

# **European Capitals of Culture**

## **Success Strategies & Long-Term Effects**

### **(1985-2019)**

**Dr Beatriz Garcia**

Director

**CC:RO | Cities of Culture Research Observatory**

University of Liverpool

[www.beatrizgarcia.net](http://www.beatrizgarcia.net) | [www.citiesofculture.org](http://www.citiesofculture.org)

# European Parliament funded study



## Study objectives

- To examine and interrogate the wealth of published material produced about respective ECoC hosts cities, in order to:
  - identify the most common strategies for success;
  - collate and review evidence of impacts and long-term effects from a cultural, economic, social and policy point of view;
  - understand the main recurrent challenges.

Garcia, B. (2013)

*European Capitals of Culture.  
Success Strategies & Long Term Effects.*

European Parliament



# History & Development



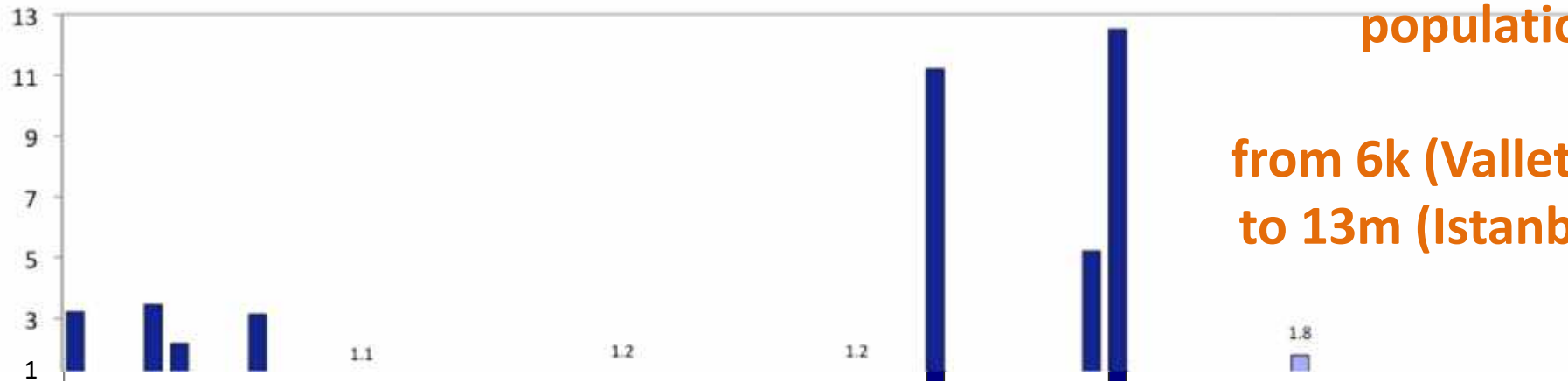
# 60 ECoC host cities in 34 years

<p><b>1985-1996</b></p> <p>12 hosts</p> <p>All Member States</p>	<p>) Athens 1985</p> <p>) Florence 1986</p> <p>) Amsterdam 1987</p> <p>) Berlin 1988</p> <p>) Paris 1989</p> <p>) Glasgow 1990</p>	<p>) Dublin 1991</p> <p>) Madrid 1992</p> <p>) Antwerp 1993</p> <p>) Lisbon 1994</p> <p>) Luxembourg 1995</p> <p>) Copenhagen 1996</p>
<p><b>1997-2004</b></p> <p>19 hosts</p> <p>2 non-EU</p> <p>2 accession</p>	<p>) Thessaloniki 1997</p> <p>) Stockholm 1998</p> <p>) Weimar 1999</p> <p>) Avignon, <i>Bergen</i>, Bologna, Brussels, <u>Kraków</u>, Helsinki, <u>Prague</u>, <i>Reykjavík</i>, Santiago de Compostela 2000</p>	<p>) Rotterdam &amp; Porto 2001</p> <p>) Bruges &amp; Salamanca 2002</p> <p>) Graz 2003</p> <p>) Genoa &amp; Lille 2004</p>
<p><b>2005-2019</b></p> <p>29 hosts</p> <p>2 non-EU</p> <p>10 new members</p>	<p>) Cork 2005; Patras 2006</p> <p>) Luxembourg GR &amp; <u>Sibiu</u> 2007</p> <p>) Liverpool &amp; <i>Stavanger</i> 2008</p> <p>) Linz &amp; <u>Vilnius</u> 2009</p> <p>) Essen-Ruhr, <u>Pécs</u> &amp; <i>Istanbul</i> 2010</p> <p>) Tallinn &amp; Turku 2011</p> <p>) Guimarães &amp; <u>Maribor</u> 2012</p>	<p>) Marseille-Provence &amp; <u>Košice</u> 2013</p> <p>) Riga &amp; Umeå 2014</p> <p>) Mons &amp; <u>Plzeň</u> 2015</p> <p>) San Sebastián &amp; <u>Wrocław</u> 2016</p> <p>) <u>Aarhus</u> &amp; Paphos 2017;</p> <p>) <u>Valletta</u> &amp; Leeuwarden 2018</p> <p>) <u>Plovdiv</u> &amp; Matera 2019</p>

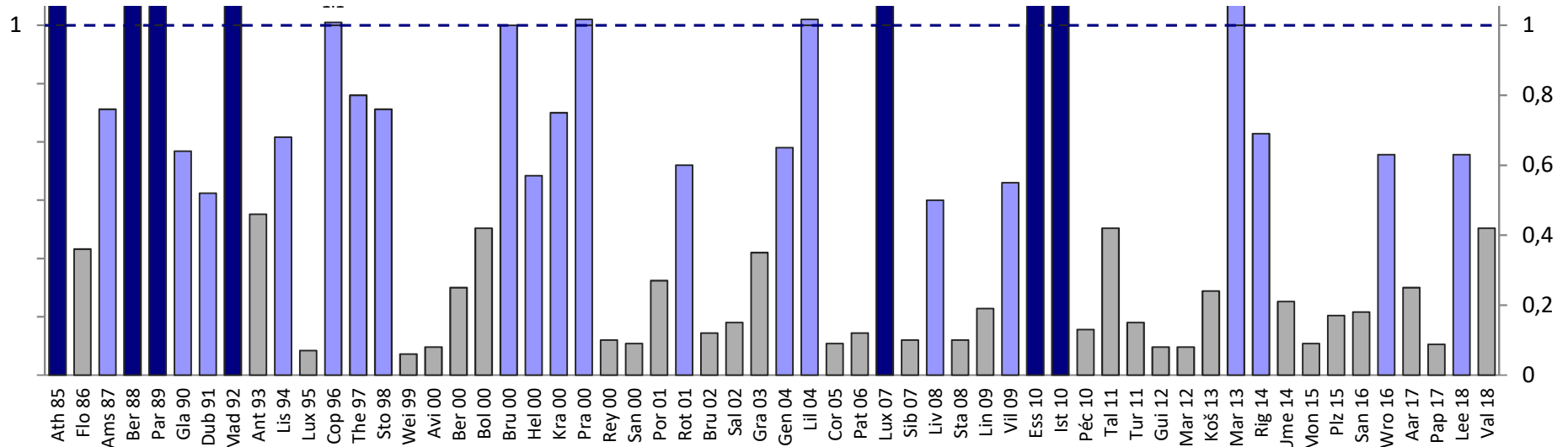
## ECoC host population size (in million inhabitants)

**Widely diverse  
populations**

**from 6k (Valletta)  
to 13m (Istanbul)**



...



Sources: Palmer/Rae Associates (2004a); Palmer and Richards (2007); Luxembourg GR 2007 (2008); online city census data



Bidding + Delivery approaches  
& success strategies

Vision

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Governance & Financing

Legacy planning

Cultural programming

Communications  
strategy

Public engagement  
approach

Physical infrastructure  
plans

Cultural impacts

Image impacts

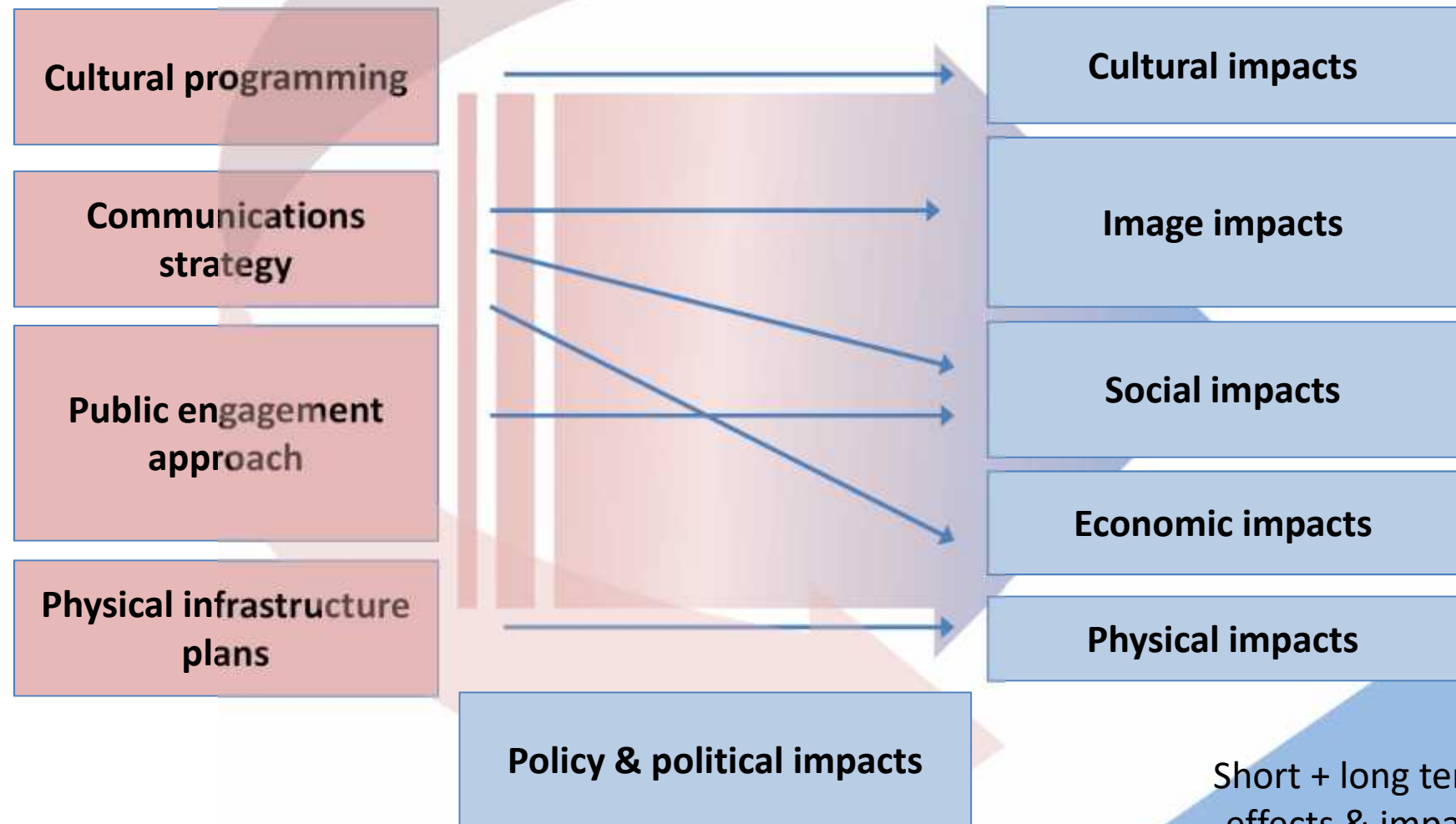
Social impacts

Economic impacts

Physical impacts

Policy & political impacts

Short + long term  
effects & impacts



# Success Strategies



## ECoC Delivery strategies

Greater professionalisation of the hosting process over time leads to common strategies for success:

- Developing a **vision to transform the city** by using the ECoC as a catalyst for cultural, social & image change.
- Facilitating **cross-sector agendas** targeted at positioning host city and/or surrounding region.
- Creating a balanced range of **themed activity** to assist in the distribution of resources & marketing coordination.
- Growing **grassroots** activities & targeting engagement with **diverse** audiences; strategic **social** programmes.



# Cultural & image impacts

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- Significant effect on the city's cultural vibrancy by
  - strengthening formal & informal **networks**,
  - opening up possibilities for new **collaborations**,
  - encouraging **new work** to continue
  - raising the **capacity** and ambition of the cultural sector
- Image renaissance for low (or negative) profile cities
  - attracting considerable media attention and enhancing local, national and international perceptions.
- Expansion of national ECoC news cycle
  - Media interest in the ECoC and what it stands for has grown over time and covers a broader time spectrum, beginning at the bid stage.

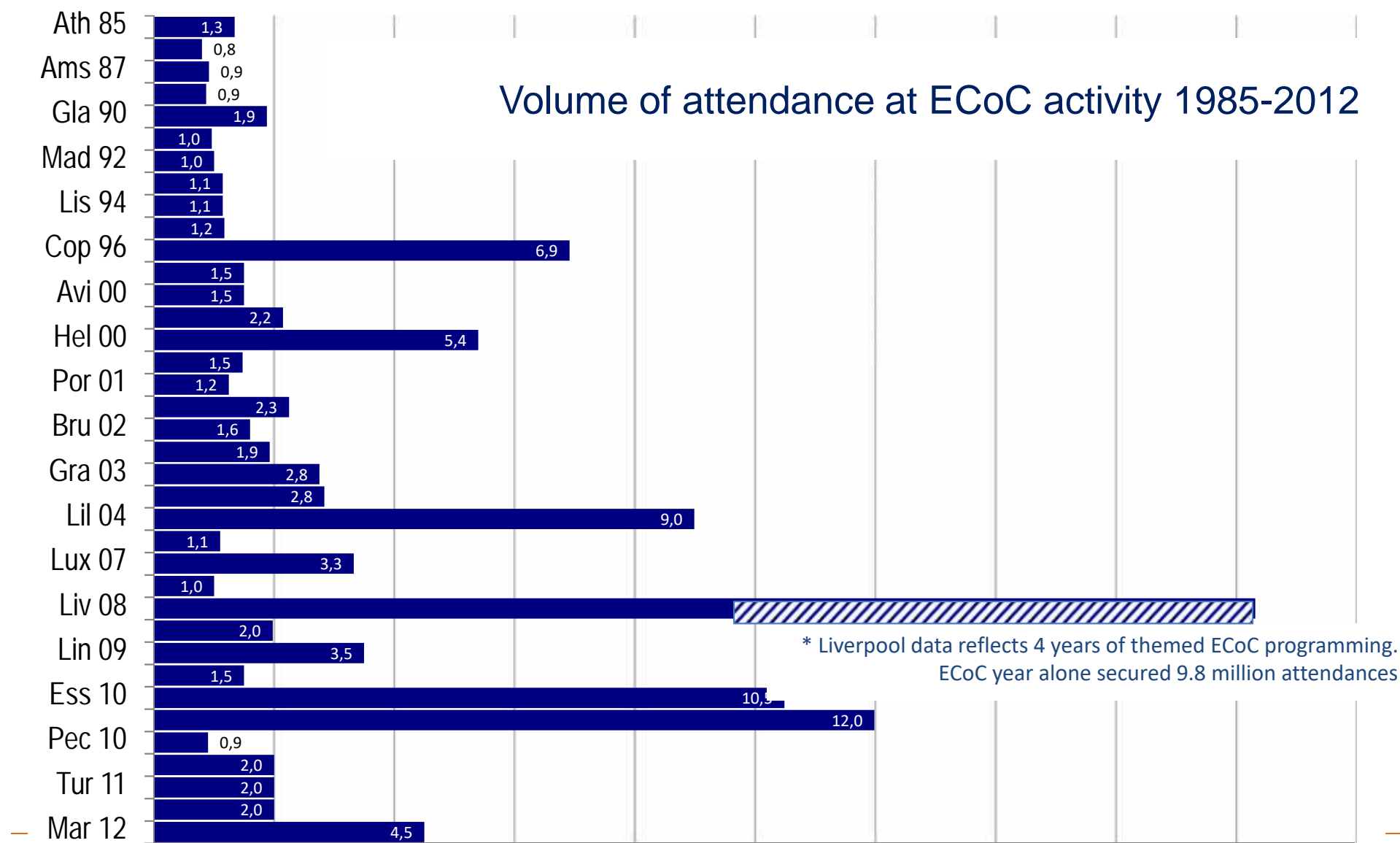


# Social impacts

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- Improved local **perceptions** of the city
  - Many recent editions claim that **50% to 90%** of their local population feel that their city is a 'better place' after having hosted the ECoC.
- Fostering local **pride** and a 'can do' attitude
- Increases the **volume and diversity in cultural audiences** during the ECoC year.
  - Hosts as diverse as Helsinki 2000, Luxembourg GR 2007, Liverpool 2008, Essen for the Ruhr 2010, Guimarães 2012 and Maribor 2012 claim that **over half** of their local population engaged with their ECoC programme.



Sources: Axe Culture (2005); ECORYS (2009a; 2009b; 2010a; 2011c; 2011d; 2012a; 2012b; 2013a); Garcia et al. (2010); Luxembourg GR 2007 (2008); Myerscough (1994); Palmer/Rae Associates (2004b); Quinn and O'Halloran (2006)



# Economic impacts

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## Immediate impacts

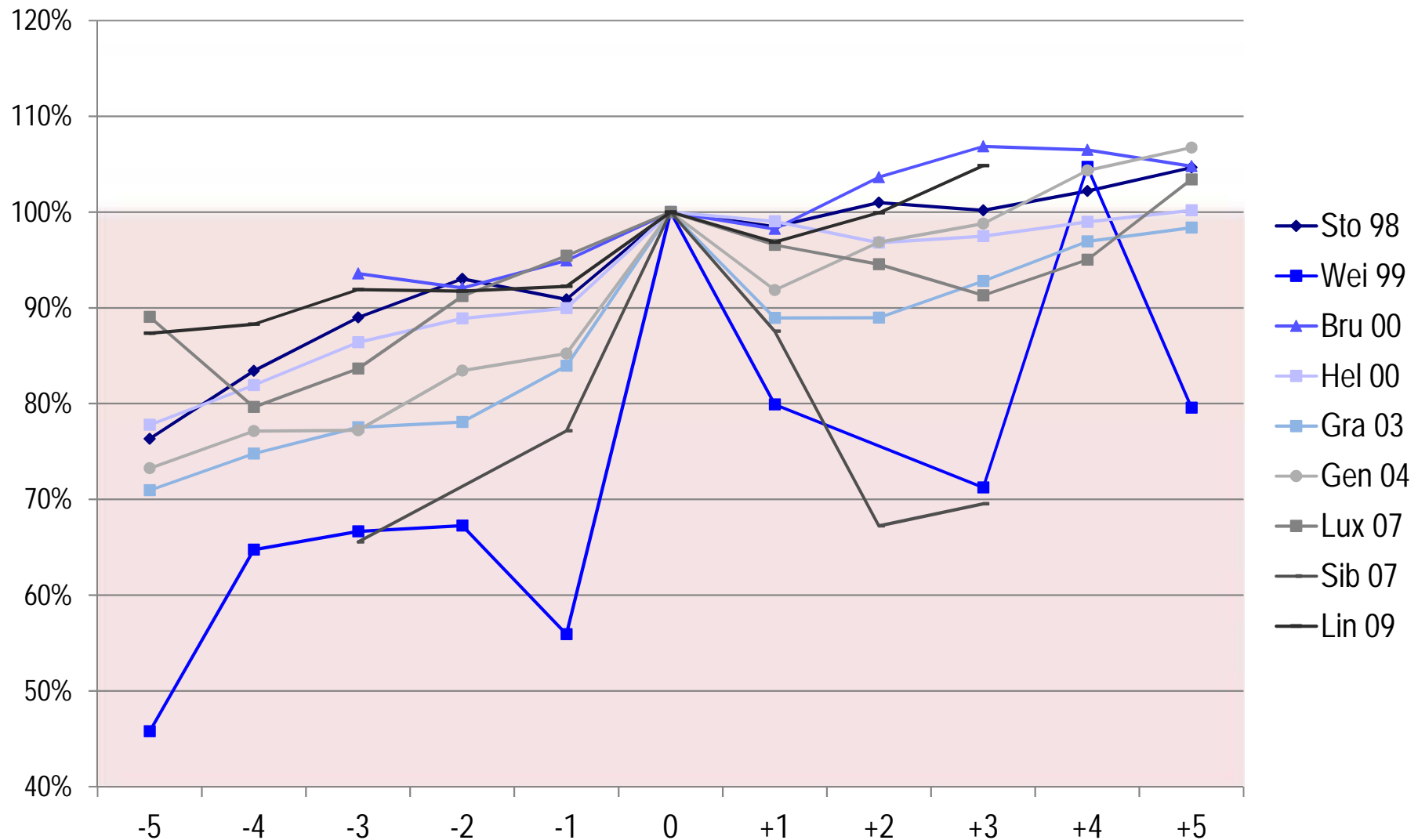
- Considerable effect on immediate to medium-term **tourism trends**, which, in turn, can have a significant impact on the city's economy.

## Long-term effects

- Cities undergoing major repositioning during or post ECoC can sustain **growth in tourism visits and expenditure** in the long term.

# Total tourist arrivals per year as % of ECoC arrivals

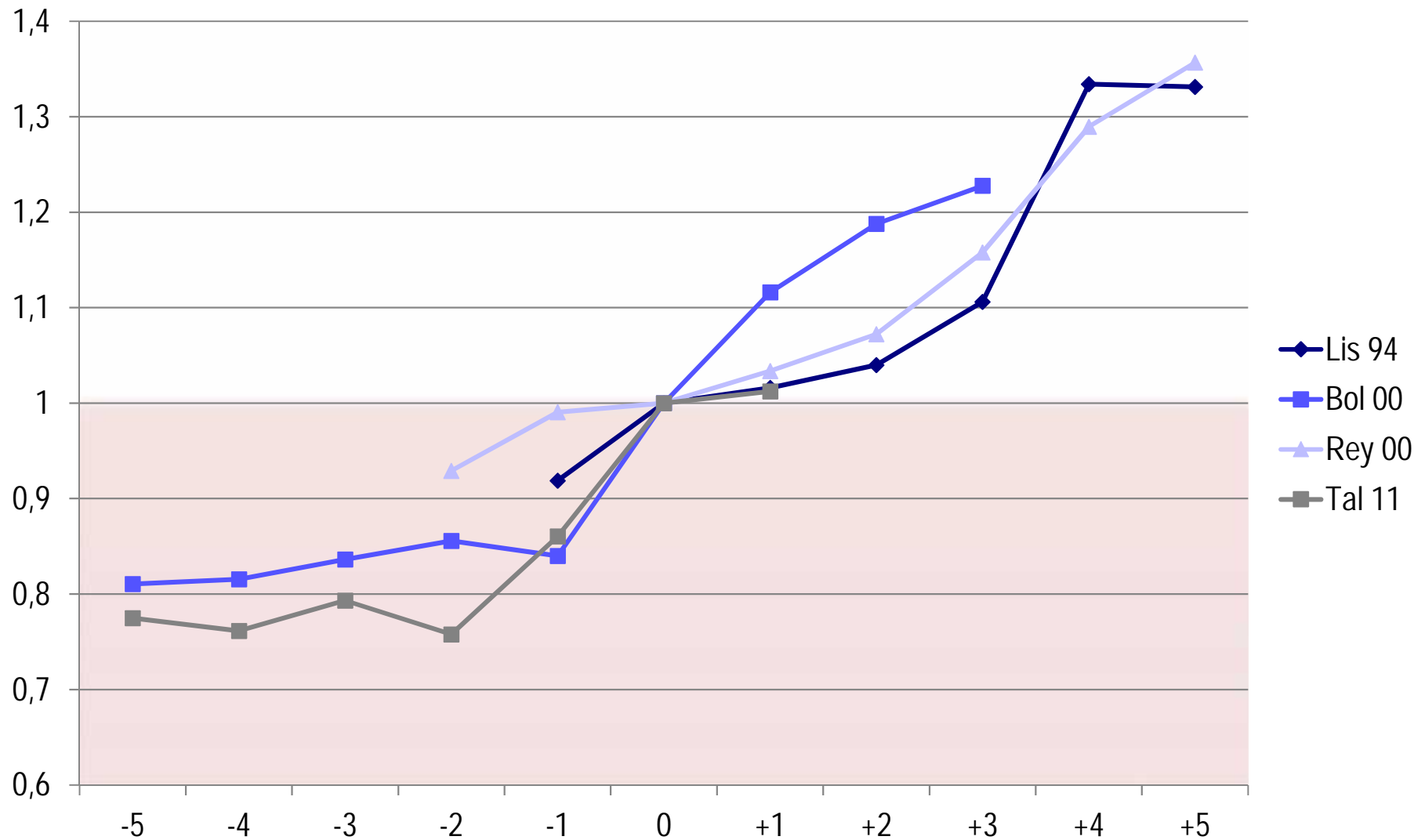
## cities showing increase pre-ECoC & decrease post-ECoC



Sources: Richards and Rotariu (2011); TourMIS database; Universidade do Minho (2013);  
Zentrum für Kulturforschung und IGC Culturplan (2011)

## Total arrivals per year as % of ECoC arrivals

cities showing increase in years both sides of hosting



Sources: Richards and Rotariu (2011); TourMIS website; Universidade do Minho (2013);  
Zentrum für Kulturforschung und ICG Culturplan (2011).

# Conclusions

- After three decades, the ECoC Programme is one of the most visible and prestigious EU initiatives.
- It has become a key platform for city positioning and a catalyst for economic and cultural regeneration.
- Immediate cultural, social and economic impacts are common and the capacity to secure long-term effects, has grown in key areas such as urban image change and tourism development.
- This evidence of the stronger commitment towards sustainable legacy planning and ever more defined and locally sensitive vision statements.



# Thank You

Dr Beatriz Garcia  
@beatriz\_garcia

[www.beatrizgarcia.net](http://www.beatrizgarcia.net)  
[www.impacts08.net](http://www.impacts08.net)  
[www.citiesofculture.org](http://www.citiesofculture.org)



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