

Neeti Baheriya

Influence of History and Culture in EU policies

Topic - Unveiling Europe's Cultural Gems: Exploring the European Capital of Culture





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Through the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, the EEC evolved into the present-day European Union with broader political and economic goals. The idea of the European City of Culture was born in 1985 despite no cultural policy in the European Community (EC).

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This idea was first put by the Greek Culture Minister Melina Mercouri who believed culture to be given equal weight as trade and economics. As a result on June 13, 1985, the European City of Culture was announced as an annual cultural event. It was based on the fact Unity in Diversity.

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Since then, the programme has evolved and grown into a fully mature international event and one of the most ambitious projects of the European Union. The chosen cities burst with creativity and enthusiasm, inventing all sorts of new celebrations.

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This is a people's program. Citizen's are directly involved in many events, both small and large scale. Liverpool (United Kingdom) ran outreach programmes with the city's schools, and all the city's pupils participated in at least one activity during the year. [#CitizenEngagement](#)

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In Umeå a piano casually placed on the riverbank allowed everyone to make their contribution in passing to the city's music programme. [#CitizenEngagement](#) [#CreativeCities](#) [#EUculture](#)



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Outdoor performance by a Lithuanian group at the puppet theatre festival in Tallinn2011. The flag indicates the home country of the group. #Tallinn2011



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Every city develops its own themes which serves as a guiding principle for shaping the various cultural events, programs, and infrastructure projects undertaken throughout the year. Liverpool, UK (2008): "Culture Capital of Europe", Rijeka, Croatia (2020): "Port of Diversity".

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The main themes of Pécs2010 followed the slogan 'Pécs – The Borderless City'. It mentioned the city as a cultural gateway to the Balkans. Its objectives included celebrating artistic achievements of European standard and diversity of European and world culture.

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The ECOC program plays a significant role in inspiring and facilitating infrastructure development, contributing to the cultural and economic well-being of participating cities. Shown below is the renovating and constructing Széchenyi square in Pécs during its ECOC year.



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The ECOC program breathes new life into cities, fostering a vibrant cultural scene through diverse events and artistic expression. By celebrating the unique cultural tapestry of Europe, the program fosters unity and appreciation for the continent's rich heritage and creative spirit.



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