



Europeanisation through the European Capital of Culture Programme

A Comparative Study of Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015

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Abstract

This thesis aims to examine Europeanisation through the European Union's cultural initiative European Capital of Culture (ECoC). The thesis understands Europeanisation as an ideology to promote the unification of the diversity of European cultures as well as foster the feeling of belonging to a united European cultural space. The ECoC programme is therefore interpreted as a political instrument to develop Europeanisation further.

The intentions of former ECoC cities to promote Europeanisation will be examined by analysing the applications to host the ECoC of two cities. The objective of this study is to approach the issue of Europeanisation through a comparative study of Umeå and Pilsen, which were designated to host the ECoC event in 2014 and 2015. This thesis investigates how Europeanisation has been carried out and how the implementation of Europeanisation varies depending on the level of Europeanness of the cities prior to the application process. The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on social – constructivism as an approach to Europeanisation, which implies that the cities in question experienced transformations during the application process to host the ECoC, in order to become more 'European'.

The conclusion drawn in this thesis consists of the confirmation concerning variations of Europeanisation depending on the level of Europeanness prior to the application process. The cities in questions underwent alterations and due to that, Europeanisation occurred. Moreover, the conclusion touches upon the issue of the unification of European cultures and the European collective identity.

Keywords: Europeanisation, European Capital of Culture, European Cultural Space, Umeå2014, Pilsen2015

List of Abbreviations

CCS - Cultural and Creative Sector

EC - European Commission

ECoC - European Capital/City of Culture

EEC – European Economic Community

EP - European Parliament

EU - European Union

MS - Member States

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1. Introduction

The European Capital of Culture (ECoC) policy can be summarized as followed by Navraksiks, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport 2015:

“By providing opportunities for Europeans to meet and discover the great cultural diversity of our continent and to take a fresh look at our common history and values, the European Capitals of Culture promote mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue among citizens and increase their sense of belonging to a community.” (European Commission, *European Capitals of Culture: 30 years*, 2015: 1)

The European Commission (EC) designates cities to host the ECoC event, in order to facilitate intercultural collaborations between the EU member states as well as highlight the richness of cultural diversity and celebrate European cultures. For the nominated cities, the opportunity for urban regeneration, promoting international visibility and strengthening cultural diversity, is attainable (Garcia & Cox, 2013).

The preservation and promoting of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue among European Union (EU) citizens is one of the founding principles of the EU's cultural policy. The EU attempts to accommodate the neglect of constructing a common European culture and shared meanings when the European project was established, by utilising the ECoC initiative as an ideological instrument for further Europeanisation (Lähdesmäki, 2014: 14). The designation of a city to become a representative of the idea of a common European culture and identity is formulated around the question whether the EU is constructed around a political or cultural basis. Is intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between EU citizens an indicator for further development of common European policy, and, therewith the emerge of a common European cultural space and shared layers of meanings? And if so, is the construction of a common European space achievable through Europeanisation? (Lähdesmäki, 2014: 13-14). These questions are utilised as guidance for the development of the present thesis.

1.2 Aim and Research Question

This thesis intends to explore Europeanisation through the ECoC initiative. The ECoC is the most successful cultural initiative of the EU's culture and creative sector (CCS), promoting Europeanisation throughout Europe (Garcia & Cox, 2013). This is done, by the EU imposing specific criteria upon the candidate cities. The criteria *European Dimension* and *City of Citizens* are facilitated in Article 4 of the Decision 1622/2006/EC:

1. As regards 'The European Dimension', the program shall:
 - (a) foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from the relevant Member States and other Member States in any cultural sector;
 - (b) highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe;
 - (c) bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore.
2. As regards 'City and Citizens' the program shall:
 - (a) foster the participation of the citizens living in the city and its surroundings and raise their interest as well as the interest from citizens from abroad;
 - (b) be sustainable and be an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city.

However, besides the criteria mentioned above, the commonly agreed content on the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* criteria are absent, meaning that the candidate cities have the freedom to interpret and decide upon themselves the rightful meanings of the criteria and how to implement them into the applications and the cultural programmes.

The criteria are considered to be a political instrument, utilised by the EU, to promote further Europeanisation. The EC designates two cities each year to host the ECoC based on how the criteria set out by the EU were implemented into the cultural programmes and applications. Consequently, the cities have to undergo a process of Europeanisation (in order to become more 'European') during the application procedure to be able to host the ECoC. The implementation of the criteria and therewith the process of Europeanisation varies from candidate city to candidate city (European Commission, *European Capitals of Culture: 30 years*, 2015). By analysing the criteria *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* in the applications of two candidate cities, Europeanisation can be investigated. Moreover, the implementations of the criteria determine the level of Europeanness of the cities and the ambition for further European cultural integration.

The aim of the thesis is to examine the process of Europeanisation by reference to ECoC applications of two different candidate cities. The cities which have been selected as cases are Umeå in Sweden and Pilsen in the Czech Republic. Umeå hosted the ECoC in 2014 and Pilsen in 2015.

The research question is therefore stated as followed: *1. How are the European Dimension and City and Citizens criteria utilised as an instrument of Europeanisation in the European Capital of Culture applications of Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015?*

Additional questions will be asked in order to attain an in-depth understanding of the research field:

2. How were the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* criteria interpreted in the applications of Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015?
3. What are the similarities and differences between both cities regarding the interpretations of the criteria?

1.3 Disposition

The previous section has laid out the purpose of the thesis. The next section provides the background of both the ECoC initiative and the application procedures for an in-depth understanding of the research field. The following chapter provides a previous research section in the field of Europeanisation, European cultural policy and studies regarding the ECoC initiative. Thereafter, the theoretical framework of the thesis will be introduced. Chapter 5 consists of the methodology discussion as well as the presentation of the selected material. It furthermore features the key advantages of utilising Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015 as a comparative case study. Chapter 6 of the thesis consists of the analysis of the prior presented material in order to answer the research questions, followed by a comparison of the findings regarding the criteria *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* in the applications of Umeå and Pilsen. The last chapter finalizes the results of the analysis and concludes the study. Moreover, further studies will be presented.

2. Background

In this section of the thesis, the background of how European City/Capital of Culture came into being and the significance of cultural actions within the EU will be presented.

Legend has it that the idea of the ECoC initiative was born between Greece's Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri and her French counterpart, Jack Lang, at the airport in Athens in 1985. Both ministers had participated in a meeting of the European Economic Community (EEC) cultural ministers earlier and recognised the lack of cultural activity and triviality of cultural politics within Europe. Hence, the concept of ECoC was created in order to facilitate further cultural integration. Athens, Greece was designated the first European City of Culture in 1985 and Melina Mercouri inaugurated the programme with the words: "It is time for our (cultural ministers) voices to be heard as loud as that of the technocrats. Culture, art and creativity are no less important than technology, commerce and the economy" (European Commission, *European Capital of Cultures: the road to success. From 1985 to 2010*, 2009: 4).

2.1 The History of the ECoC

The history of the ECoC is divided into three different phases, reflecting the modification of EU decisions regarding the EU cultural programme:

The first phase commenced with the beginning of the cultural programme in 1985 and lasted until 1996. During this period, the ECoC (formerly known as the European City of Culture) did not have a legislative framework and was considered a purely intergovernmental activity. At this point, the EEC did not have any further ambitions to promote a common European cultural space. The original concept of the ECoC intended to promote 'high' art in the 12 established EEC member states, which would allocate the title of the 'European City of Culture' among themselves (Garcia & Cox, 2013).

Regarding Glasgow's success story in 1990 in terms of economic and urban regeneration, a new phase of the ECoC initiative was declared and defined in Conclusion 90/C 162/01, allowing other European countries "basing themselves on the principle of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law" to nominate themselves to become the host of the EU cultural

initiative, 'European Cultural Month'. This programme was similar to ECoC but lasted for a shorter period of time (Garcia & Cox, 2013). The 'European Cultural Month' programme was abolished by 2003, due to the following Enlargement of the EU in 2004.

The second phase lasted from 1997-2004 and included the implementation of selection criteria and the bidding process, in order to promote geographical diversity and balance among EU cities and non-EU cities. The newly established selection criteria were defined in Conclusion 92/C 336/02. Moreover, for the first time, culture and cultural actions were facilitated in an EU Treaty. In Article 128 in the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty), the European Union cultural policy was legitimized as followed: "The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore." (Treaty on European Union, 1992, Article 128). In addition to that, the significance of acknowledging cultural diversity and shared cultural heritage was recognised. Hence, the first generation of an EU cultural programme emerged, known as *Kaleidoscope* (Garcia & Cox, 2013).

The third phase of the ECoC lasted from 2005 - 2019 and will be important for the present thesis since Umeå²⁰¹⁴ and Pilsen²⁰¹⁵ are selected as a multiple-case study to investigate the process of Europeanisation. The first legislative framework of the ECoC was introduced in 1999 as a joint decision of the European Parliament (EP) and the Council, and facilitated the ECoC programme for 2005 - 2019 as a Community action (Decision 1419/1999/EC). It was decided that the ECoC has to become a cultural project with a European dimension, meaning that the nominated cities have to promote European cultural cooperations.

Furthermore, the EU's cultural programme, *Culture 2000*, was established, in order to facilitate access to European culture within the EU to as many citizens as possible. *Culture 2000* superseded the first-generation of the EU's cultural programme *Kaleidoscope* and is considered being a significant step for the institutionalization of culture within the EU. Additionally, cultural events, including European heritage laboratories¹, art prizes and

¹ The European Heritage Label (EHL) as well as EU Heritage Days and Prize were established in 2013. The EHL is one of the most successful cultural initiatives of the EU nowadays and promotes European values, norms, ideals and most significant shared history and cultural integration (European Commission. *Creative Europe - European Heritage Label*).

researched-focused events established (Staiger, 2013: 31). The current EU's cultural programme is known as *Creative Europe* and the EU's framework to promote cultural policy.

2.2 Application Process

The current legal basis for the designation of the ECoC 2020 until 2033 is Decision 445/2014/EU and the ECoC hosts Rijeka (Croatia) and Galway (Ireland) 2020, are the first cities designated in accordance with the Decision. However, because the present thesis focuses on Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015, Decision 1622/2006/EC will be introduced in order to present the application procedure relevant for the thesis.

The application procedure commenced six years in advance. Eligible member states (two different member states each year) usually published a call for applications, resulting in cities competing with each other on a national level to become ECoC (Rampton et al., 2011). The candidate cities submitted their applications which had to include specific criteria, such as the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizen* criteria. In accordance with the EU Decision 1622/2006/EC (Article 6), a Selection Panel was established, which consisted of seven members nominated by the European institutions and six people appointed by the member state. The members had to be independent cultural experts, with no conflicts of interests. The Selection Panel agreed upon a shortlist of cities (two cities in general) which have presented a successful application and those cities were thereafter able to submit a further developed version of the application (Rampton et al., 2011). The candidate cities were able to present the application in front of the Selection Panel and answered questions regarding further planning of the cultural event. The Selection Panel recommended, at least four years before the start of the ECoC event, one city to host the ECoC to the EC. The city was formally designated shortly after.

The Swedish cities which had submitted an application to host the ECoC 2014 were Gävle, Uppsala, Lund and Umeå. The Selection Panel agreed on the application of Umeå and Lund to be examined in greater depth, resulting in Umeå to become the ECoC 2014. The application of Umeå titled *Curiosity and Passion - The Art of Co-Creation* was, according to the Selection Panel, judged to respond best to the objectives of the ECoC policy. Umeå is the smallest and northernmost city ever to host ECoC (Åkerlund & Müller, 2012).

The Czech Republic was able to host the ECoC in 2015. The cities which submitted an application were Hradec Králové, Ostrava and Pilsen, whereas Ostrava and Pilsen were shortlisted. Eventually, Pilsen was designated to host the ECoC 2015, due to the achievement of an “excellent balance between cultural project and regeneration of the city” (European Commission, *final selection report*, 2010: 3).

During the four years between the designation of the city and the commence of the ECoC event, the EC, in accordance with a newly established Monitoring and Advisory Panel, supervised the implementation of the EU objectives and criteria into the cultural programmes of the designated cities. The Monitoring and Advisory Panel consisted of seven members nominated by the EC and one observer of Umeå, respectively Pilsen in the case of the thesis. The panel convened with the representatives of the city in question on two occasions to offer advice and assist in developing a “high-quality programme with a strong European dimension” (Decision 1622/2006/EC, Article 10). Based on the reports of the panel, the city in question received a prize in honour of Melina Mercouri, which included a reward of 1.5 Million Euro to each city. Umeå, as well as Pilsen, were awarded the Melina Mercouri prize, due to successful implementation of the criteria *European Dimension* and *City of Citizens* as well as recommendations made by the Selection Panel (European Commission, 2013; 2014).

3. Previous Research

The previous research chapter provides a brief presentation of literature which has contribute to the research study, including debates within the field of Europeanisation. This section includes, moreover, literature presenting the central standpoints of European cultural integration, including the ‘united in diversity’ rhetoric and in addition to that, the significance of cultural events, such as the ECoC, to promote cultural integration.

3.1 Europeanisation

The present thesis positions itself within the field of Europeanisation research. The study of European integration and Europeanisation became a significant site for debates in the 1950's and has influenced the academic discipline of International Relations and European Studies to a great extent (Rosamond, 2000: 10). Europeanisation is a much-debated concept with a variety of definitions referring to changes occurring in political and social spheres within the EU and countries located outside the EU (Schmale, 2010: 2). Olsen (2002) argued that Europeanisation refers to a multidimensional process of change, which extends beyond EU's institutions and emphasises the export of the EU model throughout the entire world. Herewith, Europeanisation as a process is emphasised (Ladrech 1994: 69).

Radaelli is one of the widely recognised scholars in the field of Europeanisation and proposed following definition of Europeanisation:

“Processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘way of doing things’ and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidate in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structure and public policies” (Radaelli 2003: 30).

This definition stresses the significance of change and EU policy-making; however, it does not include the development of a European common culture and identity beyond the European dimension. The transfer of cultural goods, identities and policy between European countries, without the involvement of the EU, are not covered by the definition (Radaelli 2003: 31). Börzel (1999) furthermore, defines Europeanisation as the process of power transformations between the EU and its member states.

It is important noting that the concept is primarily used in relation to foreign policy, enlargement of the EU (European integration) and adaptation of EU politics and regulations impact on domestic policy systems of the EU member states (Ladrech, 1994, Olsen, 2002).

According to Börzel and Risse (2003), domestic changes emerge due to nation-states responding to the pressure of adaption, meaning that states recognise incompatibility of some sort between European-level politics and domestic-level politics, resulting in pressure to adapt specific politics which results in the Europeanisation of politics, policies or polities. This is commonly known as the top-down approach. In the present thesis, however, the bottom-up

approach of Europeanisation will be applied, which acknowledges changes occurring on a local level, meaning that local communities initiate the process of Europeanisation (Radaelli, 2003 :51)

According to Sassatelli (2008), Europeanisation is a concept referring to societal transformation and reconfiguration of cultures. Moreover, Sassatelli (2009) examines the role of the EU's cultural policy within the process of Europeanisation and focuses on the establishment of a common European cultural space through a bottom-up process. As a result of this, the social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation is emphasised as the creation of a common cultural space is considered being a social construction in order to highlight European unity. Social – constructivism in connection with Europeanisation focuses on the cognitive component and the logic of appropriateness, meaning that changes on a local level occur due to differentiation between the domestic and European norms, values, ideas and policies (Börzel & Risse, 2000). Regarding the present thesis as an example, municipalities, which host the ECoC, are not considered being European but to undergo the process of becoming European through hosting the ECoC programme, which implies the process of Europeanisation.

3.2 Cultural Integration and the ECoC Initiative

In policy discourse regarding cultural politics, the EU relies upon affective rhetoric, e.g. 'European identity', 'a common cultural heritage' and 'unity in diversity' in order to symbolize similarities and unity among the EU and its citizens. The EU slogan 'unity in diversity', emphasises the significance of cultural integration. According to Delanty and Rumford (2005), the term 'diversity' refers to the variety of cultures within the EU, including the aim of EU cultural policy to consolidate European values, ideas and norms. It furthermore captures the logic of cultural Europeanisation, aiming to maintain a balance between 'inner unity' and the diversity of identities and cultures within the EU (Delanty & Rumford, 2005: 58-60). Shore (2000) argues further, that the term 'unity in diversity' highlights the importance of the diversity of cultures within the EU.

The EU does not yet define the concept of culture, and due to that, cultural integration within the EU is an undetermined concept. Patel (2013) argues, that the current EU's cultural policy in reference to the ECoC initiative intends to address the lack of cultural legitimacy and

contributes therewith to the overall discussion of the EU's democratic deficit. By utilising the ECoC events as a political instrument to develop further Europeanisation, the legitimacy for further cultural integration will be achievable through the establishment of a common European cultural space.

In order to conceptually construct the contemporary meanings of European culture, the historical aspects and narratives of European's past, and therewith, the construction of European culture, is significant. Culture is considered to be fluid and negotiable, meaning that culture cannot be defined by certain classifications and is located in a constant transformation process (Delanty & Rumford, 2005: 104). Culture expresses itself in a variety of expressions, e.g. language, values and norms and is a dynamic concept which makes it rather challenging to set in context with 'Europe'. However, the EU's cultural policy utilises the concept and metaphor 'European cultural space' to address European culture without defining it (Sassatelli, 2008: 230). According to Sassatelli (2008), the ECoC initiative is the most direct attempt of the EU's cultural policy to create a common European cultural space through the implementation of the ECoC programme. Moreover, the ECoC programme enables European municipalities to pursue individual objectives and different approaches regarding the *European Dimension* and *City of Citizens* criteria through minimal regulations and directives. As a result, the European cultural space is held together by diversity rather than findings of a common cultural content (Sassatelli, 2009: 107).

According to Ifversen (2002), the concept of identity plays a key role when aiming to define European culture. EU citizens are loyal to their cultural identity rather than authority or nation-states. However, the EU lacks a common European culture and therefore, European awareness. Due to European cultural diversity, the European member states and therewith its citizens tend to stay without the need to identify with a common European culture, considering that the national culture and identity are superior. Shore (2000: 16-18) argues further, that cultural elements such as language, cultural heritage and history tend to separate member states and emphasises cultural diversity.

The EU has been very cautious not solely to promote unity but also to mention cultural diversity when referring to European culture. Tuuli Lähdesmäki's (2010) four strategies to represent cultural diversity in the context of the ECoC initiative is, therefore, significant for the further research. The first strategy consists of the significance of multicultural layers of history, stressing the location of the city as a historical meeting place. The city is presented as a multicultural meeting-place for a variety of different nationalities and cultural identities, resulting in fostering cultural dialogue and interaction. The second strategy involves

representing cultural diversity by reference to contemporary art and youth culture. Hereby, the city creates the contemporary meaning of Europe through culture. The next strategy refers to the beginning of the cultural programme and presenting the ‘high’ art, followed by the last strategy of representing the ‘Other’. ‘Otherness’ as a product of cultural diversity has been present in the field of social science. Regarding previous ECoC cultural programmes, ethnic and other minorities and concomitant conflicts which emerged due to the lack of unity within those areas, are for the most part absent in the ECoC cultural programme. Different ethnicities and immigrants are instead presented in positive multicultural terms (Lähdesmäki, 2010: 38). Moreover, according to Lähdesmäki (2014), the implementation of the ECoC initiative at the local level includes a variety of advantages for the local, regional and national stakeholders. Due to that, Europeanisation is understood as a bottom-up process deriving from the national societies, allowing the citizens to bring forward particular objectives, mainly consisting of culture-led regeneration of the city as well as human and economic growth (Sassatelli, 2009; Lähdesmäki, 2014). According to Palonen (2010), the EU utilises the ECoC as a political instrument for the development of further cultural integration. The EU takes profits in creating a common European cultural space and foster common cultural heritage, resulting in beneficial marketing and European awareness. The EU, however, formulates the criteria to host the ECoC, and due to that, the Europeanisation in context with the ECoC programme cannot solely be considered a bottom-up process. Moreover, local and regional authorities are being brought into direct contact with an EU programme, assuming Europeanisation in the form of a top-down invasion (Sassatelli, 2009: 82). However, due to the limited EU funding and regulations on how the criteria have to be implemented, the Europeanisation process is treated as a bottom-up process in the present thesis.

4. Theoretical framework

In order to explore the process of Europeanisation through the ECoC initiative, the theoretical framework plays an irreplaceable role as it provides a ‘lens’ through which the phenomenon can be explained. In the field of social science, theories are necessary as it is impossible to conduct research in a theoretical vacuum. However, similar research can be conducted through different theoretical perspectives. The outcome of this study is, therefore, dependent on the

chosen theoretical framework and may differ when the issues are investigated based on a different theoretical position (Rosamond, 2000: 4-5). The choice of theory is motivated by the research objective, which reflects a particular epistemological and ontological understanding of the social world. This section provides an elaboration of the theoretical framework of social – constructivism as well as a brief discussion on the social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation.

4.1 Social - Constructivism

The present thesis is grounded in the social – constructivist set of assumptions. Social – constructivist theory developed within International Relations in order to explain developments arising in world politics, and entered the field of European Studies as a ‘spill-over’ (Risse, 2004: 144). The constructivist school of thought, stresses the significance of values, norms and identities within the processes of cultural and societal transformation in the political sphere (Delanty & Rumford, 2005: 7-12). Thomas Risse is one of the most widely recognised scholars in the field of social – constructivism and he proposed following definition:

“It is probably most useful to describe constructivism as based on social ontology which insist that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collective shared systems of meanings (culture in a broad sense)” (Risse, 2004: 145).

Risse emphasises herewith that individuals cannot be understood independently from their social context (Risse, 2004: 146). Constructivism treats interests, ideas, norms and identities as socially constructed derived from processes of social interaction. This also maintains that identities are depended on the actors and their operational context (Rosamond, 2000: 173). Social reality is thus, in the discursive context of constructivism, created by social actors and consequently subject to change by human practices.

According to Alexander Wendt (1992), international politics is constituted by shared knowledge, norms and ideas and therefore as well constructed by social actors. This, naturally, makes individuals dependent on the socially constructed structure. Structures cannot be investigated by themselves, the significance of the context as well as the relation between structure and social actors must be examined as well. This will be stressed in the thesis and the comparative research study below. Due to the scope of the thesis, the socio-cognitive dimension

of social – constructivism has to be recognised. The cognitive dimension concerns the cultural framework which produces social realities. It is, however, important to note, that those cultural frameworks are continuously constructed as well, which results in influencing and changing the processes and production of the social reality (Delanty & Rumford, 2005: 16-17).

4.2 Social - Constructivist approach to Europeanisation

Considering the aim of the thesis to define societal transformation within the EU, as well as investigating the ECoC initiative through the lens of Europeanisation, the social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation will function as the theoretical framework. The significance of social – constructivism as an approach to examine Europeanisation in social science and particular European Studies emerged as a response to neo – functionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism (Risse, 2004: 144). In order to define major societal transformations within Europe, the social – constructivist conception of Europeanisation is emphasised, due to the fact that changes in the nature of statehood cannot explain those processes. While the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism acknowledges social actors' interests for almost unalterable given, the social - constructivist approach to Europeanisation denies those assumptions (Risse, 2004: 146-147). When analysing European integration issues, however, neo – functionalism is important to be recognised. Comparable to the social – constructivist perspective of Europeanisation, neo – functionalist scholars such as Ernst Haas, recognise integration as a process rather than the outcome. Moreover, social actors are expected to undergo an alteration of interests if ideas and values inspire them to do so (Haas, 2001: 27-29). Risse (2004) stresses the significance of an agency-centred ontology concerning European integration theories such as neo – functionalism when conducting research concerning institution-building and thus the emergence of a new social structure. Social – constructivism would complement the research by emphasising that the interests and ideas of social actors cannot be exogenously given. Neo – functionalism has, however, not focused on value integration and international cooperation as much as social – constructivism. By emphasising the socially constructed structure of the EU and therewith the possibility of further Europeanisation due to social interaction and human practice, the social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation is suitable for the present thesis.

According to Delanty and Rumford (2005) moreover, Europe is socially constructed through projects, discourses and different models of society, which makes Europeanisation a process of social construction rather than one of nation-state building.

The social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation emphasises, furthermore, the dynamics of society and cultural awareness as well as the significance of European developments and societal transformation (Delanty & Rumford, 2005:7). The social – constructivism theory focuses on social ontologies, including collective identity formations, ideas, norms, intersubjective meaning, and rules. Those features are able to be employed in the further research of Europeanisation and therefore, are significant for the analysis of the empirical material (Christiansen et al., 2001: 3). Social – constructivism implies, moreover, that social actors do not exist independently from their social surroundings and social reality. Those social realities define individuals and their identity, whom are embedded in various social structures (Risse, 2004: 145-146). This means further, that the EU is socially and culturally constructed by social actors according to their interests and therefore, create a social ‘community’. Due to that, Europeanisation will solely be achievable when common interests are the basis to justify the pursuit of change (Risse, 2004: 146). The social actors’ interests and identities are shaped through social practices and are therefore subject to change as well depended on the social contexts (Checkel in Christiansen, 2001: 53).

Europeanisation, as understood in the thesis, has a transformative impact on European citizens and communities, meaning that social actors’ identities, interests and behaviour are variable and transformative and will consequently influence the social reality and structure of the EU. Due to that, the process of identity formations within the context of societal transformation is included in the social – constructivist perspective of Europeanisation (Christiansen et al., 2001: 2). Due to that, the social – constructivist approach to Europeanisation is further understood as the incorporation of new norms, values and contemporary meanings of Europe.

Moreover, in the social-constructivist theory emphasises the use of language when constructing social realities, which is an important part of the comparative study of the empirical material and applications of Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015. The meaning of social – constructivism lays in the construction of social reality, which is produced in language and social practice. Various scholars are emphasising especially language as a tool to create, justify and transform the social reality (Risse, 2003; Christiansen et al., 2001: 15).

4.2.1 Collective Identity Formations

The study of collective identity formations is a crucial component of social – constructivism and significant for the research in order to analyse the construction of a common European cultural space. In this present thesis, the notion of identity is approached from a constructivist perspective, which emphasises the cultural nature of identity (Bhabha, 1994). Moreover, the continuing construction of identities through cultural narratives is being highlighted in the context of the process of Europeanisation. Rumford and Delanty's (2005) conceptualisation of European identity introduces four aspects significant during the emerge of a collective identity. Those four aspects include the construction of identity by social actions, the importance of the narrative dimension involving a discursive form of self-recognition, the relationship between an individual and others, and the acknowledgement of multiple identities, meaning that an individual consists of several different identities.

Thomas Risse (2010) defines multiple identities in his concept of identity formations as separated identities, cross-cutting identities, nested identities and blended identities. Separated identities are personal identities which do not overlap and are separated from each other. Cross-cutting identities are defined as individuals identifying with a social group as a collective. However, individuals do not identify with another group as a collective. Nested identities include multiple identities layered on top of each other. Blended identities are significant for the Europeanisation process and imply that multiple identities are linked with one another and blend into each another (2010: 23-25). The idea of a collective cultural identity is embedded in the construction of the ECoC programme. The notion of cultural identity stresses the significance of shared historical heritage and the creation and renewing of cultural meanings through narrativisation. Moreover, unity is being established not just through shared experiences, but also through an intercultural dialogue of similarities and differences as social action (Lähdesmäki, 2014: 33). This thesis, however, does not focus on a collective European identity, but rather how the strive towards European unity contributes to alterations of the collective identity formations.

5. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology and research design are presented. Furthermore, potential limitations of the study are discussed as well as validity and reliability.

The research method utilised in this study is qualitative discourse analysis (DA). The DA research method emphasises the use of language, including attention to rhetorical details and the analysis of ensembles of ideas and concepts in form of ‘texts’ through which meanings of social reality are produced or reproduced. Consequently, the relationship between discourse, the ‘text’ itself, and the social reality within a particular context are emphasised in order to investigate the association between the text and the social context (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 335-341). Moreover, DA research method shares fundamental social – constructivist presumptions, including the understanding of the construction of the world through human interactions. The social reality is, therefore, constructed through discursive practice. According to this stance, DA is part of the broader social - constructivist school of thought and therefore useful in regard to the present research study.

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a variation of the DA and claims that social reality and meaning of the social world are created through language. Therefore, society should be examined through language as well. The importance to understand the surrounding context of the discourse, is stressed, meaning that phenomenon cannot be studied isolated from its context (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). By utilising CDA, the investigation of the relationship between language, power, ideology and social-cultural change is being investigated. As a result of this, linguistic choices as use of power will be examined (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 338-339). The use of language and linguistic choices are significant to recognise regarding the following analysis, due to the discourse constituting a particular view of social reality, meaning that the selected material aims to prevail upon other social actors in order to influence social reality (Bryman, 2016: 534).

The epistemological stance applied in this thesis is interpretivist due to the utilisation of qualitative research. The interpretative epistemological stance emphasises the hermeneutics approach, implying that human behaviour is a construction of social reality and therefore are human actions being considered meaningful (Bryman, 2016: 26). Moreover, the ontological position of the present thesis suggests that social entities should be perceived as social constructions that are established, formed, and influenced by social actors. The ontological

stance of constructionism challenges further the concept of culture and organisation being pre – given (Bryman, 2016:29-30).

To be able to answer the research question, a qualitative comparative research design will be applied in the analysis. A comparative research design entails the study of two or more cases using more or less similar methods (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 211-13). By using a comparative case study design involving cross-cultural research, the logic of comparison is embodied, which can be applied in a variety of situations (Bryman, 2016: 64-66). A comparative research design in the form of a multiple-case study will be utilised, in order to allow the investigation of processes of several cases. Moreover, an advantage of conducting a multiple-case research is the improvement of theory testing as well as the extensive descriptions and explanations of the social or political phenomenon compared to a single case study (Bryman, 2016: 64-66).

5.1 Selection of Cases

As the purpose of this research is to investigate the process of Europeanisation in the context of the ECoC initiative, the selection of case candidate cities is varied. The cities are required to display certain similarities in terms of the level of Europeanisation at the commencement of the application procedure and the desire for further European cultural integration. Herewith, the cases are selected based on the notion of typicality, meaning that similar characteristics have to be identified in order to legitimate the case study (Perry, 2011: 229).

The comparative research design in form the of a multi-case study is, therefore, conducted through the case selection of the city of Umeå in Sweden and the city of Pilsen in the Czech Republic. Umeå was designated ECoC in 2014 and Pilsen in 2015. Hence, the case selection is an appropriate choice, as both cities hold the title of the ECoC within two years, meaning that both cities experienced identical application and monitoring procedures in accordance with EU Decision 1622/2006/EC (European Commission, *European Capital of Culture – Fact sheet*).

The background information on both cities were obtained by searching the official web page of the EU cultural programme *Creative Europe* as well as corresponding documentation about ECoC 2014 and 2015.

Umeå is located in Västerbotten, the northern region in Sweden and inhabited a population of 112 000 people during the time of the application process. The city has historically been a centre for trade, engineering and forestry industry and is still an urban centre in the north of Sweden (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2015). Moreover, the city of Umeå prides themselves for providing a developed cultural infrastructure including museums, theatres, music venues and distinct subculture (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 9).

Pilsen is situated in West Bohemia and is the fourth largest city in the Czech Republic. The population of the city was approximately 170,000 inhabitants by the time of the ECoC event. Pilsen has a long industrial history and is known for Pilsen beer and Škoda automobile, which brought the city to international renown (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 66-67). Moreover, the Czech Republic is part of the historical West-East division of Europe, which indicates a dissimilarity on how European history is constructed in contrast to Umeå in Sweden.

The cases demonstrate similarities in terms of comparable objectives which include further recognition on the European level, urban regeneration and strengthening of the creative and cultural sector of the city. The strive for further recognition of the cities on a European level concerning cultural, political and economic cooperation is, however, most significant.

The selection of cases includes the recognition of differences in order for the research to be valid. Umeå and Pilsen differ in terms of social, cultural, economic and political history, partly due to the East-West division of Europe. While Umeå experienced social and economic growth in the recent years, Pilsen, as well as other post-communist European countries have undergone a process of economic and societal transformation, resulting in an economic decline due to the decrease of industrial production (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 70). As a result, Pilsen aimed to further develop the cultural and creative industries by hosting the ECoC. Umeå however, had strengthened its cultural infrastructure, and due to that, the cultural and creative sector was formerly developed.

The similarities and differences of the cases have influenced the implementation of the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* criteria in the applications of the cities (Lähdesmäki, 2014: 26). Due to the diversity of the cities, including historical, social, cultural and demographic differences, the comparison between former ECoC cities is rather difficult (Lähdesmäki, 2014:23). However, since the research question is attempting to investigate the Europeanisation process, a comparison is necessary in order to define the differences and similarities in the process of Europeanisation. For closer analysis and the limited scope of the

thesis, only two cities have been selected as cases, which enables a more detailed comparative study.

5.2 Empirical Material

In order to answer the research question, a variety of different sources have been selected to contribute valuable viewpoints to the chapter below. Hereby, the materials are produced at the EU as well as the local level.

First and foremost, material produced on the local level includes the application of Umeå: *Curiosity and Passion - the Art of Co-Creation* and the cultural programme. The city of Umeå itself constitutes the application as well as the cultural programme with the assistance of cultural experts, public society and in cooperation with cultural and political institutions throughout Sweden. The application can be found on 'Umeå2014' official web page. The application of the city of Pilsen: *Pilsen, Open Up* and the cultural programme will be analysed and discussed as well. The city of Pilsen formulated the application by itself as well as produced the cultural programme in cooperation with cultural experts, institutions and public society. The application can be found on 'Pilsen2015' official web page. It is, however, important noting that images occurring in the applications are not included in the analysis.

EU policy documents that will be included in the analysis consist of documents released by the Selection Panel and the Monitoring and Advisory Panel. Furthermore, the EU documents *Ex-Post Evaluation of the European Capital of Culture 2014 and 2015* will be reviewed in order to determine the outcome of the ECoC 2014 and 2015. Decision (EU) 1622/2006/EC, Article 4 will be utilised in order to define the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizen* criteria. The documents can be found on the official EU web page 'European Capital of Culture'.

The applications are written by art and cultural experts in cooperation with cultural institutions and communities of the representative city and inherently come with its line of interests. Nevertheless, the applications promote the ideas, ideals and cultural discourse which the city is aiming to materialise and visualise during the year of ECoC (Lähdesmäki, 2010). Furthermore, due to the scope of the thesis, only Umeå's and Pilsen's application will be analysed and discussed, making it difficult to state the developments of the perception of the process of Europeanisation in context with the ECoC initiative over time. However, the cases will be outlined as examples of how the Europeanisation processes can be analysed.

5.3 Reliability and Validity

When collecting and analysing data, the researcher has to reflect upon the issues of reliability and validity. The cases selected and data used in this present thesis can influence the outcome of the analysis significantly. Therefore, the researcher has to ensure that the study is valid and reliable (Bryman, 2016: 41- 42). By utilising a qualitative discourse analysis, subjectivity and overanalysing can be problematic. Due to the interpretation of the empirical material, the meanings of the texts can vary, depending on the researcher. Consequently, by reconstructing the case study, the outcome could differentiate from the current investigations to a certain degree due to the personal interest of the researcher. To ensure reliability to a greater extent and minimise the biases in the study, the procedures, which have been utilised during the case study, are presented as well as the collection of the empirical material.

The multiple-case study design is mostly considered being substantial regarding external validity than single case studies because it includes a variety of selected cases of a general phenomenon. Thus, comparative research achieves a greater generality (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 154). As pointed out by Yin however, case studies, which include a limited amount of different cases, do not have an adequate basis of generalisation, but rather the aim of analytical generalisation (Yin, 2018: 39-41), which is a form of external validity.

In order to ensure further validity, the inclusion of sources from the city in question and EU documentations of the selection process and the outcome of both cities are recognised. Herewith, validity will be constructed as well (Yin, 2018: 44).

6. Analysis

In the following section, the applications of Umeå2014 and Pilsen2015 to host the ECoC will be analysed in order to define how Europeanisation was realised. This is done by examining how the criteria *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* was implemented into the applications and cultural programmes of the cities in question. Moreover, the emerge of a common European cultural space and European identity will be investigated in order to define the objectives for further cultural integration, followed by a comparative discussion and presentation of the empirical findings regarding the differences and similarities of the Europeanisation process of both cities.

6.1 Umeå2014

The application of Umeå themed: *Curiosity and Passion - The Art of Co-Creation* emphasises Umeå's unique location at the "Northern tip of Europe" as well as in Sápmi², the homeland of the only indigenous people of Europe - the Sami. This is perhaps the most notable feature of the application: the inclusion of the Sami population. Therefore, the cultural programme is also structured around representing Sami culture and identity (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2015). The cultural programme and application focus to a great extent on the history, language, livelihood and most importantly culture of the Sami people, including projects and activities to discuss Sami related issues. The guiding concepts were summarized as 'the northern dimension', 'cultural diversity' and 'boundary-crossing culture' (Umeå Municipality, 2009:40).

In the application, the city of Umeå is described as a unique geographical location:

"Umeå is a special, unusual place. It represents distance and closeness, dark days, reflecting snow, the magic Aurora Borealis and light nights with plants growing around the clock. It is a

² Sápmi is the 'borderless' area in the northern region of Europe and extends over the countries Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, and inhabitants over five million people. However, only 80.000 - 100.000 people identify as Sami (Samer.se, *Antal Samer i Sápmi*).

place that enlightens from within a northern dimension. We understand how culture and nature can live and work together.” (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 8).

This statement portrays a unique region in the northernmost part of the continent that European citizens have yet to explore. By composing words such as ‘dark days’, ‘reflecting snow’ and ‘magic Aurora Borealis’, the application draws attention to the surroundings and landscape of Umeå. Moreover, by emphasising the ‘northern dimension,’ Umeå presents a different component of the European dimension, which has yet to be recognised.

The city of Umeå addresses furthermore objectives in the application, which are similar to the EU cultural policy intentions regarding reinforcing Europeanisation and cultural integration. Those objectives include “human growth, strengthen the role of culture as a driving force for sustainable development and reinforce the international relations and dimensions of cultural life.” (Umeå Municipality 2009: 11). The objectives are declared in recognition of the criteria set out by the EU. Sustainable development, economic growth and cultural-led urban regeneration are common objectives of the ECoC programme and Europeanisation.

6.1.1 European Dimension

The *European Dimension* is facilitated in Article 4 of Decision 1622/2006/EC and consists of criteria the candidate city must implement into the application in order to be designated ECoC. In general, the criteria measure the cooperation between European member states and the city in question, resulting in the establishment of European partnerships and intercultural collaborations (Sassatelli, 2009: 54). Moreover, the criteria imply to highlight the cultural diversity within the EU and bring common aspects of European cultures to the fore (Decision 1622/2006/EC, Article 4).

Umeå describes itself as ‘the Northern Room in the European Building’ and utilise its geographical location as something unprecedented. “We are confident that we have something to offer, together with the northern region, Sweden, Europe and the rest of the world: something surprising, unusual and important (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 7). The ‘northern dimension’ is, however, underlined throughout the application and cultural programme and directly connected to the *European Dimension* as a significant component. By interconnecting the northern dimension with the European dimension, Umeå expresses its ambitions for further Europeanisation. Simultaneously, Umeå demonstrates the significance of the ‘northern spirit’

in the 'European room'. By exposing the 'northern region' to the European member states, the opportunity for European intercultural collaborations emerged, which is beneficial for the northern regions, but also for European municipalities and European member states (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 8).

The strategy *Caught by Umeå* was implemented beforehand and contributed to international attention and increased tourism during the ECoC event. The approach implies a promotional tour through seven European cities to encourage intercultural collaborations and awaken interest for the ECoC 2014 in Umeå (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2015). The strategy was very successful and ensured the implementation of the *European Dimension* criteria by establishing further European collaborations as well as fostered cultural exchange, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. As a result, the process of Europeanisation emerged. This has been as well recognised in the final selection report: "Umeå had a very clear ambition to make the city and the North of Sweden more visible in Europe. Umeå had also shown good ambition for using culture as a major element in regional development" (European Commission, *final selection report*, 2009). Herewith, the Selection Panel acknowledges Umeå's well-considered application regarding the *European Dimension* criteria. Moreover, the majority of projects and activities in the cultural programme, supporting local or regional cultures, are promoted as 'European'. For instance, the cultural programme is structured around the Sami population, as being part of the local and regional culture, thus acknowledged as the only European indigenous people and therefore contribute to European cultural diversity, according to the EU slogan 'unity in diversity'.

"... Sami culture will be highlighted as part of the multiplicity of cultures existing in Europe. The Sami organisations in the region will invite indigenous and minority cultures from around the world to a thought-provoking and boundary-crossing cultural festival in 2014, featuring in-depth seminars on important future issues for these ethnic minorities." (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 23).

Umeå had the unique opportunity to present Sami culture and identity as part of the European narrative and cultural diversity. Moreover, the Sami population inhabits regions within the northern area, including Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, which resulted in a border-crossing collaboration between those countries and encouraged further Europeanisation through European cultural and political cooperation.

Congenial to the theme of the application *the art of co-creation* - the art of living together - the city of Umeå utilises the strategy of representing the 'Other' (in this case the Sami population) to portray cultural diversity within the EU. To represent ethnic and cultural minorities and their visual culture in order to highlight the exotic feeling of the city in question, is a well-known strategy to highlight cultural diversity and implement the *European Dimension* criteria (Lähdesmäki, 2010: 37-38). However, by focusing on the Sami population, the risk of misrepresenting the Sami culture and identity in order to satisfy the demands of the tourism industry and international media, is possible. The Selection Panel requested, therefore, close cooperation and open dialogue between the city of Umeå and Sami representatives³ (European Commission, *Report for the Second Monitoring*, 2013).

However, tension arose between the non-Sami population and the Sami population due to the primary focus on the Sami community and non-Sami people were excluded to some extent (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2015: 27-28). As a result, cross-cutting identity formations emerged, which challenge Europeanisation. The Sami culture and identity is, however, framed as a hybrid culture and indicates a blended identity formation which entails multiple identities linked and blended into one another, which furthermore emphasises Europeanisation.

The city of Umeå emphasises not only the Sami population as representing cultural diversity; moreover, migration and ethnicity are acknowledged in positive multicultural terms. Focusing on non-European cultures, ethnic and cultural minorities and migration issues in the application and cultural programme are characteristic for the implementation of the *European Dimension* criteria in the ECoC initiative (Sassatelli, 2009: 102-103). The city of Umeå - the smallest city to host the ECoC - was well aware of questions stated by the EU regarding migration, ethnicity and inequality and arranged, therefore, several projects and activities⁴ in collaboration with other European municipalities and communities to discuss and highlight the issues on an international level. In particular, equality, gender issues, and children's rights are topics which occur repetitively. Herewith, the city of Umeå positions itself as a representative of common European politics and democracy.

³ The Sami representatives in Umeå are: The Umeå Sami Association, the national Sami Association and the Sami Parliament.

⁴ Those projects are among others: an exhibition representing the topic 'Challenge power'; a Queer festival during summer 2014; the cultural centre 'prei', which started as a project for immigrant women.

The application focuses moreover on questions regarding global warming and environmental issues. Thus, Umeå addresses the importance of the northern regions on the European agenda regarding conflicts of natural resources and European climate politics (Umeå Municipality, 2009: 10). Moreover, Umeå calls upon international collaboration on questions regarding sustainable development and climate politics in the northern regions. Herewith, Umeå emphasised Europeanisation and participated in shaping a common European cultural space through international collaborations in questions regarding climate change. Moreover, the city of Umeå ensured herewith the implementation of the *European Dimension* criteria. The question on how to strengthen intercultural collaborations throughout Europe is answered as followed in the application:

“Working collaboratively on a regional, national and international level is a matter of which we have a great deal of experience. Umeå has a considerable network for European collaboration. Our regional participants, the university, cultural institutions, the business community and the broad swathe of various associations and individual organisations, also have extensive European and global contacts, all of which contribute to promoting cooperation.” (Umeå Municipality, 2009:22).

Umeå presented itself as a dynamic and creative city and places emphasis on the role of culture in urban regeneration. Moreover, Umeå stresses the significance of European collaborations, that have already been established prior to the ECoC event.

Regarding the cultural programme, Umeå has developed European cooperation and cultural exchange throughout Europe, despite causes of concern by the Selection Panel prior to the event (European Commission, *final selection report*, 2009). The establishment of a common European cultural space and therewith the development of a meeting place between the diversity of European cultures, is significant to ensure Europeanisation, according to the slogan ‘united in diversity’ (Sassatelli, 2009: 108; 170). The city of Umeå acknowledges the relevance of the emerge of a common European cultural place in the application and defines Umeå as a ‘meeting place between European cultures’ (Umeå Municipality, 2009). Due to the variety of local, regional, national and international collaborations and the ambition to create a common European cultural space, Europeanisation is facilitated.

Moreover, the successful implementation of the *European Dimension* regarding the establishment of intercultural collaborations and mutual understanding as well as cultural

exchange, indicates the emerge of blended identities and therefore, the successful realisation of Europeanisation.

The link between the ECoC programme and Europeanisation is facilitated by the accomplishment of the *European Dimension* and in addition to that, through the further development of a common European cultural space. However, the majority of cities designated to host the ECoC focus to a greater extent on highlighting cultural differences than similarities (Sassatelli, 2009: 92-93). Unquestionable, this was the case in Umeå.

6.1.2 City of Citizens

The *City and Citizen* dimension is a significant part of the ECoC criteria and implies the participation of the citizens in order to establish a cultural programme and raise awareness of the EU cultural initiative.

The *City of Citizens* dimension has been ensured through the *Open Source* strategy, which commenced previous to the application process. The approach entails the participation of citizens in an interchange of ideas and constitute discussions in order to establish an overall framework for the ECoC event. The method was digital, which resulted in greater participation from not solely local residents, but citizens from all over Europe. The *Open Source* method has been lauded by local and regional communities as well as by the EU's cultural policy officials, claiming the strategy to be the 'driving force' for the establishment of the cultural programme (European Commission, *Report for the Second Monitoring*, 2013:8).

The city of Umeå emphasised the inclusion of ideas and impressions of the citizen when composing the ECoC event. The term 'Co-creation' mentioned in the slogan of Umeå2014, and the *Open Source* method, imply the significance of the participation of citizens during the application procedure. Moreover, the involvement of citizen legitimated the ECoC event itself (Hudson et al., 2017:1544). To formulate the application as well as create the cultural programme through the participation of the local community, public society and European citizens has contributed to the implementation of the *City of Citizens* criteria and the process of Europeanisation. However, in order to be able to facilitate the Europeanisation process, long-term objectives are essential to acknowledge.

Europeanisation is a process of societal transformation and reconfigurations of cultures, identities and forms of governance through human interaction. Moreover, the effect

on cultural and territorial ‘units’, which appears through the process of Europeanisation, is significant to realise in order to define the process itself (Sassatelli, 2009: 1). The long-term objectives regarding the reconfiguration of culture and identities are stated as followed in the application of Umeå:

“Culture will after 2014 have established new meeting places and social networks, which will increase the cultural and social longevity of society. Culture, the citizens, the city, the independent groups and associations, the business community, the tourist industry, sports and the university will have developed by means of an increased collaboration with each other, and with other participants in Europe and the world at large. “ (Umeå Municipality, 2009:30).

The Europeanisation process of Umeå in context with the ECoC programme are distinctly phrased in the quotation mentioned above. Moreover, the further development of international collaborations between cultural institutions and organisations is being emphasised and contribute to the cultural and territorial ‘units’ to transform and culture and identities to reconfigure. As a result, the blended multiple identities emerged and therewith the process of Europeanisation.

6.2 Pilsen 2015

The application of Pilsen to host the ECoC 2015 is titled *Pilsen - Open Up!*, and emphasises the challenges of the city to open up towards Europe and the rest of the world in terms of intercultural dialogue, creativity and innovations (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 66-68).

At the beginning of the application, Pilsen is introduced and personalised as a woman, which indicates the transformation of traditional political thinking as well as social alterations towards a postmodern era within the EU including coming to terms with the past regarding the experiences of a totalitarian regime and the aftermath of the Velvet Revolution:

“Just as other women and other cities of the Eastern Bloc have done, she must once more find her way in society, rediscover herself, emphasize her virtues and admit her shortcomings, tell her story and cleanse herself, revive her dreams and again step onto the

path of transformation to being a self-confident woman of European culture. “ (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 3)

The main objective of the year 2015 was, as the theme *Pilsen - Open Up!* indicates, to attain ‘openness’ in all spheres of social life.

“Openness, not only towards Europe, is a real challenge. In the first place, it is about opening from within every one of us and about overcoming the closed character of Czech society.

The character is a logical consequence of the country’ s historical experience with a totalitarian regime. “(Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 17).

Moreover, the cultural programme features a variety of projects, activities and discussions of contemporary issues regarding European meaning - making and political, economic and social developments of the EU⁵. However, the cultural programme contains a deficit in explaining how those activities should be implemented into the ECoC actuality. Due to that, multiple activities had to discontinue and weaken therewith the *European Dimension* and *City and Citizen* criteria (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 72-73, 79-81).

6.2.1 European Dimension

To facilitate Europeanisation, Pilsen had to recognise the criteria *European Dimension*, in the application as well as implement the criteria into the cultural programme. As mentioned in the previous section, the collaborations between the city in question and European municipalities and communities are significant for the Europeanisation process (Sassatelli, 2009: 50-56). Moreover, cultural diversity and to bring common European cultural components to the fore,

⁵ The questions of the discussions have been stated in the application as followed: What is the imprint of 20th Century history in human souls? Can Czech society develop its reactions and debates from local topics to the essential European ones? Can it be opened towards Europe in this aspect as well? Is Europe interested in what Czech society has gone through? Does Europe want to understand Czech society? Does Czech society want to be part of European debates, to contribute with its experience and to search for parallels? Can Czech people listen to each other?

in accordance with EU's cultural policy rhetoric 'united in diversity', had to be acknowledged in order for the *European Dimension* criteria to be implemented successfully.

Despite the optimal geographical location of Pilsen - in the middle of Europe – in order to establish further intercultural European collaborations, a strong *European Dimension* was absent, in the cultural programme of Pilsen2015. Despite the slogan *Pilsen - Open Up!* the cultural agenda and application demonstrated a large number of collaborations among local stakeholders and lacked European collaborations. However, the objective of 'openness', is highlighted as the most significant part in order to be able to encounter Europeanisation. The attempt for further Europeanisation through opening up towards international collaborations among EU municipalities and communities is acknowledged in the application. According to the Monitoring and Advisory Panel, however, the lack of a clear *European Dimension* was an ongoing issue and deficiency of the overall cultural event in 2015. Moreover, Pilsen's ECoC management team had to be reminded that the ECoC is an EU financed programme and therefore should the objectives of the EU cultural policy be 'high visibility throughout the year on publications, online and at events' (European Commission, *Report for the Second Monitoring*, 2013). The absence of a strong *European Dimension* was partly overcome by the employment of an international advisory and management team in order to establish contacts with global networks. To connect local stakeholders to European partners was a significant step in order to realise the implementation of the *European Dimension* criteria and therewith ensured Europeanisation (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 79-82).

“An absolutely essential criterion of the project selection will be above all a lively collaboration of European artists and international institutions with Pilsen's personalities and organisations. “ (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 147).

Herewith, international cooperation and European partnerships as a long-term project is remarked. The cultural programme manifests European cooperation and objectives for future collaborations ⁶.

⁶ The collaborations which had strong *European Dimension* are e.g. 'The Gallery of West Bohemia' which was an exhibition in cooperation with a German art Museum; 'The Rock for People Europe concert', which was a music festivals in cooperation with a variety of

A variety of strategies to outline cultural diversity in Pilsen are taken into account in the application and constituted into activities and projects during the ECoC event 2015.

Pilsen is introduced as a meeting place of different cultures. Stressing the integration of minorities, immigrants and citizens excluded from the Pilsen society, are outlined in the application:

“Integration is a difficult process which involves give and take on both sides. Accepting immigrants means more than assimilating them. It means being interested in their customs and culture, not ignoring them. It is about naturally incorporating them into our lives. If our society becomes more open towards people of other origins, it will find it easier to respect other ‘minorities’, be they defined by age or habits, be they vegetarian, gay or lesbian, disabled, elderly or new to the world. Opening a dialogue of cultures means opening a dialogue of all minorities. “ (Pilsen Municipality, 2010:19).

By drawing attention to the unsuccessful integration of immigrants and minorities into the Pilsen society, the city attempts to welcome socially marginalised and excluded citizens through the ECoC event. Immigrants, suburbs and ethnicity are forming hereby an entity representing ‘otherness’ and therewith cultural diversity (Lähdesmäki, 2010:38).

“We would like to use the potential that artistic and cultural projects have in overcoming stereotypes and prejudices. If we learn to be open towards different skin colours, we will in turn respect ‘minorities’ - gays, lesbians, disabled people, seniors and children. “ (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 120)

By forming a ‘melting pot’ type of communality, which emerges due to the consolidation of various social groups with diverse backgrounds, cultural diversity is encouraged. Those social groups consist of the people coming from a variety of ethnic, national, cultural and subcultural backgrounds, including the social groups mentioned above in the quotation (Lähdesmäki, 2010: 35-36). Herewith, the EU cultural policy rhetoric ‘united in diversity’ is highlighted and facilitated in the ECoC programme of Pilsen2015. “Europe is ‘united in diversity’, and a

European artists and Dj’s; as well as cooperation’s between the West Bohemia University and further European Universities (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016).

special, unique and irreplaceable reflection of this principle can be found in each of Europe's corners" (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 17).

Moreover, the application indicates a strong cross-cutting identity formation, which implies identification with a social group as a collective; however, individuals do not identify as a collective in a different social context. Pilsen society identifies strongly with the Czech national identity, which is a complexity in itself, due to being constructed by human interaction and influenced by historical events. Cross-cutting identities are relevant regarding immigration and ethnicity issues, insofar as identification with the EU can differ from one's identifications towards another social group, e.g. religion, gender, political orientation (Risse, 2010: 24). However, by retaining cross-cutting identities throughout Europe, the Europeanisation of European culture and identity would not be possible. The emphasis on the emerge of blended identity formations is therefore included in the ECoC policy and in the application of Pilsen2015:

"... Let's not be afraid of going into deeper analysis and alerting local citizens to think over why they already belong in Europe, and vice versa how they can be inspired by Europe, how to get more involved not only at a local or national level, but also European-wide." (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 16)

Pilsen attempts to promote the recognition of European unity and in addition to that a European cultural identity through the emerge of blended identities. The development of blended identities would benefit the process of Europeanisation throughout Europe and deepen the relationship between the EU and its citizens through mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue of European cultures. However, European identity construction is less open to non-European immigrants (Risse, 2010: 6-8). This is the case in Pilsen (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 19-20). To achieve a blended identity formation, resulting in the establishment of a common European cultural space, is complicated. Regarding the theme *Open up!* however, Pilsen attempts to achieve openness of local and regional societies towards Europe as well as towards minority communities in Pilsen in order to construct a diverse Pilsen identity. As a result, the construction of a European cultural space is possible (Pilsen Municipality, 2010:16).

By insisting that 'Pilsen has always been a European crossroad', the city highlights the significance of its location, as well as legitimate its application to host the ECoC event. Moreover, Pilsen claims to be a meeting place of various cultures, including minorities and immigrants, and be 'the bridge between old and new Europe' (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 15).

The latter term recognised the divided history of Eastern and Western Europe and the consequences of fundamental change which the Eastern European countries experienced.

The history of Pilsen is a repetitive subject throughout the entire event. According to the application, representing the foundation of modern Czech Republic, including the Czech society, culture and identity, results in further understanding of not only Western and Eastern European states but all member states of the EU. The application furthermore implies that the EU member states comprise of different historical backgrounds, including a variety of identity formations, political orientation and cultural heritage, which represents the diversity of the EU, in accordance with the slogan ‘united in diversity’.

“If we want to answer the question why we have been engaged in the concept of a creative city for more than three years and why Pilsen so fervently wants to be awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, we must move away from purely local feelings and interests and we must delve deeper into what has shaped the Czech nation and its complex mentality, because without understanding and accepting the past we can hardly create a vision of the future. “ (Pilsen Municipality, 2014:14)

Herewith, Pilsen emphasises the recognition of understanding the past, in order to create a future within the EU.

The application acknowledges the emerge of a common European cultural space. However, due to the variety of cultural heritages and diversity of political orientations, cultures and identities, the construction of such a common space is complicated. According to the application, however, Pilsen stresses the significance to open up and create a common cultural space (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 14-23). The European cultural space is nevertheless defined by diversity and not, as assumed, through the recognition of a common European content (Sassatelli, 2008: 237). Due to that, the *European Dimension* criteria was acknowledged in the application of Pilsen2015 and Europeanisation was facilitated through the establishment of European collaborations, networking and intercultural dialogue as well as the ambition to create a common European cultural space in cooperation with other EU municipalities and communities (Sassatelli, 2009: 92-93). Creating a common space involves, however, the development of blended identity formation, which was recognised in the case of Pilsen.

6.2.2 City of Citizens

The *City of Citizens* dimension is a significant part of the ECoC criteria insofar as the participation of citizens is being facilitated in order to establish a cultural programme and raise awareness of the event. Involvement of citizens is herewith understood as an element, which allows not only citizens but also visitors and audiences to actively participate in co-creating the cultural programme (A. Fage-Butler, 2020: 151-154). Moreover, the sustainability in regard to long-term and short-term developments in the field of cultural, economic and social dimensions are stated in the application and cultural programme.

Drawing attention to the local community is a crucial component of the application *Pilsen - Open Up!* and therefore, the participation of the citizens in Pilsen was necessary in order to fulfil the *City and Citizens* criteria. The candidature of Pilsen to host the ECoC 2015 is part of the ‘City Development Programme 2003-2018’ - a strategic document outlining the economic and social developments of the city. The document was prepared in cooperation with the public and civic engagement around the issues of innovations for businesses, urban environment, urban regeneration and tourism. Those long-term objectives correspond to the objectives stated in the ECoC policy. Moreover, open discussions, workshops and conferences were held in order to recognise the public opinion on the candidature of the ECoC and the process regarding the application (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 28-30).

“In the spirit of the tradition of innovative planning and in connection with the preparations for the candidature for the ECoC 2015 title, the creation of a new Cultural Development Programme for the years 2009-2019 began in the summer of 2008. This basic advantage are in particular the very intense involvement of the local community in creating the programme itself, and the emphasis on the independent approach to evaluation the current state of cultural life. “ (Pilsen Municipality 2010: 29)

Herewith, the significance of the participation of citizens was emphasised. As stated in the Evaluation report of 2016 released by the European Commission, the general public and citizens of Pilsen had been the key component of the overall ECoC programme implementation. The cultural programme however favoured the narratives of the Czech citizens, particularly, the Pilsen society and due to that, the recognition of EU citizens was deficient (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 80-83).

The project *Foster the City* has nevertheless ensured the *City of Citizens* criteria. The aim of the project was ‘to improve the perception of public space, mobilise citizens to take up its transformation and upkeep, and encourage cooperation among citizens, the city’s administration and experts’ through the ‘open call’ method (Plzen2015.cz, *Foster the City*). The Pilsen citizens had the possibility to enhance public spaces, which had fallen into dereliction, by competing in bringing forward locations around the city as places to invest the funding to improvement. Herewith, urban regeneration, as well as regional development, proceed.

Urban regeneration in connection with representing the city in question as ‘European’ is considered a long-term objective in a majority of ECoC events over the recent years. Glasgow’s success story in 1990 in terms of economic and urban regeneration, is deemed to function as the ideal example (Sassatelli, 2009: 96-107). Glasgow is comparable to Pilsen in the implementation of the ECoC policy and in terms of the desire to change, discussion on identity, inclusion of the local community and strive for recognition on a European level (Sassatelli, 2009: 106-107). Moreover, both cities are former industrial city, aiming for urban regeneration and economic growth by participating in the EU’s cultural policy programme.

It is essential noting that Pilsen ECoC 2015 understood the term culture in a broader sense, including the overlapping of a variety of spheres such as science, philosophy and business. As a result, socio-economic effects and long-term objectives were emphasised (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 34). The long-term objectives of Pilsen include furthermore, strengthen of international ties and European collaborations, as well as cultural-led urban regeneration and the establishment of further institutions and organisations to foster creativity and culture (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2016: 98-99). Herewith, Pilsen positions itself as a representative of contemporary Europe and expresses its Europeanness, which indicates Europeanisation.

7. Discussion

The current ECoC policy aims to establish closer cultural relationships between EU member states, municipalities and communities in order to facilitate intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. Hence, the richness of cultural diversity, as well as common cultural components of European cultures, has to be acknowledged. Moreover, to raise European awareness and promote citizens' participation concerning long-term cultural and social development of the city are important to encourage in order for the citizens to establish a feeling of belonging to a common European cultural space and promote the idea of common European identity (Lähdesmäki, 2014; Sassatelli, 2008).

Umeå's unique geographical location - in the northernmost part of Europe - has been a significant part of the application and resulted moreover in questioning the legitimacy of hosting the ECoC, due to the isolation from the rest of Europe (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation* 2015). However, Umeå stressed the importance of including the 'Northern Room' into the European dimension, especially due to the common European environmental politics regarding climate change. Umeå, however, remarked the limited shared history and cultural heritage between the city and the majority of regions within the EU. Nevertheless, the city emphasised future collaborations between EU member states, municipalities and communities, which indicates Europeanisation.

Pilsen drew attention to the geographical location to legitimate its candidature to host the ECoC 2015. By implying that Pilsen had always been a 'crossroad' and the 'bridge between old and new Europe', the city demonstrated its significance in the European history (Pilsen Municipality, 2010: 14-20). The division between East and West Europe, which has been a crucial part of European history, is highlighted in the application of Pilsen2015. Herewith, Pilsen declared itself as a 'European city' and stressed therewith the already existing notion of Europeanisation through shared history and cultural heritage.

Umeå's and Pilsen's implementation of the *European Dimension* into the application and cultural programme vary in terms of the establishment of European collaborations, highlighting the richness of cultural diversity and bringing common European cultural aspects to the fore. However, both cities resembled each other in terms of the intention to develop further European cooperation through intercultural collaborations between municipalities and communities. Subsequently, Umeå, as well as Pilsen, developed closer international ties and partnerships throughout Europe as long-term objectives, which indicates the intentions for

closer cultural relationships with other European municipalities and communities. Moreover, the strive for regional developments is outlined in both applications. Closer European collaborations result furthermore in the development of collaborations in the political and economic sphere, which is essential to Europeanisation.

Regarding highlighting the richness of cultural diversity, both cities applied different strategies in order to present cultural diversity. Umeå emphasised the representation of cultural and ethnic minorities (Sami population). Herewith, Umeå emphasised international collaborations between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia concerning Sami related politics. Moreover, the coexistence of the Sami population, Swedish and foreign citizens, contributed to the impression of blended identity formations in Umeå, which is essential to the process of Europeanisation. Pilsen, on the other hand, focused mainly on European cultural traits, emphasising common cultural heritage and shared history. However, Pilsen mentioned the significance of the EU rhetoric ‘united in diversity’ and the ambition to integrate communities, which are socially excluded, into the Pilsen society. Based on the intention of inclusion of social groups into the Pilsen society, the impression of blended identity formations are given, however not to the same extent as in Umeå. Pilsen acknowledged, however, shared cultural heritage and the historical experience of a totalitarian regime (Pilsen Municipality 2010: 14-15). Thus, Pilsen stressed its Europeanness by highlighting common European cultural traits and similarities between the EU member states in contrast to the city of Umeå. Moreover, both cities in question submitted their application during the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis, which had an impact on the financial support and the implementation of the projects as well as the outcome of the events. Nevertheless, both cities had regional and local financial aid, which indicated the increasing relevance of culture as a political instrument of urban regeneration, economic growth and European integration in form of Europeanisation. The strong political commitment which both cities experienced implied the intention for societal transformation and culture-led urban regeneration (Sassatelli, 2009:90-95). In particular, Pilsen utilised the cultural-led urban regeneration strategy in order to transform and reimagine the former industrial city into a ‘European city’ with a cultural centre (Sassatelli, 2009: 95).

The *City of Citizens* criteria was furthermore significant in order to define the process of Europeanisation in context with the ECoC programme. Umeå, which profited from a functioning cultural infrastructure, required solely slight improvements. Pilsen however, despite its geographical location, required several changes, due to the limited function of the cultural infrastructure. The *City of Citizens* criteria was facilitated through the *Open Source* method in Umeå. As a result of this, the local community, as well as EU citizens, had

the possibility to participate in promoting activities and projects during the ECoC year 2014. However, due to the broad participation of the general public, the *Open Source* approach became ambiguous and cultural experts supervised and controlled the organising of cultural activities and projects subsequently (European Commission, *Ex-post Evaluation*, 2015: ii). Regarding citizens participation, Pilsen focused on the involvement of Pilsen's local community. By emphasising the importance of the participation of citizens concerning economic, cultural and social developments of the city, Pilsen ensures the *City and Citizens* criteria through the strategic document 'City Development Programme 2003-2018'. Moreover, the participation of citizens is important on the issues of urban regeneration. However, due to solely involving the Pilsen local community in participating and organising the cultural programme, the process of Europeanisation was limited. However, both cities stated long-term objectives such as cultural-led urban regeneration and societal transformation in terms of reconfiguration of identities, underlining Europeanness and a strong emphasis on Europeanisation. Europeanisation is facilitated in the ECoC cultural initiative and therewith part of the EU cultural policy. Umeå and Pilsen underwent a process of Europeanisation through the construction of blended identity formations, developments of further European collaborations and the aspirations to construct a common European cultural space.

8. Conclusion

The ECoC initiative is the most successful cultural event of the EU's cultural policy regarding the facilitation of Europeanisation (Sassatelli, 2009: 225-227). The ECoC cultural event is not merely a celebration of European culture; instead, the ECoC policy focuses on highlighting cultural diversity and bringing common European cultural characteristics to the fore as well as form a closer relationship between the EU and EU citizens. As a result, Europeanisation will be highlighted, leading to further European awareness and shaping the contemporary meanings of Europe.

The link between the ECoC programme and Europeanisation is facilitated by the accomplishment of the *European Dimension* and *City of Citizens* criteria set out by the EU. The criteria indent to foster European awareness and the feeling of belonging to a common European cultural space as well as places emphasis on Europeanisation. By successful

implementation of both criteria, the process of Europeanisation in terms of societal transformation and reconfiguration of cultures is accomplished (Sassatelli, 2008: 226). This will, however, solely be achievable when common interests are the basis to justify Europeanisation. Social interests as well as norms, values and identities are shaped through social practice and depend on the social context. The social context can, however, be reconstructed through the implementation of the ECoC programme and the criteria set out by the EU. Due to that, Europeanisation will be obtained to a certain degree. The attempt to develop a common European cultural space is significant in order for the municipalities and local communities to become more 'European'. Furthermore, to highlight the diversity of European culture plays a vital role in the Europeanisation process. Moreover, not solely cultural unity but also urban regeneration of cities or socioeconomic growth indicate a strong identification of local, regional and national citizens of the host country to the EU and therefore further developed Europeanisation (A. Fage-Butler, 2020: 152-153).

The present thesis addresses the process of Europeanisation in the context of hosting the ECoC 2014 and 2015. The questions which have been asked in order to determine how the process of Europeanisation is obtained has been answered through studying the implementation of the EU cultural policy criteria *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens*. By analysing those criteria, Europeanisation can be obtained as well as the ambition for further Europeanisation. Moreover, by applying a comparative study between two candidate cities, the differences and similarities of how Europeanisation can be obtained can be determined. It is, however, important noting that the Europeanisation process can vary depending on the level of Europeanness of the city prior to the application procedure. The present thesis is, therefore, considered being an example of solely two cities. It demonstrates the Europeanisation of local communities as well as urban regions and confirms the variations of how the process of Europeanisation is achieved.

Both cities - Umeå and Pilsen - hosted the ECoC cultural initiative and contributed therewith to the further development of Europeanisation. Through approaching the criteria *European Dimension* and *City and Citizens* in different ways as well as implementing both criteria dissimilar in the cultural programme by developing a variety of various activities, projects and/or discussions, Europeanisation is being pursued variously. In the application to host the ECoC 2015, Pilsen aims to bring Europeanisation forward insofar as highlighting the cultural similarities among European municipalities and the city of Pilsen as well as drawing attention to shared cultural heritage and history with Eastern European countries. The city of Pilsen legitimates its ambitions to host the ECoC 2015, by emphasising its significance as a

cultural meeting place and ‘bridge between old and new Europe’ (Pilsen Municipality, 2009). Thus, Pilsen implies to ‘be’ European and underline its ambitions for further Europeanisation. Umeå legitimates its application to host the ECoC 2014 by stressing the significance of the ‘norther room’ in the European dimension and underlined therewith the desire of a common European cultural space. Moreover, by highlighting cultural diversity through representing the ‘Other’, the city of Umeå endeavour mutual understanding and intercultural dialogues among EU’s member states.

The accomplishment of Europeanisation becomes noticeable due to the successful implementation of the *European Dimension* and *City of Citizens* criteria. The criteria can, therefore, be utilised as a political instrument of Europeanisation. However, due to the concept of Europeanisation being somewhat vague in terms of a comprehensive definition in cultural integration at this point in time in European Studies research, the entire process of Europeanisation in the context of the ECoC initiative requires further research. Additionally, the question remains, whether the ECoC is being utilised as ‘cheap and simple’ political instrument for further Europeanisation, implemented as a top-down invasion by the EU itself. The EU funding for drafting and implementing the ECoC programme in the host cities amounts to 1,5 Million Euro, which is barely enough to sponsor local and regional artists (ec.europa.eu, *European Capital of Culture*). The present thesis presumes a bottom-up approach of Europeanisation through the designation of the ECoC and limited regulations and directives of the implementation of the criteria, however further research is necessary in order to determine whether the ECoC cultural policy can be considered a bottom-up or top-down approach of Europeanisation.

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Appendix A: Overview of the empirical material

Umeå, Municipality (2009)	Application of the title European Capital of Culture 2014	<i>Curiosity and Passion - the Art of Co-Creation</i>
Umeå, Municipality (2013)	Cultural Programme of Umeå 2014	<i>A Programme Year in the making - Capital of Culture Year Umeå2014</i>
Pilsen, Municipality (2010)	Application of the title European Capital of Culture 2015	<i>Pilsen – Open Up!</i>
Pilsen, Municipality (2013)	Cultural Programme of Pilsen 2015	<i>Pilsen European Capital of Culture 2015 - Book one, Programme outline</i>
European Commission (2009)	Final Selection report	<i>Selection of a European Capital of Culture 2014 in Sweden.</i>
European Commission (2010)	Final Selection report	<i>Selection of the European Capital of Culture for 2015 in the Czech Republic</i>
European Commission (2013)	Monitoring and Advisory report	<i>Report for the Second Monitoring and Advisory meeting for the European Capitals of Culture 2014</i>
European Commission (2014)	Monitoring and Advisory report	<i>Report for the Second Monitoring and Advisory meeting for the European Capitals of Culture 2015</i>
European Commission (2015)	Evaluation report of the European Capital of Culture 2014	<i>Ex-post Evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture. Final Report</i>
European Commission (2016)	Evaluation report of the European Capital of Culture 2015	<i>Ex-post Evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture. Final Report</i>