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**FILLING STRUCTURES WITH CONTENT:
REGIONAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE PÉCS 2010 AND TURKU
2011 ECOC PROJECTS**

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Introduction



- Increasing numbers of small and medium-sized towns are motivated to participate in the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme.
- Participating cities tend to rely also on the resources provided by their surrounding regions:
as supplies of a special image, culture, nature, attractions as well as demand for cultural services
- Focus is on:
 - *structures* that have been framed by the programme applications and promotion activities as well as the ways of coordination and governance models,
 - *content* is what actually has emerged as the outcome of the years of efforts.



Theoretical background



- Multi-level or multi-scale governance
 - First by Marks in 1992 to capture developments in the EU structural policy following its major reform in 1988.
 - Refers to *bounded spaces*
 - ‘Region’ is understood as a bounded space where lower scale spatial entities are contained by higher level regions; often for the practical purposes of territorial administration, monitoring and measuring development and performance, as well as of the funding of regional assistance programmes.



Theoretical background (2)



- *Unbounded , relational space* concept (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Massey, 2004, 2005; Allen and Cochrane, 2007)
 - regions not fixed, but discontinuous and diffuse in space
 - Allen et al. (1998):
a “doily”, where there are holes between the connecting links, without “the necessary inclusion within the definition of a region of everything which lies within a spatially continuous area”
 - Morgan (2007): political space is bounded in administrative territories, but at the same time *porous through people’s multiple identities, mobilities, and relational connectivity exceeding territorial boundaries*
 - Amin (2004): cities and regions should be seen as places ‘without prescribed and proscribed boundaries’



Theoretical background (3)



- Jones (2009): The concept of *phase space*
 - accepts the relational making of space but insists on the „*confined, connected, inertial, and always context-specific nature of existence and emergence*”,... that is: time, history are important elements of the context.
 - There are different ‘phase space layers’ formed through the passage of events, legacies, and practices.

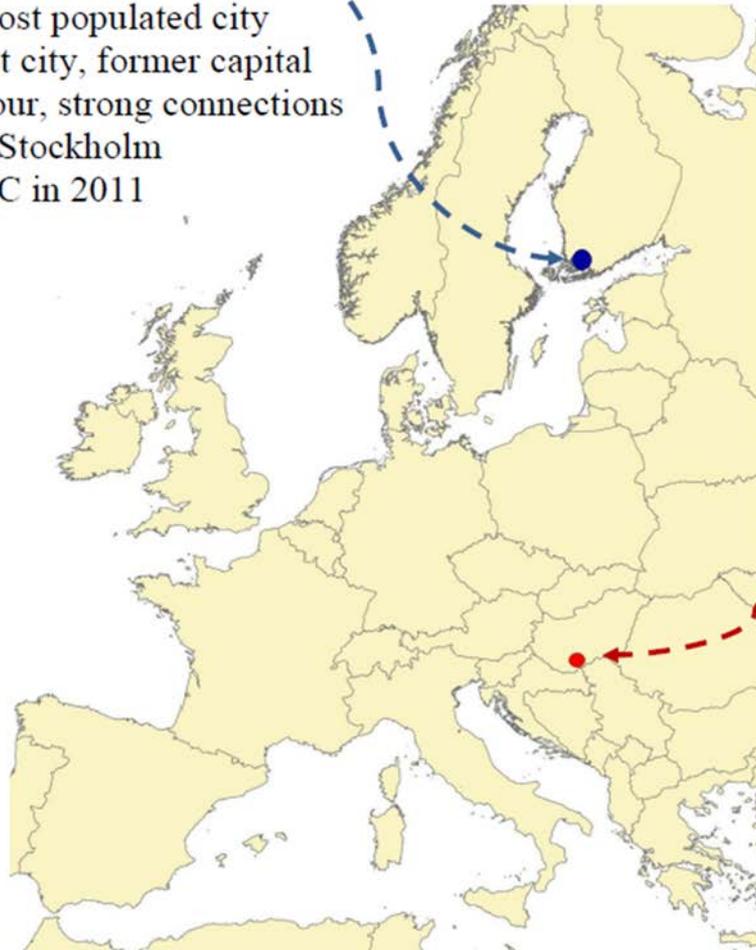


Case studies



TURKU

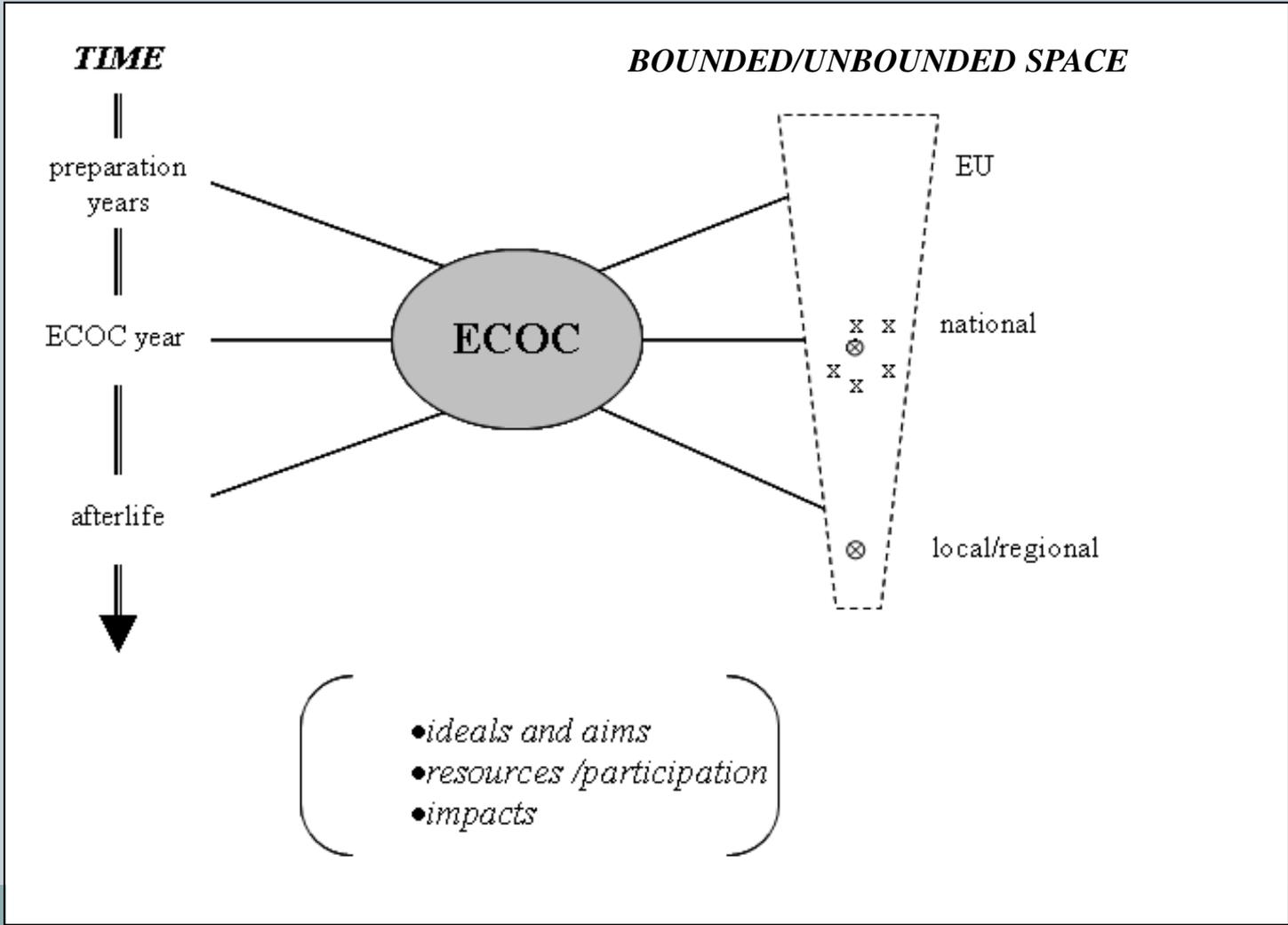
- population: 178,784
- 5th most populated city
- oldest city, former capital
- harbour, strong connections with Stockholm
- ECOC in 2011



PÉCS

- population: 157,721
- 5th most populated city
- originally manufacturing, coal mining
- revival of former strong connections to Croatia and Serbia
- ECOC in 2010

The application of theory to ECOC cases





Research questions and preliminary answers from the case studies



- What spaces are formed around the cities by their respective ECOC projects?
- How are these spaces linked to the chosen ways of „content development” of Pécs 2010 and Turku 2011 to fill the prescribed ECOC „structure”?

Participants from regional and national hinterlands

(preliminary findings from ECOC programme documents, interviews)



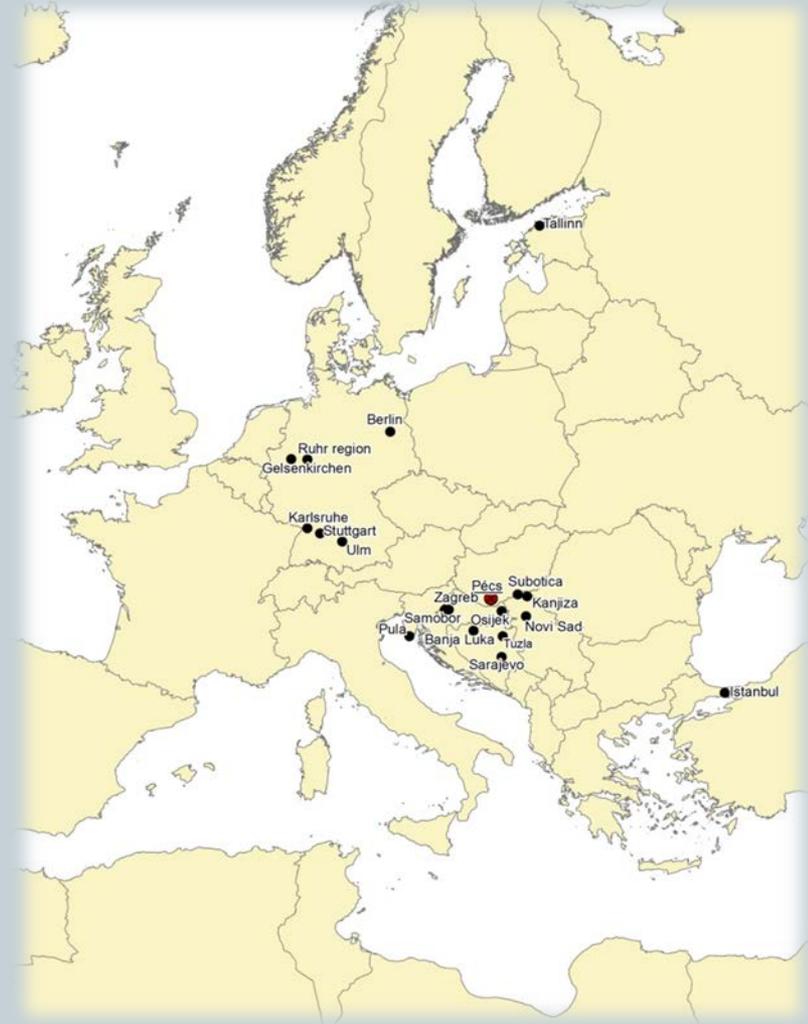
- Surrounding smaller settlements (funded participants *vs.* self-financing joiners)
- National counterparts:
 - „The National Cultural Forum” – Turku 2011
 - „Winner takes you all along” - Pécs 2010
- Slogans, ideals, intentions *vs.* reality – *dimension of time*

International networks



Co-operative projects:

- Baltic Sea region: St. Petersburg, Tallinn, Stockholm
- Balkans





Conclusions



- *Despite the fact that it is not prescribed in the given „structures” of ECOC – as in the case of Pécs and Turku – the spaces formed by the ECOC projects are wider than the cities themselves.*
- *These spaces, however, cannot be defined as bounded regions, neither are they fixed and continuous in time and space.*

Like outgoing and receding tides, ECOC spills over in the main event year to cover wider regions, and even to cross national borders; then withdraws to the limits of the title holding cities and meanwhile leaving behind footprints in a few other places: in the form of new tradition-setting events, social capital, which can be beneficially sustained in the future.



Thank you for your attention!

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