Annex 10

Guidelines for the cities' own evaluations of the results of each ECoC

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Culture and creativity

European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) 2020-2033
Guidelines for the cities' own evaluations of the results of their ECOC

1. Background and context

Independent monitoring and evaluation by host cities

A new requirement for European Capitals of Culture

The European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) were created in 1985 as an intergovernmental initiative and transformed into a European Union action in 1999. The rules were renewed from 2007, developing the effectiveness of the action further. In accordance with these rules, the European Commission ensures the external and independent evaluation of all 2007-2019 ECoC. In addition, a number of ECoC so far have initiated and carried out their own evaluations of the title year, following different models and approaches.

Decision No 445/2014/EU[1] (the "Decision") lays down new procedures for the implementation of the ECoC action for the period 2020 to 2033. Regarding evaluation, the Decision introduces a 'new' obligation for all ECoCs 2020-2033 to carry out their own evaluations of the results of the title-year. As part of this 'new' obligation, cities bidding for the title have to indicate in their application their plans for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the title on the city as well as for disseminating the results of such evaluation.

[1] Official Journal of the European Union, OJ L 132 of 3 May 2014: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014D0445

More precisely, Article 16 of the Decision defines the cities' and the Commission's responsibilities and obligations as follows:

1.

- Each city concerned shall be responsible for the evaluation of the results of its year as European Capital of Culture.
- The Commission shall establish common guidelines and indicators for the cities concerned based on the objectives and the criteria [of the ECOC action] in order to ensure a coherent approach to the evaluation procedure.
- The cities concerned shall draw up their evaluation reports and transmit them to the Commission by 31 December of the year following the year of the title.
- The Commission shall publish the evaluation reports on its website.

2.

- In addition to the cities' evaluations, the Commission shall ensure that external and independent evaluations of the results of the action are produced on a regular basis.
- [These] evaluations shall focus on placing all past European Capitals of Culture in a European context, allowing comparisons to be drawn and useful lessons to be learned for future European Capitals of Culture, as well as for all European cities. Those evaluations shall include an assessment of the action as a whole, including the efficiency of the processes involved in running it, its impact and how it could be improved.
- The Commission shall present to the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions the following reports based on these evaluations, accompanied, if appropriate, by relevant proposals:
  (a) a first interim evaluation report by 31 December 2024;
  (b) a second interim evaluation report by 31 December 2029;
  (c) an ex-post evaluation report by 31 December 2034.

This document explains the benefits for ECoC to carry out their own evaluation of the results of the title-year. It also provides a set of common indicators to use and a list of questions cities should ask themselves when deciding to bid as an ECoC and planning their evaluation procedures.

The document is based on the expertise resulting from the external and independent evaluations of the ECoCs produced for the Commission since 2007 - in particular on the "measuring impacts" section of the 2012 ECoCs evaluation - as well as on the EU-

funded work of a Policy Group of former ECOC, set up in 2009-2010 to share good practices and produce recommendations for research and evaluation by cities hosting the title.

Further reading:
You can access the external ECoC evaluations and the report of the ECoC Policy Group at:
- http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/actions/capitals-culture_en.htm
- http://ecocpolicygroup.wordpress.com/category/case-studies-ecocs

2. Key motivations and purposes

Reasons and motivations WHY the cities should evaluate the results of their year as ECoC

Since it started in 1985, the "European Capital of Culture" action has grown in scope and size to become today one of the most prestigious and high-profile cultural events in Europe. Over the years the initiative also contributes to the sustainable development of cities and their surrounding areas, bringing them – if well prepared – long-term impact in cultural, social and economic terms. As a consequence, ECoC are now recognized as laboratories for strategic investments in culture at local and regional level.

However, there is still a shortage of a coherent evidence-base to better grasp the benefits of being an ECoC, especially its medium-to-long term cultural, social and economic legacy in host cities. Common ground to compare its impact from one city to another is also missing. The evaluation obligation introduced in the 2014 Decision is a way to remedy this situation.

The first recipients of such evaluations are the cities hosting the title. This obligation will also bring benefits to other cities across Europe, willing to learn from the ECoC experience and better understand the multi-faceted impact of a huge investment in culture. Finally, it will help the European Union Institutions to assess the cumulative impact of the ECoC action, in particular as the evaluations carried out by the cities will nurture the external and independent evaluations carried out for the European Commission.

More precisely, **at local level**, the obligation will help ECoCs to improve delivery against the objectives set for the title-year. Experience shows that planning evaluation (and evaluation tools) well in advance helps cities to clarify their vision of their strengths and weaknesses, to analyse what they can realistically strive to achieve through the ECoC title and thus refine their objectives, to establish clear milestones towards the achievement of their goals and, as a result, improve the end result of the year.

It should also enable them to better demonstrate the impact of the title-year and the ways in which they have optimised cultural, social and economic benefits as well as the effect the title has for the development of the city. It would also be instrumental in fostering local ownership of objectives, assisting cities in planning and negotiating with partners (in particular sponsors and public authorities at local, regional or national levels) and become a good practice and source of inspiration for future ECoC to set meaningful and achievable targets. Finally, evaluation's findings can also support the city's future cultural strategies.

At European level, it will help to understand how individual ECoC contribute to the objectives of the action, whether they have broadly achieved their objectives, whether implementation has proceeded in line with the original proposal, and how the ECoC action as a whole could be improved. Very importantly, the obligation – by giving a more comprehensive view of the results of the ECoC – will also encourage further knowledge transfer between cities as more consistent data enables comparisons between cities. It will reinforce the existing evidence-base on the ability of the ECoC action and – more generally – of cultural initiatives to support the revitalisation of urban economies or affect social change as well as contribute towards the wider goals of the European Union.

3. Common core indicators

Minimum set of indicators that should be in every evaluation carried out by the cities

Cities holding the ECoC title are invited to use the common core indicators presented below (Table 2) when carrying out their respective evaluation.

These indicators correspond to the general and specific objectives of the ECoC action as laid down in the Decision, and their application into operational objectives at city level (Table 1). They are also based on the criteria laid down in the Decision for the

assessment of the applications of the cities bidding for the ECoC title. The core indicators suggested below reflect this hierarchy of objectives and are intended to capture their essence whenever possible in a quantified form.

Table 1- Hierarchy of ECoC objectives

<table>
<tr><th colspan="9">General Objectives</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="9">Safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, highlight the common features they share, increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space (GO1), and foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities (GO2)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="9">Specific Objectives (SO)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">SO1: Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation</td><td colspan="2">SO2: Widen access to and participation in culture</td><td colspan="2">SO3: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors</td><td colspan="2">SO4: Raise the international profile of cities through culture</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="9">Operational Objectives</th></tr>
<tr><td>Stimulate extensive cultural programmes of high artistic quality</td><td>Ensure cultural programmes feature a strong European dimension and transnational co-operation</td><td>Involve a wide range of citizens and stakeholders in preparing and implementing the cultural programme</td><td>Create new opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural events</td><td>Improve cultural infra-structure</td><td>Develop the skills, capacity and governance of the cultural sector</td><td>Stimulate partnership and co-operation with other sectors</td><td>Promote the city and its cultural pro-gramme</td><td>Improve the inter-national outlook of residents</td></tr>
</table>

It is expected that some indicators may need to be further developed in the light of evolving circumstances, lessons learned from other ECoCs, unexpected developments, new types of data being created and new methodologies available to capture them.

Quantitative data should take account of baselines (i.e. data at application stage, start of title year, end of title-year), regional or national comparators when available and the cultural, social, educational and infrastructure context of the city. Data should also be analysed and contextualised, to understand what contribution the ECoC is likely to have made, and identify other influential factors.

On top of these common indicators, cities should also define any additional indicators needed in the light of their own context, priorities and activities and reflecting their own performance targets. These indicators could be considered relevant for future cities and integrated in the common ECoC indicators.

All indicators should be consistent with SMART principles: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed.

Table 2 - Overview of ECoC objectives and criteria with corresponding indicative indicators and possible sources of data collection

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
General objective 1: **To safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, to highlight the common features they share and to increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space**	**Impact**	Increased citizens' awareness and appreciation of the diversity of European cultures. Increased citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space, citizens' perceptions of being European Increased citizens' participation and engagement in multicultural projects Increased knowledge about European cultures Intangible European heritage (arts and crafts) increased skills Increased number of cultural initiatives linking heritage and innovation Tangible cultural heritage infrastructure investment, heritage re-purposed or re-interpreted	Surveys of local residents, e.g. undertaken or commissioned by municipalities or agencies managing ECoC. Question such as "What is your view on feelings of "Europeanness"? Surveys of artists, cultural sector and local/ regional/national agencies (municipalities but not only) responsible for cultural, educational and developmental goals Citizen / Community focus groups, commissioned by the above and/or conducted by local universities. Investment and development reports Qualitative analysis of the programme Number and quality of programmes promoting diversity and Europe Self-completion survey (on-site or sent digitally afterwards) Analysis of quality of information ref. European themes and programmes provided on ECoC websites

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		Diversity of European themes (in the programme, in the media) Geographical area covered in the artistic programme Number and quality of multicultural projects Number of local grassroots initiatives including European partners or intercultural themes Number and profile of people reached via media coverage Geographical scope of media coverage Increased visits to heritage sites (number of people and length of the visit) Increased support for multicultural projects e.g. by cultural minorities	Analysis of online activities – comments, information shared by audiences Analysis of media reviews ref. European topics and ECoC programme Analysis of media coverage (number and profile of people reached, geographical coverage) Internal evaluation data from cultural organisations/institutions Polls (e.g. online or onsite) Eurobarometer
General objective 2: **To foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities**	**Impact**	National / international recognition of cities as being culturally vibrant and having improved image Increase in GDP and employment in cities' cultural	Surveys of tourists and visitors to host cities; international surveys of tourist opinions; opinion of national or international cultural experts; other authoritative published sources.

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		and creative sectors Increase in the availability of affordable space for cultural production (studios etc.) Quality and quantity of post-ECoC and long-term strategic documents and policies prepared New use of unused spaces, new public space development Civic sector reference bodies working with the municipality – number, number of meetings, number of organisations participating Development of the city's cultural strategy and implementation plans Number of decisions Municipality took in consultation with the cultural and civic sector and the increased budget for cultural activities	Statistical data provided by municipalities, national statistical offices, sector bodies, etc. Documents analysis GPS data, big data etc. Reports, number of new civic initiatives, new organisations, creative start-ups, partnerships etc. Reference groups' work programmes and reports Analysis of city budgets –expenditure on culture
Specific objective 1: **To enhance the range,**	**Result**	Total n° of events Total Budget of ECoC cultural programmes.	Programme data provided by the agencies managing ECoC Analysis (both managerial and scientific)

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation		Increased financial contributions obtained from public, private and third sector partners. N° of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or based on transnational cooperation N° of new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators ECoC programme subdivided according e.g. to art genre N° of events in every category of events Number of artists involved in international cooperation Number of local artists involved in international projects abroad	Number of new and sustainable international partnerships Qualitative analysis of new cross-border collaborations Qualitative analysis of the programme Reports and statistics from projects and institutions Surveys of artists, cultural sector and local/ regional/national agencies (municipalities but not only)
Specific objective 2:	**Result**	Attendance at ECoC events and evolution compared to the regular cultural audience of the	Programme data provided by the agencies managing ECoC

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
To widen access and participation in culture		City % of residents attending or participating in events, including youth, schools, minorities or the disadvantaged. Increased level of awareness of the cultural offer (generally and by the groups mentioned above) Number and profile of active volunteers and level (depth) of their commitment Number of events and initiatives encouraging active engagement and giving opportunities for different levels of participation Gender balance and cultural diversity of the cultural workforce Geographical spread of audiences Number and quality of the schemes encouraging wider engagement (e.g. ref. ticket policies, transport, promotion)	Surveys of local residents, e.g. undertaken or commissioned by municipalities or agencies managing ECoC and other types of opinion gathering e.g. via creative means. Compare it with national or international comparators. Resident focus groups (representative of / conducted at diverse neighbourhoods), conducted by local Universities Student focus groups, conducted by local Universities Reports and statistics from projects and institutions Participants self-reports Observation analysis Analysis of online engagement on ECOC-related websites (comments, share, profile of people) Box office and Custom relationship management data (visitor numbers and frequency of visits) Audience post-codes analysis Google analytics

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		Number and quality of the programmes involving currently not-engaged Increased motivation for participation in culture Increased depth of participation in culture Number of cultural professionals trained and using audience engagement methods in everyday work Increased participation of local community groups and schools in cultural programmes Increased diversity (age, cultural background) of the audience	
Specific objective 3: **To strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors**	**Result**	Strategy for long-term cultural development of the city, initial and post-ECOC, including an Action Plan Value of investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities Value of investment in cultural programmes by NGO sector and CCI	Statistical data provided by public bodies at local, provincial or regional level on any increase in GDP, in employment figures. Published documents of ECoC legacy body, municipalities and/or other relevant body Evaluation of capacity building programmes Reports from the programmes

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		Quantity, quality and sustainability of the schemes and programmes supporting professional development of cultural managers and artists Created conditions and programmes for development of NGOs, cultural and creative industries (to support diversification, quantity, growth, extended reach or internationalization) Civic sector reference bodies working with the Cultural department – number, number of meetings, number of organisations participating Sustained multi-sector partnership for cultural Governance Cross-sectorial collaborations including cultural sector Number and profile of projects realised with other sectors Number of documents supporting cross- sectorial collaboration	Surveys of cultural sector representatives Reports from supported individuals or organisations Reports from relevant representative bodies (e.g. representations of NGO or CCI) Self-completion survey (on-site or sent digitally afterwards) Partner organisation internal data: internal evaluation data from project partners. Analysis of appraisal reports of municipality cultural managers Participants self-reports

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		Raised cultural management standards Number and profile of people and organisations participating in capacity building programmes	
Specific objective 4: **To raise the international profile of cities through culture**	**Result**	Increase in tourist visits (day visit and overnight stays, both at domestic and international level) Volume and % of positive media coverage of cities Awareness of the ECoC among residents Awareness of the ECoC among cultural sector representatives abroad (e.g. embassies, national cultural organisations) Volume and % of city coverage about the ECoC and/ or its cultural offer Awareness of the ECoC as a city accolade / contributor to city reputation among residents	Statistical data provided by tourist boards or relevant public authority Data provided by authoritative media monitoring organisations Surveys of local residents, e.g. undertaken or commissioned by municipalities or agencies managing ECoC Qualitative analysis of media coverage by University teams Surveys of national cultural institutes abroad Surveys of national and international opinion formers in the tourism and cultural sectors (Put the city on the European Map) Focus groups with local or national influencers / opinion leaders. Question such as "How to increase local pride".

Objectives	Type of indicator	Indicative indicators	Possible sources of data collection
		Changes in city positioning / representation / inclusion for the first time in international city brand rankings[2]	Stakeholders interviews

[2] https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/cultural-creative-cities-monitor/

4. Planning and implementing evaluation procedures

A few useful questions cities should ask themselves

When starting the process?

Timely implementation of the evaluation helps to ensure that appropriate organisational arrangements are put in place, that the the funding is planned and time is allocated to establish data collection and analysis frameworks, as well as the baseline position.

Planning for the evaluation should start early on during the process. Cities need to take a number of organisational parameters into account, including the duration of the evaluation, how much funding will be allocated to it, what kind of data collecting and analysing tools and mechanisms will be needed, allocating responsibility for undertaking it, deciding if additional training is needed to ensure objective and professional data collection by all parties involved, processing with ethical reviews and defining what kind of evaluation is needed.

Cities that have hosted the title previously have approached this in different ways. For example, Liverpool's 2008 research programme started in 2005, Stavanger 2008 started its evaluation programme in 2006 and Luxembourg 2007 started undertaking research in 2005. Some cities start their evaluation programme about a year before the start of their cultural programme e.g. Essen for the Ruhr 2010 and Turku 2011. Guimarães 2012 started implementing an evaluation programme just before the start of the title year.

Which period to cover?

Deciding how long the evaluation process should last is also an important aspect of the planning phase. ECoC aim to create long-term impacts for the city development, but often the research focuses only on short term effects. Only two ECoC, Liverpool 2008 and Turku 2011, have undertaken longitudinal research lasting several years after the end of the title year. In most cities, evaluation procedures are completed around six to 12 months following the end of the title year and this, at least in part, reflects the need at local level to demonstrate the results of the year as early as possible. The balance between pressures to demonstrate quick results and the need to undertake thorough analysis and quality evaluation should be weighed carefully and taken into account at the planning stage. The ECoC Policy Group suggested that the

object of the evaluation process should be extended to one or two years after the title year to ensure a thorough assessment, and a three to four year evaluation would be needed in order to properly observe longer-term impacts. If programme in the ramp up years is important from the point of view of specific ECoC's aims longitudinal research covering period before ECoC should be conducted.

What budget for the evaluation?

Securing the necessary funding for evaluative research is often a challenge in many cities. However, in the long term, investing in research is likely to bring a number of benefits such as the ability to demonstrate the impact of the cultural offer in terms of attracting additional funding, justifying the value of public spending and understanding what initiatives and/or projects make a difference to the city. It is therefore important to identify and secure funding for the evaluation, early in the development phase.

Who to choose to carry out the evaluation?

Reflecting on the organisation that will undertake the evaluation should be done at the proposal drafting stage. Independence, transparency and avoiding any conflict of interests are important criteria in this respect. A good practice is to commission an organisation that is not related to the agency in charge of the delivery of the ECoC year. Local universities or other public or private research organisations are often chosen. Defining clear roles and responsibilities between the organisation undertaking evaluation and delivery agency should be given due consideration, especially in relation to collecting data, communication and other issues.

What type of evaluation?

Decisions concerning the type of evaluation that should be undertaken will also be a significant consideration at an early stage. Questions to consider would include for example: Should the evaluation focus only on the city or cover a wider region? What thematic areas and issues should the evaluation cover? Should the evaluation focus on quantitative, qualitative research or a mixture of both research tools? What indicators would be particularly important and appropriate for each ECoC? What is the sample group size and composition relevant for every survey or data collection?

While an evaluation brings significant benefits, efforts should also be made to avoid a number of potentially negative aspects. Increasing the importance of the evaluation can have an impact where, in developing the cultural programme, tried and tested activities might be prioritised over more ambitious and experimental ones. Similarly, it is important to avoid the situation where the programme is developed to achieve 'easy wins' instead of addressing more challenging issues. Moreover, it is worth to include in the evaluation information about the context – positive and negative factors influencing the results.

Again, the evaluation needs to be prepared against the specific ECoC project's objectives stated in the bidbook and the baseline studies.