



INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF THE SELECTION PROCESS OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

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Aim

The European Capital of Culture (ECOC) is an EU initiative designed to celebrate the “richness and diversity” of European culture [1]. The EU specifies selection criteria that are designed to be equitable and not directly favour one type of city over another [2]. The aim of this research was to determine whether the EU is following its own selection policy. To assess this, the influence of a number of factors in the selection of the ECOC were investigated. The null (H_0) and alternative (H_1) hypotheses are described as:

- H_0 : Within the context of our variables, the selection of the ECOC is random.
- H_1 : Within the context of our variables, there are factors that correlate with the selection of the host city.

Variables and Data Sources

The scope of the project was all shortlisted candidate cities from 2016-22 inclusive. Figure 1 shows a map of these cities. Five variables were selected for investigation: city population; distance to nearest big city; annual cultural spend; annual number of museum visitors; and proportion of a city’s residents in higher education. Descriptions of these variables and the data sources are detailed in the table on page A1 of the Appendix. The variables were chosen because they act as proxies for the selection criteria specified by the EU.

A number of limitations of the datasets were identified. Firstly, as the ECOC programme (in its current form) is still very young, there was a small range of cities that were investigable. Secondly, data reporting requirements differ from country to country. This resulted in incomplete and non-exhaustive datasets. Thirdly, there were no means to verify that data collection methods were consistent from country to country, or from year to year.

Method

The investigation had three main analytical steps:

- 1 - Examine each variable to identify differences between successful and unsuccessful candidate cities.
- 2 - Use spatial analysis techniques to detect any trends not immediately visible.
- 3 - Interpret trends in terms of the wider geographical context.

**Map showing candidate cities for
the European Capital of Culture
(2016-22)**



Figure 1: Map showing the candidate cities for the European Capital of Culture (2016-22)

Analysis

Figure 2 shows the candidate cities and the number of museum visits per resident. There is no obvious relationship between ECOC candidature success and museum visits. In some countries (e.g. Ireland), the city with the highest number of annual museum visitors is chosen, but in most other countries (e.g. Italy and Romania), there is no relationship of statistical significance. Cities with the four highest number of museum visits were unsuccessful in their bid, suggesting that having a high number of museum visits is not a guarantee of success. However, having a low number of museum visits is not a barrier to success (e.g. Rijeka, Timisoara).

These same observations can also be seen in Figure 3, which shows the candidate cities and the proportion of residents in higher or tertiary education. In some countries (e.g. Poland), the city with the highest number of residents in higher education is chosen, but in most other countries, there is no relationship of statistical significance. Likewise, having a higher proportion of residents in higher education is not a guarantee of success (see Veliko Tarnovo), nor is having a low proportion of residents in higher education a barrier to success (see San Sebastian).

Similar analyses were performed for all other variables but no patterns of interest were identified.

Spatial Analysis

In order to perform the spatial analysis, a spatial weights matrix was defined. In order to prevent unwanted bias in the results, the arc distance between cities was chosen as the measure of connectivity in the matrix. To ensure meaningful connections between the cities, it was decided to only keep Central and Eastern European cities. Consequently, due to their large distance from other points, cities in Ireland and Spain were excluded. The spatial weights matrix was obtained by applying a bell-curve function to the distance matrix.

Global Moran's I statistic was calculated to measure spatial autocorrelation in each of the variables. The results are presented in Table 1. One can observe that although the median cultural budget is the only variable with a statistically significant result at the 10% level, it has a weak spatial autocorrelation. A review of spatial clustering in the variables was performed by calculating the Local Moran's I statistic, which identified hotspots [3]. An example hotspot was one formed of cities with a high percentage of residents in higher education. It was found in Poland, formed by the cities of Katowice, Lublin, Wroclaw and Warsaw, and is highlighted in Figure 3.

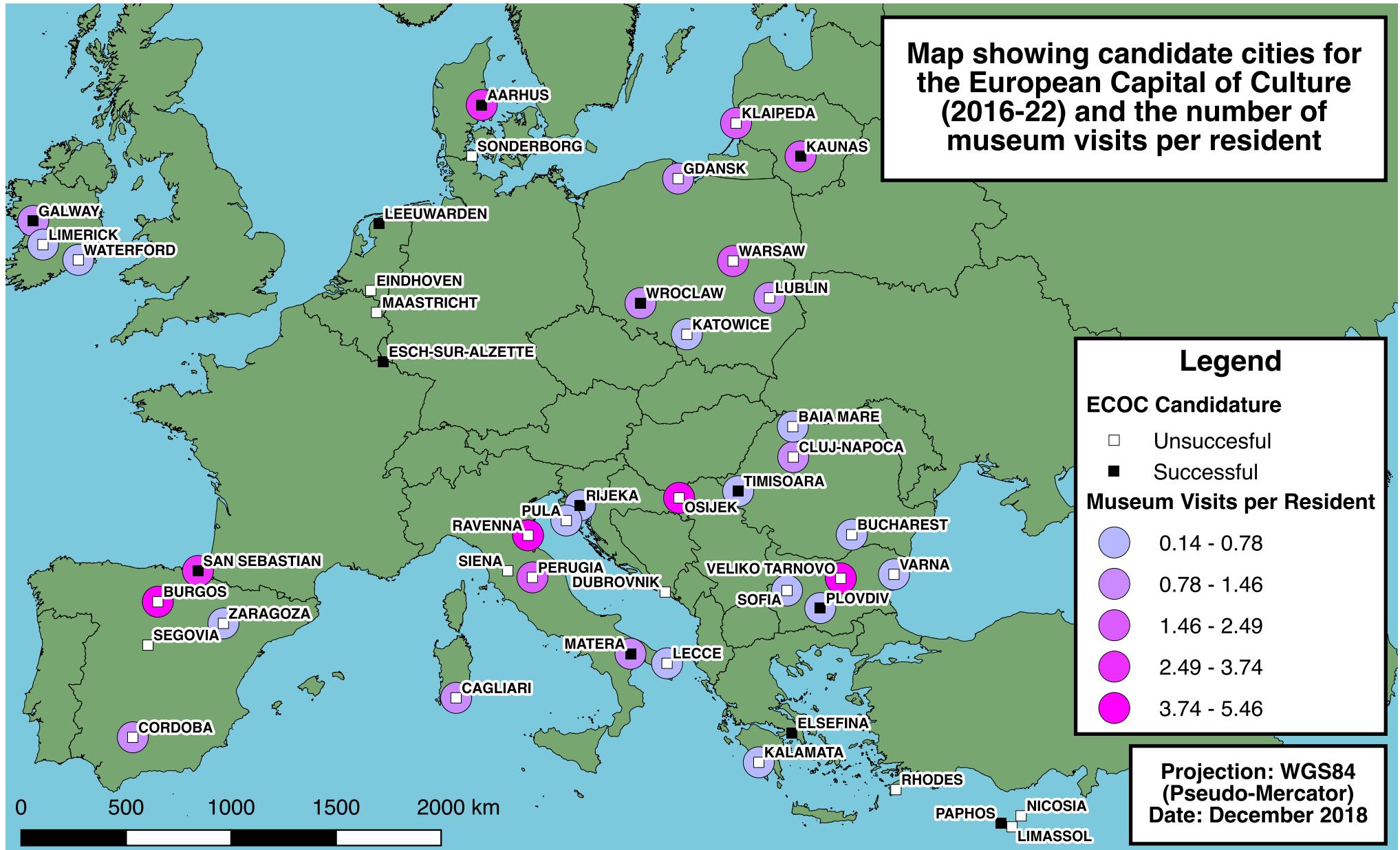


Figure 2: Map showing the candidate cities for the European Capital of Culture (2016-22) and the number of museum visits per resident

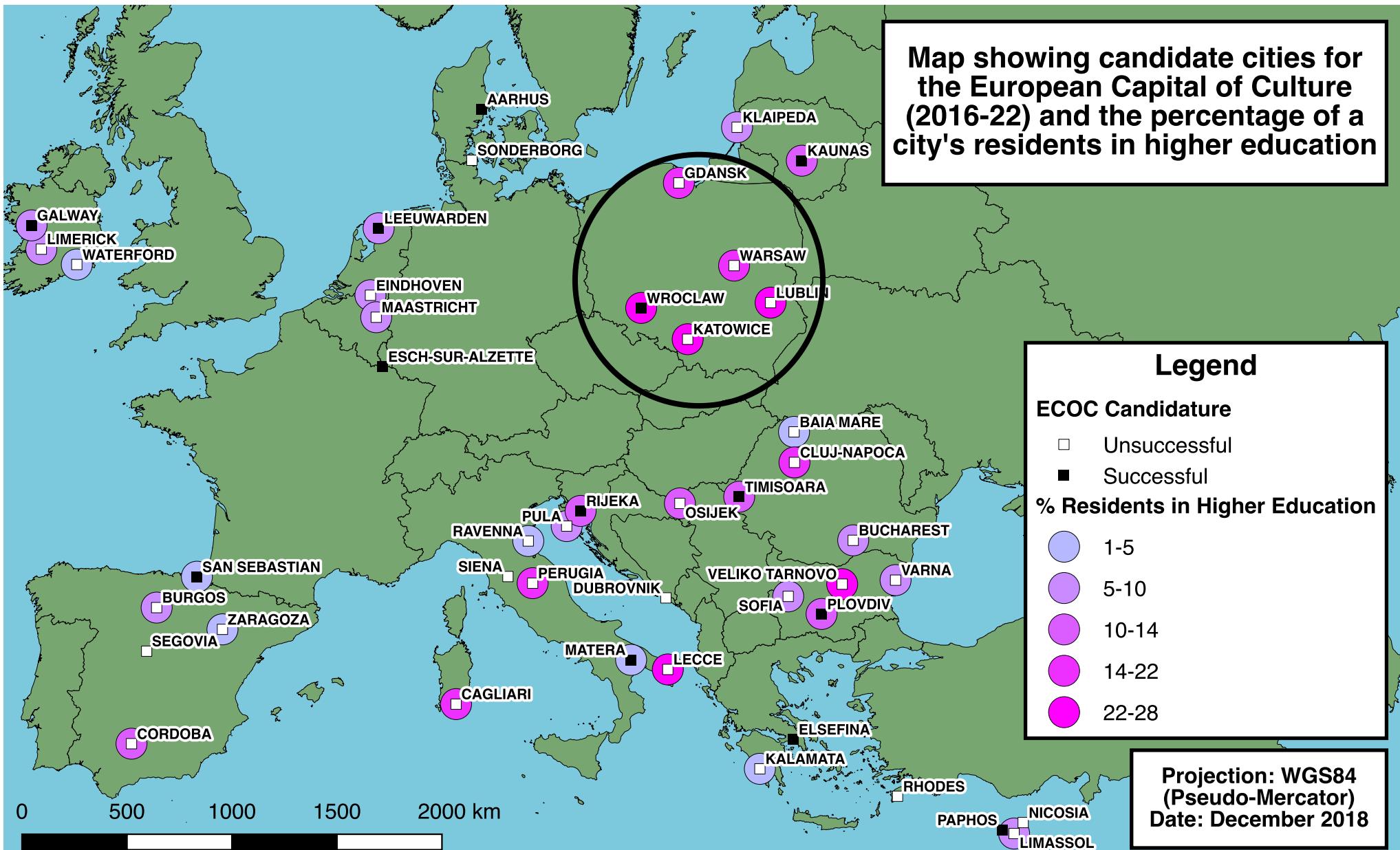


Figure 3: Map showing the candidate cities for the European Capital of Culture (2016-22) and the percentage of a city's population in higher education. The circled region indicates a hotspot identified through Local Moran's I analysis.

Table 1: Summary of Global Moran's I statistic and p-values

| | Global Moran's I | p-value |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| ECoC | 0.00 | 0.96 |
| Population | 0.01 | 0.35 |
| Distance | -0.03 | 0.44 |
| Museum Visitors | -0.27 | 0.90 |
| Education Percentage | -0.17 | 0.76 |
| Median Cultural Budget | 0.17 | 0.09 |

Contextual Analysis

Due to limitations of the original dataset, the above quantitative investigations could only provide a limited view on the factors influencing the selection process. The above findings were used as a basis for further contextual analysis of the candidate cities.

Quality of infrastructure in relation to distance travelled in the context of host countries

Candidate cities were investigated in terms of the relation between their distance to one of the three most populated cities within their country and the quality of their transport network, as evaluated by the European Commission's transport scoring system [4]. Figure 4 shows the primary transport



Figure 4: Map of the primary transport infrastructure of Europe

infrastructure of Europe [5]. The transport analysis suggested that whenever a country has a well-developed transport system it is likely for a distant city to also be shortlisted along with others, whereas in a country with a poor transport network it is less likely for a distant city to be shortlisted. This finding indicates that the accessibility of a city within the country might be a factor for it being shortlisted as an ECOC – a factor stated as ‘unimportant’ in the selection guidelines.

Influence of city culture heritage and diversity in the context of host countries

Candidate cities were investigated in terms of their cultural diversity prior to the ECOC selection process and in the context of their host countries. It is evident that most successful cities are more culturally diverse than other candidates from the same country, as shown in Figure 5. The only exception is Matera. However, all shortlisted cities within Italy have similar cultural diversity scores and there is no city that exhibits higher cultural variety than Matera. This suggests that the cultural diversity of a city is likely to have an influence on its candidature success. The existing cultural heritage and activities of a city, however, are noted by the selection committee as non-important factors for winning.

Consideration of influencing economic factors

Shortlisted cities were investigated in terms of economic factors, such as employment figures and GDP. The analysis revealed patterns within national unemployment levels and the globalisation of economy within the ECOC-selected countries. Each year, one candidate country evidenced lower values than the EU aggregate and one scored higher. This pattern is observed only on a national level and does not follow through to the city shortlisting and the selection of the ECOC. The economic analysis suggests, that even though there might not be a particular economic reason for appointing a city as ECOC, which is in alignment with the selection guidelines, there is a conscious and deliberate spread of cultural capital cities within Europe.

Further qualitative analysis on city tourist arrivals was also performed. However, due to data limitations, no significant patterns were found.

Conclusion

The statistical and spatial analysis showed that there was no significant evidence to suggest the EU were not following their selection criteria. The contextual analysis of other factors indicated that there may be some factors for which there is strong correlation between the factor and the likelihood of success. Further statistical analysis would be necessary in order to confirm this.

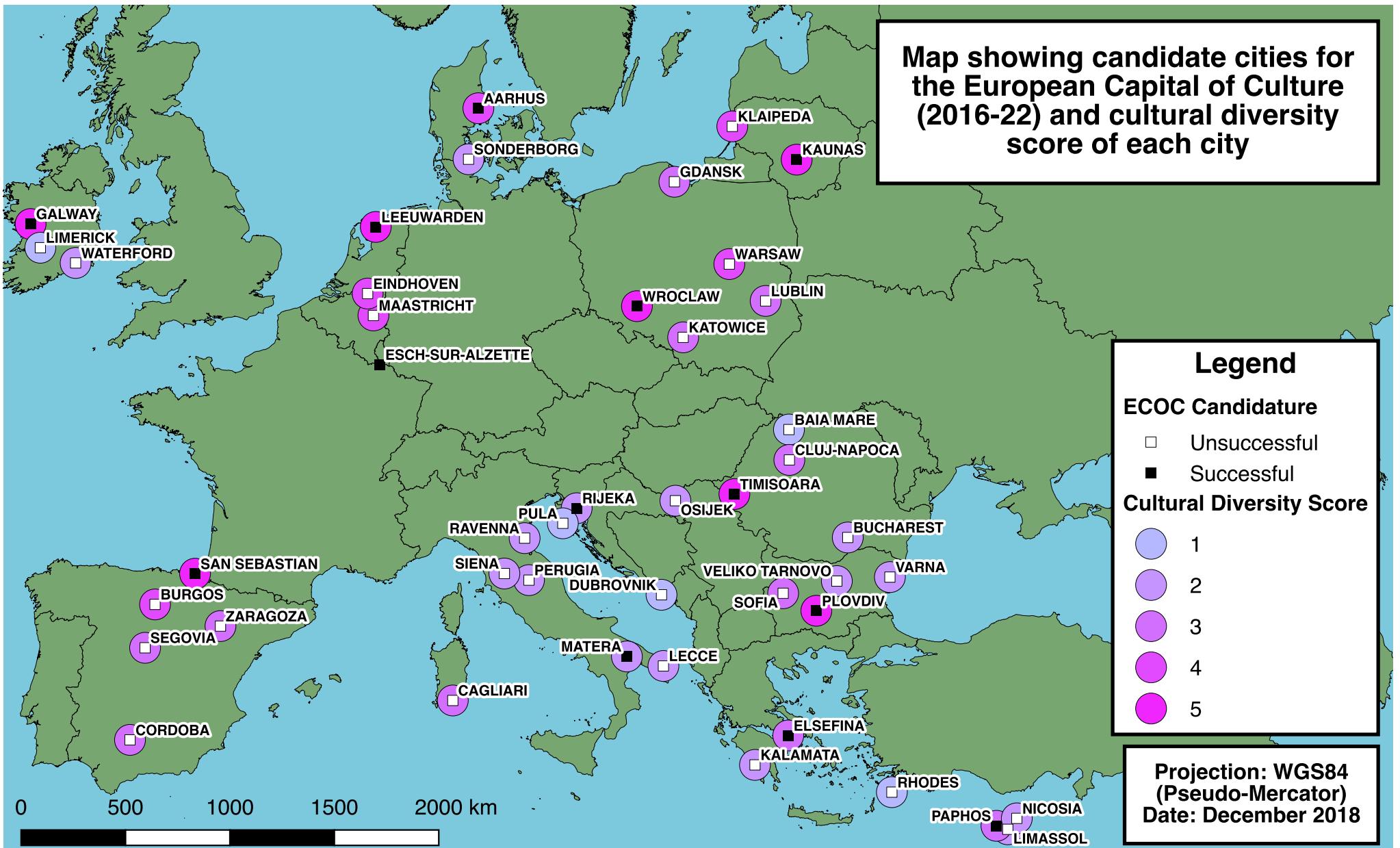


Figure 5: Map showing the candidate cities for the European Capital of Culture (2016-22) and the cultural diversity score of the city.

Bibliography

- [1] European Commission, “European Capitals of Culture,” 2018. [Online]. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en. [Accessed 13 December 2018].
- [2] European Commission, “European Capitals of Culture: 2020 to 2023 - A guide for cities preparing to bid,” 2017. [Online]. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/capitals-culture-candidates-guide_en_vdec17.pdf. [Accessed 2 December 2018].
- [3] L. Anselin, “Local Indicators of Spatial Association—LISA,” *Geographical Analysis*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 93-115, 1995.
- [4] European Commission, “EU Transport Scoreboard,” 2018. [Online]. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/facts-fundings/scoreboard_en. [Accessed 31 December 2018].
- [5] European Commission, “TENtec Interactive Map Viewer,” 2018. [Online]. Available: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html>. [Accessed 19 December 2018].

Appendix

The Appendix contains further information on the variables used, and final data values for all the analysis performed.

| Variable | Description | Data Source | Notes |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Population | Population of the city in the decision year | Eurostat (Table DE1001V) | |
| Distance from the nearest big city | Road distance from the candidate city to the nearest big city | Google Maps API | Big city defined as the country's three largest cities, by population |
| Cultural budget spend | Percentage of a city's annual budget spent on cultural-related activities | Host city bid books | The median value for the five years preceding the decision year |
| Annual museum visitors | Annual total number of museum visitors, normalised by city population | Eurostat (Table CR1007V) | Median value from 2009-2016 |
| Higher education attendees | Proportion of a city's residents in higher or tertiary education | Eurostat (Table TE1026I) | |

ECOC Data - City Location and Connectivity

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | Big city (First 3 cities by population) | Distance to Big City (km) | Time to Big City (min) | Country size (Surface Area - sq. km) | Normalised Distance | Road Infrastructure EU Quality Score | Rail Infrastructure EU Quality Score | Port Infrastructure EU Quality Score | Air Transport EU Quality Score |
|------|------------------|----------------|-------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | no | 452 | 275 | 505940 | 0.001087 | 5.5 | 5.46 | 5.52 | 5.83 |
| | | Burgos | no | no | 245 | 148 | 505940 | 0.000257 | | | | |
| | | Cordoba | no | no | 394 | 247 | 505940 | 0.000566 | | | | |
| | | Las Palmas | no | no | 84.7 | 58 | 505940 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | | Segovia | no | no | 96.7 | 72 | 505940 | 0.000710 | | | | |
| | | Zaragoza | no | no | 313 | 183 | 505940 | 0.000484 | | | | |
| | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | no | 222 | 123 | 312680 | 0.000779 | 4.1 | 3.56 | 4.21 | 4.46 |
| | Gdansk | no | no | 340 | 183 | 312680 | 0.000167 | | | | | |
| | Katowice | no | no | 80.4 | 55 | 312680 | 0.000893 | | | | | |
| | Lublin | no | no | 177 | 144 | 312680 | 0.000191 | | | | | |
| | Warsaw | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 312680 | 0.000619 | | | | | |
| 2017 | Denmark | Aarhus | yes | yes | 0 | 0 | 42922 | 0.000000 | 5.52 | 4.56 | 5.7 | 6.05 |
| | | Sonderborg | no | no | 163 | 104 | 42922 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | Cyprus | Paphos | yes | no | 67.7 | 47 | 9250 | 0.007319 | 5.11 | 0 | 4.6 | 5.51 |
| | | Limassol | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 9250 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | | Nicosia | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 9250 | 0.003798 | 6.14 | 5.76 | 6.79 | 6.58 |
| | | Leeuwarden | yes | no | 140 | 82 | 41540 | 0.002672 | | | | |
| | | Eindhoven | no | no | 111 | 72 | 41540 | 0.003370 | | | | |
| | | Maastricht | no | no | 202 | 127 | 41540 | 0.004863 | | | | |
| | Malta | Valletta | yes | yes | 0 | 0 | 320 | 0.000000 | 4.52 | 4.08 | 4.41 | 4.63 |
| | Italy | Matera | yes | no | 259 | 171 | 301340 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | | Cagliari | no | no | 595 | 805 | 301340 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | | Lecce | no | no | 422 | 272 | 301340 | 0.001901 | | | | |
| | | Perugia | no | no | 149 | 119 | 301340 | 0.001975 | | | | |
| | | Siena | no | no | 223 | 142 | 301340 | 0.001400 | | | | |
| | | Ravenna | no | no | 289 | 179 | 301340 | 0.000859 | | | | |
| | Bulgaria | Plovdiv | yes | yes | 0 | 0 | 111000 | 0.000494 | 3.36 | 3.01 | 4.12 | 4.26 |
| | | Sofia | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 111000 | 0.000959 | | | | |
| | | Varna | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 111000 | 0.000740 | | | | |
| | | Veliko Tarnovo | no | no | 211 | 158 | 111000 | 0.004047 | | | | |
| 2020 | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | yes | 0 | 0 | 56590 | 0.005001 | 5.46 | 2.76 | 4.64 | 4.25 |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | no | 229 | 182 | 56590 | 0.001926 | | | | |
| | | Osijek | no | no | 283 | 158 | 56590 | 0.000000 | 4.64 | 3.69 | 5.11 | 5.38 |
| | Ireland | Pula | no | no | 109 | 88 | 56590 | 0.002917 | | | | |
| | Romania | Galway | yes | no | 205 | 134 | 70280 | 0.001409 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 3.53 | 4.04 |
| | | Limerick | no | no | 99 | 84 | 70280 | 0.001722 | | | | |
| | | Waterford | no | no | 121 | 104 | 70280 | 0.000160 | | | | |
| | | Timisoara | yes | no | 318 | 277 | 283390 | 0.001622 | | | | |
| | Greece | Cluj-Napoca | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 283390 | 0.004615 | 4.52 | 2.84 | 4.53 | 4.79 |
| | | Baia Mare | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 283390 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | | Bucharest | no | no | 148 | 129 | 283390 | 0.009522 | | | | |
| 2021 | Lithuania | Eskifina | yes | no | 214 | 33 | 131960 | 0.000000 | 4.73 | 4.39 | 4.76 | 4.36 |
| | | Kalamata | no | no | 214 | 152 | 131960 | 0.001122 | | | | |
| | Rhodes | no | no | 609 | 1071 | 131960 | 0.000000 | 5.46 | 4.86 | 0 | 5.62 | |
| 2022 | Esch-sur-Alzette | Kaunas | yes | yes | 0 | 0 | 65286 | 0.000000 | | | | |
| | Klaipeda | no | yes | 0 | 0 | 65286 | 0.000000 | 5.46 | 4.86 | 0 | 5.62 | |

Source: Eurostat, World Bank, European Commission

ECOC Data - Museum Visitors per Bidding City

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | Museum visitors normalised by population |
|------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | 3.26 |
| | | Burgos | no | 4.48 |
| | | Cordoba | no | 1.27 |
| | | Las Palmas | no | 1.16 |
| | | Segovia | no | |
| | | Zaragoza | no | 0.74 |
| | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | 1.46 |
| | | Gdansk | no | 0.98 |
| | | Warsaw | no | 2.31 |
| | | Lublin | no | 0.85 |
| | | Katowice | no | 0.26 |
| 2017 | Denmark | Aarhus | yes | 3.74 |
| | | Sonderborg | no | |
| | Cyprus | Paphos | yes | |
| | | Limassol | no | |
| | | Nicosia | no | |
| 2018 | Netherlands | Leeuwarden | yes | |
| | | Maastricht | no | |
| | | Eindhoven | no | |
| | Malta | Valletta | yes | |
| 2019 | Bulgaria | Plovdiv | yes | 0.33 |
| | | Sofia | no | 0.65 |
| | | Veliko Tarnovo | no | 5.46 |
| | | Varna | no | 0.44 |
| | Italy | Matera | yes | 1.46 |
| | | Cagliari | no | 1.41 |
| | | Lecce | no | 0.14 |
| | | Perugia | no | 2.13 |
| | | Siena | no | |
| | | Ravenna | no | 4.87 |
| 2020 | Ireland | Galway | yes | 1.01 |
| | | Limerick | no | 0.50 |
| | | Waterford | no | 0.58 |
| | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | 0.78 |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | |
| | | Pula | no | 0.43 |
| | | Osijek | no | 5.08 |
| | | | | |
| 2021 | Greece | Elefsina | yes | |
| | | Kalamata | no | 0.26 |
| | | Rhodes | no | |
| | Romania | Timisoara | yes | 0.43 |
| | | Baia Mare | no | 0.76 |
| | | Bucharest | no | 0.71 |
| | | Cluj-Napoca | no | 1.05 |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Kaunas | yes | 1.71 |
| | | Klaipeda | no | 2.49 |
| | Luxembourg | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | |

Source: Eurostat

ECOC Data - Percentage of Residents is Higher Education

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | % of Residents in Higher Education (average) |
|------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | 0.5% |
| | | Burgos | no | 7.2% |
| | | Cordoba | no | 12.2% |
| | | Las Palmas | no | 7.1% |
| | | Segovia | no | |
| | | Zaragoza | no | 5.1% |
| | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | 23.9% |
| 2017 | Denmark | Gdansk | no | 19.1% |
| | | Katowice | no | 23.5% |
| | | Lublin | no | 25.4% |
| | | Warszawa | no | 19.4% |
| | Paphos | yes | | |
| 2018 | Cyprus | Limassol | no | 9.3% |
| | | Nicosia | no | |
| | | Leeuwarden | yes | 8.3% |
| | Netherlands | Eindhoven | no | 5.9% |
| 2019 | Italy | Maastricht | no | 10.1% |
| | | Malta | yes | 6.0% |
| | | Matera | yes | 3.1% |
| | | Cagliari | no | 19.5% |
| | | Lecce | no | 23.5% |
| | | Perugia | no | 16.6% |
| | Bulgaria | Siena | no | |
| 2020 | Croatia | Ravenna | no | 2.1% |
| | | Plovdiv | yes | 11.9% |
| | | Sofia | no | 9.1% |
| | | Varna | no | 9.8% |
| | Ireland | Veliko Tarnovo | no | 28.5% |
| | | Rijeka | yes | 12.9% |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | |
| 2021 | Romania | Osijek | no | 14.2% |
| | | Pula | no | 6.8% |
| | | Galway | yes | 8.9% |
| | | Limerick | no | 6.2% |
| | Greece | Waterford | no | 4.5% |
| | | Timisoara | yes | 13.3% |
| | | Cluj Napoca | no | 21.6% |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Bucharest | no | 10.3% |
| | | Baia Mare | no | 3.3% |
| | | Elefsina | yes | |
| | Greece | Kalamata | no | 4.2% |
| | | Rhodes | no | |
| | Luxembourg | Kaunas | yes | 13.5% |
| | | Klaipeda | no | 8.2% |
| | | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | |

Source: Eurostat

ECOC Data - Percentage of Total Budget Spent on Culture by Bidding City

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | Median Value |
|------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|--------------|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | | 12.38% | 12.31% | 11.37% | 10.67% | 11.67% | | | | | | | 11.67% |
| | | Cordoba | no | | 4.64% | 5.13% | 4.92% | 5.40% | 5.64% | | | | | | | 5.13% |
| | | Las Palmas | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Zaragoza | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Segovia | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Burgos | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | | 4.32% | 5.24% | 4.73% | 4.83% | 5.53% | | | | | | | 4.83% |
| 2017 | Denmark | Gdańsk | no | | 4.22% | 4.97% | 4.56% | 4.02% | 4.80% | | | | | | | 4.56% |
| | | Katowice | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Lublin | no | | 1.99% | 2.62% | 2.50% | 3.11% | 4.01% | | | | | | | 2.62% |
| | Cyprus | Warszawa | no | | 4.00% | 5.00% | 6.00% | 5.00% | 4.00% | | | | | | | 5.00% |
| | | Aarhus | yes | | 2.94% | 2.78% | 2.66% | 2.46% | 2.45% | | | | | | | 2.66% |
| | | Sonderborg | no | | | 3.40% | 3.40% | 3.30% | 4.30% | 3.50% | | | | | | 3.40% |
| 2018 | Netherlands | Paphos | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Limassol | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Nicosia | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5.70% |
| | Malta | Leeuwarden | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4.50% |
| | | Maastricht | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Eindhoven | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Valletta | yes | | 0.34% | 0.23% | 0.30% | 0.39% | 0.38% | 0.41% | 0.43% | | | | | | 0.38% |
| 2019 | Bulgaria | Plovdiv | yes | | | | | | 3.79% | 3.27% | 3.24% | 3.43% | 4.05% | 4.20% | | 3.61% |
| | | Sofia | no | | | | | | 2.22% | 2.18% | 2.18% | 2.25% | 3.25% | 3.49% | | 2.24% |
| | | Varna | no | | | | | | 2.60% | 2.70% | 2.90% | 2.90% | | | | 2.90% |
| | | Veliko Turnovo | no | | | | | | 7.00% | 9.00% | 10.00% | 13.00% | 9.00% | | | 9.00% |
| | Italy | Matera | yes | | | | | | 1.70% | 1.70% | 2.20% | 2.80% | 3.00% | | | 2.20% |
| | | Cagliari | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Lecce | no | | | | | | 3.26% | 3.08% | 2.97% | 2.71% | 2.44% | 5.37% | | 3.03% |
| | | Perugia | no | | | | | | 4.37% | | 3.88% | 3.26% | | | | 3.57% |
| | | Siena | no | | | | | | 10.15% | 10.88% | 10.09% | 6.28% | | | | 10.09% |
| | | Ravenna | no | | | | | | 9.50% | 9.10% | 8.90% | 8.80% | 7.50% | | | 8.90% |
| 2020 | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10.80% |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 16.23% |
| | | Osijek | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 9.21% |
| | Ireland | Pula | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Galway | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4.40% |
| | | Limerick | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5.00% |
| | | Waterford | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2021 | Greece | Elefsina | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5.52% |
| | | Kalamata | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2.44% |
| | | Rhodes | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1.50% |
| | Romania | Timisoara | yes | | | | | | 1.40% | 1.60% | 2.20% | 2.50% | 2.60% | | | 2.20% |
| | | Cluj Napoca | no | | | | | | 0.18% | 0.62% | 0.60% | 0.67% | 1.06% | 1.28% | | 0.65% |
| | | Bucharest | no | | | | | | 2.60% | 2.87% | 2.66% | 3.33% | 6.22% | | | 2.87% |
| | | Baia Mare | no | | | | | | 1.85% | 2.33% | 2.46% | 2.49% | 2.67% | | | 2.46% |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Kaunas | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5.00% |
| | Klaipeda | no | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2.75% |
| | Luxembourg | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10.46% |

Source: City Bid Books

ECOC Data - Cultural Diversity and Characteristics

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | Diversity Characteristic | Diversity Score |
|------|-------------|------------------|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | film, music, art, cinema, theatre | 5 |
| | | Burgos | no | heritage, museums, gastronomy, cathedrals | 4 |
| | | Cordoba | no | heritage, museums, floral festivals | 3 |
| | | Las Palmas | no | libraries, art, music, dance | 4 |
| | | Segovia | no | heritage, museums, cinema | 3 |
| | Poland | Zaragoza | no | heritage, folklore, gastronomy | 3 |
| | | Wroclaw | yes | heritage, universities, theatre, film, games | 5 |
| | | Gdansk | no | universities, museums, cultural events | 3 |
| | | Katowice | no | science, music, culture festivals | 3 |
| | | Lublin | no | heritage, film, theatre | 3 |
| | | Warsaw | no | media, museums, music, festivals | 4 |
| 2017 | Denmark | Aarhus | yes | music, science, universities, theatre | 4 |
| | | Sonderborg | no | art, science | 2 |
| | Cyprus | Paphos | yes | heritage, museums, art | 3 |
| | | Limassol | no | heritage, carnival | 2 |
| | | Nicosia | no | museums, galleries | 2 |
| 2018 | Netherlands | Leeuwarden | yes | heritage, museums, music, cinema, media | 5 |
| | | Eindhoven | no | universities, art, museum, festivals | 4 |
| | | Maastricht | no | heritage, universities, museums, festivals | 4 |
| | Malta | Valletta | yes | art, music, galleries | 3 |
| 2019 | Italy | Matera | yes | heritage, film | 2 |
| | | Cagliari | no | heritage, museums, libraries | 3 |
| | | Lecce | no | heritage, museums | 2 |
| | | Perugia | no | universities, music | 2 |
| | | Siena | no | heritage, art | 2 |
| | Bulgaria | Ravenna | no | heritage, music | 2 |
| | | Plovdiv | yes | heritage, iconography, galleries, museums literature, | 5 |
| | | Sofia | no | art, cinema, theatres, | 3 |
| | | Varna | no | heritage, music, theatre | 2 |
| | | Veliko Tarnovo | no | heritage, museums | 2 |
| 2020 | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | heritage, carnivals | 2 |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | heritage | 1 |
| | | Osijek | no | heritage, music | 2 |
| | | Pula | no | heritage | 1 |
| | Ireland | Galway | yes | heritage, art, music, dance, film | 5 |
| | | Limerick | no | culture (overall) | 1 |
| | | Waterford | no | heritage, film | 2 |
| 2021 | Romania | Timisoara | yes | heritage, art, dance, film, theatre, | 5 |
| | | Cluj-Napoca | no | art, music, destivals | 3 |
| | | Baia Mare | no | museums | 1 |
| | | Bucharest | no | art, festivals | 2 |
| | Greece | Elsefina | yes | art, cinema, music | 3 |
| | | Kalamata | no | heritage, dance | 2 |
| | | Rhodes | no | heritage | 1 |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Kaunas | yes | heritage, universities museums, theatres, circus | 5 |
| | | Klaipeda | no | heritage, museums, music, film | 4 |
| | Luxembourg | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | museums, music, theatre | 3 |

Source: Official City Websites, ECOC Bidbooks, Wikipedia

ECOC Data - Economic Factors

| Year | Country | City | ECOC Winner | Unemployment | % Employed In Foreign Companies |
|------|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 2016 | European Union (current composition) | | | 8.6 | 15.28 |
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| | | Burgos | no | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| | | Cordoba | no | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| | | Las Palmas | no | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| | | Segovia | no | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| | | Zaragoza | no | 19.6 | 12.2 |
| 2016 | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | 6.2 | 27.57 |
| | | Gdansk | no | 6.2 | 27.57 |
| | | Katowice | no | 6.2 | 27.57 |
| | | Lublin | no | 6.2 | 27.57 |
| | | Warsaw | no | 6.2 | 27.57 |
| | | Aarhus | yes | 5.7 | 19.71 |
| 2017 | Denmark | Sonderborg | no | 5.7 | 19.71 |
| | | Paphos | yes | 11.1 | 6.02 |
| | Cyprus | Limassol | no | 11.1 | 6.02 |
| | | Nicosia | no | 11.1 | 6.02 |
| 2018 | Netherlands | Leeuwarden | yes | 4.9 | 16.27 |
| | | Eindhoven | no | 4.9 | 16.27 |
| | | Maastricht | no | 4.9 | 16.27 |
| | Malta | Vallletta | yes | | |
| 2019 | Italy | Matera | yes | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | | Cagliari | no | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | | Lecce | no | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | | Perugia | no | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | | Siena | no | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | | Ravenna | no | 11.2 | 8.02 |
| | Bulgaria | Plovdiv | yes | 6.2 | 16.29 |
| | | Sofia | no | 6.2 | 16.29 |
| | | Varna | no | 6.2 | 16.29 |
| | | Veliko Tarnovo | no | 6.2 | 16.29 |
| 2020 | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | 11.2 | 13.32 |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | 11.2 | 13.32 |
| | | Osijek | no | 11.2 | 13.32 |
| | | Pula | no | 11.2 | 13.32 |
| | Ireland | Galway | yes | 6.7 | 25.22 |
| | | Limerick | no | 6.7 | 25.22 |
| 2021 | Romania | Waterford | no | 6.7 | 25.22 |
| | | Timisoara | yes | 4.9 | 26.89 |
| | | Cluj-Napoca | no | 4.9 | 26.89 |
| | | Baia Mare | no | 4.9 | 26.89 |
| | Greece | Bucharest | no | 4.9 | 26.89 |
| | | Elsefina | yes | 21.5 | 5.15 |
| | | Kalamata | no | 21.5 | 5.15 |
| | | Rhodes | no | 21.5 | 5.15 |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Kaunas | yes | 7.1 | 14.9 |
| | | Klaipeda | no | 7.1 | 14.9 |
| | Luxembourg | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | 5.5 | 39.45 |

Cities plotting **below** the European Union average

Cities plotting **above** the European Union average

Source: Eurostat

ECOC Data - Tourist Arrivals in 2013, 2015 & 2017

| Year | Country | City | ECoC Winner | 2013 | 2015 | 2017 |
|------|-------------|------------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2016 | Spain | San Sebastian | yes | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 4 |
| | | Burgos | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Cordoba | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Las Palmas | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Segovia | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Zaragoza | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 4 |
| | Poland | Wroclaw | yes | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 4 |
| | | Gdansk | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Katowice | no | Range 2 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Lublin | no | N/A | N/A | Range 2 |
| | | Warsaw | no | N/A | N/A | Range 4 |
| 2017 | Denmark | Aarhus | yes | Range 1 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Sonderborg | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | Cyprus | Paphos | yes | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Limassol | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Nicosia | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| 2018 | Netherlands | Leeuwarden | yes | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Eindhoven | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Maastricht | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | Malta | Valletta | yes | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2019 | Italy | Matera | yes | Range 1 | Range 1 | Range 1 |
| | | Cagliari | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Lecce | no | Range 3 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Perugia | no | Range 3 | Range 3 | Range 3 |
| | | Siena | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | Bulgaria | Ravenna | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Plovdiv | yes | Range 1 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Sofia | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 3 |
| | | Varna | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Veliko Tarnovo | no | Range 1 | Range 1 | Range 1 |
| 2020 | Croatia | Rijeka | yes | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Dubrovnik | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Osijek | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 3 |
| | | Pula | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | Ireland | Galway | yes | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | Limerick | no | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | Waterford | no | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2021 | Romania | Timisoara | yes | Range 1 | Range 1 | Range 2 |
| | | Cluj-Napoca | no | Range 1 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Baia Mare | no | Range 1 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Bucharest | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 3 |
| | Greece | Elsefina | yes | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| | | Kalamata | no | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 2 |
| | | Rhodes | no | Range 4 | Range 4 | Range 4 |
| 2022 | Lithuania | Kaunas | yes | N/A | N/A | Range 3 |
| | | Klaipeda | no | N/A | N/A | Range 3 |
| | | Esch-sur-Alzette | yes | Range 2 | Range 2 | Range 2 |

| Colour | No of tourists |
|---------|------------------------|
| Range 1 | 0 - 936,837 |
| Range 2 | 936,837 - 1,875,080 |
| Range 3 | 1,875,080 - 3,227,445 |
| Range 4 | 3,227,445 - 35,646,592 |

Source: Eurostat - Arrivals at tourist accommodation establishments* by NUTS 2 regions

* Hotels; holiday and other short-stay accommodation; camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks*