

Monitoring and Evaluation of 2023 Eleusis European Capital of Culture

Collecting data and monitoring the progress of 2023 Eleusis is an essential part of the on-going preparations for the European Capital of Culture in 2023. The purpose of the evaluation of 2023 Eleusis is the quantitative measurement and the qualitative assessment of the impact of 2023 Eleusis ECoC, especially for its reference year (2023, by postponement from 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Monitoring and evaluation of 2023 Eleusis focuses on local citizens' access to and participation in culture, the city's cultural vitality and sustainability, the local economy and tourism. It also considers the governance of the ECoC and its operation, as well as, its image and reception by local residents and the wider public. The evaluation is performed through a set of 62 indicators.

Process of the evaluation

There are three distinct stages to carrying out the evaluation: a. before the title year, with the view to understand the local environment and conditions and set a baseline of all the indicators (ex-ante evaluation); b. shortly before the title year (mid-term evaluation for the period 2021-2022); and c. during the reference year (2023), in order to examine the final formation of these indicators after the completion of the ECoC.

The evaluation team, in collaboration with 2023 Eleusis, has created a multidimensional database for the continuous monitoring of the set indicators, so that it can provide evidence-based feedback to the ECoC's team. In doing so, it can inform the ECoC's policies on related issues, such as arts programming, capacity building, audience outreach, communication strategies and cross-border collaborations. In this way, the evaluation assists in the planning of the ECoC in a systematic and comprehensive way.

Two sets of objectives are used as a basis for the evaluation of 2023 Eleusis: (1) the *general objectives* (Bidbook, p. 12) and (2) the *strategic objectives* of 2023 Eleusis ECoC, as presented in the initial plan of the programme. The evaluation of both the general and the strategic objectives is performed through a series of 62 indicators, which have been selected with reference to the guidelines of the European Commission (*Guidelines for the cities' own evaluations of the results of their ECoC*, 2018) and the findings of previous ECoC assessments.

Methodology and Data Sources

The evaluation team has designed a mixed-methods research plan to compare the performance of Elefsina's cultural field before and during the ECoC's events. Quantitative and qualitative methods are being used to produce and collect primary data and to analyse secondary data. Quantitative techniques are suitable for the investigation of large-scale phenomena and the examination of their characteristics, whereas qualitative tools allow for

exploring these characteristics in greater depth and from the subjective point of the various stakeholders involved (such as citizens, artists, cultural professionals both within and outside the ECoC).

The quantitative methods employed for the evaluation include:

- An ex-ante (prior to the title) and an ex-post perceptions and cultural participation survey of representative sample of residents of Elefsina
- A survey of artists and creative workers (before and during the year of the title)
- An audience survey of 2023 Eleusis events (prior and during the reference year)
- A survey of visitors to archeological sites
- Statistical analyses of secondary data, regarding:
 - o communication and promotion activities of 2023 Eleusis, including analytics of the organization's social media presence;
 - o attendance of events organized by 2023 Eleusis (e.g. number of participants, audiences' demographic profile, frequency of attendance at ECoC events),
 - o the degree of recognition of 2023 Eleusis,
 - o the expenditures of the company and the Municipality of Elefsina for actions carried out within the ECoC's framework,
 - o impact on the local economy and tourism.

Qualitative methods

Interviews and focus groups are being carried out with executives of 2023 Eleusis, representatives of the Municipality of Elefsina, participating artists and cultural professionals, members of the audience, volunteers, residents and business people of Elefsina. In total, 12 focus groups (each with 8-10 participants) and about 70 interviews will be conducted by the end of the evaluation period.

Qualitative analyses of secondary data are also being carried out. These examine:

- o the programme of the ECoC,
- o media monitoring reports of the promotion and branding of 2023 Eleusis events in the media
- o the organisation's progress reports concerning its projects

Milestones and Deliverables

The main milestones of the evaluation of 2023 Eleusis ECoC are (a) the ex-ante evaluation and the formulation of a baseline scenario for all evaluation indicators, which has been completed (Deliverables 1, 2, and 3), (b) the mid-term evaluation for year 2021 (Deliverable 4; completed) and for year 2022 (Deliverable 5), and (c) the ex-post evaluation, at the end of 2023. Deliverable 6 will form the final evaluation of the Eleusis 2023 ECoC.

Indicators

Cultural Access and Participation

Increased citizens' participation and engagement in multicultural projects

Geographical area covered in the artistic programme

Number and quality of multicultural projects

Number of local grassroots initiatives including European partners or intercultural themes

Number and profile of people reached via media coverage/Geographical scope of media coverage

Increased visits to heritage sites (number of people and length of the visit)

Increased support for multicultural projects e.g. by cultural minorities

Attendance at ECoC events and evolution compared to the regular cultural audience of the city

% of residents attending or participating in events, including youth, schools, minorities or the disadvantaged

Increased level of awareness of the cultural offer (generally and by the groups mentioned above)

Number and profile of active volunteers and level (depth) of their commitment

Number of events and initiatives encouraging active engagement and giving opportunities for different levels of participation

Gender balance and cultural diversity of the cultural workforce

Geographical spread of audiences

Number and quality of the schemes encouraging wider engagement (e.g. ref. ticket policies, transport, promotion)

Number and quality of the programmes involving not-engaged

Increased motivation for participation in culture

Increased depth of participation in culture

Number of cultural professionals trained and using audience engagement methods in everyday work

Increased participation of local community groups and schools in cultural programmes

Increased diversity (age, cultural background) of the audience

Cultural Vibrancy

Intangible European heritage (arts and crafts) increased skills

Increased number of cultural initiatives linking heritage and innovation

Increase in the availability of affordable space for cultural production (studios etc.)

New use of unused spaces, new public space development

Number of artists involved in international cooperation

Number of local artists involved in international projects abroad

Quantity, quality and sustainability of the schemes and programmes supporting professional development of cultural managers and artists

Created conditions and programmes for development of NGOs, cultural and creative industries (to support diversification, quantity, growth, extended reach or internationalization)

Number and profile of people and organisations participating in capacity building programmes

Economy and Tourism

Cultural heritage infrastructure investment

Contemporary culture infrastructure investment

Increase in GDP and employment in Eleusis cultural and creative sectors

Increase in tourist visits (day visit and overnight stays, both at domestic and international level)

Profile of the visitors

Governance and delivery process

Diversity of European themes (in the programme, in the media)

Quality and quantity of post-ECOC and long-term strategic documents and policies prepared

Civic sector reference bodies working with the municipality – number, number of meetings, number of organisations participating

Development of the city's cultural strategy and implementation plans

Number of decisions Municipality took in consultation with the cultural and civic sector and the increased budget for cultural activities

Total n° of events

Total Budget of ECoC cultural programmes

Increased financial contributions obtained from public, private and third sector partners

N° of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or based on transnational cooperation

N° of new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators

ECoC programme subdivided according e.g. to art genre

N° of events in every category of events

Strategy for long-term cultural development of the city, initial and post-ECOC, including an Action Plan

Value of investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities

Value of investment in cultural programmes by NGO sector and CCI

Civic sector reference bodies working with the Cultural department – number, number of meetings, number of organisations participating

Sustained multi-sector partnership for cultural Governance

Cross-sectorial collaborations including cultural sector

Number and profile of projects realised with other sectors

Number of documents supporting cross- sectorial collaboration

Raised cultural management standards

Image and Perceptions

Increased citizens' awareness and appreciation of the diversity of European cultures.

Increased citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space, citizens' perceptions of being European

Increased knowledge about European cultures

Volume and % of positive media coverage of cities

Awareness of the ECoC among residents

Awareness of the ECoC among cultural sector representatives abroad (e.g. embassies, national cultural organisations)

Volume and % of city coverage about the ECoC and/ or its cultural offer

Awareness of the ECoC as a city accolade/ contributor to city reputation among residents