Andy C. Pratt, "Creative cities: Tensions within and between social, cultural and economic development. A critical reading of the UK experience," *City, culture and society* 1, no. 1 (2010): 16.

The use of culture as a means to fight economic decline and push the cities' post-industrial recovery has been at the heart of culture-driven urban regeneration strategies. Evans distinguishes three separate, yet not necessarily mutually exclusive models of 'regeneration through cultural projects'. In the 'culture-led regeneration' model, cultural activity is seen as central to the regeneration process. Serving as the main driver and catalyst for renewal, this activity typically takes the form of high-profile cultural flagship projects, mega-events and/or architecture developments, whose great symbolic value is supposed to epitomise change and movement. The model of 'cultural regeneration', on the other hand, is characterised by a more profound embeddedness of culture into a general area strategy. This includes the 'creative quarter' approach, and, to a lesser extent, the 'creative city' paradigm[24] of urban cultural policy. Finally, in the 'culture and regeneration' model, cultural activity serves as a supportive, supplementary element rather than playing the leading role in the regeneration process. Here, cultural interventions are often small and under-promoted (and therefore less visible than in the other two models), although not absent or without impact.[25]

Based on the mid-1980s to 1990s experiences of major UK cities, Kong lists four important characteristics of what she identifies as 'cultural economic policy'. These include growing investment in cultural infrastructure and the planning of 'cultural districts', flagship development projects in inner-city areas and the launching of festivals and events aimed at cultural tourism, investment in public art and revival of urban public spaces, and an increase in public-private partnerships.[26] Similarly, Pratt describes four types of urban policy-making that are based on the instrumentalisation of culture. The first one is associated with the preservation and promotion of heritage targeted to increase cultural tourism. The second variety of policy-making relates to place-based competition for attracting investment and highly-skilled professionals.[27] The third variety is focused on social inclusion, most commonly through 'small-scale and neighbourhood projects whose purpose is to ameliorate social tensions, to improve the health and welfare of people'. Finally, the fourth type of policy is focused on the development of cultural and creative industries, treating culture in strictly economic terms, as a sector or cluster.[28]

The 'cultural turn' in urban policy became even more pronounced with the rise of city marketing and city branding in the 1990s. According to Paddison, the need for economic revival figures as the main goal in attempts at marketing cities. Having lost their traditional manufacturing bases, post-industrial cities have focused their attention on attracting investment, which has become the most significant source of local economic development. As the competition between places for

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[24] The concept of the 'creative city' is most commonly associated with the work of Charles Laundry. See: Charles Landry, *The creative city: a toolkit for urban innovators* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2000).

[25] Evans, "Measure for Measure," 967-70.

[26] Kong, "Culture, economy, policy: trends and developments," 387.

[27] Lately, such strategies have been fed by the 'creative class' theory of Richard Florida. Despite its prominence, the Floridian discourse is of too recent date to have affected the examined ECoC programmes, and shall therefore not be discussed here. Regarding Florida, however, it is interesting to observe that many of the ideas related to his work were already in circulation during the 1990s. See: Richard L. Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

[28] Pratt, "Creative cities," 15.

investment intensified, the concept of city marketing has become a crucial strategic tool. Reflecting the 'new urban entrepreneurialism', its main objective is to raise the competitive position of a city, primarily by improving its image.[29] Apart from attracting inward investment, city marketing is typically directed toward increasing tourism. Additionally, it might also aim to promote 'community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city'.[30]

While city marketing is more fragmentary, using 'selected cultural elements within promotional campaigns', city branding goes one step further, holistically 'packaging' the city in order to produce an externally visible and easily recognisable identity.[31] The 'product' being branded, in other words, is the city itself. Adopting the commodified logic of retail, entertainment, and experience economies, city branding relies heavily on the power of culture to develop and sustain an identity and image, framing the uniqueness of a place. By and large, cities seek to differentiate themselves and maintain the visibility of their 'brand' through various forms of urban cultural actions and strategies, such as the creation of major cultural flagship projects—often involving the construction of architectural masterpieces (Bilbao's Guggenheim is probably the most famous example) and gentrification of former industrial districts, waterfronts, and depopulated downtown areas; linking a place with a cultural icon (Gaudi's Barcelona); staging of festivals and 'hallmark events'; re-labelling of ethnic quarters previously associated with deprivation (Chinatowns in many Western cities, for instance); and formation of shopping districts that fuse leisure, consumption and culture.[32] The hard-branding of the cultural city is therefore characterised by 'the agglomeration of cultural consumption in both spatial and symbolical terms'.[33]

Although culture-led urban regeneration and city branding promise to reconcile leisure, business, and community demands and aspirations[34], the real effects of such policies have proved highly controversial. The extent to which culture-driven strategies can balance the social with the economic and physical outcomes of regeneration is perhaps the most contested issue. As stated by Evans, the evidence of regeneration using major cultural projects appears to be limited, especially in the case of sustained, long-term effects.[35] Pointing to the gap between rhetoric and reality, Miles and Paddison note that the regeneration potential of cultural investment is often exaggerated. According to them, the main problems arising from culture-led regeneration can be best addressed by answering two crucial, interrelated questions. Firstly, what does the culture-led policy aspire to achieve? Secondly, how to evaluate whether these expectations are fulfilled?[36]

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[29] Ronan Paddison, "City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration," *Urban Studies* 30, no. 2 (1993): 339-40.
[30] Dave Gelders and Bart van Zuilen, "City events: short and serial reproduction effects on the city's image?," *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 18, no. 1 (2013): 110-11.
[31] Graeme Evans, "Hard-Branding the Cultural City – From Prado to Prada," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27, no. 2 (2003): 420.
[32] Evans, "Hard-Branding the Cultural City."
[33] Ibid., 436.
[34] Ibid., 428.
[35] Evans, "Measure for Measure," 975.
[36] Miles and Paddison, "Introduction: The Rise and Rise of Culture-led Urban Regeneration," 838.

Regarding the first question, Bianchini points out three main policy dilemmas. The 'spatial dilemma' concerns the tensions between the city centre and the periphery. As culture-led regeneration projects tend to focus on downtown areas, neglecting other parts of the city, achieving an even geographical distribution of cultural activity remains one of the major challenges. This is closely related to gentrification issues—the common danger that 'cultural investment' may not improve the living conditions in deprived neighbourhoods, but instead result in the marginalisation of low-income groups, contributing to intra-city inequality rather than reducing it. The second, 'cultural funding dilemma' pertains to finding the balance between investing in temporary versus permanent activity. The former would mostly correspond to regeneration based on events and festivals, the effects of which might be seen as ephemeral and short-lasting, while the latter implies investment in cultural infrastructure, which also might lead to the construction of extravagant, underused facilities (the so-called 'white elephants'). The main challenge here lies not so much in the tension between event-led and infrastructure-led regeneration, as in how to approach each of them thoughtfully, avoiding a trade-off in which one would exclude or undermine the other. Finally, the 'economic development dilemma' addresses the question of whether to prioritise cultural consumption or cultural production. While consumption might bring immediate gains by way of attracting tourists and encouraging community involvement, cultural production guarantees sustainable benefits in the long run, thereby requiring more time for these to come into effect.[37]

The second important question is how to evaluate the effects of culture-led regeneration projects. On the one hand, the evidence supporting the claim that cultural events and flagship projects can be used to revive declining cities seems unconvincing, pointing to the conclusion that more evaluation is needed. In particular, calls for greater emphasis on measurement tools and quantitative assessment have been made both by policy-makers and the public, reflecting the need to go beyond 'the simplistic ideological principles and grand theories' that often guide public policy interventions, and anecdotal evidence that is commonly used to justify them.[38]

On the other hand, many authors stress the need for a different kind of evaluation, advocating a more holistic concept of cultural policy. By giving greater consideration to the social, educational, environmental and other related life-quality aspects of cultural activity, and providing a platform for local communities to take part in the establishing of assessment criteria that would account for their views and needs, such an approach would provide a more satisfactory basis for policy evaluation.[39] Instead of focusing on the immediate and easy-to-monitor economic outcomes, the notion of culture-led strategies, together with the various indicators used to measure its effects, need to be expanded to reflect the 'complex and multifaceted nature of urban culture', including the cultural impacts and legacies of regeneration projects, especially in the long run.[40]

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[37] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 200-04.
[38] Evans, "Measure for Measure," 961-75.
[39] Beatriz García, "Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration in Western European Cities: Lessons from Experience, Prospects for the Future," *Local Economy: The Journal of the Local Economy Policy Unit* 19, no. 4 (2004): 324-25; Evans, "Measure for Measure," 975-78; Miles and Paddison, "Introduction: The Rise and Rise of Culture-led Urban Regeneration," 837.
[40] García, "Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration in Western European Cities: Lessons from Experience, Prospects for the Future," 324-25.

2.3. The European Capital of Culture

The European Capital of Culture[41] (ECoC) programme was started in 1985 at the initiative of Melina Mercouri, then serving as minister of culture in Greece. The title is awarded for a period of one year, during which a city designated by the European Union organises a series of cultural events that are supposed to showcase its cultural life, reinforcing elements of Europe's common cultural features and values.[42]

Over the past 33 years, the European Capital of Culture has evolved in many senses, from the way the title is awarded to its organisation and funding, and—most importantly—the goals with which cities approach the programme. Regarding the former, the most important change occurred at the turn of the millennium, when a competitive bid process was introduced, replacing intergovernmental arrangements. The contest to stage the event has been increasingly popular ever since, with more and more cities competing for the title. Starting from 2005, two host cities share the status each year, provided with a preparation time of at least four years.[43]

When it comes to the financing of the ECoC event, it is interesting to notice that the budgets for different host cities greatly differ, both in structure and in size.[44] Although EU funding of the ECoC initiative has increased over time, it still represents a relatively small portion, amounting to under five percent of the operating budget in most cases.[45] As reported by Gomes and Librero-Cano, up to now, funding from national governments comprised 37 percent of the total budget across all ECoCs on average. 34 percent came from local and regional governments, while the rest was sourced by private sector sponsors.[46] In terms of size, the operating budgets (net of capital expenditure) for ECoCs ranged from 5.5 million euros in Reykjavik to over 100 million euros in Liverpool and Istanbul[47], amounting to 25.6 million euros on average.[48] In addition to the cultural programme budgets, almost all ECoC programmes included significant public investment in infrastructure. Although it varies from city to city, infrastructure spending has tended to increase, especially after 1996, surpassing the cultural programme expenditure.[49]

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[41] At first, the programme was called the European City of Culture. The European Parliament and the Council of the EU renamed it the European Capital of Culture in 1999.

[42] "European Capitals of Culture: 30 years of achievements," European Commission, 2015, accessed May 20, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/capitals-culture-30-years-brochure_en.pdf.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Beatriz García and Tasmin Cox, *European Capitals of Culture: Success Strategies and Long-Term Effects*, Directorate general for internal policies, policy department B: Structural and cohesion policies (2013), 101-05.

[45] Ibid., 107

[46] Pedro Gomes and Alejandro Librero-Cano, "Evaluating three decades of the European Capital of Culture programme: a difference-in-differences approach," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 42, no. 1 (2018): 60.

[47] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 103.

[48] Lasse Steiner, Bruno Frey, and Simone Hotz, "European Capitals of Culture and Life Satisfaction," *Urban Studies* 52, no. 2 (2015): 376.

[49] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 110.

At its inception, the ECoC had purely cultural aims. It was established to serve as an 'expression of a culture which, in its historical emergence and contemporary development, is characterized by having both common elements and a richness born of diversity', helping to 'bring the peoples of the Member States closer together'.[50] Over time, however, the main focus of the ECoC has changed significantly. Reflecting the trend in public policy to utilize culture as a tool for urban regeneration and local economic development, the ECoC 'morphed from a cultural initiative to one that is intrinsically economic'.[51]

In the 'European Capital of Culture Fact Sheet', staging the ECoC is presented as an opportunity for cities to create economic growth (by means of tourism and the increased turnover of cultural and creative industries), build a sense of community (through the engagement and wide participation of citizens), and physically regenerate themselves (through the development of new cultural infrastructure).[52] Hosting cities indeed do approach the ECoC with an array of visions and ambitions, ranging from economic to physical to social and cultural growth. The *poetics* of the ECoC event, however—the idyllic narrative surrounding the ECoC—is seldom in accord with its *politics*—the dry reality of seeking legitimacy and drawing support from various stakeholders, selecting and running projects, as well as managing potential dissatisfaction. Consequently, a considerable amount of disagreement concerning the ECoC is present among various actors.[53]

In the growing amount of literature on the European Capital of Culture, several thorny issues are repeatedly pointed out. The lack of well-founded evidence on the long-term impacts of ECoC projects is one of the main challenges that yet need to be overcome.[54] This problem is exaggerated by the fact that claims about long-lasting positive effects of the event are often used as one of the main arguments for winning the title. The difficulty of evaluating the long-term outcomes of the event then goes hand in hand with the lack of follow-up plans and actions which would ensure that the ECoC legacy actually lasts.[55] Secondly (and very much related to the previous point), a discrepancy between high-reaching promises and unconvincing results seems to be the rule rather than the exception. While the competitive nature of the bidding process contributes to making overly ambitious plans, the implementation is often constrained by limited resources and political dilemmas, leading to unkept promises and disappointments.[56]

[50] "Resolution of the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs, meeting within the Council, of 13 June 1985 concerning the annual event 'European City of Culture'," European Commission, 1985, accessed May 20, 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=CELEX:41985X0622.

[51] Philip Boland, Brendan Murtagh, and Peter Shirlow, "Fashioning a City of Culture: 'life and place changing' or '12 month party'?," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* (2016): 2.

[52] "European Capital of Culture Fact Sheet," European Commission, 2018, accessed May 20, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/ecoc-fact-sheet_0.pdf.

[53] Can-Seng Ooi, Lars Håkanson, and Laura LaCava, "Poetics and Politics of the European Capital of Culture Project," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 148 (2014): 423.

[54] Floris Langen and Beatriz García, *Measuring the impacts of large scale cultural events: a literature review* (Impacts 08, Liverpool, 2009), 9; Gomes and Librero-Cano, "Evaluating three decades of the European Capital of Culture programme: a difference-in-differences approach," 61.

[55] Ooi, Håkanson, and LaCava, "Poetics and Politics of the European Capital of Culture Project," 423.

[56] Ibid., 423-424.

Unsurprisingly, the largest part of the literature on the ECoC focuses on its economic dimension. Analysing the economic effects of the programme between 1984 and 2012, Gomes and Librero-Cano conclude that the GDP per capita of the regions that hosted the event is on average 4.5 per cent higher compared to the regions of the cities that unsuccessfully competed for it. The GDP increase starts two years prior to the event and continues for more than five years after it, suggesting that there are long-term economic benefits arising from the ECoC. Still, the authors were not able to determine whether the positive effects can be contributed to a specific economic sector closely related to the programme, such as construction, accommodation, food services or arts and entertainment.[57] The study conducted by Steiner, Frey, and Hotz, on the other hand, did not find that hosting the ECoC produced any impact on the regional GDP per capita.[58]

Although a great deal has been written about the various impacts of the ECoC, it is doubtful whether the outcomes of the event can (and should) be assessed on a general level. Unlike other EU programmes, namely, the ECoC implies significant flexibility, allowing the host cities a high level of autonomy in deciding how to carry out the event.[59] Due to the differences in city characteristics, national circumstances, available budgets, programme conception and goals (which may vary substantially from case to case, both in scale and scope of activities), the success of different ECoCs could be defined in alternative ways.[60] Projects should therefore be evaluated according to their own objectives.[61] Since each ECoC is unique in its own terms, involving a specific local context, comparing one hosting city to another should also be done with particular caution.[62]

Certain goals, however, seem to figure prominently in the agendas of almost every host city. Such is the ambition to use the ECoC title as a way to boost (cultural) tourism and increase the number of visitors. Studies investigating the effectiveness of the ECoC as a means of attracting tourists typically show that the event leads to a palpable increase in the visitor numbers and spending, but only in the short term, as the positive effect tends to disappear in the subsequent years, reflecting the temporary nature of the programme.[63] Comparing the minority of cities in which the tourist increase remained significant in the long run to ones with negative effects, Falk and Hagsten point out that the first group comprises of second-tier cities with rich cultural and historical heritage (the

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[57] Gomes and Librero-Cano, "Evaluating three decades of the European Capital of Culture programme: a difference-in-differences approach," 67.

[58] Steiner, Frey, and Hotz, "European Capitals of Culture and Life Satisfaction."

[59] Peter Sjøholt, "Culture as a Strategic Development Device: The Role of 'European Cities of Culture', with Particular Reference to Bergen," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 6, no. 4 (1999): 342.

[60] Ibid., 343; Ooi, Håkanson, and LaCava, "Poetics and Politics of the European Capital of Culture Project," 426.

[61] Pratt, "Creative cities," 18.

[62] Gomes and Librero-Cano, "Evaluating three decades of the European Capital of Culture programme: a difference-in-differences approach," 61.

[63] Greg Richards, "The European cultural capital event: Strategic weapon in the cultural arms race?," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 6, no. 2 (2000); Martin Falk and Eva Hagsten, "Measuring the impact of the European Capital of Culture programme on overnight stays: evidence for the last two decades," *European Planning Studies* 25, no. 12 (2017).

ECoC event, the authors assume, revealed these hidden gems to a wider audience), while industrial cities prevail in the latter group.[64]

Common to most ECoCs is also the use of the event as a means to enhance the image of the host city, or even completely redefine it.[65] This opens a series of questions, which range from the dubious causality between such city (re)branding strategies and the desired economic benefits associated with it, to issues concerning the way in which the programme interacts with city identity. Is the programme intended for the local population, as most EU documents and ECoC promotion materials claim[66], or is it aimed at attracting tourists and cultural consumers from the outside? In whose eyes should the city image-enhancing effect be visible—its own citizens or the rest of the world? A paradox often associated with major festivals and events therefore also seems to be present in the case of the ECoC. On the one hand, cities are using the event as a way to differentiate themselves. At the same time, however, they are employing copy-paste models that offer a generic formula for success, which often proves to be at odds with the actual identity of a place.[67]

Achieving complementarity between one-off capital projects and the sustainable development of cultural production is a common difficulty related to the ECoC.[68] In addition to serving as eye-catching attractions for tourists and accessories for branding, Richards notes, the cultural facilities should contribute to stimulating the cultural and creative resources of the city.[69] Furthermore, the need to pay attention to the cultural production process is supplemented by the dilemma between bringing external celebrities and staging international events versus focusing on local artists and cultural activities.[70] Clearly, the tension between local and external actors is present both in relation to cultural consumption and cultural production.

With all being said, it is evident that staging the ECoC presents policy-makers with many challenges that need to be resolved—discords between culture and economy, instrumentalism and intrinsic policy, production and consumption, locals and tourists, short-term profits and long-term legacies.[71] The following chapter will examine how Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool addressed the issue of finding the right balance between these potentially conflicting goals.

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[64] Falk and Hagsten, "Measuring the impact of the European Capital of Culture programme on overnight stays: evidence for the last two decades," 2186-87.

[65] Greg Richards and Julie Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001," *Urban Studies* 41, no. 10 (2004); Yi-De Liu, "Event branding, image reconstruction and urban regeneration: A case study of Liverpool as the 2008 European Capital of Culture," *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal* 9, no. 4 (2016).

[66] See, for example, the "European Capital of Culture Fact Sheet."

[67] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1932-33.

[68] Pratt, "Creative cities," 18.

[69] Richards, "The European cultural capital event: Strategic weapon in the cultural arms race?," 178-79.

[70] Ooi, Håkanson, and LaCava, "Poetics and Politics of the European Capital of Culture Project," 424.

[71] Pratt, "Creative cities," 18; Richards, "The European cultural capital event: Strategic weapon in the cultural arms race?," 179.

CHAPTER 3: COMPARING THE AIMS AND APPROACHES

This chapter considers the aims and approaches of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) programmes in Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool, focusing on their economic and social dimensions. It does so by making a comparison based on the three major policy dilemmas pointed out by Bianchini: the spatial dilemma, the cultural funding dilemma, and the economic development dilemma.[72] Before proceeding with the comparative analysis of the cities' aims and approaches, however, it is necessary to place the three cases into the appropriate historical context. Therefore, the following section will provide historical insight into the cultural policies and urban development paths of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool.

3.1. The Historical Background and Lead-Up to the ECoCs

3.1.1. Glasgow

Known as the 'Second City of the Empire', during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Glasgow was a bustling port and one of the largest industrial cities in the world, most renowned for shipbuilding, coal mining and steel production. At the turn of the century, when Glasgow enjoyed its heyday, shipbuilding employed 60,000 men, with another 40,000 working in related industries, giving the city 'the lowest unemployment rate of any British industrial region'. After WWI, however, Glasgow's economy gradually began to decline. During the years of the Great Depression, unemployment reached 30 percent, while the shipbuilding output slumped to a mere '7 percent of its 1913 peak'.[73]

After a brief revival during WWII, which temporarily fuelled the demand for heavy industrial manufacturing, the downturn continued at an even greater pace.[74] De-industrialisation in the 1960s and 1970s was particularly harsh: the collapse of heavy industry, together with the unsuccessful post-war urban modernisation resulted in widespread deprivation and squalor.[75] The focal point of Glasgow's economy for two centuries, the River Clyde, was almost completely abandoned, and the port lost its function as containerization rendered the riverside docks and wharves unusable.[76] From being a city of 785,000 inhabitants before WWI and over 1.1 million in 1951, by the late

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[72] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 200-04.

[73] Peter Booth and Robin Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," in *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, ed. Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 24-25.

[74] María V. Gómez, "Reflective images: the case of urban regeneration in Glasgow and Bilbao," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 22, no. 1 (1998): 107.

[75] Florian Urban, "Modernising Glasgow — tower blocks, motorways and new towns 1940-2010," The Journal of Architecture 23, no. 2 (2018): 265-309.

[76] Branka Dimitrijević, "Sustainable urban development of Glasgow," *Arhitektura i urbanizam*, no. 24-25 (2009): 69.

1980s, Glasgow's population had fallen to around 600,000.[77] Between 1961 and 1981, manufacturing employment in the city nearly halved.[78] The social problems of industrial decline were made worse by the 'urban legacy of high-density, low-quality tenemental housing' and the failed attempts to relocate the working class, which dramatically altered the social and physical environment of the city.[79] Mass unemployment, disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rising crime and high levels of urban decay reinforced Glasgow's 'mean city' reputation.[80]

Acknowledging the need to facilitate the shift in the city's economic base, Glasgow's urban renewal policies employed the idea of including its cultural resources into the equation of post-industrial urban recovery. In 1983, the 'Glasgow's Miles Better' promotional campaign was launched by the Glasgow District Council, marking the introduction of city marketing.[81] The campaign was coupled with a series of actions and events, including the annual Mayfest arts festival, the Glasgow Garden Festival, the opening of the renowned Burrell Art Collection (the largest municipal art collection outside London), the construction of the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (the so-called Armadillo), refashioning of the city centre, including the renewed 'Merchant City' quarter, as well as the extensive cleaning of yellow and red stone façades, which were blackened by smoke from burning coal.[82] All these activities were set up with the intention of promoting the city for tourism, inward investors, and business.[83] When it comes to using place marketing and cultural events as a means to stimulate the urban economy, therefore, Glasgow can be seen as a pioneering example, having 'developed a formal city marketing campaign more than a decade before this became common practice in other parts of the UK or Europe'.[84]

Marking a highpoint in Glasgow's regeneration strategy[85], the European Capital of Culture was a way to continue and extend the city image repair that started in the early 1980s.[86] In many ways, Glasgow's staging of the ECoC in 1990 was a crucial point in the history of the programme, redefining its purpose and format. Unlike previous title-holders, which were all well-known

[77] "Population Estimates: Glasgow's Population 1801-2016," Understanding Glasgow—The Glasgow Indicators Project, accessed May 11, 2019,
http://www.understandingglasgow.com/indicators/population/trends/historic_population_trend.

[78] Gómez, "Reflective images," 107-08.

[79] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 27-28.

[80] The public perception of Glasgow as a city of misery, crime and violence was entrenched by popular books, most notably *No Mean City* from 1935—a sensationalist novel that, nevertheless, 'left an indelible stain on Glasgow's reputation', branding the city as 'a collection of thugs and harlots'. Dave Graham, "Glasgow Fights 'No Mean City' Tag, 75 Years on," Reuters, January 05, 2010, accessed May 11, 2019, https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-glasgow/glasgow-fights-no-mean-city-tag-75-years-on-idUKTRE6042N520100105.

[81] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 28-30.

[82] David Leslie, "Urban Regeneration and Glasgow's Galleries with Particular Reference to the Burrell Collection," in *Cultural Attractions and European Tourism*, ed. Greg Richards (Wallingford, Oxon: CABI Publishing, 2001), 115.

[83] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 31.

[84] Beatriz García, "'If everyone says so …' Press narratives and image change in major event host cities," *Urban Studies* 54, no. 14 (2017): 3186.

[85] Gerry Mooney, "Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation? Critical Reflections on Glasgow, European City of Culture 1990," *Local Economy: The Journal of the Local Economy Policy Unit* 19, no. 4 (2004): 329.

[86] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 32.

cultural centres of Europe, seeking to build up on their long-established status, the idea behind Glasgow's bid was to use the award as a catalyst for a thorough transformation of its urban identity. As perceived by Glasgow's authorities, the 'image issue' was 'putting off tourists, deterring external investment, and driving people and jobs away from the city'.[87] Hence, the Glasgow City Council was not only hoping that the ECoC event will help the city to shake off its undesirable reputation, but the potential effects of this change were also seen as crucial in providing opportunities for further regeneration and development[88], conveying the notion of the 'new' Glasgow as a prosperous, culturally rich post-industrial city.[89]

Making use of the fact that the nominated city can choose the form of the event, Glasgow was the first to introduce a broad definition of culture[90], which has since become a standard for all ECoC organisers. Emphasizing the embeddedness of culture in everyday life, this conception encompasses a wide range of forms and topics, from lifestyle, sport and education to food, crafts, video arts and archaeology, as well as more conventional forms of artistic expression.[91] In like manner, a broad approach was taken when it comes to the scale of the ECoC event, which was spread over the entire 12-month period. The motive behind these innovations was to promote participation, ensure a high profile for the ECoC, and make it appealing for corporate sponsorship.[92]

The Glasgow District Council had clearly formulated aims for the event, which were divided into three main groups.[93] In addition to cultural objectives, Glasgow 1990 also had a strong economic and social rationale. The economic goals were defined as follows:

- 'to create employment opportunities;
- to increase the number of visitors to the city;
- to expand the number of spectators and participants for cultural activities; and
- to improve the image and perception of Glasgow', which was expected to increase the attractiveness of Glasgow for businesses and high-skilled workers.[94]

The most important social objectives of Glasgow 1990 were:

- to widen the social base of cultural audiences, improve access and increase opportunities for participation in cultural activities, especially for non-mainstream groups;
- to increase civic pride in Glasgow and the local culture, and

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[87] Matthew Reason, "Cartoons and the Comic Exposure of the European City of Culture," *European Studies: A Journal of European Culture, History and Politics* 23, no. 1 (2006): 181.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Paddison, "City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration," 347.
[90] John Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow 1990* (Glasgow: Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde Regional Council and Scottish Enterprise, 1991), 10.
[91] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 36.
[92] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 8.
[93] The Strathclyde Regional Council established separate goals for the programmes it funded, but these were mainly in line with the general objectives set by the Glasgow District Council. See: Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 9.
[94] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 8-9.

- to ensure adequate consideration is given to special groups, such as the elderly, disabled, children and youth, or cultural and social minorities.[95]

In order to prepare and coordinate the events for 1990, a separate Festivals Unit was established in 1987 within the Glasgow District Council.[96] Not taking into account the capital projects, revenue support for the ECoC programme totalled £32.7 million.[97] Apart from a small grant given by the Office of Arts and Libraries, 82% of this sum was sourced from the local and regional governments[98], while the rest of the funding (£6.46 million) was secured from private sector contributions.[99] The year-long Glasgow 1990 programme included 3,961 performances, 429 exhibitions, 2,212 community events, a large number of special educational activities (such as workshops and lectures), as well as extended opening hours of galleries and museums.[100]

3.1.2. Rotterdam

Most renowned for its port, which has been the busiest in the world for many years, Rotterdam made its name as an industrial centre, a city of 'merchants, bankers and dockers'. Rotterdam's major episode of growth took place in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the construction of the New Waterway canal made the city accessible to seafaring vessels, turning it into the main seaport for the rapidly industrialising Ruhr area.[101]

The Second World War erased much of the erstwhile Rotterdam, splitting its history into two parts. As a result of multiple bombing raids, the city was almost completely destroyed and had to be rebuilt from scratch. The post-WWII reconstruction, however, was not merely a renewal of the city as it once was, but a radical remodelling from which a completely different Rotterdam arose, dominated by modernist buildings and wide boulevards. The contemporary history of Rotterdam has therefore been inextricably linked to modernisation. In the post-war era, paradoxically, modernisation has even become its tradition. In contrast to many other Dutch cities, it was not seen as a threat, but was instead embraced by the community as a kind of rebirth.[102]

A vital element of Rotterdam's culture refers to its multiculturalism. As a port city and major transportation hub, Rotterdam has always been an attractive destination for immigrants from across the globe. Today, the city is home to over 170 nationalities, and more than half of its inhabitants have a migration background. Moreover, only one-third of Rotterdam's youth under the age of fifteen is of Dutch descent. People from Surinam, Turkey, and Morocco form the most significant

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[95] Ibid., 9.
[96] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 35.
[97] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 24.
[98] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 104.
[99] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 11; 35.
[100] Ibid., 53.
[101] Jan Buursink, "The cultural strategy of Rotterdam," Cybergeo: European Journal of Geography (1997): 1-5.
[102] Maarten A. Hajer, "Rotterdam: re-designing the public domain," in *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, ed. Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 48-50.

minority groups, along with an increasing number of migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (especially Poland), Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia, Indonesia, and South America.[103] Today, however, as well as in the past, the superdiverse Rotterdam has been both a city of inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, cultural diversity has become an integral part of Rotterdam's urban life; on the other hand, it has also been the cause of ethnic friction and segregation between the 'autochthonous' population of Dutch descent and minority groups.[104]

Modernisation, multiculturalism, and the connection of the city with the port are the key elements that defined the role of cultural policy in the process of Rotterdam's post-war urban regeneration. While in the 1970s cultural policies focused on the people of the city, insisting on the societal function of the arts, during the 1980s, the emphasis shifted to external goals of urban development.[105] Following the economic crisis of the late 1970s, and the increased competitive pressure from East Asian and European ports, it became clear that Rotterdam's economy can no longer depend solely on its harbour. During this period, Rotterdam was facing increased unemployment and an unfavourable investment climate. Although Rotterdam's population remained fairly stable at around 600,000 people, a strong sub-urbanisation of higher-income families to peripheral towns threatened to deprive the city of its middle class, causing social imbalances.[106]

The need to expand the economic base led to the adoption of city marketing-inspired policies aimed at attracting mobile capital, along with designing an urban environment that would suit the highly skilled white-collar middle classes, which the blue-collar city lacked. In this sense, the role of cultural policy was to assist the development of the service sector, tourism, the cultural industries and other areas of the new economy, delivering the notion of a 'new Rotterdam' as a changed place.[107] Similar to Glasgow, the need to improve Rotterdam's cultural profile also arose from the fact that it was predominantly perceived as a working town without much cultural significance. When it comes to cultural life, it has always been in the shadow of Amsterdam, whose image of traditional cultural excellence deemed Rotterdam second-rate[108], not being able to pair the capital's abundance of artists, cultural companies and landmarks.[109]

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[103] Peter Scholten, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar, eds., *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam* (Cham: Springer, 2019), 13-15.
[104] Ibid., 226.
[105] Erik Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 6, no. 2 (2000): 187-89.
[106] Mariangela Lavanga, "Creative Industries, Cultural Quarters and Urban Development: The Case Studies of Rotterdam and Milan," in *Urban Management in Europe Vol. II: Towards a sustainable development*, ed. G. Mingardo and M. van Hoek (Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam, MEMR - The Thesis Series, 2004), 26.
[107] Hajer, "Rotterdam: re-designing the public domain," 52-54.
[108] Huib Schippers and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, "Redefining Places for Art: The Contemporary Metropolis as 'Many Cities'," 2006, accessed May 21, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/29462690_Redefining_places_for_art_The_contemporary_metropolis_as_%27many_cities%27.
[109] Buursink, "The cultural strategy of Rotterdam," 4-6.

The turn toward a 'more culturally dynamic' Rotterdam took place in the late 1980s, starting with the *Rotterdam '88, the City: A Stage* summer festival, and continuing with a series of events that combined the arts and public spaces[110], including outdoor cinemas, carnivals, theatre, and poetry festivals. A special waterfront area (named *Waterstad* as a reference to the historic maritime quarter of Rotterdam) was developed south of the new city centre with the aim of attracting tourists. The city also started to set up a cultural district ('the Cultural Triangle') in the area around the renowned Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, including the construction of a new art exhibition hall (Kunsthal, opened in 1992) and the new Netherlands Architecture Institute (based in Rotterdam since 1993.[111] As outlined in the 'Revitalising Rotterdam' policy memorandum issued in 1987, the promotion of culture and reorganisation of public spaces was aimed at improving the urban quality of life and the overall attractiveness of the city, as well as opening up culture to deprived social groups.[112]

The attribution of positive socio-economic impacts remained the focal point of Rotterdam's cultural policy during the 1990s.[113] On the one hand, therefore, Rotterdam's European Capital of Culture in 2001 (R2001) can be seen as a continuation of the 1990s cultural strategy, relying on the notion that a major cultural event can create an economic spin-off, both by means of indirect returns through improvements of the city's image, and direct economic benefits through extra spending by tourists.[114] On the other hand, however, great attention has been devoted to developing a programme that would involve the entire local community, concentrating on topics such as local identity, multiculturalism, diversity, cultural mobility, and providing opportunities for cohesion and active participation of deprived groups in cultural life.[115] In fact, social cohesion[116] and community development were indicated to be an objective of the highest priority.[117] In that sense, R2001 can also be seen as a return to social-democratic cultural policies of the 1970s inspired by the ideal of the 'participatory city'.[118]

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[110] Schippers and Bartleet, "Redefining Places for Art: The Contemporary Metropolis as 'Many Cities'," 5.

[111] Hajer, "Rotterdam: re-designing the public domain," 54-57.

[112] Lavanga, "Creative Industries, Cultural Quarters and Urban Development," 26-27.

[113] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 190.

[114] *Rotterdam, mirror of a new society and candidate for Cultural Capital of Europe in 2001* (Rotterdam: Municipality of Rotterdam, 1997), 4.

[115] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001, Cultural Capital of Europe* (Rotterdam: City of Rotterdam, 2003).

[116] According to Novy, Coimbra Swiatek, and Moulaert, 'fostering social cohesion in cities means creating neighbourhoods and agglomerations where people live together differently [...] or—more precisely—have the opportunity to be different and yet be able to live together' without 'becoming homogenised or excluded'. As such, social cohesion encompasses the category of social inclusion, as well as social and spatial mobility. See: Andreas Novy, Daniela Coimbra Swiatek, and Frank Moulaert, "Social Cohesion: A Conceptual and Political Elucidation," Urban Studies 49, no. 9 (2012).

[117] Robert Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture (Study Prepared for the European Commission): Part 2* (Brussels: Palmer/RAE Associates, 2004), 268.

[118] Hajer, "Rotterdam: re-designing the public domain," 58.

The aims and objectives of R2001 were outlined in a wide range of policy documents in the years leading up to 2001.[119] Generally speaking, these goals seem to have been formulated rather loosely. Although the official bid acknowledges the ambitious nature of the objectives, including the need to produce long-lasting effects, it does not seem to provide a clear indication of how these aims are supposed to be met. In Palmer's ECoC report, the main objectives of Rotterdam 2001 are ranked as follows:

- social cohesion and community development were identified as having the highest priority;
- growing and expanding the local audience for culture, long-term cultural development, attracting visitors from the Netherlands, enhancing local pride and self-confidence, and raising the international profile of the city were among the aims deemed important, but of a lesser priority;
- cultural infrastructure improvements, promoting innovation and creativity, attracting visitors from abroad, and developing the careers of local artists were placed lower in the hierarchy, although they too were considered significant.[120]

The programme budget for Rotterdam 2001 was around 23.6 million euros[121]—a sum which is below the ECoC average. This amount was funded by the Municipality of Rotterdam, the Dutch national government, and private sponsors, all of which contributed approximately one-third of the budget.[122] Described as 'the largest cultural event ever held in the Netherlands', the programme included 524 separate projects. The organisation was carried out by an independent foundation set up by the municipality.[123]

3.1.3. Liverpool

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Liverpool developed as a major port and maritime commercial centre. Up until 1914, the city benefited greatly from Britain's dominance of the world economy, first as the economic and political capital of the slave trade, and afterwards as a key port for the export of British manufactured goods across the Atlantic. Not only was Liverpool economically dependent on its port, but its maritime connections and outwards orientation also determined its cultural character, shaping it as an early global city—a key point of departure for migration to America, as well as a major recipient of emigrants itself, particularly Irish.[124] Following the post-WWI drop in transatlantic trade and Britain's decreasing share in the international economy, the port started to lose its significance. These trends had a devastating

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[119] Greg Richards, Erik Hitters, and Carlos Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research* (Arnhem: ATLAS, 2002), 7.
[120] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 267-68.
[121] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1939.
[122] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 30.
[123] Ibid., 4.
[124] Ronaldo Munck, *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 4.

impact on Liverpool's unemployment rates, which remained above the national average ever since 1932.[125]

After the Second World War, Liverpool experienced an 'industrial, social and cultural boom', but its fortune turned during the 1970s and 1980s. Similar to Glasgow and many other northern cities in the UK, the problems associated with economic restructuring resulted in industrial decline, withdrawal of private capital, unemployment, and social troubles.[126] As noted by Wilks-Heeg, the new international division of labour degraded Liverpool's position from 'world city' to 'pariah city'.[127] The place that was once a key driver of globalisation thus became one of its most prominent victims. From 870,000 before WWII, at the turn of the millennium, the city's population halved to 440,000 people.[128] Struck by poverty, dereliction, social unrest and crime, Liverpool suffered a serious reputation setback, developing a long-lasting negative image associated with urban social problems.[129]

Compared to other cities in Western Europe and the UK, Liverpool was a latecomer to culture-led regeneration. In addition to intense economic problems, since the 1970s, the city has struggled with severe political instability, which left its mark on all aspects of public life, including culture. Despite the working-class structure of the city, until the beginning of the 1980s, Liverpool was not governed by Labour, but by a 'weak and divided coalition government between Liberals and Conservatives'. Between 1983 and 1987, the city council was dominated by an extreme fraction of the Labour party, the 'Militant Tendency'. This period was marked by chronic confrontations with the Conservative national government of Margaret Thatcher. Together with the harsh economic decline, therefore, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Liverpool experienced a period of political turmoil, lacking firm leadership and a clear development strategy. In a political climate characterised by a lack of middle-class interests, furthermore, the welfare needs of the working class were the main concern. Under these circumstances, cultural policy was not on the priority list.[130]

In 1987, a new, more moderate Labour government with different political priorities emerged. Their development strategy recognised the regenerative potential of culture, acknowledging that Liverpool's rich cultural assets could contribute to the economic and social well-being of the city. Linking culture to economic development was a drastic change compared to the council's previous cultural policy initiatives, which, in addition to being modest, 'traditionally prioritised social

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[125] Stuart Wilks-Heeg, "From World City to Pariah City? Liverpool and the Global Economy, 1850–2001," in *Reinventing the City? Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Ronaldo Munck (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 47-48.

[126] Philip Boland, "The construction of images of people and place: Labelling Liverpool and stereotyping Scousers," *Cities* 25, no. 6 (2008): 356.

[127] Wilks-Heeg, "From World City to Pariah City?," 50.

[128] Munck, *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 4.

[129] Boland, "Labelling Liverpool and stereotyping Scousers," 356-57.

[130] Michael Parkinson and Franco Bianchini, "Liverpool: a tale of missed opportunities?," in *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, ed. Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 156-59.

integration and democratisation of access to the arts, rather than economic regeneration'.[131] The new strategy emphasized the importance of restoring the city centre, developing the arts and cultural industries (film, broadcasting, and music in particular), staging festivals, and promoting tourism.[132]

From the late 1990s, the Liberal Democrats took control of the city council, making a decisive shift towards urban entrepreneurialism. The pro-growth policy agenda proved highly successful in attracting private sector investment and increasing employment. The local economy grew significantly, catching up with the rest of the country. Embracing a culture-led regeneration strategy, the city was eager to make use of its rich cultural potential, ranging from the Beatles to Victorian and Georgian architecture, art galleries and museums, television companies, experimental theatres, artists and playwrights to one of the most famous football clubs in the world. The development of the city centre has particularly been in the focus of regeneration efforts, which emphasized the economic potential of retail, leisure, tourism and art activities. Notwithstanding the increasing economic prosperity, however, Liverpool was still far from resolving its problems of social inequality. In 2004, the city-region had the second biggest concentration of low-wage households in the country.[133]

The lead-up to Liverpool's ECoC was therefore very similar to Glasgow's in the sense that the event was seen as an integral part of the shift in the city's political economy.[134] Relying on the capacity of culture to rebrand the city as a creative centre, the policy-makers of Liverpool's ECoC were looking to use the event as a way to further accelerate local economic growth. On the other hand, however, the question was how would an economically motivated regeneration strategy deal with the fundamental social problems of deprivation and inequality. As stated in the bid material prepared for the UK nomination contest, the main objectives of Liverpool 2008 were to:

- 'confirm Liverpool's position as a premier European city;
- empower an inclusive and dynamic community, and
- achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for Liverpool and its future generations'.[135]

Within these three groups of objectives, the first one includes the economically motivated goal of city (re)branding, stressing the need to develop a positive profile and image of the city and market it effectively as a good place to live, invest or visit. The second group of objectives is clearly of a social nature, focusing on cultural diversity, inclusion, community involvement and increased cultural participation of all groups. Finally, the desired long-lasting benefits listed in the third group include contributing to the economic, social, and physical regeneration of the city,

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[131] Ibid., 162.
[132] Ibid., 164-72.
[133] Paul Jones and Stuart Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," *Local Economy* 19, no. 4 (2004): 345-48.
[134] Ibid., 357.
[135] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool, the World in One City: Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid* (Liverpool: Liverpool Culture Company, 2002), 301.

facilitating the creative sector through skill development, education opportunities, and the creation of an attractive environment for cultural businesses and creative people, sustaining cultural infrastructure, and contributing to a vibrant city centre and revitalised neighbourhoods across the city.[136]

The ambitious nature of Liverpool's programme was backed up by hefty funding. In addition to the £129.9 million operating budget[137], according to García and Cox, infrastructure spending related to the event amounted to 900 million euros[138], although other sources provide figures that are several times higher. Regarding the operating budget, it should be noted that it also covered the five 'themed years' in advance of the official ECoC.[139] The local government was the main funder of the event, covering 61.3% of the expenditures. Private sector sponsorships amounted to 10.2% (around £12.5 million), while the rest of the funding was provided by the central government, the EU and other public agencies.[140] The bid and the organisation of the event were carried out by the Liverpool Culture Company, a separate and independent body established by the city council in 2000.[141]

3.2. The Major Policy Dilemmas

3.2.1. The Spatial Dilemma: Centre vs. Periphery

Bianchini's remark that economic inequalities in Western European cities have clear spatial manifestations[142] is highly relevant for Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool. The need to tackle the increasing social, spatial, and cultural segregation of low-income and ethnic minority groups was present in the cases of all three cities, but each of them prioritised it differently.

Seeking to satisfy the demands of the local community in addition to improving the external image of the city, Glasgow 1990 developed an extensive community events programme.[143] These mainly included free, city-wide, outdoor events of a popular character, such as celebrations and concerts (e.g. the *Big Day*), but also children's events, broad participatory initiatives (e.g. *Call That Singing* mass choral singing introduction), workshops, religious celebrations, and sports activities.[144] Additionally, the programmes funded by the Strathclyde Regional Council focused on education

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Beatriz García, Ruth Melville, and Tamsin Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2010), 13.

[138] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 110.

[139] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 12-13.

[140] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture: Final Report* (Birmingham: ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd., 2009), 60-61.

[141] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 401.

[142] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 199.

[143] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 39.

[144] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 31.

and social work, including a range of specific initiatives to develop interest among targeted groups.[145]

Broadening cultural activity and involvement, the community events programme set out to bring the ECoC closer to the Glaswegians, especially the people living in peripheral areas.[146] According to Booth and Boyle, the massive scale of the community programme together with the fact that the 1990 events were not divided by class attest that 'resources were allocated widely throughout the city'.[147] In the same vein, Reason notes that 'the range of 1990 projects was huge, diverse and (largely) both geographically and socially inclusive'.[148] On the other hand, however, it is also evident that framing Glasgow 1990 in the context of image reconstruction and city marketing overlooked the wider societal implications of such a strategy[149], especially given the city's social polarisation and 'two-tier' character.[150] When it comes to alleviating the disparities between the city centre and peripheral estates, the significance of 1990 was mainly in its intention to 'increase civic pride' (as one of the social objectives stated[151]), serving as a 'mechanism for urban unification'.[152] Still, whether and how local morale-boosting could lead to tangible and widespread benefits remained unclear.

The idea of achieving a balanced spread of events was a high priority of Rotterdam 2001. The organisers conceived that during the Cultural Capital year, 'the entire physical area of the city will serve as a stage'.[153] Coupled with this was the objective of achieving the greatest possible degree of cultural participation, involving all the communities and population groups of the city, which was supposed to emphasize and enhance its multicultural character, along with improving social cohesion.[154] As noted by Hajer, one of the key concerns regarding Rotterdam's cultural policy was the question of how it can contribute not just to economic development, but to the development of society as a whole, facilitating the integration of ethnic minorities and improving prospects for 'the growing urban underclass', these two groups largely overlapping, concentrated in inner-city areas surrounding the centre, 'where poverty, unemployment, the drug trade and ethnic unrest accumulate'.[155]

Given the growing diversity of Rotterdam's population, the ECoC event set out to bring the many cultures of the city closer together, encouraging crossovers between the dominant, mainstream city culture and various minority groups. In this sense, art and culture were defined as 'something that provides cohesion within a society that is increasingly disintegrating into groups of varying

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[145] Ibid., 9.

[146] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 39.

[147] Ibid., 45

[148] Matthew Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," *Contemporary Theatre Review* 16, no. 01 (2006): 78.

[149] Paddison, "City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration," 341.

[150] Mooney, "Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation?," 334.

[151] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 9.

[152] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 45.

[153] *Rotterdam, mirror of a new society*, 32.

[154] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 193-94.

[155] Hajer, "Rotterdam: re-designing the public domain," 66-68.

sizes'.[156] The *Preaching for the Other Man's Parish* spiritual project, which brought people together to hear ministers of different faiths giving sermons in each other's churches, and the virtual debate community *Rotterdammers One and All* are examples of programmes addressing this aim. Recognising that the traditional range of cultural activities offered by the city's institutions does not accommodate the specific needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, the Cultural Capital aimed to develop a substantial number of projects involving difficult-to-reach sections of the public, fostering cultural inclusion.[157] Such was the case with the *Vital City* theme, which focused on sex workers, substance abusers, homeless people, and other marginalised groups commonly stereotyped as 'unhealthy, unemployed, deviant or left out'. A significant segment of the programme specifically targeted young people, who were recognised both as an under-represented audience and a population group on which the city's future creativity strongly depends.[158]

The conflict between the affluent city centre and increasingly marginalized periphery was most pronounced in the case of Liverpool. The economic importance of reviving the city centre has made it the main focus of the city's prior regeneration efforts, which were expected to gain further momentum with the ECoC. While acknowledging the key role of the city centre in fulfilling the economic goals of the ECoC[159], the Liverpool bid also included the aims of community engagement, involving projects promoting inclusion, multiculturalism, diversity, and culture's potential role in social cohesion and community change, promising revitalisation of neighbourhoods across the city.[160] For example, the *Creative Communities* programme was a large-scale public and community arts scheme dedicated to local participation in the ECoC, parts of which took place in peripheral and deprived areas of the city.[161] Operating from 2004 to 2008, it received over £11 million funding, involving 160,000 participants.[162]

Still, as many commentators have noted[163], Liverpool's ECoC clearly prioritised economic over social goals. In contrast to Rotterdam, the integration of disadvantaged groups into public and cultural life was not a high priority. Apart from seeking to improve cultural participation in neighbourhoods where people were less likely to access culture, Liverpool 2008 did not specify social inclusion objectives relating to particular disadvantaged groups.[164] Given the degree of social polarisation in the city, the focus on the city centre rose concerns that the regeneration process will fail to address this deep-rooted problem, further exacerbating existing inequalities.[165]

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[156] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 6.
[157] Ibid., 5.
[158] Ibid., 19-21.
[159] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 401.
[160] Ibid., 302-03.
[161] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 15.
[162] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 68.
[163] Claire Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity: A Comparison of Liverpool (UK) and Marseille (France)* (Amsterdam: European Cultural Foundation, 2013), 58; Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 349; ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 57.
[164] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 57.
[165] Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 342.

With regard to cultural diversity and multiculturalism, it is interesting to note the different ways in which Liverpool and Rotterdam operationalised these concepts. 'Rotterdam is Many Cities' and 'The World in One City'—the official slogans of the two ECoCs—both echo the desire to underline diversity. Still, while Rotterdam recognised the associated social problems and tried to devise programmes that would help to overcome them[166], in the case of Liverpool, the notion of multiculturalism was pointed out as a mark of local authenticity, put in the place marketing context of showcasing the city's cultural image to external audiences.[167] Furthermore, many authors argue that the competitive nature of UK's contest for the ECoC nominee pushed the writers of Liverpool's bid to put more emphasis on certain social objectives—particularly the ones related to diversity and the European dimension of the programme—in order to meet the pre-defined contest criteria.[168] The diversity discourse was therefore seen as 'externally imposed', based on generic formulas that did not reflect Liverpool's specific problems and identity.[169] Finally, concerns were raised whether 'The World in One City' was an appropriate motto, as in Liverpool 'the percentage of people of migrant backgrounds and ethnic minorities is actually smaller than other cities in the UK'[170], calling into question the extent to which it can be considered a multicultural and cosmopolitan city.[171]

Another important issue refers to concerns that city centre gentrification was leading to 'privatisation of public space' and restriction of access to the city centre for unwanted demographic groups (such as skaters, sex workers, alcoholics, the homeless, etc.) who give a bad impression to potential investors, tourists and shoppers.[172] Furthermore, the construction of the Liverpool ONE mall, which was planned to be opened during the ECoC year, resulted in the closure and relocation of Quiggins, an alternative retail centre where many of the stallholders were local artists, craftsmen, and antique traders. A long-established hub of indigenous cultural industries was thus eliminated in favour of a huge shopping centre filled with stores of multinational brands.[173] All of this points to the relative lack of priority given to social and spatial considerations. In other words, economic rather than social regeneration aims have been the main driver of Liverpool 2008. Altogether, it seems that Liverpool's ECoC intensified the centre-periphery tensions rather than alleviating them.

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[166] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 20.
[167] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 59-62.
[168] Ron Griffiths, "City/culture discourses: Evidence from the competition to select the European capital of culture 2008," *European Planning Studies* 14, no. 4 (2006): 428; Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 63.
[169] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 64.
[170] Ibid., 58
[171] Ibid., 64-65.
[172] Philip Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!' Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital," *Social & Cultural Geography* 11, no. 7 (2010): 634-35.
[173] Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 353-55; Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 635-36.

3.2.2. The Cultural Funding Dilemma: Infrastructure vs. Events

As the most visible and most tangible component of a city's cultural landscape, infrastructure carries particular significance for ECoC hosts, whose achievements it often comes to symbolize.[174] Since the re-opening of the Burell Collection in 1983, and a series of renovations and re-housings (including institutions such as the Museum of Transport, the King's Theatre and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama)[175], Glasgow has been keen to make improvements to its existing cultural infrastructure, which was seen as crucial for positioning the city as a major centre of the arts.[176] Seizing the opportunity to continue and round off this long-term programme of cultural infrastructure development, in preparations for the ECoC, Glasgow invested £43.03 million in new cultural facilities. [177] The list of major infrastructure projects completed in 1990 includes the Royal Concert Hall, McLellan Galleries, Glasgow Film Theatre, the Scotland Street School (refurbished as a Museum of Education), and the Tramway (a former tram depot that was converted to theatrical use).[178] According to Myerscough, these new venues were directly responsible for 16-40 percent of the audience increase achieved in 1990 compared to the previous years. During the three months it was open during 1990, for example, The Glasgow Royal Concert Hall drew 179,000 admissions.[179]

Although cultural infrastructure development was specified as one of the main aims of Rotterdam 2001[180], compared to Glasgow and Liverpool, the investment in cultural 'hardware' was quite modest. Documents presenting the plans for the event list the new Luxor Theatre and the expansion of the Doelen concert and conference centre as the main infrastructure projects[181], although these were not developed specifically for the event.[182] Additionally, a number of abandoned landmark buildings—such as Las Palmas, a former warehouse, and the Calypso cinema—were restored as spaces of art.[183] Along with cultural facilities, non-cultural investments, such as improvements to the tram and metro network, and the construction of a new hotel, were also carried out.

Despite the ambitious early plans for hosting the ECoC, which envisaged that the event will serve to 'crown the many years of cultural reconstruction'[184], this idea was later dropped in favour of an event-based approach. One of the reasons for this choice certainly lies in the fact that due to the wartime destruction, from 1945 onwards the municipal government of Rotterdam has already

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[174] Robert Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture (Study Prepared for the European Commission): Part 1* (Brussels: Palmer/RAE Associates, 2004), 74-77.
[175] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 17.
[176] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 31.
[177] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 19.
[178] Ibid., 16.
[179] Ibid., 60-62.
[180] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 192.
[181] *Rotterdam, mirror of a new society*, 4.
[182] Han de Bruijne (financial director of Rotterdam 2001 European Capital of Culture), interviewed by the author, Rotterdam, May 24, 2019; Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 273.
[183] Schippers and Bartleet, "Redefining Places for Art: The Contemporary Metropolis as 'Many Cities'," 7.
[184] *Rotterdam, mirror of a new society*, 8.

invested considerably in rebuilding the cultural facilities.[185] Yet, the key rationale behind the event-based approach was strategic: an array of projects and performances spread out over different neighbourhoods was seen as a more suitable means to bring about wide participation and encompass a full range of art and culture than building new museums and operas.[186] The event-infrastructure balance therefore appropriately reflected the main goal of R2001, along with its relatively modest budget. In this sense, Rotterdam's approach was in line with Bianchini's remarks[187], relying on greater use of public open spaces and temporary facilities in order to free financial resources.

What set Liverpool 2008 apart from other ECoCs is the role it played in the physical redevelopment of the city. Namely, the ECoC title was to be used as a means of achieving Liverpool's regeneration aims, complementing (and completing) the physical change that had been occurring in the city since the early 2000s.[188] Although the regeneration projects in the city centre were not financed as part of the ECoC, and discussion remains concerning the extent to which these projects can be attributed to the event[189], the Cultural Capital status was seen as a fundamental driver for bringing forward and completing them.[190]

Major cultural infrastructure developments include the Echo Arena and Convention Centre (Liverpool's first venue of this kind), the refurbished Bluecoat Arts Centre, the redevelopment of the World Heritage Site waterfront, as well as the future projects for the new Museum of Liverpool, completed in 2011.[191] In addition to this, the year 2008 also saw the opening of Liverpool ONE, a 42-acre shopping and leisure complex.[192] According to the Impacts 08 evaluation report, £4 billion was invested in city centre physical infrastructure development between 2000 and the end of 2008, £1.5 billion of which was completed during the ECoC year.[193] Hence, Liverpool's ECoC can only be viewed in the wider context of the city's overall regeneration strategy. Unlike Glasgow, nevertheless, the infrastructural projects went well beyond what could be defined as cultural venues.

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[185] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 185-86.
[186] Schippers and Bartleet, "Redefining Places for Art: The Contemporary Metropolis as 'Many Cities'," 6.
[187] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 204.
[188] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 1101.
[189] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 132.
[190] Even though Liverpool's ECoC did not motivate major infrastructure development projects, the Impact 08 evaluation reports still recognises investors involved in regenerating the city centre as key stakeholders of Liverpool's ECoC. The predominant view seems to be that it was all 'knitted together'. See: David O'Brien and Impacts 08, *Liverpool on the Map Again: Liverpool stakeholders' reflections on the Liverpool European Capital of Culture* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2010), 17-18.
[191] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 69.
[192] O'Brien and Impacts 08, *Liverpool on the Map Again*, 2.
[193] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 11.

Table 1. A comparison of operating budgets, infrastructure expenditure, and numbers of events and related programme activities[194]

	Operating budget (€m)	**Expenditure on infrastructure (€m)**	**Number of events and related activities**
Glasgow 1990	75.97	99.95	4,390
Rotterdam 2001	27.8	N/A	524
Liverpool 2008	177.1	900	7,000

Sources: Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*; *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*; Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image"; García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*; García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*.

As Palmer notes, balancing high-profile events with small-scale local projects is a difficulty experienced by many cities.[195] Although the programme size and scale varied significantly, the event programming in all three cases reflected the desire to find a double balance—between high culture and popular content on the one hand, and the interests of locals and tourists on the other.

The broad conception of culture adopted by the Glasgow City Council enabled it to conceive a programme that would address both the local and the universal.[196] Reflecting the ambition to promote Glasgow internationally, the main idea was to develop 'a visible, high-profile programme of cultural activities'.[197] Even so, regular activities undertaken by the city's established cultural institutions formed the basis of the Glasgow 1990 programme. This was supplemented by special programming (which included enhancements in the main institutions' programmes and projects designed specifically for the ECoC), commissions of new works, as well as independent, grant-aided projects.[198] Many of the programmes and projects had an international character. Visits of world-class orchestras from other cities, international theatres and exhibitions were a prominent feature of Glasgow's ECoC. The most popular of these events included concerts of Luciano Pavarotti, Frank Sinatra, and the Rolling Stones, the *Age of van Gogh* exhibition at the Burrell, as well as the World Orchestra Series.[199] Among the events showcasing the local heritage, *Glasgow's Glasgow*—a major exhibition of the city's history—and Bill Bryden's play *The Ship* attracted the greatest attention.[200] Major outdoor community events and celebrations drew the largest audience. The *Big Day* concert had a total attendance of almost one million, which made it the biggest musical event to be held in Scotland.[201] In addition to popular and art events, a range of local community and neighbourhood programmes also took place, such as the participation project *Call*

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[194] The financial data for Glasgow and Rotterdam was adjusted for inflation according to the inflation calculator from http://www.in2013dollars.com, taking 2008 as the end year. Pounds were converted to euros using historical exchange rates from https://fxtop.com/en/historical-currency-converter.php.
[195] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 67.
[196] Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," 78; Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 35-36.
[197] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 8.
[198] Ibid., 10-14.
[199] Ibid., 56-63.
[200] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 38-39.
[201] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 66.

That Singing, various children's events, amateur groups, along with the European Special Olympics.[202]

The organisers of Rotterdam 2001 created two types of programmes. 'Magnets', as the name suggests, were blockbuster events meant to attract widespread attention. 'Generators', on the other hand, were programmes that invited people to take part.[203] With this kind of approach, the organisers of R2001 tried to compromise between the potentially conflicting objectives of strengthening the local community and attracting tourists. Regarding the latter, it seems that the focus of the event has been re-defined during the preparations, replacing the ambition of showcasing Rotterdam's cultural achievements to a wide international audience, which was pointed out in the initial bid, with a more internal orientation, which prevailed in the end.[204] Developed within the motto 'Rotterdam is Many Cities', the programme for R2001 included ten themes displaying various dimensions of urban life, such as *Working City*, *Vital City*, *Peripheral City*, *Flowing City*, *City of Pleasure*, and *City of the Future*.[205] Altogether, it can be said that the proportion of different types of events appropriately reflected the main goals of R2001. 57% of the events were locally-oriented with a popular focus, 21% were locally-oriented with a high culture focus, 13% were internationally-oriented with a popular focus, while 9% were internationally-oriented with a high culture focus.[206]

Reflecting the size of its budget, Liverpool set up one of the most extensive ECoC programmes up to date. Under the theme 'The World in One City', approximately 7,000 cultural activities took place during 2008, around half of which were workshops, education sessions or trainings.[207] In comparison[208], Rotterdam had 524 projects[209], Glasgow 4,390 performances and exhibitions.[210] Seeking to address the needs of both visitors and locals, the programme of Liverpool 2008 intended to combine 'the pure show-biz element with developmental and regeneration orientated projects'.[211] High-profile events included the Gustav Klimt exhibition at Tate Liverpool, the visit of the *Berliner Philharmoniker*, the concerts by Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr, the *Go Superlambananas* public art sculpture exhibition, and *La Princesse*, a giant mechanical spider that paraded the streets.[212] Although the general impression was that the spectacular, outward-oriented approach prevailed, Liverpool's ECoC also included a number of community-based and grassroots projects, such as the *Four Corners* initiative, in which some of the city's large cultural

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[202] Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," 78.

[203] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 6.

[204] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 281.

[205] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 8.

[206] Greg Richards and Robert Palmer, *Eventful Cities: Cultural Management and Urban Revitalisation* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010), 300.

[207] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 14.

[208] Despite the difficulties in comparing this segment (namely, the definition of what makes an event may vary from case to case, including or excluding various categories, such as projects, workshops, activities, etc.), the figures presented above provide a clear indication of the difference in the size of the three ECoCs.

[209] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 30.

[210] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 53.

[211] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 306.

[212] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 59; García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 124; O'Brien and Impacts 08, *Liverpool on the Map Again*, 14.

organisations worked with different neighbourhoods.[213] While 'world-class events' managed to attract a mass audience, the amount of money spent on staging them was also considerable, questioning the cost-effectiveness of the programme.[214] According to Bullen, the pressure to fill the calendar with spectacular crowd pleasers also compromised the social goals of Liverpool's ECoC, pushing out 'opportunities to develop genuinely inclusive projects'.[215]

Although events are often seen as 'ephemeral' and as such opposed to infrastructure investments, the experiences of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool all support the view that the importance of the latter is often overestimated compared to the former. As Bianchini argues, events too can become 'permanent features of a city's cultural landscape, producing long-term benefits in terms of image, tourism and support for local cultural production', especially if they are coherently organised and repeated.[216]

Before 1990, Glasgow was already putting forth an events strategy, staging a number of festivals, such as the Garden Festival in 1988, the Mayfest, and the Glasgow International Jazz Festival. The experiences of the ECoC year confirmed the appropriateness of this approach, which was continued afterwards.[217] The need to find a balance between infrastructure and events was pointed out in Liverpool's bid, which voiced the city's desire to establish itself as a major festival destination in Europe[218], but also—and perhaps more strongly—in the aftermath of the ECoC. Concluding that 'opportunities will be lost unless Liverpool develops a coherent and aggressive events strategy', the stakeholders of Liverpool 2008 recognised that regularly repeated cultural events are needed in order to give visitors a reason to come back to the city.[219]

Rotterdam's experience also speaks in favour of this notion. As early as 1994, Rotterdam Festivals was established with the task of developing and coordinating the city's annual festival and event calendar. A successful organisation with a proper knowledge base, Rotterdam Festivals facilitated the planning and preparations for the ECoC.[220] After 2001, it remained the backbone of the city's event policy, which has been recognised both in the Netherlands and internationally.[221] Although the socially-oriented ECoC did not significantly influence Rotterdam Festivals and its further functioning, it played a role by adding two events to its repertoire. Launched for the first time in 2001, *Motel Mozaique* and *Jazz International Rotterdam* were both continued after the ECoC, and eventually grew into successful festivals.[222]

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[213] ECOTEC, *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture*, 59.
[214] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 630-32.
[215] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 91.
[216] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 204.
[217] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 387.
[218] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 801.
[219] O'Brien and Impacts 08, *Liverpool on the Map Again*, 9.
[220] Johan Moerman (managing director of Rotterdam Festivals), interviewed by the author, Rotterdam, April 16, 2019.
[221] "Het Rotterdamse evenementenbeleid," Rotterdam Festivals, accessed May 19, 2019, https://zakelijk.rotterdamfestivals.nl/kennisbank/het-rotterdamse-evenementenbeleid.
[222] Moerman, interview.

3.2.3. The Economic Development Dilemma: Consumption vs. Production

Although rarely elaborated by the organisers of ECoC events, the distinction between consumption and production-oriented cultural strategies can be a decisive determinant of the role culture plays in long-term urban development. Generally, ECoC events tend to focus on consumption, underlying the need to promote the city as a destination for tourism, shopping, and leisure. While such an approach is likely to bring considerable short-term economic returns, as Bianchini points out, strategies aimed at supporting local creative industries[223] have greater economic potential in the long run, promising to create skilled jobs in high-value-added sectors.[224]

The economic rationale behind Glasgow 1990 strongly favoured the idea of using culture for city marketing and tourist promotion. In fact, attracting tourists has been a key component in Glasgow's urban regeneration strategy since its inception in the early 1980s and the 'Glasgow's Miles Better' campaign.[225] Continuing along these lines and expanding the target to a much wider national and international audience[226], the Festivals Unit planned to develop a high-profile programme of cultural activities for 1990, staging a year-long ECoC involving a series of prestigious events that could be used as a focus for cultural tourism.[227] Given the need to establish a new global brand for the city, Saatchi and Saatchi, a major advertising agency from London, was hired to promote Glasgow's ECoC under the slogan 'There's a lot Glasgowing on in 1990'.[228] By bringing visitors to the city and increasing its cultural appeal, the ECoC was meant to position Glasgow as a 'first-time' tourism attraction.[229] Noticeably, such a strategy was focusing on the economic benefits arising from cultural consumption.

The economic objectives of R2001 were formulated somewhat imprecisely. Apart from mentioning economic spin-offs, increases in tourism, and the desired effects of the event in terms of improving the city's image[230], neither the initial bid nor its subsequent version elaborate the strategies for realizing these goals. This can be explained by the fact that social rather than economic considerations were in the focus of the event. When it comes to visitors, growing and expanding the local audience was identified as the main concern of R2001, followed by attracting

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[223] Since the term 'creative industries' was in the process of being established during the 1990s (as it is well known, its conceptual fuzziness is still an issue of contestation), and considering that the cities use different wording (all the documents and reports concerning Glasgow's ECoC, for instance, use the term cultural industries, while Liverpool's documents refer to both cultural and creative industries interchangeably without defining them), to avoid any terminological confusion, when discussing the cities' ECoC programmes, the term *creative industries* will be used to refer to the following sectors: advertising, architecture, art and antiques, crafts, design, fashion, film and video, music, performing arts, publishing, television and radio, and video and computer games. Essentially, this is how the creative industries have been defined by the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), whose classification includes software in addition to the 12 sectors listed above. See: Hartley et al., *Key concepts in creative industries*, 59.
[224] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 202-03.
[225] Mooney, "Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation?," 328-29.
[226] Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," 80.
[227] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 32-33.
[228] Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," 79-80.
[229] García, "'If everyone says so …'," 3194.
[230] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 192.

visitors from the region and the rest of the country, while tourists from abroad were a target of lesser importance. Despite being given a lower priority, however, the aim of raising the city's international profile remained on the agenda. [231] As mentioned earlier, 'magnet' events were seen as crucial in attracting tourists, both international and domestic. Their role was to ensure the visibility of the programme, contributing to meeting the goal of bringing 3 million extra visitors to the city.[232] Among these events, the Hieronymus Bosch exhibition was the most magnetic, drawing 220,000 visits, 67% of which were foreigners. The *Roots and Routes* and WOMEX 2001 world music festivals also generated a lot of interest, especially from international visitors.[233]

From everything that has been said about the efforts put into the revamping of Liverpool's city centre and promoting it as a site of tourism and shopping, it is clear that city centre-based cultural consumption was in the focus not just of Liverpool's ECoC, but also the city's general development vision, in which the event was embedded. Copying Glasgow, Liverpool identified tourism as a high-priority objective for the cultural year, and its programme was marketed extensively.[234] As previously noted, the high visibility and attendance of Liverpool 2008 were reinforced by a number of spectacles, such as the aforementioned giant mechanical spider, and Paul McCartney/Liverpool Sound concert.[235]

On account of the emphasis all three cities put on cultural consumption, notable similarities can be identified between them when it comes to the cultural production side of the dilemma as well. Although Glasgow's ECoC undoubtedly created artistic opportunities 'which would not have been possible in a normal year'[236], due to the concentration on cultural tourism, the development of creative industries was largely overlooked.[237] Left out from the District Council's list of objectives, it is clear that the creative industries were not a major part of the plans for the event, nor was there a strategic approach that would link them to the ECoC. Even in regard to cultural infrastructure projects, as Boot and Boyle observe, art venues were primarily in the service of tourism and leisure sector growth, while 'the cultural industries that produce artistic goods and performances' were 'left to look after themselves and respond to market forces'.[238]

Cultural production also seems to have been absent from the agenda of R2001. While various references were made regarding (long-term) cultural development, promoting innovation and creativity, and local artists' career advancement[239], there were no explicit aims that highlighted the effects of the programme on the city's creative industries. In other words, although Rotterdam did adopt strategies concerning its creative industries (in particular the Schiecentrale audio-visual

[231] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 268.
[232] Ibid., 278.
[233] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 11-12.
[234] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 84.
[235] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 35.
[236] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 6.
[237] Beatriz García, "Deconstructing the City of Culture: The Long-term Cultural Legacies of Glasgow 1990," *Urban Studies* 42, no. 5-6 (2005): 859.
[238] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 40.
[239] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 268.

cluster, and the architecture and design cluster within the Van Nelle Fabriek[240]), these were not encompassed by the ECoC. Hence, it can be said that regarding the economic development dilemma Rotterdam's ECoC was mainly oriented to cultural consumption.

Compared to Rotterdam and Glasgow, Liverpool's bid was more explicit in referring to the development of creative industries. In addition to the long-term objective of 'creating an attractive environment for cultural businesses and creative people'[241], the bid document also promised to bring forth 'a sustainable culture of innovation, excellence and achievement in arts, sports, tourism and creative industries' and 'generate new products, innovations and creative businesses through a continued focus on inward investment and business development in the cultural and creative industries'.[242] Still, apart from relying on the (rather vague) notion that the creative climate and increased cultural activity surrounding the ECoC will benefit the creative industries, no specific measures targeting this sector were incorporated as part of the ECoC strategy itself.[243]

In addition to issues of balance between high-profile and 'local' activities, a tension that often emerges in many ECoC events concerns the extent to which a programme is 'home-grown', relying on local artists and cultural organisations, versus being 'imported' from outside of the city. Unlike Glasgow, which has been criticized for not sufficiently using local talent, the intention of Liverpool 2008 was to base its programme on the city's 'indigenous capacity'.[244] Although the approach favouring a locally based programme was expected to produce a substantial positive effect on the city's creative industries, in the end, the idea was not fully realized.[245] According to the Impacts 08 evaluation report, '50% of professional artists employed as part of the programme for the Liverpool ECoC were locally based'; 30% were national and 20% overseas based artists.[246] Despite the relatively high percentage of local artists involved, however, it seems that the local creative businesses ended up receiving the smaller slice of the cake. As noted by Campbell, this happened mostly due to the need felt by the organisers to produce an internationally visible programme, which led to expensive and extravagant arrangements with international companies.[247]

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[240] Mariangela Lavanga, "The Contribution of Cultural and Creative Industries to a More Sustainable Urban Development. The Case Studies of Rotterdam and Tampere" (ACEI (Association of Cultural Economics International) Conference, Vienna, 2006), 12.

[241] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 301.

[242] Ibid., 303.

[243] Despite the overtone of the objectives mentioned above, the bid itself (which was submitted to the UK nomination contest in 2002) contains no references to Richard Florida. In the following years, however, as his work gained prominence, the discourse found its way into UK policy documents promoting culture-led regeneration. According to Campbell, Liverpool's 2008 Cultural Strategy adopts the Floridian notion that creative activity, understood in the broadest sense, can stimulate the creation of new businesses, entrepreneurship, and innovation, thereby stressing the role of the ECoC (and cultural policy in general) in contributing to a (more) creative urban climate. See: Peter Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 5 (2011): 512-13.

[244] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 305.

[245] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 516.

[246] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 14.

[247] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 516.

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To conclude this section, it is worthwhile to recap where each of the cities stands on the policy dilemma spectrum. When it comes to the spatial dilemma, Rotterdam's socially-oriented approach clearly stands out from Glasgow and Liverpool, who prioritized the objectives of city marketing, putting greater emphasis on the economic importance of the city centre. Despite the different levels of investment in infrastructure, it seems that in all three cases the cultural funding dilemma has been resolved in favour of an event-based approach. As an ingredient necessary to sustain the influx of visitors, regular events born out of the ECoC were recognised as something that can yield long-lasting benefits. Finally, regarding the economic development dilemma, it seems that the ECoC events in all three cities were mainly consumption-oriented, putting little attention to the development of cultural production and not attempting to use the event to foster the development of local creative industries. The next chapter will analyse what kind of outcomes these approaches produced.

CHAPTER 4: COMPARING THE OUTCOMES

This chapter compares the economic and social outcomes of Glasgow's, Rotterdam's, and Liverpool's ECoCs. It examines how the ECoC as a cultural input was converted into economic and social outputs, to what extent were the gains created by the event widespread and sustainable, and whether the differences and similarities in the results the cities have achieved can be ascribed to their varying approaches. Certainly, the fact that the social and economic goals in question were shared by all three cities is what allows for this comparison to be made in the first place. Still, given that the priority ranking of these objectives differed among the cases, the specificity of each ECoC was taken into account and pointed out when needed.

4.1. Economic Outcomes

Following the discussion from the previous chapter, it becomes clear that the main economic outcomes of the three ECoCs are the ones related to tourism and the creative industries—the two sides of the dichotomy stemming from the economic development dilemma. Another very important result concerns the improvement of city image, which in itself can be understood as an intangible channel through which other economic goals are achieved. Therefore, this section will consider the effects of the three ECoC events on tourism, the creative industries, and external city image.

4.1.1. Tourism

Considering that Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool all favoured a consumption-oriented approach to the economic development dilemma, the most significant economic outcome in all three cases is the one referring to the benefits of attracting tourists. In Glasgow, the figure of 3 million visits attained in 1990[248] was the prevailing factor in deeming the ECoC an economic success story. In fact, the results Glasgow managed to achieve in this segment were one of the main reasons why tourism started to feature so prominently in the agenda of all subsequent ECoCs. According to Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, Rotterdam 2001 attracted a total attendance of 2,250,000 visitors.[249] Liverpool's ECoC, on the other hand, influenced 9.7 million visits to the city.[250]

When it comes to ECoC tourism outcomes—and the economic effects of the event in general— the most basic and most important parameter is certainly the one concerning visitor spending. This figure is also something that requires a good deal of consideration, as the measurements might yield considerably different results depending on the method used for the calculation of

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[248] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 109.
[249] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 10.
[250] England's Northwest Research Service and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by the Liverpool European Capital of Culture in 2008* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2010), 5-6.

'additionality'.[251] Namely, the greatest difficulty in estimating tourism effects concerns the issue of determining whether or not the visits to the city (and the associated economic benefits) can be attributed to the ECoC.

In their visitor research study, Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes calculated that the total expenditure of all the 2.25 million people who attended Rotterdam's ECoC was 105 million euros. However, the spend of ECoC visitors in the city of Rotterdam itself was €63 million. The latter figure excludes the expenditure of Rotterdam residents, travel costs, and accommodation expenses outside the city. When counting only the visitors whose primary motivation for coming to Rotterdam was the ECoC programme, the figure drops to €17,4 million[252], denoting the amount of spending that surely would not have taken place in the city without the ECoC. Although this is a relatively conservative approach, it provides a good illustration of the high degree to which the evaluations of ECoC associated economic benefits are susceptible to assumptions made about visitors' motives and the elements of expenditure counted, which often turn out to be a sort of *licentia poetica*, especially when evaluation reports are commissioned by local authorities, who are always under pressure to justify the money put into the ECoC.

In addition to inflating (or deflating) the economic impacts of tourism, the differing methods also obstruct the possibility of comparing results.[253] Assessing the economic impacts of Glasgow 1990, John Myerscough calculated that the ECoC related tourist expenditure and ancillary spending by those visiting arts facilities and events generated approximately £10.3–£14.1 million of additional revenue for the city.[254] This figure was obtained by taking into account the short-term direct and indirect impacts on net income and deducing the additional public-sector costs. Using a significantly different methodology, Liverpool's Impacts 08 evaluation report presents the figure of £753.8 million generated by direct visitor spending, as well as an additional £201.1 million of indirect spending, which makes an impressive total economic benefit figure of £954.9 million for the North-West region as a whole.[255] Aside from the political advocacy behind the study[256], the methodology it applies raises suspicion that the numbers might be inflated, as the calculations included both event attendees and people who didn't attend any events, but whose visits to the city were influenced by its ECoC status. Furthermore, the Liverpool and Glasgow studies apply different kinds of multipliers, which is a controversial issue in itself.[257]

Clearly, trying to compare results reached by using widely differing methodologies is not the most sensible thing to do. Still, by looking at these figures, one may conclude that the economic benefits arising from visitor expenditure were substantial in all three cases. Glasgow's and Liverpool's official evaluation reports also assess the extra employment created by the additional tourism

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[251] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 103.
[252] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 38.
[253] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 358.
[254] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 173.
[255] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 70.
[256] Tamsin Cox and Dave O'Brien, "The "Scouse wedding" and other myths: reflections on the evolution of a "Liverpool model" for culture-led urban regeneration," *Cultural Trends* 21, no. 2 (2012): 98.
[257] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 18.

activity arising from the ECoC. In the case of Glasgow, Myerscough estimated that 'the initiative generated some 5,350-5,580 person-years employment', the majority of which was in hotels, catering and retailing.[258] Liverpool's Impacts 08 study came up with the figure of 14,912 tourism jobs created or supported by additional visitor spend in the North-West region as a whole.[259] These estimates, however, do not reveal much, and should be viewed with caution for at least two reasons. Firstly, although neither of the reports includes a clear breakdown of the types of jobs created by the ECoC, assuming that most of them are in tourism and retailing raises the question of their quality. Secondly, as acknowledged by Myerscough[260], it is not certain how many of these jobs were permanent and how many were only temporary. In that sense, only a sustained tourism increase in the long run could provide a solid argument to claim the former.

With regard to tourism, it is important to take into account that only visitors from outside the city bare economic importance, as much of the spending made by local residents would have occurred anyway.[261] Accommodation, shopping, food, drinks, cultural expenditure, and travel within the city are the most typical items included in the equation of the economic impact of visitor spending. Within these, accommodation is by far the greatest contributor (accounting, for example, for over 50% of the expenditure in the case of Rotterdam[262]), which also points to the key economic role of foreign visitors and longer stays. Expenditure for shopping is also important, both as an expenditure category and an additional reason to visit a city.[263]

Tourists staying overnight accounted for 1.5 million admissions to Glasgow's cultural attractions in 1990, day visitors (not staying overnight) for 1 million, and 'secondary tourists' (visiting the city but being accommodated elsewhere) for 0.42 million visits.[264] 59% of the staying tourists were British, accounting for 1.8 million bednights, while the remaining 41% of foreign tourists accounted for 1.25 million nights.[265] One-third of overseas tourists were from North America, 11% were from Australia, and 20% from France and Germany. On average, tourists stayed in Glasgow for 5.6 nights.[266] Among domestic tourists, 41% were new to the city. Among foreigners, this figure was 52% for English speaking tourists and 71% for non-English speakers, implying a significant success in reaching new markets.[267]

In Rotterdam, 49% percent of the event audience were local residents. 12% came from the region of South Holland, and 22% from the rest of the country. Altogether, 83% of R2001 visitors came from the Netherlands, while 17% were foreigners, mostly from Belgium, France, Germany, and the UK.[268] Even though foreign tourism was not a high-priority goal or R2001, it can be said that

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[258] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 173.
[259] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 70.
[260] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 173.
[261] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 123.
[262] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 36.
[263] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 57.
[264] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 109.
[265] Ibid., 116-117.
[266] Ibid., 119-121.
[267] Ibid., 127-128.
[268] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 12-13.

the event was successful in bringing new international visitors. Namely, two-thirds of foreigners who came to Rotterdam for the ECoC had never been to the city before.[269] Still, it seems that most foreign tourists were day visitors, as the statistics showed an unchanged number of foreign bed nights during the ECoC year, despite the reported increase in the proportion of foreign visitors to the city from 4% to 7%. Interestingly, due to the increase in the absolute number of visitors (the majority of whom were domestic), the proportion of foreign bed nights fell compared to the previous year.[270]

Out of 9.7 million visits generated by the Liverpool ECoC, 26% or around 2.5 million were tourists from Europe and overseas (300 thousand of whom actually attended the programme).[271] 23% of visitors were Merseyside residents, 20% came from the North West, while 31% of visitors were from elsewhere in the UK.[272] Most importantly, the event managed to attract a significant portion of first-time visitors, who made up 66% of the total audience. The proportion of first-time visits among foreigners was particularly high (97%), while 87% of the UK audience coming from outside the region visited Liverpool for the first time.[273] While the day visitor market was dominated by those from nearby locations, according to the visitor survey, the majority of staying guests were from abroad (54.5%) and elsewhere in the UK (39.9%). Almost half of them stayed outside of the city.[274] Overall, Liverpool's ECoC influenced 1,141,000 stays in city-based serviced accommodation.[275]

Knowing that the economic impacts of day visitors are much lower than those of overnighters[276], it is not surprising that Glasgow, and especially Liverpool, who managed to draw in more staying tourists, profited more from additional spend than Rotterdam, where day visitors composed the majority. In the case of Liverpool, of course, the very high total attendance was also a crucial element. Yet, the success of cities in attracting longer staying guests might have more to do with their overall tourism and traffic infrastructure (accommodation facilities, airports, and the like), or even geographical factors (cities close to major conurbations will attract more day visitors compared to places that are more isolated—this was most obvious in the structure of Rotterdam's visitors) than with the actual cultural programme of the ECoC. In order to reap the economic benefits of increased visits, furthermore, cities need to offer shopping and leisure opportunities. Finally, attracting visitors to ECoC events requires marketing and promotion, and a significant part of the budget was devoted to these efforts (15% in the case of Glasgow, 8% in Rotterdam, and almost 20%[277] in Liverpool).[278]

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[269] Ibid., 24.

[270] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 118.

[271] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 20.

[272] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 62-63.

[273] Ibid., 5.

[274] Ibid., 29-34.

[275] Ibid., 64.

[276] Griffiths, "Evidence from the competition to select the European capital of culture 2008," 418.

[277] Liverpool spent €27 million on marketing alone, more than the entire operating budget of Rotterdam 2001. Yi-De Liu, "Cultural Event and Urban Regeneration: Lessons from Liverpool as the 2008 European Capital of Culture," *European Review* 24, no. 1 (2016): 165.

[278] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 84.

Although many studies justifiably stress the importance of appropriately developed marketing strategies, arguing that host cities cannot automatically count on tourist increase[279], the power of the ECoC brand itself should also not be underestimated. Especially when it comes to ex-industrial cities, the ECoC title surely serves as an effective marketing tool and a 'hook' for attracting visitors. However, as Palmer notes, although culture plays a crucial role in bringing additional tourists, most of their expenditure remains outside the cultural sector, concentrated in the hotel, catering, and shopping economies.[280] This clearly points to the instrumental role of culture.

The predominance of economic goals also explains why ECoC host cities tend to embrace a broad definition of culture, including an abundance of spectacles and mass events, as exactly these kinds of performances are the most significant drivers of tourism.[281] In other words, the tendency to expand and 'anthropologize' the definition of culture[282] seems to be driven by economic motives as much as by those of cultural inclusion. Although a thorough analysis of these phenomena falls outside the scope of this research, it is worthwhile to note that such cultural policy trends pose the danger of culture being degraded into mere entertainment—something purely decorative, bland and crowd-pleasing, deprived of its artistic and subversive potential.

In trying to establish the success of ECoC events in attracting tourists, the most reliable point of comparison might be the relative increase of guests compared to the previous year. As can be seen in the figures below[283], all three cities displayed very similar trends. Firstly, it is noticeable that the ECoCs generated significant growth in visitor numbers. In Glasgow, total overnight visitor stays increased by 39.6% in 1990.[284] Rotterdam enjoyed a 10.6% rise in hotel guests[285], while the total number of visits to Liverpool grew by 34% compared to the previous year.[286] The main issue, however, is that this increase in visitor numbers was followed by an equally sharp decline in the year(s) following the event, when the numbers dropped to pre-ECoC levels. This is not least due to the fact that neither of these cities is a traditional tourist destination, meaning that the cultural year had the effect of a distinct one-off attraction. As argued by Griffiths, it is hard to expect that former industrial cities can easily break into the firmly established hierarchy of Europe's urban cultural destinations.[287]

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[279] Ibid., 89.
[280] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 124.
[281] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 90.
[282] Mark Gerard Connolly, "The 'Liverpool model(s)': cultural planning, Liverpool and Capital of Culture 2008," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 19, no. 2 (2013): 169-70.
[283] The available annual tourism figures for Glasgow and Liverpool, which are collected from the International Passenger Survey, only show the number of visits made by overseas residents. Therefore, these are intended to act as a rough guide for the change in tourism that occurred in the two cities. Figures for Rotterdam are obtained from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics. They include the total number of hotel guests (both foreign and domestic) per year.
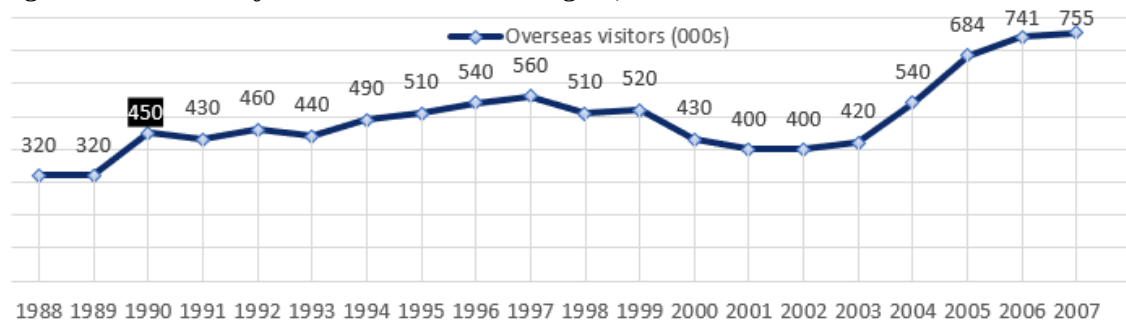[284] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 110.
[285] Ibid., 112.
[286] ENRS and Impacts 08, *The Economic Impact of Visits Influenced by Liverpool 2008*, 42.
[287] Griffiths, "Evidence from the competition to select the European capital of culture 2008," 418.

Figure 1. Number of overseas visits to Glasgow, 1988-2007

Source: International Passenger Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Figure 2. Number of hotel guests (foreign and domestic) in Rotterdam, 1999-2016
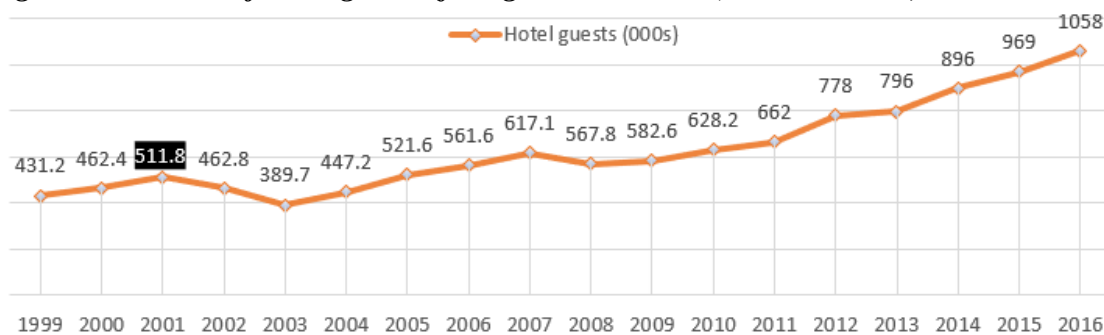
Source: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek.

Figure 3. Number of overseas visits to Liverpool, 2003-2017

Source: International Passenger Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Over the longer term, however, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool have all managed to recover, achieving and sustaining a steady rise in the volume of visits. Glasgow's tourism success is perhaps one of the best examples of how the ECoC can act as a sustainable solution. Catalysing the city's post-industrial recovery, the ECoC served as a basis for a long-term strategy of culture and event-led development[288], which was continued by the Glasgow Year of Visual Arts in 1996, staging of

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[288] Matthew Tucker, "The cultural production of cities: Rhetoric or reality? Lessons from Glasgow," *Journal of Retail and Leisure Property* 7, no. 1 (2008): 30-31.

the European Year of Architecture in 1999 and the recent 2014 Commonwealth Games. While this wave of accolades would have hardly been possible without the favourable outcomes of the ECoC programme, it is also clear that it is unrealistic to expect that one event—no matter how large or successful it is—can generate a long-term tourism growth on its own, but only as part of a wider strategy or development process.

The notion that the ECoC served as one of the 'small stones in the pond', leading to today's tourism success of the city was also evident in the case of Rotterdam. Although the event itself did not bring about an immediate change, it was one of the many steps that helped the city to create 'a much better, more cultural and attractive image'.[289] There is also evidence suggesting that Rotterdam's tourism economy profited from the investments in the city's physical infrastructure, especially hotel accommodation, that were made during the preparations for the ECoC, and then continued strongly in 2003, supporting the intensification of event-led development.[290]

Similar can be said of Liverpool, whose visitor figures returned to and surpassed 2008 levels after experiencing a slump in 2009 and 2010. According to Cox and O'Brien, Liverpool's success primarily came as a consequence of fortunate local and global circumstances, in which the role of the ECoC was secondary. The city's existing artistic and cultural base, extensive government and EU funding, large-scale private sector investment in the city, together with the timing of the ECoC, which took place just before the beginning of the global recession, were the crucial factors that contributed to the visitor economy, which peaked during the ECoC year and subsequently maintained growing after 2010. In this view, then, Liverpool's experience as a Capital of Culture does not comprise a model or policy that can be replicated by other cities.[291]

Based on the experiences of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool, one can ultimately draw several important conclusions about the effect of ECoC events on tourism. First of all, the ECoC can be invaluable in increasing the visibility of a city, helping to 'put it on the map'[292] and draw in first-time visitors. Secondly, while the ECoC can certainly provide the much-needed impetus for tourism growth, the danger of losing the momentum established during the cultural year is also a very real threat. For ECoC hosts, hence, the main tourism-related challenge is to give first-time visitors a reason to come back, along with attracting new ones. In order to justify their consumption-oriented approach to the ECoC and ensure its sustainability in the long run, cities must not stand still and overly rely on one big event, but instead strive to continually reinvent themselves and refresh their cultural offer.[293] This is where the cultural funding dilemma truly comes into play, pointing to the importance of 'eventfulness' on the path to achieving long-term benefits—namely, the need for cities to continuously create new events and repeat existing ones, utilizing them as a permanent cultural resource.[294]

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[289] Moerman, interview.
[290] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 136.
[291] Cox and O'Brien, "The "Scouse wedding" and other myths," 97.
[292] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 117; García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 89.
[293] Leslie, "Urban Regeneration and Glasgow's Galleries with Particular Reference to the Burrell Collection," 130.
[294] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*.

4.1.2. The Creative Industries

Despite the widespread notion that the creative industries sector can be one of the key drivers of local economic growth, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool all focused little attention on cultural production compared to tourism and cultural activities underpinning consumption. Overall, it can be said that the ECoC had little or no impact on the creative industries sectors in the respective cities. Where it did exist (most notably, in the case of Liverpool), the influence was not direct. It concerned the benefits felt through the improved external image and higher profile of the city generated by the ECoC.[295] However, the extent to which the creative industries profit from these symbolic improvements remains questionable and unsupported by evidence.

The Impacts 08 research has shown that between 2004 and 2008 there was no significant growth in the size of Liverpool's creative industries sector—neither in terms of employment nor the number of enterprises.[296] This indicates that Liverpool's ECoC nomination in 2003 did not provide a stimulus for creative firms to establish themselves in the city or increase their activity ahead of the event. During the ECoC year, concrete benefits were experienced only by businesses that were directly involved in the programme, having been commissioned by the ECoC to do work related to the events. Still, this was the case only with a small number of firms.[297] Within Liverpool's creative industries sector, the prevailing sense was that the ECoC did not provide direct work-related opportunities nor encourage procurement from local creative businesses.[298] Despite the ambitions to stage a home-grown ECoC, 'imported' elements seemed to have prevailed in the end. As Campbell points out, 'the "hits" of the ECoC in Liverpool were largely events based on creative work originating outside the city'.[299] While hiring internationally renowned companies helped to popularize the event, this came at the expense of undermining the local creative industries sector.

While the creative industries were definitely not in the focus of interest of Glasgow's ECoC, the event did produce some impacts on certain areas in this sector. The European Film Awards drew attention to Scotland's film, broadcasting companies engaged in several important projects, good efforts were made to publicise architecture, and the local music industry received promotional benefits. [300] Still, although the ECoC year generally improved the climate for artistic activity, the creative sector 'felt no particular boost from 1990'.[301] As Myerscough acknowledges in his report, a chance was missed to promote and secure Glasgow's standing as the main creative industries centre in the UK outside London, especially considering the city's potential in the designer trades and screen industries.[302] Along the same lines, García notes that among Glasgow's creative entrepreneurs there was a general feeling that 1990 did not directly influence their work, neither

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[295] Impacts 08, *Liverpool's Creative Industries: Understanding the impact of Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 on the city region's creative industries* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2009), 41.

[296] Ibid., 26-34.

[297] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 513-14.

[298] Impacts 08, *Liverpool's Creative Industries*, 44.

[299] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 516.

[300] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 190-91.

[301] Ibid., 194.

[302] Ibid., 211.

in the short nor the long run.[303] Furthermore, the benefits of the event were limited by the fact that 'cultural facilities in Glasgow were used to host external celebrities rather than developing their own programming'.[304]

Given the absence of intentions to directly connect Rotterdam's ECoC to the development of the city's creative industries[305], it is not surprising that the event did not produce any palpable results in this sphere. Despite this, however, some indirect influences have certainly been achieved, perhaps mostly through the desire to involve as many local artists in the programme as possible and encourage them to self-initiate projects.[306] Palmer estimated that only 20% of R2001's events and projects originated from outside of the city.[307] If one assumes that the improvement of Rotterdam's cultural image would attract creative talent (as it was outlined in the *Cosmopolitan City* programme section, which addressed the issue of Rotterdam not being cosmopolitan enough to appeal to innovative and creative transnationals[308]), this can also be interpreted as an indirect way of stimulating cultural production. The same can be said of various projects promoting independence and entrepreneurialism of local artists and cultural managers, giving support to their structural development, and enhancing local and international networks, partnerships, and collaborations.[309] Still, the capacity of such projects to produce substantial effects was secondary at best.

On the whole, it can be concluded that the creative industries in Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool were not influenced by the ECoC in any significant way. Considering that the objectives related to cultural production did not figure prominently in the agendas of the three ECoCs, whose approaches favoured cultural consumption (or social objectives, in Rotterdam's case), this lack of effects should not be seen as a failure, but rather as a missed opportunity. Where references were made to the creative industries, on the other hand, the rhetoric was fuzzy and indirect. Evidently, the lack of specific aims and actions resulted in the absence of tangible results.

Given that all three cities missed opportunities in this field, the question of how to relate ECoC events to the development of local cultural production appears to be crucial. The experiences of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool strongly suggest that cities wanting to foster the advancement of creative industries should consider developing locally based programmes instead of importing them. The connection between new infrastructure developments and cultural production is another important point. As noted by Richards, ensuring that new cultural facilities serve as places where art and culture are actually produced (in addition to being merely consumed) is imperative for the sustained development of a city's cultural capital[310], which is highly relevant to the creative

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[303] García, "Deconstructing the City of Culture," 859.
[304] Richards, "The European cultural capital event: Strategic weapon in the cultural arms race?," 177.
[305] De Bruijne, interview.
[306] Bert van Meggelen (intendant of Rotterdam 2001 European Capital of Culture), interviewed by the author, Rotterdam, April 24, 2019.
[307] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 272.
[308] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 25-26.
[309] Van Meggelen, interview.
[310] Richards, "The European cultural capital event: Strategic weapon in the cultural arms race?," 178.

industries sector. Thirdly, policy-makers should be aware that ECoC events can produce certain negative consequences on local creative industries. This danger is particularly pronounced when gentrification is involved, such as in the case of Quiggins, where a new shopping mall dislocated many small and authentic creative businesses. Also, while more business premises became available in Liverpool's city centre after the regeneration, the rental costs rendered them relatively unaffordable, especially for small firms.[311]

Finally, a series of contestable issues surrounding the creative industries cast doubt upon whether a ECoC should be concerned with them in the first place. While Bianchini's argument[312] in favour of a cultural production-oriented strategy stresses the high-skilled, high value-added character of creative industries (as opposed to the low-quality, low-paid, unstable employment in the tourism and retailing sectors), the capacity of the creative industries to support local economic and social development has been challenged by more recent findings. On the one hand, there is little doubt that an over-concentration on tourism undermines the development of local creative and cultural talent on account of servicing the visitor, negatively affecting job quality.[313] On the other hand, however, it is also well known that creative labour, especially in the more culture-related subsectors of the creative industries, is characterised by high levels of precariousness.[314] In other words, although the creative industries involve more skilled work than tourism, these jobs seem to be equally unstable.

The extent to which second-tier cities can match the pre-eminence of capitals, in which creative talent usually concentrates, is also open to suspicion.[315] Especially in the UK context, London's status as a global creative hub poses the danger of talent leakage to any provincial city.[316] In the Netherlands, similarly, the creative industries are traditionally based in Amsterdam.[317] In order to capture the full value of their creative resources, therefore, second-tier cities need to come up with sustained and tangible creative industries development strategies, in which the ECoC can—and perhaps should—play a role, even if it's not bound to a decisive one.[318]

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[311] Impacts 08, *Liverpool's Creative Industries*, 43.

[312] Bianchini, "Culture, conflict and cities: issues and prospects for the 1990s," 202-03.

[313] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 40.

[314] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 517.

[315] Cardoso's and Meijers' research has shown that the 'first city bonus' that capitals and first-tier cities possess compared to second-tier cities is most substantially pronounced in regard to cultural functions. See: Cardoso and Meijers, "Contrasts between first-tier and second-tier cities in Europe: a functional perspective," 1006-07.

[316] Campbell, "Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture," 517-18; Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 43.

[317] Buursink, "The cultural strategy of Rotterdam," 6.

[318] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 142-43.

4.1.3. City Image

In addition to tourism development, the most important goal shared by all three cities concerns the desire to use the ECoC event to improve their image. As declining industrial hubs in pursuit of post-industrial prosperity, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool all set out to re-image themselves in order to stimulate their economies by attracting visitors, investors, and knowledge workers. To achieve this, the cities had to fight against negative stereotypes and bad reputations.[319] In all three cases, therefore, the desired effect included a profound image transformation—from that of a 'tough', 'rough', working-class city into a city of culture, arts, and creativity.

Before proceeding with the discussion, it is important to call attention to the complex and multi-layered nature of city image, and frame the different dimensions that exist within it. Although the cities themselves do not make a clear distinction between these different dimensions in their approaches to the ECoC, in order to better understand the outcomes of the events it is crucial to distinguish *external image* from *self-image*. Within this dichotomy (which is a simplification itself), the former would refer to the perception of a place held by non-residents, while the latter concerns the citizens' own sense of their city. As will be pointed out later, this distinction is particularly important because of the potential contradictions that may exist between the two categories. Given their predominantly social nature, the outcomes related to self-image (and their clashes with external image-enhancing strategies) will be analysed in the next section.

In regard to the economic benefits of external image improvement, the logic goes as follows: the ECoC helps to re-shape the negative image of the city, which drives in tourists, businesses, and high-skilled workers. As previously explained, this argument was a novelty pioneered by the organisers of Glasgow 1990[320], which was later copied by many other post-industrial cities across Europe, including Rotterdam and Liverpool. The basic question, therefore, is whether the ECoC can truly have a significant effect on boosting the city's external image, and to what extent does this translate into economic benefits.

Myerscough's research study on Glasgow showed that the ECoC 'substantially improved external perceptions of the city, both at home and abroad'. While almost all residents agreed that the 1990 programme improved the public image of Glasgow, in London and the South-East of Britain there was a 15 percent increase in the belief that Glasgow was 'rapidly changing for the better'. Likewise, there was a 13-point fall in those thinking the city was still 'rough and depressing'.[321] Similar improvements were seen in the case of Liverpool. Between 2005 and 2008, overall positive impressions of Liverpool amongst the UK population increased from 53% to 60%, while the percentage of those holding a negative view of the city fell from 20% to 14%. By the end of 2008,

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[319] Not surprisingly, the designation of these cities as Capitals of Culture was followed by scepticism and ridicule (and even self-mockery) targeting their suitability and capacity to bear the title. See: Reason, "Cartoons and the Comic Exposure of the European City of Culture."; Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 281; Boland, "Labelling Liverpool and stereotyping Scousers."

[320] García, "'If everyone says so …'," 3194.

[321] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 192.

over 60% of UK residents were aware of the Liverpool ECoC, and a great majority of visitors voiced a positive opinion about the event and the city, particularly regarding the general atmosphere, attractions, shopping, places to eat, and the feeling of safety from crime.[322] Richards' and Wilson's research on the influence of the 2001 ECoC event on Rotterdam's city image confirmed the general rule. Overall, the ECoC positively affected the image of Rotterdam. In particular, the image component of culture and art received a high rating, considerably improving compared to previous years. During 2001, Rotterdam also became better ranked relative to other cities, rising from 20th to 15th place in the ATLAS list of 22 top European cultural destinations.[323]

Another important indicator of the image-enhancing effects of the ECoC refers to the ensuing wide and positive media publicity.[324] According to García, the shift in media narratives surrounding a major event can play a crucial role in the transformation of negative city images.[325] Glasgow 1990 received a particularly strong and positive international press coverage, most evident in the celebratory headlines praising the city's regeneration success. 'Glasgow's No Mean City Anymore', a title from the *Wall Street Journal* declared. 'The ugly duckling of Europe has turned into a swan', wrote the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*.[326] In 2003, when six UK cities were competing to host the 2008 edition, Glasgow's ECoC was once more in the centre of attention, being widely cited as a model worth following.[327] In Liverpool, the positive media coverage brought about by the ECoC award was seen as crucial in reversing the traditionally negative perceptions of the city at the national level—stereotypes that were created by bad media publicity in the first place.[328] From 2003, the prevailing negative reporting on social issues was replaced by overwhelmingly positive stories on the city's cultural assets and economic change.[329] Positive and increased media coverage was also reported in Rotterdam's official evaluation report[330], but it seems that the event attracted less publicity compared to Glasgow and Liverpool.

Altogether, there can remain little doubt that hosting the ECoC improved the external perception of the three cities, generating positive media coverage. The durability of the positive image change caused by the ECoC, however, remains questionable. As Richards and Wilson note, a major problem with image-enhancement strategies is that their impacts are very hard to measure, especially in the long run.[331] In the case of ex-industrial cities fighting negative stereotyping, however, it is exactly the long-term effects that matter the most, as it can take decades until the image transformation can even be deemed to exist.[332]

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[322] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 43-47.
[323] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image."
[324] García, "Deconstructing the City of Culture," 847-56.
[325] García, "'If everyone says so …'," 3195.
[326] Ibid., 3187-88.
[327] Ibid., 3193.
[328] Boland, "Labelling Liverpool and stereotyping Scousers."
[329] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 44.
[330] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*.
[331] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1933.
[332] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 431.

In this respect, García points out that if a media story about 'city renaissance' or 'overcoming decline' is established and constantly repeated over a long period of time across different platforms without being questioned, it becomes accepted wisdom. In the absence of knowledge about public perception, therefore, a sustained and significant change in media representation can be taken as evidence of *de facto* image change. Examining the media content covering the preparation, staging and aftermath of Glasgow 1990 and Liverpool 2008, she concludes that positive stories about these cities as ECoC hosts have become 'mainstreamed' and 'normalised' over time, suggesting that in both cases significant narrative changes have taken place.[333]

Stressing the compartmentalized nature of a city's image, Paddison, on the other hand, argues that the impact of the ECoC on the overall image of Glasgow was weak and transient. While the event may have augmented certain aspects of the city's image (such as its perception as an important cultural centre), the more negative elements were essentially not replaced, just pushed into the background, as shown by the increased number of survey respondents who see Glasgow as an exciting place to visit, compared to the unchanged (and quite small) number of those who perceive it as a desirable place in which to live and work (barely 10 percent).[334] Similarly, Richards and Wilson observe that despite the improved perceptions of Rotterdam as a place of culture, the traditional components of its image—such as 'modern architecture', 'water', 'international orientation', 'multiculturalism', 'working city'—remained dominant in the visitors' eyes. The prevalence of 'hard', physical image components perhaps indicates that despite the ECoC Rotterdam still lacks a recognisable cultural ambience.[335]

Another image discrepancy, particularly evident in the case of Liverpool, concerns the nuances in national and international perceptions of the city. While international images are very positive, focused around The Beatles and Liverpool Football Club, in the UK, the city suffered from a long-established bad reputation, the makeover of which was central to the ECoC.[336] In Glasgow, similarly, foreign tourists ranked the city higher than visitors from the UK.[337] In Rotterdam, the effects of image change also differed among foreign and national audiences. Unlike Liverpool and Glasgow, however, Dutch visitors expressed a stronger and more positive view of the city, while foreign tourists had a weaker, less coherent picture.[338]

All of this points to the complex and elusive nature of city image. As Richards and Wilson put it, 'it is clear that we need to start talking about *images* rather than *image*'.[339] Within the category of external city image, namely, not only can a further distinction be made between the tourist, cultural, and business image components—but also between the images held by different groups of visitors. What is more, even if we agree that the ECoC creates a sustained image-enhancing

[333] García, "'If everyone says so …'."
[334] Paddison, "City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration," 347.
[335] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1941-46.
[336] Ruth Melville, Martin Selby, and Matthew Cliff, *Re-telling the City: Exploring local narratives of Liverpool* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2007); Boland, "Labelling Liverpool and stereotyping Scousers," 365-66.
[337] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 144.
[338] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1946.
[339] Ibid.

effect, the connection between this largely symbolic, ECoC-generated shift in the external perception of a place and the ensuing economic benefits is even more difficult to prove. While a fairly direct causal link exists in the case of tourism (see section 4.1.1.), when it comes to 'attract[ing] inward investment and emphasis[ing] the quality of the city's offer for potential residents'[340], any attribution to the event remains a hope at best, impossible to isolate from other factors.[341] In that sense, the question of whether the ECoC is truly a long-term development tool or only a short-term promotional device[342] remains open.

4.2. Social Outcomes

Due to the clear spatial manifestations of social and economic inequalities in Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool, evident in the social, geographical, and cultural segregation of low-income and ethnic minority groups, the social dimension of the ECoC is most closely related to the spatial dilemma. Reflecting the difficulty to reconcile social with economic development priorities, the different ways in which the cities addressed this dilemma translated both into the social aspirations and outputs of their ECoC programmes. Although all three cities included aims concerned with social questions, the importance given to these aims differed significantly. While social objectives were not a high priority for Liverpool and Glasgow, whose agendas were dominated by economic aims, Rotterdam used the event mainly for social purposes.

In order to appropriately compare the intricate social impacts of the three ECoCs, this section is divided into four sub-sections, ranging from more cultural and artistic outcomes to the ones that are more of a social and socio-economic character. The former includes improving cultural participation and cultural inclusion. The latter concerns social cohesion and (multicultural) community development, and the effects related to self-image enhancement. Lastly, this section also examines the overall potential of ECoC programmes to improve the position of left-out groups, help reduce inequalities and thereby produce widespread socio-economic benefits.

4.2.1. Promoting Cultural Participation and Inclusion

All three cities saw the ECoC as an opportunity to increase public participation in cultural activities and improve access to cultural provision. Starting from the broad definition of culture, which implied there was something on offer for everyone, the cities aspired to grow and expand their cultural audiences. Furthermore, specific programmes were designed to create cultural opportunities for social groups outside the dominant cultural landscape, fostering cultural inclusion. Such initiatives targeted the younger generations, ethnic minorities, disabled people, as well as other groups that are commonly marginalised or excluded from culture. As mentioned in the previous chapter, examples of such programmes include community events and participatory

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[340] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 24.
[341] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 104.
[342] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1947.

initiatives in Glasgow, R2001's *Vital City*, *Young@Rotterdam*, and *Cosmopolitan City* programme themes, and Liverpool's large-scale *Creative Communities* programme.

Despite the wide use of programmes promoting access and cultural inclusion, due to the high complexity, intangibility, and ensuing absence of real evidence, their results are very difficult to evaluate. Before trying to assess the social impacts of such activities and projects, therefore, it may be appropriate to look at how the desired social impact is supposed to be produced, especially when it comes to benefiting under-represented and disadvantaged groups. As Bullen argues, for some of these people, 'participating in formal cultural activities is a long-term life-changing experience'. For others, it is a way to forget their everyday worries, a chance to connect with their neighbours or interact with another culture.[343] Certainly, involvement in arts and cultural activity can lead to 'magical moments of self-empowerment and exchange, pleasure and pride', especially when taking part in a performance or creation.[344] It is therefore understandable why culture is seen as vital for rebuilding social capital and the invigoration of excluded communities.[345] On the other hand, it is also obvious that despite the existence of benefits, due to their predominantly cultural and individual nature, the underpinning evidence remains elusive.[346] For this reason, studies evaluating the work undertaken in this area are scarce.[347]

From the evidence that is available, it is possible to compare the increases in audiences caused by the ECoCs, as well as the participation of diverse groups in the programmes. Following its objectives, Glasgow's ECoC achieved significant developments in widening local audiences, touching the lives of four out of five adult Glaswegians. In 1990, 79% of adult Glasgow residents attended at least one arts event or attraction.[348] Attendance at theatres, halls, museums and galleries rose 40% compared to 1989, amounting to 6.6 million. Furthermore, neighbourhood events managed to attract participation by 10% of residents who have previously not engaged with culture.[349]

While Rotterdam's ECoC succeeded in 'reaching a wide range of participants'[350], showing 'the importance of developing events in different neighbourhoods of the city to attract a more varied audience'[351], the results of the visitor research carried out by Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes call into question the extent to which the event was culturally inclusive. Namely, people from ethnic minority groups (such as Moroccans, Indonesians, Surinamese, and Turks) comprised only 8% of visitors, which is significantly lower than their 35% share in the population of Rotterdam. Furthermore, the proportion of visitors with higher education was also extremely high (70%), and

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[343] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 145.
[344] Ibid., 150.
[345] Connolly, "The 'Liverpool model(s)'," 166.
[346] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 137.
[347] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 148.
[348] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 82.
[349] John Myerscough, *European Cities of Culture and Cultural Months* (Glasgow: The Network of Cultural Cities of Europe, 1994), 123-24.
[350] Richards and Wilson, "The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image," 1947.
[351] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 128.

most of the respondents tended to regularly attend cultural events or be connected with culture through their occupation.[352]

The notion that R2001 managed to bring the different cultures and communities of the city closer together is also contested by the survey. The findings showed that even though the ECoC managed to attract a broad audience from a variety of different groups, there was little or no mixing between these groups, both in terms of high and popular culture audiences, and 'white' Rotterdammers and ethnic minorities.[353] The fact that the former were best represented at locally-oriented events, while the latter preferred to attend popular internationally-oriented programmes points to a certain lack of identification with the local culture in members of minority groups, which might also be indicative of their exclusion.[354] These overall figures, of course, do not undermine the great success of particular projects (such as *Preaching for the Other Man's Parish*, for example)[355], but they do illustrate that offering 'something for everyone' is still not a guarantee for achieving social integration, as the segregation patterns can remain preserved between programmes of various kinds.

According to the Impacts 08 report, the demographics of Liverpool's ECoC audiences generally matched the city's socio-economic profile. The attendance of traditionally excluded audiences—black and ethnic minority (BME) and lower socio-economic groups (C2DE)—was slightly lower than the proportion of this population in the city, but there was considerable variance between different events and programmes. While the *Creative Communities* programme recorded a high percentage of working-class and unemployed people, mainstream cultural events had difficulty attracting ethnic minorities.[356] Unsurprisingly, the ECoC increased the overall interest in cultural activities in Liverpool, resulting in a 10% rise in arts audiences across the city for each year between 2006 and 2008. By 2009, '66% of Liverpool residents took part in at least one ECoC event'.[357] Still, as the European Commission reported, the social dimension of Liverpool's ECoC 'consisted primarily of widening access to culture, rather than of cultural inclusion or social inclusion *per se*'.[358]

When it comes to cultural participation, the production side of the matter also deserves to be acknowledged. Namely, as McGuigan points out, ethnic minorities and other underprivileged groups should not be involved just as consumers of culture, but also as its producers.[359] Of the artists and performers in Liverpool's ECoC programme, 32% were from a black or minority ethnic

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[352] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 16-18.

[353] Ibid., 22.

[354] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 305-06.

[355] Van Meggelen, interview.

[356] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 20-21.

[357] Ibid., 3.

[358] "Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions – Ex Post evaluation of the European Capital of Culture event 2007 (Luxembourg and Sibiu) and 2008 (Liverpool and Stavanger)," European Commission, 2009, accessed May 20, 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52009DC0689.

[359] McGuigan, *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, 40.

background.[360] Despite this figure, which is significantly higher than the city or UK average, critics point out that most of the programmes in which minority actors took part were either big festivals or small, one-off neighbourhood activities that were not even featured in official marketing materials. Hence the impression that the 'diverse communities' were not genuinely involved as creative actors, and that the programming remained mainly mono-cultural.[361] The *Creative Communities* project, on the other hand, which was supposed to underpin 'the neighbourhood as a site of cultural production', brought in 'professional artists' to 'work with' residents, which in itself undermined the creative capacity of local actors.[362]

Although statistical data on this aspect of participation is scarce for Glasgow and Rotterdam, available sources suggest that both cities made efforts to enable non-professionals from marginal groups to take part in the ECoC. When it comes to cultural participation and inclusion, in fact, Rotterdam's greatest success seems to have been achieved through the wide opportunities for creation that the programme offered, particularly in working with younger people and ethnic minorities.[363] According to Palmer, as much as 30% of all projects in Rotterdam's ECoC were of an 'amateur' or 'community' nature.[364]

In Glasgow, the social programmes funded by the Strathclyde Regional Council focused on encouraging self-expression in people with disabilities and the elderly, while the educational programmes targeted school children.[365] With regard to cultural activities such as dance, theatre, writing, arts/crafts and photography groups, classes and courses, the percentage of adults attending has been quite low (12% in total), especially among the lower socio-economic (C2DE) group (8%, compared to 19% of participants from the ABC1 social grade). As Myerscough noted, 'participation in this sense may not have been addressed particularly effectively by Glasgow 1990'.[366]

4.2.2. Social Cohesion and the Concept of Multiculturalism

The potential of ECoC programmes to bridge cultural differences is another important point of comparison. This is particularly related to the way the cities operationalized the issues of multiculturalism and diversity in the context of the ECoC event. Despite the city's international and multicultural character[367], Glasgow 1990 was not concerned with this aspect. Rotterdam and Liverpool, on the other hand, both extensively employed the concept, although with an entirely different orientation.

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[360] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 14.
[361] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 115-16.
[362] Ibid., 136.
[363] Van Meggelen, interview.
[364] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 2*, 272.
[365] Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 32-34.
[366] Ibid., 96-97.
[367] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 23.

The observation that the multi-ethnic character of Rotterdam does not automatically make it a multicultural city formed the basis of the programme for R2001. Unlike other ECoC hosts, the organisers of Rotterdam 2001 perceived the event as an opportunity to undertake a thorough SWOT analysis of the city, identifying its threats and weaknesses along with exhibiting the strengths and opportunities.[368] In addition to being a mark of uniqueness, the divisions arising from the city's growing diversity were also recognised as a potential problem that the ECoC should address. By connecting diversity with cohesion through dialogue and exploration of differences, culture was seen as a solution that would prevent the dangers of disintegration and exclusion.[369]

Still, this kind of approach is not without controversies. Firstly, as Hitters argues, the very assumption that a multicultural society is something that can be engineered is highly debatable. Furthermore, it is equally uncertain whether cultural events, or even cultural policy in general, is the right means for achieving goals in this domain, which is both highly complex and outside the scope of the arts.[370] Secondly, as it was pointed out above, the only existing audience research questions the extent to which the programme was successful in fostering inclusion and interaction between different ethnic, social and cultural groups.[371] Regarding this issue, one of the interviewees acknowledged that the ambition to develop an all-encompassing programme designed for the multicultural society instead of making separate ones for different ethnic groups was 'a step too far'. In his view, the complexity of addressing this issue lies in the fact that in the city there is not only one line of division—between the Dutch and non-Dutch Rotterdammers, but the tensions also exist between other groups (for example, between the Turks and the Moroccans, who get along with the Dutch better than with each other).[372]

In contrast to Rotterdam's internal focus, Liverpool's use of multiculturalism was geared towards external audiences. Namely, while much of the narrative surrounding Liverpool's ECoC has been about ethnic diversity and multiculturalism, its programme avoided to problematize the accompanying negative aspects of racial segregation and inequalities. The notion of Liverpool as a 'veritable cocktail of cultures' and 'one of the longest established truly cosmopolitan communities in Britain'[373] was therefore promoted primarily as part of the city rebranding strategy, with few efforts devoted to aiding the actual integration of marginalized ethnic minority groups.[374] Furthermore, the overhyped multicultural tone left Scousers[375] with the feeling that their local culture is being underrepresented.[376]

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[368] Van Meggelen, interview.

[369] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 10.

[370] Hitters, "The social and political construction of a European cultural capital: Rotterdam 2001," 193.

[371] Richards, Hitters, and Fernandes, *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor Research*, 16-22.

[372] Van Meggelen, interview.

[373] Liverpool Culture Company, *Liverpool 2008 Capital of Culture Bid*, 1102.

[374] Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 352.

[375] Scouse is a dialect of English spoken in Liverpool, and the locals are colloquially referred to as Scousers.

[376] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 143.

4.2.3. Self-Image

In addition to improving their image with the outside world, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool also sought to use the ECoC to change the perception of the cities in the eyes of their own citizens. While external image transformation is undertaken to stimulate economic activity, the relevance of self-image is principally social. It refers to developing civic pride and the local communities' sense of worth, which can, in turn, lead to broader societal effects through increased citizen engagement[377], or just a 'feel good factor'.[378]

The so-called 'citizenship dimension' of the ECoC, which is generally one of the most widely recognised social benefits of the programme[379], was evident in all of the three cities. Especially regarding Rotterdam and its former status of a culturally inferior city of labour, it has been pointed out by the interviewees that the ECoC produced a decisive and irreversible effect on local self-confidence, cementing the belief in the city's potential as a cultural centre.[380] In Glasgow, similarly, there was a prevailing sense that the boost to local unity and confidence created by the events was significant.[381] Liverpool residents also highlighted community pride as one of the most positive things about the ECoC, mentioning effects such as 'buzz generated', 'lifted spirits', and 'bringing communities together'.[382] Still, as Palmer notes, the actual impacts of ECoC events on enhancing civic pride are quite hard to prove[383], as the available evidence is mostly rhetorical. What is even more difficult to determine is whether and how this surge of confidence and community spirit can be converted into concrete gains, especially in the longer term.[384]

While the positive feelings arising from renewed self-confidence were widely expressed, negative perceptions of the interactions between the ECoCs and the cities' self-images were also common, especially in Glasgow and Liverpool. Namely, although the official views tend to present external image and self-image as complementary, in reality, there are several noteworthy incompatibilities between the two. The main issue concerns the way in which externally oriented image-enhancement strategies interfere with local identity. According to Jones and Wilks-Heeg, such strategies prioritise tourists and investors over residents and 'involve the re-definition, and even the attempted eradication, of local cultures'.[385]

Together with the widely recognised success of its image-enhancement strategy, Glasgow 1990 is also paradigmatic in regard to the controversies that came with it—namely, the tensions and identity clashes arising from the construction of a new city image. Critics from the Left raised the

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[377] García, "'If everyone says so …'," 3181.
[378] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 631.
[379] García and Cox, *European Capitals of Culture*, 91.
[380] Van Meggelen, interview; Moerman, interview.
[381] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 45-46; Myerscough, *Monitoring Glasgow*, 193.
[382] Ruth Melville et al., *Neighbourhood Impacts: A longitudinal research study into the impact of the Liverpool European Capital of Culture on local residents* (Liverpool: Impacts 08, 2010), 15-16.
[383] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 147.
[384] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 45-46.
[385] Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 343.

question of whose Glasgow was being represented, arguing that the new, manicured image of the city is false—not only neglectful of Glasgow's working-class past and culture[386], but also sharply at odds with the reality of 'social deprivation and poverty concentrated in the city's peripheral estates'.[387] Instead of celebrating the city's existing identity and revealing it to the world, in other words, the ECoC was creating a new, 'yuppified' Glasgow in order to make it appealing to visitors and investors.[388]

As in Glasgow, the question 'whose culture?' was at the heart of Liverpool's city (re)branding controversies. While the official viewpoint attested that the event had a very positive impact on the image of the city[389], critics pointed out that the 'new Liverpool' brand promoted by the ECoC was designed for external audiences rather than local residents. The predominantly external focus contributed to local people's feeling of alienation from their own city and the sense that the attractions in the centre are not intended for them.[390] According to Boland, the official, ECoC image of Liverpool failed to incorporate 'different geographies of culture and different cultural experiences that make Liverpool the city it is', purposely ignoring less celebratory and alternative aspects of the city's cultural life, creating a 'sanitised', one-dimensional picture.[391]

Clearly, selling the city is not the same as representing what it actually is. By packaging a place as a readily consumable product, city branding tends to reduce and homogenize the complex and diverse urban realities and experiences of everyday life.[392] Even worse, it is not just the diversity of cultures within a place that is being threatened, but the economic imperative behind city branding exercises also seems to endanger the idea of culture as such, crowding out authentic experiences in favour of shopping and spending, such as in the case of Quiggins and Liverpool ONE.[393] Ironically, the desire of Liverpool 2008 to replicate the 'Glasgow effect' seems to have generated exactly the same type of problems.

In contrast to Glasgow and Liverpool, Rotterdam's ECoC did not compromise the city's self-image. Clashes between external and internal perceptions were avoided for two main reasons. First of all, Rotterdam's ECoC was not part of a major city marketing strategy. In other words, the event was not extensively used to (re)brand the city for external audiences, but rather to strengthen the internal sense of community, along with conveying the notion that Rotterdam is not only a 'hard-working' port city, but also a place of culture.[394] Secondly—and very much related to the previous point—Rotterdam's ECoC embraced the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity as an integral part of the city's identity. Instead of creating a 'sanitized' image, R2001 acknowledged the

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[386] Mark Boyle and George Hughes, "The Politics of the Representation of 'the Real': Discourses from the Left on Glasgow's Role as European City of Culture, 1990," *Area* 23, no. 3 (1991).
[387] Paddison, "City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration," 348.
[388] Mooney, "Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation?," 331.
[389] García, Melville, and Cox, *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, 38.
[390] Bullen, *European Capitals of Culture and Everyday Cultural Diversity*, 143.
[391] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 637.
[392] Jones and Wilks-Heeg, "Capitalising Culture: Liverpool 2008," 352; Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation," 80.
[393] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 636.
[394] Moerman, interview.

existence of different (and potentially awkward) social realities arising from the many cultures, religions, ethnicities, and nationalities that the city accommodates. Along with celebrating the positive aspects of diversity, the programme also considered the difficulties that come with it[395]—most importantly, the fact that Rotterdam 'meets the characteristics of a cosmopolitan city less than one would expect'.[396] By posing the question of how people live together in a place like Rotterdam, in other words, the ECoC wanted to make the city feel more comfortable with its own identity.[397]

4.2.4. Everything Is a Social Effect: Addressing Divisions and Inequalities

Aside from the existence of objectives specifically targeted at producing social impacts, as Palmer notes, 'almost all ECoC programme outcomes can be seen in social terms'.[398] This is particularly true when it comes to the general economic aspects of the ECoC, the effects of which are bound to be felt in the social fabric of the city.

When it comes to the capacity of ECoC programmes to produce widespread social improvements, the question of overcoming divisions stands out as crucial in all three cases. In a sense, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool could all be characterised as divided cities, or cities with divisions. If the polarisation in Liverpool and Glasgow is mainly an economic one, between the 'haves' and 'have nots', in Rotterdam, the most pronounced line of division concerns the city's multiethnicity, epitomized by the wide varieties—and gaps—between different cultures and ethnic communities. With this in mind, it is worthwhile to consider the relationship between culture, inequality and social divisions in the city—especially in the long run—examining whether the ECoCs helped to alleviate these problems.

Although the positive legacies of Glasgow 1990 are not to be neglected, the balance of benefits between the public and private actors remained a contested issue, with critics pointing out that the event had less to do with arts and culture than attracting investors and corporate businesses, whose wealth was increased by public policies, while the majority was left dependent on insecure, low-pay service sector jobs.[399] While the outside perception of the city has improved significantly after 1990, there is evidence indicating that the benefits from these changes have been distributed unequally, bypassing a significant number of Glaswegian households, 41% of which were under the poverty line in 2004.[400] The failure of cultural policy to address the social problems of inequality and poverty can further be illustrated by the unpleasant fact that 'Glasgow still contains three of the poorest constituencies in Britain, where life expectancy is more than ten years below

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[395] Van Meggelen, interview.

[396] *Final Evaluation of Rotterdam 2001*, 25.

[397] Moerman, interview.

[398] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 132.

[399] Boyle and Hughes, "Discourses from the Left on Glasgow's Role as European City of Culture, 1990," 76; Reason, "Glasgow's year of culture and discourses of cultural policy on the cusp of globalisation."

[400] Mooney, "Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation?," 337.

the national average'.[401] In this respect, Glasgow remained a 'twin track city'—a place of multiple realities, where affluence and prosperity coexist with social disintegration and poverty.[402]

Strikingly similar to its role model, spatial differentiations between the city centre and periphery remained a chronic problem in Liverpool. As in Glasgow, it seems that the ECoC event, together with the entire culture-led urban regeneration scheme in which it was incorporated, failed to contribute to resolving the city's social divisions. Despite the official narrative of 'urban renaissance', Liverpool remained a 'polarised city',[403] with some of the worst socio-economic indicators in the country. Although compared to 2010 Liverpool is no longer the most deprived English city, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation ranking for 2015, it is still one of the five local authorities with the highest proportion of deprived neighbourhoods.[404] Commenting on the sharp contrast between the impoverished peripheral estates and the beautified city centre, Boland ironically remarks how Liverpool's theme 'The World in One City' could also imply that 'Liverpool holds the same incidence of inequality as cities around the world'.[405] Regarding the geographical bias towards the city centre, even the Impacts 08 evaluation expressed doubt over the ECoC's socio-economic influence.[406]

The available evidence therefore suggests that the Glasgow and Liverpool models of culture-led regeneration do not have the capacity to deal with the problems of social deprivation and inter-urban inequality. Even though it may be true that resolving deep-rooted social issues is a complex and long-lasting process[407], it is also obvious that cultural policy cannot serve as a substitute for social policy.[408]

In the case of Rotterdam, unfortunately, the question of how effective its internal, socially-oriented approach to the ECoC was in bridging social divisions within the city cannot be fully answered. The main reason for this lies in the political changes that took hold in early 2002, immediately after the event, when the social democrats—Rotterdam's traditional political majority, whose administration carried out the 2001 ECoC—lost the elections to *Liveable Rotterdam*, a newly formed right-wing populist party.[409] Dominated by conservative political structures opposed to multiculturalism[410], the new municipal government gave less priority to culture and the work on

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[401] McGuigan, "Neo-Liberalism, Culture and Policy," 238.
[402] Ivan Turok and Nick Bailey, "Twin track cities? Competitiveness and cohesion in Glasgow and Edinburgh," *Progress in Planning* 62, no. 3 (2004).
[403] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 636.
[404] *The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 Statistical Release*, Department for Communities and Local Government, accessed May 19, 2019, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Statistical_Release.pdf.
[405] Boland, "'Capital of Culture — you must be having a laugh!'," 633.
[406] O'Brien and Impacts 08, *Liverpool on the Map Again*, 20.
[407] Tucker, "The cultural production of cities: Rhetoric or reality? Lessons from Glasgow," 31.
[408] McGuigan, "Neo-Liberalism, Culture and Policy," 238.
[409] Julien van Ostaaijen, "Local Politics, Populism and Pim Fortuyn in Rotterdam," in *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam*, ed. Peter Scholten, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar (Cham: Springer, 2019).
[410] Ibid., 93.

cultural diversity. This resulted in decreased public-sector funding and a lack of interest in continuing the policy line of R2001.[411] The longevity of the social effects of the programme was therefore significantly undermined by the absence of follow-up initiatives.[412]

Despite all this, however, the issues raised by the ECoC are still highly relevant for Rotterdam and its superdiverse social fabric, perhaps even more than in 2001. A recent survey of Rotterdammers about their experience of living in the city has shown that one of the main concerns of Rotterdam residents is related to the feeling of increasing segregation, whereby different groups are living alongside but not with each other.[413] In absence of more palpable outcomes, the desire to use the ECoC as 'an exercise in thinking about the city'[414] and the view that culture can foster a diverse, inclusive society[415] are perhaps the most important social legacies of Rotterdam 2001.

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This chapter has shown that the similarities and differences in the outcomes of the three ECoC programmes came as a consequence of the city's approaches, as well as their specific political circumstances. Reflecting the emphasis put on cultural consumption, the most significant impact on the cities' economies was achieved through tourism and visitor spending. As part of wider event-based strategies, the ECoCs provided an impetus for considerable tourism growth in the long run. In all three cases, consequently, the ECoCs did not contribute to the development of the creative industries. The cities were fairly successful in improving their external image and cultural reputation, leading to lasting intangible legacies. In the social sphere, the cases of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool indicate that the ECoC can contribute to increasing cultural participation, foster the inclusion of minority groups in cultural life, and boost community pride. When it comes to addressing urban social divisions and inequalities, however, the capacity of ECoC events seems to be very limited, suggesting that despite its good intentions cultural policy cannot substitute social policy.

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[411] De Bruijne, interview.

[412] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 389.

[413] Eeva Liukku et al., *Rotterdam, the never-ending story: het publiek gesprek van de manifestatie Rotterdam viert de stad!* (Rotterdam: Stichting Rotterdam Festivals, 2016), accessed May 21, 2019, https://issuu.com/rotterdamviertdestad/docs/neverendingstory-artcollart.

[414] Van Meggelen, interview.

[415] Moerman, interview.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The comparison of Glasgow's, Rotterdam's, and Liverpool's European Capital of Culture programmes has exposed several important points regarding the capacity of culture to serve as a tool for economic and social urban (re)development.

The analysis of the cities' varying approaches to the event exposed the difficulty of finding the right balance between the economic, social, and cultural components of the ECoC policy-making puzzle, characterised by complex interrelations that are more often conflicting than complementary. In that sense, the ECoC involves decision-making that expands the scope of Bianchini's policy dilemmas.

Apart from the different levels of infrastructure investments, the cities' approaches to the cultural funding and economic development dilemmas mostly coincided. Regarding the former, the crucial role of integrating regular events into a city's cultural landscape emerged as a strategic component common to all three cases. Especially in the context of ex-industrial cities, sustaining an event-led approach proved capable of producing permanent benefits, not just in terms of tourism, but also by means of city image enhancement and supporting local cultural production. When it comes to the latter, the cities favoured a focus on cultural consumption. While Glasgow's, Rotterdam's, and Liverpool's ECoCs were successful in attracting significant numbers of first-time visitors to the cities, providing a strong foundation for long-term tourism growth, the consumption-oriented approach also downplayed the potential impact of the event on the development of local creative industries.

The ubiquitous need for balance added extra dimensions to the decision-making process, leading to further *dilemmas within a dilemma*. An event-based approach, for instance, entailed prioritising between high culture and popular content, 'imported' and home-grown elements, as well as large, blockbuster events and small-scale programmes. A consumption-oriented strategy, similarly, required a choice between focusing on international or domestic audiences.

The key difference between the cities' approaches concerned the way they addressed the spatial dilemma. While Rotterdam concentrated on this aspect, and the social goals arising from it, Liverpool and Glasgow were preoccupied with the economically motivated objectives of city (re)branding. In this regard, it could be said that there is also a *dilemma between dilemmas*, in the sense that a city might decide to put greater emphasis on one of the three dimensions.

In light of this, one essential discrepancy seems to stand out: the extent to which the objectives of economic and social regeneration are mutually exclusive. Although they prioritised them differently, the agendas of all three ECoCs included both, striving to fulfil them at the same time—and by using the same means (of culture). Yet, as economic goals are typically externally oriented, whereas social aims are predominantly internal, these two groups of objectives seem to conflict with each other. The need to 'sell' the city to tourists requires a city centre focus, leading to the

exclusion of peripheral neighbourhoods from the ECoC, and the benefits of city image improvements tend to be spread unequally. This clash was evident in the cases of Glasgow and Liverpool. The incapacity of their culture-led regeneration approaches in dealing with the cities' wider social concerns suggests that the economic and social dimensions of ECoC programmes sit at odds with each other.

That being the case, the question is whether the ambition of ECoCs to include these diverse goals is a reasonable one to begin with. On the one hand, the drive to present the ECoC as a socio-economic panacea might have to do a lot with the competitive nature of the bidding process, or simply the need to find the strongest possible justification for funding cultural activities. In that case, the intention of the programmes to truly deal with social problems is what should be questioned, rather than their capacity. On the other hand, if the far-reaching objectives of ECoCs arise out of a genuine desire to tackle all these issues at the same time, such an intention can only be discarded as overly ambitious or too naïve. When it comes to remedying urban socio-economic problems, the capacity of ECoC programmes indeed seems to be limited, pointing to the conclusion that culture is not the right tool for achieving these goals.

Even so, the cases of Glasgow, Liverpool, and Rotterdam have also shown that ECoC events can successfully contribute to social objectives that are of a more artistic and cultural character, such as the ones related to widening cultural participation and promoting the inclusion of minority groups in cultural life, as well as increasing community pride. Despite the tensions between city branding strategies and local identities, the positive effect of the event on local self-confidence was recognised as one of the most substantial achievements in all three cases.

Given its internally-oriented approach, one would expect Rotterdam's ECoC to have achieved more durable outcomes in the social sphere. Apart from a number of successful projects, however, these aims were largely left unfulfilled. The results would most likely be more permanent had it not been for the political changes that prevented follow-up plans and thus minimised the possibility for the ECoC to ensure the sustainability of its legacies. This highlights another key point: the importance of political stability and cross-party political support for sustaining the legacies of the event in the long run. In contrast to Rotterdam, the political climate in Glasgow has always been characterized by a wide consensus regarding its urban regeneration aims, which allowed the city to plan for the longer term.[416] In Liverpool, similarly, strong local political support was crucial for integrating the ECoC into the wider development strategy of the city.[417]

A problematic issue that is related to the politics of the ECoC concerns the prevailing impreciseness and fuzziness of objectives. ECoC host cities generally tend to formulate their goals in a rather loose manner, avoiding to set specific targets[418], which significantly hinders the possibility for thorough monitoring and evaluation of ECoC events.[419] Glasgow, Rotterdam, and

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[416] Booth and Boyle, "See Glasgow, see culture," 44; Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*, 404.
[417] Griffiths, "Evidence from the competition to select the European capital of culture 2008," 422.
[418] Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Part 1*, 47-51.
[419] García, "Deconstructing the City of Culture," 863.

Liverpool were not an exception to this rule. Even though the ECoC is surely not a precise instrument (if it can be considered an instrument at all), defining clear(er) goals and setting some measurable targets is the least host cities should do in order to provide a sound basis for a more rigorous evaluation. On the other hand, the vagueness of objectives and absence of targets is perhaps more comfortable for the political structures behind the ECoC, who can then easily make glorifying claims, producing myths about 'urban renaissance' without the danger of being contested by concrete evidence.

Although the evidence remains too general, the experiences of Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Liverpool have shown that the ECoC can serve as a development tool only if it is integrated into a continuous, long-term strategy of urban development. Otherwise, it remains a distinct one-off, with little potential to produce regenerative outcomes. The regeneration culture is capable of delivering, nevertheless, is most likely to be of a symbolic character. Along the lines of García's arguments[420], the examined cases have shown that the image-enhancing effect stands out as the most permanent ECoC legacy. Yet, the further relationship between these symbolic improvements and any direct or indirect economic and social benefits remains diffuse and unsupported by evidence. While there are good reasons to believe that the gains achieved in tourism owe much to successful city image reconstruction strategies, the same cannot be said for the local creative industries, which did not profit from the external image and cultural profile upgrading brought about by the ECoC.

The unused potential of the ECoC in the field of creative industries points to the need to calibrate more thoughtfully between cultural consumption and cultural production. Not only are consumption-oriented strategies associated with low-quality jobs, but their prevalence is also threatening to make the word 'culture' redundant—both in the phrase 'cultural consumption' and the ECoC on the whole. With the lion's share of the additional income generated by the event being concentrated in tourism and the role of culture being degraded into a bait for luring in visitors, the negative effects of over-reliance on consumption appear to be even greater in the longer term. Of course, this is not to say that the objectives of tourism promotion should be completely dismissed, but to suggest that the focus of the ECoC needs to be re-centred around the stimulation and development of the cities' internal creative capacities. Otherwise, as García notes, if its main purpose is to attract visitors, there is nothing that sets the ECoC apart from events such as major sporting competitions or business conventions, which can easily achieve the same results (perhaps with even greater success).[421]

Using the ECoC to advance the development of local cultural capital—ensuring that a permanent link is forged between infrastructure projects, cultural production, and regular events—would therefore represent a more sustainable alternative to the prevailing focus on cultural consumption. In order to tie their ECoC programmes more tightly to the development of local cultural production and creative industries, host cities should strive to rely as much as possible on their internal resources, fostering home-grown talent and local creative businesses, and making sure that new cultural infrastructure is connected to cultural production. That way, putting the ECoC into the

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[420] García, "'If everyone says so …'," 3193-94.
[421] García, "Deconstructing the City of Culture," 863.

service of unleashing and employing the city's full creative potential would also be a step towards the de-instrumentalisation of culture, opening up new perspectives for reconciling the economic, social, and cultural components of urban development.

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