

Chapter 8

Mega-Events and New Patterns of Cooperation: The European Capitals of Culture

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Abstract Since its launch 30 years ago, the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme has been researched widely from different perspectives of urban and regional development, investigating the physical and structural changes that it initiates and the challenges that it brings to local government and to urban governance. Alternatively, this chapter gives a longitudinal analysis of two particular ECOC cases to examine the potentials of this cultural mega-event for social (network) capital mobilisation. Inter-organisational networks of an ECOC project can be characterised as collaborative networks; however, considering their potential longer-term sustained impact, they can contribute to strengthening the local–regional governance network. Using examples of the cities of Pécs, in Hungary, and Turku, in Finland, the analysis looks into the networks and relations between various participating actors in order to explore how these ECOC projects facilitate and change inter-organisational cooperation and networking among cultural and creative producers. The study applies the basic approach and methodology of social network analysis and uses primary data taken from online surveys performed in the two ECOC cities. Primarily, the chapter uses an analytical approach based on the thorough examination of numerical and visualised data. The findings reveal the importance of knowledge and support networks in the field of creative industries and the role of large-scale cultural events in the formation and sustainability of such networks.

Keywords European capitals of culture · Local government · Urban governance · Mega-events · Collaborative networks · Local–regional development · Social network analysis · Hungary · Finland

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8.1 Introduction

Over the last two decades, there has been an increasing interest in regional studies regarding the horizontal relations of local and regional actors, based on the awareness that networks play a key role in social, cultural and economic development. Collaborative networks are seen as important assets in various fields, from R&D practices (Krätke 2010), to urban cultural development (Comunian 2011a) and environmental protection (Hirschi 2010). Such networks have become part of regional development strategies,¹ mostly as promoters of innovation and economic competitiveness.² What is common to most of these case-study research and development strategies is that they see the processes of cooperation and networking among different types of actors as an effective and essential governing power.

In the case of mega-events (e.g. the Olympic Games, the Football World Cup, the World Expo or the European Capital of Culture), the development of inter-organisational cooperative networks that shape these events is based on a complex web of relationships that exist both inside and outside the event hosting community. This chapter engages with current discussion about the formation and role of networks in framing governance strategies, especially in event tourism contexts (Edizel 2014; Morellato and Williams 2014; Ziakas and Costa 2010). In particular, it places a special focus on the *complexities* and *dynamics* of cooperative networks. Using research undertaken in Hungary and Finland, this chapter investigates the networks and relations between various actors participating in the two European Capital of Culture projects (Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011). It aims to make both a theoretical and an empirical contribution to reach a better understanding of the network-oriented forms of urban governance, as well as to engage in debates about social and inter-organisational network analysis.

Previous studies and conceptual developments related to the relationships that mega-events and the collaborative networks of organisations have with local–regional development provide a background to the chapter and inspire some initial hypotheses for investigation. Thus, the empirical analyses of the two ECOC cases are preceded by a clarification of relevant concepts and typologies and also a brief review of the academic accounts of these relationships. As a result, some assumptions based on existing debates are instrumental in answering the initial questions raised in the chapter and are later tested in the analysis.

¹In the European Union's Cohesion policy, it is referred to as a 'partnership'.

²Finland's Regional Development Strategy 2020, and to a lesser extent Hungary's National Development and Territorial Development Concept 2030.

8.2 Relevance and Hypotheses

8.2.1 *Mega-Events and Social Networks*

Mega-events are increasingly perceived as strategic tools for local and regional development (Evans 2011; Hall 2006; Mills and Rosentraub 2013). The anticipated and perceived benefits of holding such a major event are most often related to material and financial returns. However, it is just as important to consider how *large-scale events may help shape and strengthen a community and its social infrastructures*. In the absence of considerable economic benefits (which is often the case: see Palmer 2004), this latter, less tangible outcome may in fact represent one of the few advantages a city can gain from hosting a mega-event. Also, in the long term, the potentials for sustainable positive socio-economic impacts can be realised by the mobilisation of existing but often inactive resources through the formation and sustenance of collaborative networks. Therefore, an analysis of mega-events in terms of the stakeholder networks which potentially emerge, expand and operate during their implementation may help us to better understand the local–regional development implications of these events.

In comparison with tangible economic benefits (i.e. tourism flows and incomes or spectacular urban regeneration projects), the somewhat less tangible role of social capital and the emergence and behaviours of social networks are still relatively underrepresented in the field of mega-event research. The analysis of stakeholder networks and inter-organisational relationships has featured in academic recent discussion as one of the leveraging legacies of hosting mega-events, especially in the literature dedicated to major sporting events. O'Brien and Gardiner (2006) analyses the role of the Sydney Olympic Games in commercial development through the event's contribution to the creation and reinforcement of business relationships, while Misener and Mason (2007) have studied the significance of social capital in urban regeneration related to the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, UK.

In regard to cultural mega-events, academic discussion about social networks seems to be less active. Recently, stakeholder collaborations have been studied as related to festivals (Getz et al. 2007; Morellato and Williams 2014); however, the majority of ECOC case studies still have a strong focus on the event's economic and image-building impact (Gomes and Librero-Cano 2014; Herrero et al. 2006; Richards and Wilson 2004; Steiner et al. 2015). The consideration of how the ECOC would affect the networking of different stakeholders appeared only very recently in the evaluations (Richards 2015).

The bulk of relevant literature does not explicitly test the claim that networks are a better way to govern or that they are more efficient than hierarchies or other alternative means of organisation. However, many analyses share an instance that *innovation and sustainability may be important consequences of network governance*. Since innovation (raising the event's attractiveness) and sustainability (creating legacies for the intense financial investment) are both important

expectations in the case of the European Capital of Culture programme (Németh 2010), it is interesting to investigate whether and how social networks are supportive of these claims. Furthermore, a collaborative network approach is even more relevant for studying the local impacts of the ECOC programme because in the case of both of the studied projects, the inclusion of collaborative acts (performances, exhibitions and other activities) was particularly encouraged in the initial calls (Németh 2015).

8.2.2 *Social Networks and Local–Regional Development*

Generally, a social network can be defined as a series of established relationships between interdependent actors within a larger social structure. The ‘nodes’ of networks can be individuals or groups, as well as formal organisations, thus making up so-called inter-organisational webs. The significance of *inter-organisational* linkages was already being discussed in the 1960s with initial focus placed on the relationships in-and-between business organisations. The academic literature of the last few decades mostly comes from the field of management studies and concentrates on the organisational relationships within different industries (Müller-Seitz 2012; Powell 1990). However, this kind of network approach has found its way into social-scientific studies which are interested in the impacts of networks on public service provision (e.g. health care), policymaking and governance (Ansell 2000; Bulkeley 2005; Provan and Milward 2001).

Issett et al. (2011: 161) distinguish between three separate public management networks: *policy, collaborative and governance networks*, where policy networks seek to shape public decision-making, collaborative networks work together in the delivery of services and governance networks combine aspects of policy making and service delivery. Inter-organisational networks which form and operate in the context of an ECOC project can be seen to be most similar to collaborative networks, yet horizontal collaborative linkages can also enrich the governance networks of the localities involved, their regions and local/regional development.

Concerning inter-organisational networks, the ‘whys and whens’ of network formation have been widely researched aspects in the context of emergent networks (Cropper et al. 2008; Harrison 2013; Kilduff and Tsai 2003). There are various drivers and purposes of network formation at work. A frequent driving force is resource dependence or resource sharing (combining), where one party is dependent on the resources and competencies which are controlled by another, where there are perceived or actual mutual gains, and where the synergies of providing resources and competencies are shared. Sometimes, these more internal motives are combined with an external pressure to ‘team up’, for example when exerted by the rules established by a funding authority. The inter-organisational cooperation networks involved in ECOC events have indications of both *internal and external* motives (Németh 2015).

Considering the *sustainability of networks*, Newman and Dale (2005) argue that the more heterogeneous and diverse a network is, the more resilient it will be to future changes. Along this line, they have further developed the concept of the utilisation and reproduction of social capital (first discussed by Pierre Bourdieu 1983/1986) by emphasising the significance of the combination of ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ ties (Putnam 2000; Woolcock 2001) within a network. In their analysis, networks composed of ‘bridging ties’ (connecting various types of actors with different resources, e.g. across economic sectors or fields of activities) are argued to strengthen a community’s ability to adapt to change. ‘Bonding ties’ (connecting similar actors), however, create dense networks that may increase trust between members, but at the same time may also encourage either conformity or exclusivity, thus leaving less room for fresh ideas and experimentation. Accordingly, reaching and maintaining *a dynamic balance of the bridging and bonding types of links in a network* increases adaptive capacities and supports sustainability. In the case of an emergent network such as one reactivated and/or forming around an ECOC project, it is of significance whether this balance is created in a way that it will contribute to the continuity of cooperation and synergic effects in the city and its wider region, and also follow on from the actual event year.

Based on the arguments above, the chapter starts with the normative claim that inclusive horizontal cooperation among diverse stakeholders in the implementation of mega-events is beneficial. In more detail, it is assumed that:

- ECOC projects (and in general, large-scale events) may help shape and strengthen a community and its social infrastructures, which especially in the absence of considerable and more tangible economic benefits, can represent an important advantage that a city and its region can gain from hosting a mega-event.
- The innovation and sustainability of positive achievements from a mega-event may be significant consequences of network governance, both in the particular context of governing mega-events, such as the ECOC, and in local and regional development (policy making, service provision) in general.
- The heterogeneity of the ECOC networks and a balanced combination of bridging and bonding linkages support the continuity and sustenance of cooperation and its positive impacts on local–regional development.
- Inter-organisational networks operating towards the implementation of an ECOC project are probably most similar to emergent collaborative networks, but also, considering their longer-term sustained impact, they contribute to strengthening the local–regional governance network.

As implied above, the chapter investigates the networks and relations between various participating actors in order to explore how European Capital of Culture (ECOC) projects facilitate and alter the patterns of inter-organisational cooperation and networking among cultural and creative producers. Within this framework, this research addresses three more concrete questions:

1. What is the level of networking between the organisations who are involved in one way or another in the implementation of the featured ECOC projects, and are there any unique patterns which are observable in their cooperation networks?
2. To what extent do the activities related to the organisation of ECOC events initiate new and/or revive former relational spaces? In particular, do these relations build temporary structures (i.e. operating only for the ECOC event year) or are they capable of forming more permanent (sustained) networks which also function after the event?
3. How does the intensity of networking affect the experience and opinions regarding the benefits of ECOC from the perspective of the participant organisations?

By answering these questions, the objective of the chapter was to detect case-specific features, as well as more generalisable tendencies concerning the network capital which is mobilised and increased by mega-events.

8.3 Data and Methodology

Network analysis is a method of collecting and analysing data from various individuals and organisations and from their interactions with others. Social network analysis (SNA) as a toolkit is in itself a rather quantitative methodology that most often needs to be complemented with qualitative data collection in order to be able to describe and explain the functions and potentials of the mapped networks. Also, while networks are not rigid forms of relations fixed in time and space, it is their time and space dimensions which are specifically relevant for regional studies. Accordingly, networks need to be understood as being embedded in specific circumstances, geographical or social determinants, and therefore require a longitudinal research approach.

The analyses below are based on data gathered from online survey questionnaires carried out in Hungary (October–November 2014) and Finland (January–February 2015). Respondents were selected on the basis of their participation in the ECOC projects held in Pécs and Turku, based on the published programme booklets and by applying a snowball method. Because of their temporal existence and their high degree of involvement in the projects, the two official management organisations of the featured cultural years, the *Pécs 2010 Management Centre* and the *Turku 2011 Foundation*, were not included in the survey. However, as indicated by many of the respondents, both organisations are present in the networks as ‘receiver nodes’.

The languages of the questionnaires were Hungarian, English, Finnish and Swedish. In order to obtain an optimal amount of data for network analysis, the questionnaires needed to be brief, aiming solely at the respondents’ cooperations. As anonymity is not possible in this type of analysis, sensitive questions were

deliberately avoided. To implement a longitudinal approach, questions were focused on cooperation during the ECOC events, rather than collaborations which existed either before or after the event. The continuity of collaborative linkages was then examined in the light of brief evaluations by the respondent stakeholders, for example, the effect the ECOC event had had on their professional work. The response rates (taking into account only those who verified their participation in the ECOC) were 24 % in the case of the Pécs 2010 project and 29 % related to the Turku 2011 project.

In the analyses, the *nodes* of the networks are various organisations participating in the ECOC projects. The *links* indicate their connections based on a reference by at least one of the actors to the other in a cooperating pair; and assuming mutuality, there are only ‘undirected’ linkages in the network. For a deeper understanding of the complexities of the networks, four independent *attributes* (one network-intrinsic and three network-external characteristics) are defined for each of the nodes: the degree (number of links to a particular node), the legal status, the field of activity and the geographical location of a participating organisation. When SNA is applied in regional studies, one often faces the dilemma of determining what constitutes a node (an individual or an institution) or what its geographical location or scale is (Comunian 2011b). For the purpose of this analysis, nodes are seen in most of the cases as organisations (except for a few individual artists who are referred to as ‘small artistic enterprises’ as reflecting their legal status), and their geographical location was defined on the basis of their mailing address (if not otherwise declared by the respondents themselves).

On a technical level, the majority of the information gained from the survey was processed and visualised using the methods of SNA and by applying NetMiner 4 software. Wherever possible, the quantitative results were related to the evaluative answers and free-form comments given by the respondents. Also, in order to be able to assess the functions and potentials of the mapped networks, findings from previous research conducted in the two case-study areas were considered in the analysis.

8.4 Focus on Nodes: Cooperating Organisations and Their Characteristics

Firstly, the analysis aimed to determine the ECOC projects’ impact on networks. In more concrete terms, it examined the patterns and intensity (degree) of cooperation during the event year, especially in relation to the different attributes (categories) of the participants, and including their legal status, field of activity and geographical location. The networks visualised included all of the respondents who confirmed their participation in the event year’s programme and fully answered the questionnaire. Inclusion in the calculations and visualisation was regardless of their cooperation activity; therefore, the network charts also show ‘isolates’

Table 8.1 Summary of basic network characteristics of the Pécs 2010 and the Turku 2011 European capitals of culture (during the event year)

	Pécs 2010 (226 nodes)	Turku 2011 (297 nodes)
Carrier node (one degree nodes)	78 % (176)	73 % (217)
Ordinary node (degree ≥ 2)	19 % (43)	25 % (75)
Isolate (degree = 0)	3 % (7)	2 % (5)
Total degree (number of links, undirected)	213	320
Mean degree	1.89	2.15
Standard deviation	2.93	3.12
Max. degree	29	26

Source Survey data (2014–2015) processed by NetMiner 4 software

(unconnected nodes), i.e. those participants in the ECOC projects who declared their individual engagement in the events. The size of the cooperation network is somewhat larger in the case of Turku (297 nodes and 320 total links), mainly due to the higher number of respondents, but also due to the more intensive networking activity which is reflected in the higher share of ordinary nodes, i.e. respondents that have two or more links with others. In other aspects, however, the two networks are very similar in their general numeric characteristics (see Table 8.1).

In order to reveal actual patterns regarding the partnerships surrounding the ECOC programmes, the scrutiny of the networks of genuine social-economic actors cannot stop at a mere numeric comparison of carrier, ordinary and isolate nodes, but also needs to proceed further along node dimensions. For this purpose, the attributes of *geographical location*, *legal status* and *field of activity* were also considered. In terms of regional networking (Fig. 8.1) and cooperation between organisations of different legal statuses (Fig. 8.2), the two ECOC projects show more similarities, while the connectivity of participants from different fields of activities (Fig. 8.3) differs between the Pécs and Turku cases. These initial observations and their implications are further elaborated in the more detailed analysis of so-called aggregate networks, where participants of the same class (based on one of the three categories mentioned above) are collected into a single node, and where their links are also combined on that aggregate level.

The regional dimension: The regional networking effect of the Pécs and Turku ECOC projects seems to be very similar. In both cases, the central nodes are the title-holding cities with a high level of internal networking (i.e. bonding ties). This indicates that the performances, exhibitions, etc. within the ECOC projects tend to primarily rely on the local–regional scale. Even though the main slogan of the Pécs 2010 programme was ‘Gateway to the Balkans’, the results show that the engagement of organisations from the West Balkans is not particularly strong. At the same time, the European scale is more represented in terms of participant organisations in the Pécs 2010 project than in the Turku 2011 project. This is a result of the considerable levels of participation and cooperation by organisations of those Hungarian minorities living in the Central European region.

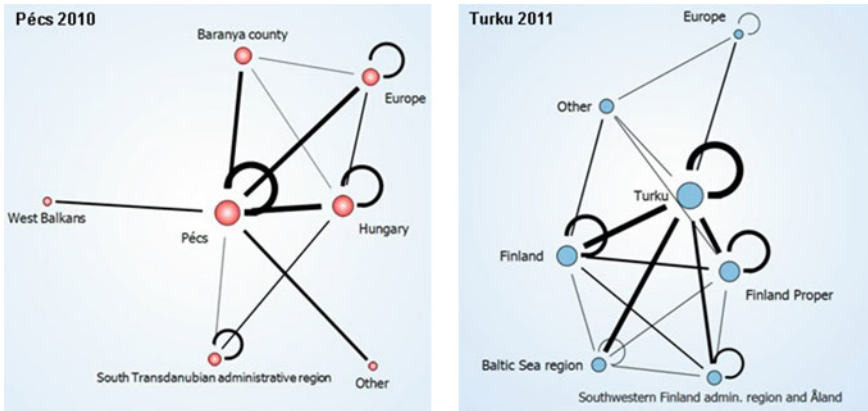


Fig. 8.1 Aggregate networks of the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 projects showing the ‘regional’ dimension. *Note:* the size of nodes indicates the number of links of a node on the aggregated level variety of links (i.e. the larger the node, the more different links it has with other groups), while the *thickness* of the links shows the number of connections on the level of organisations summated under the nodes. *Source:* Survey data (2014–2015) processed and visualised by NetMiner 4 software

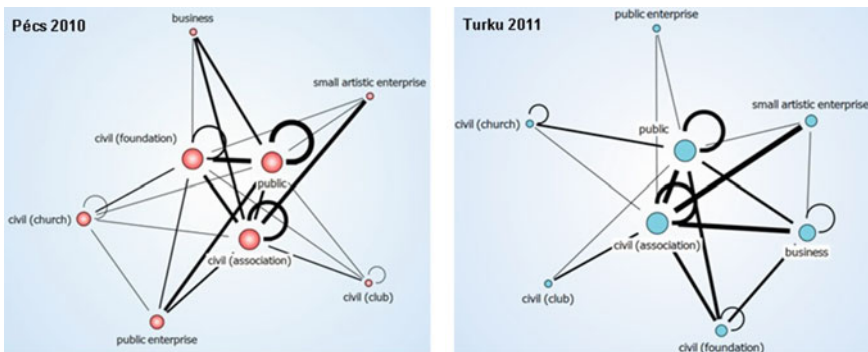


Fig. 8.2 Aggregate networks of the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 projects showing the ‘legal status’ (sectorial) dimension. *Note:* the size of nodes indicates the number of links of a node on the aggregated level variety of links (i.e. the larger the node, the more different links it has with other groups), while the *thickness* of the links shows the number of connections on the level of organisations summated under the nodes. *Source:* Survey data (2014–2015) processed and visualised by NetMiner 4 software

Inter-sectorial cooperation: The aggregate networks of the ECOC projects display the constellation of collaborations between public, business, civic organisations (association, foundation, church, club), and public and small artistic enterprises (i.e. individual artists, small bands). In both of the ECOC projects, public organisations (mostly municipalities, publicly funded museums and schools) are in central positions. A diverse range of civic associations are key figures in the

ECOC networks by linking in most of the small artistic enterprises. This evidence supports Bauböck's (1996) idea that associations have a significant role in society, not only by the flexible fulfilment of missing state, market or voluntary functions, but more importantly by taking on the role of mediation, and connecting different individuals and institutions. Despite the general similarity of the two collaborative webs, there is a slight difference regarding the cores of the networks: while in the Pécs 2010 project, there is a clear representation of intensive public-civil cooperation (see the public–associations–foundations triangle), in the Turku 2011 project, businesses also play a significant role in the visualised networking (Fig. 8.2).

Cooperation between various cultural and other activity profiles. Based on the main activity of the respondents, the organisations were classified into 21 fields of activities³ including various cultural areas, social services, administrative and decision-making functions. In both of the projects, cultural- and education-related activities are the most represented, as well as being the most networked (performing art, visual art, institutions of culture promotion⁴), which is in accord with the main profile of the events. Nevertheless, it is worth looking at the variety of participants with other activity profiles such as local community and urban development, leisure and sports, social services and health care or other services (e.g. financial consulting, retail and professional advocacy) which, although with fewer links, are also part of the collaborative networks which formed around the Turku and Pécs ECOC projects.

As regards collaboration between the various activity profiles, there are some more visible differences between the two ECOC cases. In Turku, participant organisations with different activity profiles seem to be more inter-connected. This can be an indication of the fact that a considerable share of cultural productions and other ECOC-related activities were realised through the cooperation of heterogeneous actors, i.e. those coming from different fields. It is interesting to observe that participants with government–governance functions (e.g. municipalities or ministries) have the highest number of links with other activities in the Turku network, while in the Hungarian project, these functions seem to have a more marginal role. On the other hand, institutions of culture promotion seem to have a central networking role in both of the cities (Fig. 8.3).

When focussing on node attributes, the method of aggregation of organisations on a higher, cumulative attribute-level provides interesting insights into the cooperation patterns of assorted ECOC participants. Beyond some place-specific characteristics such as the higher connectedness of businesses and the more central role of public administration in Turku, and the stronger European dimension of the Pécs project due to the Hungarian quasi-diaspora, there are also several similarities between the two cases: both are highly localised networks with strong local bonds, have intensive public-civil cooperation and show the significant integrative power of civil associations.

³The majority of the activity types are present in both cases; 20 types are represented in the Pécs 2010 project and 18 in the Turku 2011 project.

⁴The category of institutions of culture promotion refers to museums, galleries and culture centres.

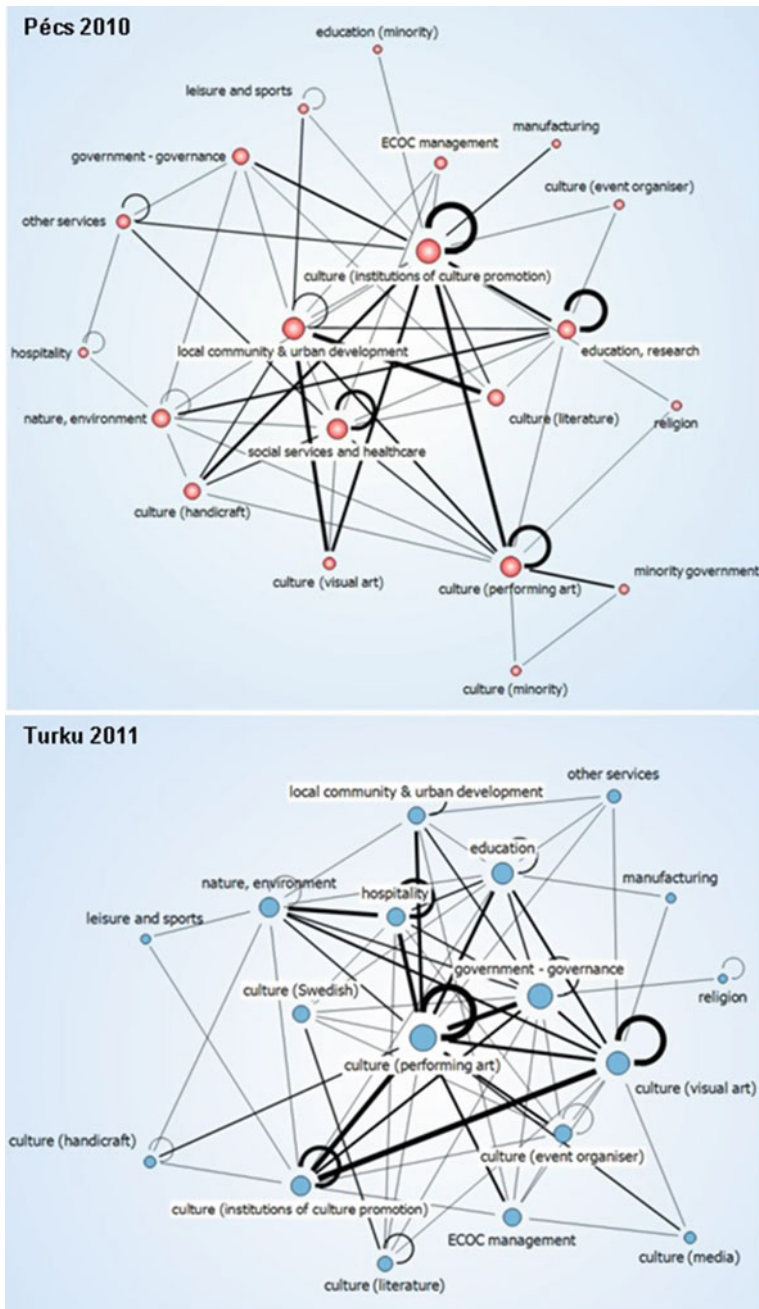


Fig. 8.3 Aggregate networks of the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 projects showing the ‘field of activity’ dimension. *Note:* the size of nodes indicates the number of links of a node on the aggregated level variety of links (i.e. the larger the node, the more different links it has with other groups), while the *thickness* of the links shows the number of connections on the level of organisations summated under the nodes. *Source:* Survey data (2014–2015) processed and visualised by NetMiner 4 software

8.5 Focus on Links: Centrality, Expansion and the Permanence of Networking

Analysing the networks of ECOC projects on the level of individual respondents (Fig. 8.4) reveals more concrete examples of cooperation than the study of aggregate networks, since links between individual organisations become visible, and key actors can be identified as well as smaller actor-clusters. From this perspective, the position of individual organisations and various constellations of actor groups may also be examined in the light of their known attributes (location, legal status and field of activity), so bringing us closer to an interpretation of these cooperation patterns in terms of local development potentials. Furthermore, individual links can be classified in terms of their temporality, and a longitudinal comparative approach can be implemented to understand the potential long-term impact of the ECOC projects on the communities involved.

8.5.1 Nodes in Structurally Distinguished Positions (Centrality)

As already expected from the analysis of aggregate networks, diversity is a general characteristic of both of the ECOC projects. However, there are some specific types

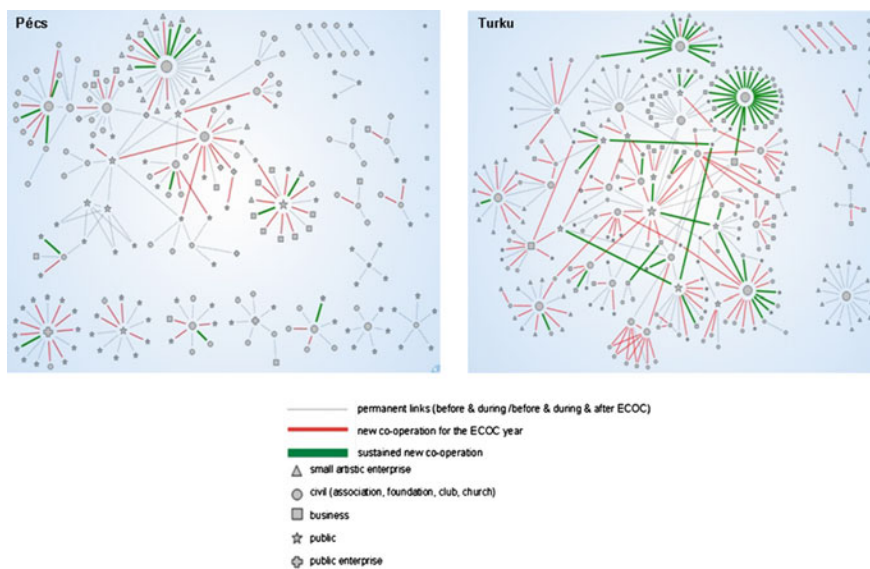


Fig. 8.4 The dynamics of the cooperation networks related to the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 projects. *Source:* Survey data (2014–2015) processed and visualised by NetMiner 4 software

of participant organisations that fill particular roles and distinguished positions. Looking at the networks in terms of geographical location/scales, it is clear that the majority of the cooperation clusters are regional mixes, although with a dominance of the title-holding cities as central, high-degree nodes. In the case of the Pécs 2010 network, however, there are also some more visible smaller clusters with purely local cooperation links, with little bridging and more bonding in terms of city-internal and city-external connections. Another aspect concerns the position and distribution of non-cultural organisations within the two networks. In regard to sectorial categories, civil stakeholders (associations, foundations, clubs) have significant roles in both of the networks. In the case of Pécs 2010, almost all the major nodes (and especially those that are interconnected in a wider network of other large nodes) are civic organisations. In the network of the Turku 2011 project, the public sector has a generally more central position, and civic organisations tend to be major nodes and have an important mediator role, i.e. in linking different types of participants and their hubs. Finally, when looking at the classification based on the fields of activity, the share of clusters with an exclusively cultural activity profile is somewhat higher in the case of the Turku ECOC project, but even those cultural clusters are usually connected to larger networks via other kinds of organisations (e.g. from the fields of hospitality, education or public administration/government).

Furthermore, structurally vital positions in the cooperation networks can be filled by organisations whose significance may be less obvious at a first glance. These actor-nodes do not necessarily have the highest degrees (i.e. the greatest numbers of links to others), but may still be the ones that keep the larger structures together, and without which the more extensive networks would fall apart into smaller groups. By calculating the so-called betweenness centrality values⁵ of nodes, these cohesive actors can be easily identified. The results of the centrality analysis and the characteristics of the main groups of central nodes are comparable for the two cases and are summarised in Table 8.2. The network of the Pécs 2010 project can be characterised by five main and important cohesive organisations, while the Turku 2011 ECOC project's major central node is the city of Turku (surrounded by other 9 organisations with high betweenness centrality values but still remotely following the node of the Turku city administration). The results of the analysis indicate that these key networking organisations are local civic and public entities, not necessarily from the field of culture but with various activities ranging from education to social services.

⁵Node betweenness centrality quantifies the number of times a node acts as a bridge along the shortest path between two other nodes. The more times a node appears in the paths, the higher centrality it has.

Table 8.2 Network characteristics of the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 projects based on centrality analysis

	Pécs 2010	Turku 2011
Number of most significant central* nodes	5	1 (+9)
Regional distribution of the most central* nodes	Very strong dominance of Pécs/Turku city administrations	
Legal status of the most central* nodes	Civil (foundations and associations)	Public (very significant), civil (associations and foundations)
Activity profile of the most central* nodes	ECOC management, institutions of culture promotion, local community and urban development, social services, governance/administration	ECOC management, governance/administration, education and research, nature and environment protection

Main central node characteristics are compared to the rest of the nodes in terms of regional distribution, legal status and activity profile

Source Survey data (2014–2015) processed by NetMiner 4 software

*Calculated based on betweenness centrality

8.5.2 Expansion of the Networks

When discussing cooperation networks, their dynamics are probably the most interesting aspect to analyse. This is especially important if one wishes to see the extent to which ECOC projects are able to initiate new and revive former relational spaces through their cultural projects, and whether those relations have the potential to build temporary collaborative structures, which may persist beyond the event years. For this purpose, data are still best analysed on the level of the individual respondents, but the real focus now turns towards the *time frame of relations*. In this respect, three types of relations need to be differentiated; *permanent links*, *new (but not continued) cooperations* and *sustained new cooperations*. Permanent links that existed either before and during or before-during-after the ECOC event year cannot be considered as indicators of actual network expansion, nor can they be seen as markers of the sustainability of network growth. Thus, only the two latter types of cooperative relations (i.e. networking which was brought about by the ECOC events) are analysed (highlighted in Fig. 8.4).

Besides using already existing networks, the ECOC projects may be assumed to have been significant motivators for new cooperations. In this respect, the Turku 2011 project has proved to be more successful than Pécs 2010 by having significantly more newly created cooperation links. However, it is interesting to take a closer look not only at the number of the newly emergent links, but also their nature and composition. One aspect is the balance between bonding and bridging ties which existed before and were created as a result of the ECOC events (see the above section on ‘social networks and regional development’):

- In terms of the participant organisations' legal status, the Pécs 2010 project seems to have a stronger effect (i.e. there is greater added value in terms of the hybridisation of partnerships). In Pécs, the newly established cooperations are mostly of the bridging type, mainly between the public and business sectors or civil groups and small artistic enterprises (while the older permanent links mainly bond actors of the same sector). In contrast, although the ECOC project has brought about new bridging linkages across sectors in Turku, the pre-event partnerships already consist of a balanced mixture of both bridging and bonding types of connections (see Fig. 8.4).
- Regarding the participant organisations' activities, the share of bridging ties is significantly higher in Turku within the ECOC-initiated network, but this kind of diversifying effect is less visible in the case of Pécs 2010.

All in all, it becomes evident that the European Capital of Culture programme had increased the number of bridging links (connecting different types of actors with various resources) in one way or another. Based on Newman and Dale's (2005) concept of the resilience of networks, this may actually have a positive effect on the longer-term sustainability of collaborative networking.

8.5.3 *Permanence of Emergent Networking*

In addition to its potentials to mobilise cooperative linkages, the prospects for lasting networking capital of the ECOC projects can also be examined. In terms of sustained new cooperations, the Turku 2011 project performs better by having more links between participant organisations that survive beyond the ECOC year (35.7 % as opposed to 20 % in the case of Pécs). It is possible to examine the endurance of these new cooperative linkages in terms of the variety and combinations of different participants they connect; however, it seems that the organisations' legal status does not have an influence on the sustainability of new links (Fig. 8.4). Due to the high number of categories (21), the fields of participant organisations activity cannot be assessed in terms of their impact on the permanence of their relationships.

Finally, the data allow for testing the effect of the geographical location (regional scales) of the participants on the sustainability of collaborative links between them. In this respect, it can be seen that the Turku 2011 project initiated new relations with its wider regions, especially in the Baltic Sea region, and to a much smaller extent in Europe. However, these cooperations seem only to last for the event year and the majority of sustained new cooperation links remain in Turku itself, and to a lesser extent within the Finland Proper⁶ (Varsinais-Suomi) region as well as within

⁶Finland Proper is a region made up of 28 municipalities, and its capital and biggest city is Turku. Its Finnish name is Varsinais-Suomi, and in English, it is referred to as Finland Proper. The next larger spatial unit in this study is the state administrative region of Southwest Finland composed of Finland Proper and Satakunta region.

Finland (mainly Helsinki). In comparison, only about half of the new relations initiated by the Pécs 2010 project are local, while the other new cooperation links are from all of the different spatial levels (from county level to those outside Europe). In contrast to the Turku 2011 project, the few sustained relations that are to be seen in Pécs are not restricted to the city, and moreover, their durability is atypical of locally established new relationships.

8.6 Increased Network Capital and Inclusive Governance: Does Networking Matter?

The above analyses confirm that the European Capital of Culture programme has a measurable impact on inter-organisational cooperation and networking among a diversity of actors and that this reaches beyond the field of culture and the limits of the hosting cities. However, the question remains: what do the existing relations which have been mobilised and the new collaborative relations that have been triggered mean to the participants? Also, to what extent is the contribution of an ECOC project perceived to have a positive impact on developing the network capital of organisations and their region? In order to find some direct or indirect relationships between the dynamics of networking and the experienced benefit of the cultural event, the survey contained a request for an appraisal by participant organisations of the effects that the ECOC project had had on their activities. Respondents could select from four options: (a) ECOC hindered their work, (b) ECOC had not affected their work, (c) ECOC meant new opportunities for the event year, but it had no effect in the following period, and (d) ECOC had supported their work in the last 4 years as well.⁷ The answers to this question were compared to the respondents' networking activities before, during and after the ECOC year in both Pécs and Turku. The results show (Table 8.3) that the sense of benefitting from these ECOC projects generally increases with the intensity of cooperation during the event year. In other words, the higher the degree of a participant organisation (i.e. the more connected it is), the more positive they assess the impact of the ECOC programme.

Similarly, there is a positive correspondence between an increase in the cooperation links of an organisation (degree growth), and perceived new opportunities. In this regard, there is an observable difference between Pécs and Turku: while in Pécs, growing networks are perceived as beneficial for the organisations' activities mainly during the event, the responses from the Turku 2011 indicate that intensive networking promotes lasting benefits which stem from Cultural Capital projects, i.e. the project has a positive effect on the respondents' activities *beyond* the ECOC year.

⁷None of the respondents selected option (a) in their answers.

Table 8.3 Networking compared to the evaluation of the Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 ECOC events

Response	Pécs 2010		Turku 2011	
	Average degree during the ECOC year	Average degree growth for the ECOC year	Average degree during the ECOC year	Average degree growth for the ECOC year
(b) No effect	1.1	0.2	2.8	0.8
(c) New opportunities only for the ECOC year	4.2	2.5	5.1	3.1
(d) Beneficial beyond the ECOC year	5.2	1.8	6.5	3.8

Source Survey data (2014–2015) processed by NetMiner 4 software
Italics indicate high average degree growth

Table 8.4 Evaluation of ECOC and the experienced impact on individual organisations' networking

	Experience of impact on an individual organisation's network							
	Pécs				Turku			
	Isolates (%)	I (%)	II (%)	III (%)	Isolates (%)	I (%)	II (%)	III (%)
(a) Groups of respondents classified by their ECOC-evaluative responses								
(b) No effect on the organisation's work	44.4	44.4	11.1	0	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0
(c) New opportunities only for the ECOC year	33.3	38.1	19	9.5	5.8	5.8	76.5	11.8
(d) Beneficial beyond the ECOC year	4.2	41.6	29.1	25	2.6	15.8	34.2	47.4

Source Survey data (2014–2015) processed by NetMiner 4 software

Typology: isolates, no cooperation; I, same cooperation network before and during the ECOC year (and often following it); II, existence of at least one new cooperation link for the ECOC year; III, existence of at least one sustained new cooperation

Italics indicate high percentage

The most interesting results are revealed by looking at the relations between the *sustained* networks (or sustained growth in cooperative partnerships) and the evaluation of the event. For this purpose, nodes have been classified into 'isolates' and types I, II, III based on their highest-value link. For instance, when an organisation has at least one link that represents a 'new (but not continued) cooperation', but no new linkage sustained beyond the event year, it is classified into group II (see more under Table 8.4). This way of processing the network data brings the *experience* of the varying continuities of networking to the surface. The evaluative answers about the events' effects have been compared against the existence of increased networking (or lack of an experience thereof) in order to see

whether obtaining new and lasting partnerships is related to the experienced benefits of the ECOC programme (Table 8.4).

The analysis shows that those organisations that have no new or existing cooperations for the ECOC year do not perceive the event as beneficial for their activities. This trend is especially visible in the case of the Turku 2011 project. Additionally, figures indicate that in both of the cities, perceived new opportunities for the ECOC year might be affected by the occurrence of new relations. However, when it comes to the experience of any longer-term positive impacts of the cultural event, the role of sustained relations can be associated with lasting benefits only in the case of the Turku 2011 ECOC (Table 8.4). This may indicate that there is generally a higher significance and value associated with networking (or increasing one's network capital) for actors engaged in the ECOC event held in Turku than those in Pécs.

The generally positive evaluation of the ECOC's impact on networking is also well reflected in the final optional comments given in the survey. Project-related networking is especially appreciated by organisations with high degrees (5–16 cooperative relations) during the ECOC event, but the possibility of developing expertise in collaborations is also seen as an advantage by those with a lower number of links. The long-term benefits of lasting relationships are directly mentioned in many comments of the Turku 2011 questionnaire and stem from a variety of participants such as the Municipality of Kaarina, Illume Ltd (a company specialised in film production) or the Mixed-Art Association 'Poike'. However, some refer to a lack of willingness on the part of partner organisations, or the lack of resources for maintaining the cooperation. These comments could easily be associated with the inbuilt thematic bias of the survey, i.e. its obvious focus on the relationship between the ECOC programme and networking. In the case of Pécs, under identical survey conditions, there is only one positive comment regarding this relationship (by the Hungary–Japan Friendship Society—Kubaru Group), and this confirms the conclusion made above that participant organisations in the Turku ECOC project tended to perceive more benefits from networking than their Pécs counterparts.

8.7 Conclusions and Policy Implications

There is a richness of tests and measurements offered by the SNA method that can be applied to relational data such as the inter-organisational partnerships that are formed in the context of an ECOC mega-event or other similar events within wider urban governance processes. This chapter presents only a limited number of analyses, illustrating the heterogeneity of collaboration and the dynamics of emergent networks. Whilst there is a need for other sources of data and other analytical approaches, by quantifying and visualising the network of cooperations among diverse ECOC participants, SNA may help to get to the heart of some of the questions related to the general patterns of cooperation networks surrounding mega-events, as well as their locally specific features.

Firstly, the above analysis sheds light on the commonalities and differences in the observable patterns in cooperation networks of the Turku and Pécs ECOC participants. Although the Turku project's collaborative network is slightly more connected than that of Pécs 2010, the levels of networking based on basic network characteristics (i.e. the number of participants and links, and the mean degree) are comparable. The analyses showed in both cases that the involvement of a variety of participants with other than cultural profiles is not only possible but also necessary for connecting cultural actors in the collaborative networks of ECOC projects. These stem from the fields of local community and urban development, leisure and sports, social services, health care or other services, and organisations that could relate their activities to the aims of ECOC. In many cases, these could form heterogeneous partnerships based on resource sharing and complementarities in their roles or objectives. The resulting mix of constellations greatly contributes to the innovativeness and attractiveness of individual ECOC projects.

Furthermore, what has become evident from the longitudinal analysis of this network data is that ECOC projects can contribute to the growth of network capital. As raised in the conceptual introduction on mega-events and social networks, the ECOC programme (which deliberately prefers cooperative projects in its allocation of resources) inherently builds upon and expands collaborative networks. There is evidence that some of these new cooperations have been maintained years after the events in both Turku and Pécs had concluded. These sustained relations are likely to contribute to a better inclusion of social partners (non-public actors) in the decision-making processes in these cities, and also enrich their local–regional governance networks. Thus, an ECOC project can support longer-term local–regional development via the soft 'social' infrastructure of inter-organisational collaborative networks that it triggers.

The sustainability of structures created for and by large-scale events is probably one of the most discussed issues, and it is also relevant in the case of soft, social infrastructures. The ECOC works with and initiates innovative cooperations, but their project's effects on local–regional development largely depend on their durability beyond the actual event year. The analysis of the two case studies indicates that the ECOC programme increased the number of bridging links that connect different types of actors, which is considered as a good general indicator of the future sustainability of networks. Some direct evidence of sustained networks (in the scope of 3–4 years after the ECOC events) is visible, especially in the Finnish cultural capital, Turku. The permanence of cooperations does not appear to depend on the participating organisations' fields of activities, although some regular patterns can be detected in terms of the regional scales of networking: in the manner of outgoing and receding tides, projects spill over during the main event year to cover wider regions and even to cross-national borders, and then withdraw mostly to the confines of the title-holding cities.

However, the comparison of the two cases indicates that mere top-down initiation or external incentives to cooperate are not enough in themselves, and an existing culture of networking is an important contextual factor. The collected data indicate stronger traditions of networking in Turku than in Pécs, and it has a

detectable effect on the growth and sustained growth of cooperation links generated by the event. This network-mindedness may be a more general societal phenomenon in Finland (e.g. in the light of the more horizontal social and institutional structures that are present in the country); however, whether there is an underlying wider societal–cultural difference between Finland and Hungary is a question that would need further investigation to answer with any certainty.

As for the experienced benefits of the ECOC projects, results of the analysis show that ECOC-facilitated networking is perceived as a valuable asset by the participating organisations. Their reflections indicate that the recognition of the importance of networking is often associated with the perceived success of the ECOC project, which partly supports the hypothesis that this type of cultural mega-event may strengthen social infrastructures. However, this association was drawn only from the responses of those participating in the Turku 2011 project, which again raises the question of the overall embeddedness such events have in wider societal–cultural settings.

Though the positive local development effects of mega-events are often a feature of political and academic discourses, attention is still mostly paid towards material factors such as the generated profit compared to the size of investment, or the use of created urban infrastructures for increased tourism and use by local residents. However, some of the less tangible impacts are also important. The European Capital of Culture programme's possible contribution to the mobilisation and increase in 'network capital' of individual participant organisations, as well as that of its hosting city and region is an intangible, yet potentially long-lasting positive influence. Considering the fact that the ECOC programme can generate lasting networking relations, as indicated by this research, it can potentially contribute to the strengthening of local–regional governance networks. The extent of this gain varies between ECOC projects and depends on several factors related to the local management of the event, as well as factors which are embedded into wider sociocultural contexts. Therefore, both the ECOC 'practitioners' (on local, national and EU levels) and those who are involved in the impact assessment of mega-events should pay more attention to the potential contributions such events can make to the development of soft infrastructures, and especially the possible enhancement of network capital in the hosting city and its region.

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