

Mytilene-Lesvos  
European Capital of Culture 2021  
Candidate City

[Application file]





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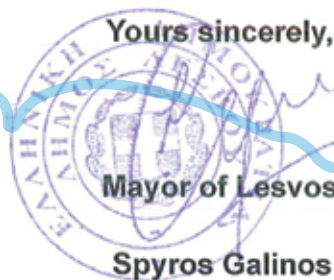
Mytilene  
24 November 2015

Lesvos island and the city of Mytilene began it's journey for claiming nomination of European Capital of Culture 2021, a few months ago. It has been an extrovert procedure towards the European Union.

We submit our candidacy with trusting in our cultural heritage, our humanitarian aspect of culture and our vision for a different Lesvos, a different Mytilene. A city where civilization gives hope for a better life. A life of contribution, of solidarity and compassion and a life with prospect for personal and collective growth whose cornerstone is our culture.

Our civilization is what help us turn pain into hope, turn crisis into opportunity, turn xenophobia to "philoxenia". This is what keeps us together as a community, as a city, as Europe.

Yours sincerely,



Mayor of Lesvos

Spyros Galinos



five year old volunteers painting

#### Greeting of the deputy mayor of Culture and Tourism of the municipality of Lesvos

The aesthetic quality, the artistic performance, the quality and the spiritual quest exhibited by the residents of Lesvos, constitute elements that have survived from the ancient years until today. These are the elements which have lead our people to cultural activities, that transcend the population data of the island. This timeless quality and nonbelligerent attitude of the residents of Lesvos, is exactly the element that shapes today their solidarity and humane behavior towards the huge immigration flows to the island, a humanitarian burden which they unexpectedly and unintentionally are called to handle and live with. Committed to the European values and awarded with the title of the Capital of Solidarity, we are all willing to stand up for the title of the EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2021, so as to be given the chance to transfuse our spirit, our tradition, our cultural elements to the whole European peninsula, our common homeland . This will become an opportunity for us to shape collaborations and alliances which are going to exhibit our extroverted cultural attitude and our focus to European collective action.

With innovative ideas we will be able to achieve these significant objectives.

Vice Mayor Culture- Tourism

Municipality of Lesvos



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## LESVOS 2021: Introduction – General considerations

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### Intro.1 Why does your city wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

*No matter what you say about this land, there will always be something that cannot be expressed in words. Something deep, elemental, furtive, and yet tangible. Unable to describe it, you can only experience it. Lesvos and Mytilene have enough charm to keep you enclosed you in a gentle prison.*

Lesvos stands at the meeting point of two currents that sometimes flow quietly and sometimes rage uncontrollably: East and West, Christianity and Islam. Lesvos became a welcoming bosom where myths, beliefs, traditions, and people from the two opposite coasts of the Aegean Sea combined in a new whole.

Lesvos resembles a boat that sails incessantly for 5000 years through art and culture, ever ready for the unexpected in life. A boat that



accommodated, willingly or not, conquerors, “friends”, visitors, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Genoese, Turks, pirates, fugitives, refugees. These adventures and contacts with the “Other” explain the metamorphosis of the island into an extraordinary place that is able to absorb and mesmerize you. The inhabitants’ primordial poetic and sarcastic psyche, a result of the island’s Aeolian past, captivates you. These are the endless changes in the island’s history that account for the appearance and growth of such a bewildering variety of personalities, tendencies, philosophical currents, works of art, and monuments of everyday culture in Lesbos.

## POETRY DESIGNS THE CITY

*This island learned to live half in heaven, half on earth, half in doubt, half in immortality, half in mayhem, and half in hope.*

It is hard to incorporate, present or explain Lesbos. Its long history precludes that. It is equally hard to account for all the reasons that shaped the conditions for the continuous production of culture on the island. A culture that refuses to stay put. There is an irrepressible tendency to export words and ideas that influence intellectual elites at home and abroad.

The cause is not really that important. What matters is that poetry has always held the place of honour in the daily life, the history, the memory, the heritage, the morals, the spirit and the future of the island. Poetry provides an unbroken record of reality through the wounds, the feelings, the fantasies, the anxieties, the joys, the dreams and the images of the natural and lush landscape. Poetry is the cornerstone of intellectual achievement and cultural heritage. It prompts the island forward and becomes, even today, a life-giving reference point for the islanders.

Poetry. Glorified by Sappho and Alcaeus. Drafted by Longus in *Daphnis and Chloe*, the oldest pastoral novel, about which Goethe claimed that its annual reading enhances the human intellectual ability. Poetry as recited by Aristotle to his students, when he returned from writing his *Historia Animalium* (*History of Animals*), a pioneering work of zoology inspired by his observations in Lesbos. The poetry that assisted Arion in giving form to the satirical drama and the dithyramb in honor of Dionysus. The poetry that accompanied the dramatist Menander’s plays in the ancient theater.

Poetry defined the works and the days of simple stonemasons, allowing their imagination to reach the most unpredictable limits, and to create, across the island, architectural wonders of the highest aesthetics.

Poetry sustains the potter’s joy in molding clay to create his pots in kilns whose fire remains unextinguished for more than 4500 years. It inspires the wood carver to shape the wood of the chestnut tree into exquisite iconostases and chests. It motivates the shipbuilder to build the most beautiful hulls that will carry the ship to the end of the world. It prompts the weavers to follow Penelope’s example as they labour at home, their own temple of creativity and responsibility. It animates the self-taught organist to put together delightful verses and lyrics during funfairs that go back to the time of Dionysus. It stimulates the visual

artist to follow the poet’s counsel: “if I was to speak about spring in Lesbos, I would paint.”

Poetry was a fertile field where members of reading clubs from Constantinople and patrons of popular local coffee houses planted introspective reflection and creativity, while shaping speech.

Poetry is the hidden sister of the local idiom that does not limit itself to the form of the language but embraces its very substance. It is an ingrained philosophy and attitude towards life.

Poetry defined the city of Mytilene with its urban character, the idyllic environment and an overflowing amorousness.

Poetry was imparted through the eyes of the emblematic heroes depicted by the folk painter Theophilos, and the mellifluous writing of Odysseas Elytis, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Poetry sustained Tériade in his successful fight to establish the unfledged revolutionary movement of modernism in the visual arts canon of the 20th century.

Poetry as it thrived and was reborn through the words and thoughts of the island’s most important intellectuals (Miltos Kountouras, Kostas Kontos, Thrasyvoulos Stavrou a.k.a. Melikertis, Argyris Eftaliotis, Fotis Kontoglou, Stratis Myrivilis, Elias Venezis, and the Vernardaki brothers). Poetry that always opposed tyranny and exalted freedom.

Poetry, with its inspired craftsmen and their scintillating spirit, so full of love for life and sarcasm that it managed to deflate the fear of death.

Poetry that never rested. It comes all the way from the revolution in the use of metals, through Homer, to the age of constitutional upheavals and the creation of the city-state, the birthplace of democracy.

Poetry written by foreign literary giants, such as Charles Baudelaire, who never forgot Lesbos. His collection *The Flowers of Evil*, is an almost prophetic search for the befitting acquittal of the island from the charges of History:

*Which of the gods will dare to be your judge, Lesbos,  
And condemn your brow, grown pallid from your labors,  
If his golden scales have not weighed the flood  
Of tears your streams have poured into the sea?*

[...] *What are to us the laws of the just and unjust [...]*

*Charles Baudelaire, The Flowers of Evil*

Poetry that accompanies, without a murmur, for two centuries already, the culture of ouzo, the island’s local nectar that inebriates the senses worldwide.

Poetry that was always present in the inhabitants’ sense of humour. To the present day they set up mock trials and establish associations of “oppressed spouses,” with fixed days of coming together around a table full of delicacies to exchange views on the various “accidents” of married life.

Poetry that remains a vigilant defender of the island’s castles; that flows in the water conduits of the ravaged Roman aqueducts; that offers prayers in more than 100 byzantine basilicas; that fills the sails



of the island as it travels on the edge; that stays up all night walking the island's cobbled streets; that embraces lesbians during their summer congregation in the beaches of Eresos.

All this is happening and strengthens poetry's place in the island's life and culture. For there is only one poetry and there is only one sky. As Odysseas Elytis wrote in *The Little Mariner*:

**«...what matters is from where one looks at the sky... for I have seen it from the open sea.»**

What better place to view the sky than Mytilene and the entire island of Lesbos?

The same poetry continues to guide our steps through the ancient streets with the point of the compass steadily facing the future. It is the poetry and the lyre used by the locals as indestructible weapons against would-be invaders, who, envious of this blessed land, tried to conquer it. It is poetry, her practitioners and those who carry on its tradition with continuous practice and the creation of new material with innovative methods that become defenders of their land and the castle of the Muses. As they sing the glory of what is truly great in life, they bestow upon the next generation a safe crossroads of civilization, peaceful coexistence and humanism.

### **SOLIDARITY IS CIVILIZATION**

*Two opposite shores*

*With lights hither and thither*

*For men to see*

*And express their sorrows*

*Always the same in different languages.*

*Makis Axiotis*

Mytilene and the entire island of Lesbos is a candidate for the 2021 European Capital of Culture title. Her dream is to pursue her glorious progress through culture, at a time when the island is under pressure, forced to confront an unprecedented refugee and immigration problem, the most acute and uncontrollable issue in Europe and the Mediterranean today.

The people of Lesbos responded actively to the drama of the refugees, who arrive in their thousands, relieved to have escaped war but anxious about the uncertain future. Faced with no alternative, they surpassed their capabilities while exhibiting generosity, humanity and remarkable patience.

The fight of the people of Lesbos, in the midst of the national financial crisis, is so desperate that it seems to go beyond human endurance. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees recognized the islanders' superhuman efforts and declared Mytilene "the world capital of solidarity".

For the people of Lesbos, the connection between culture and daily life, on the one hand, with the art of solidarity, on the other, remains strong

for centuries. Poets and refugees have always been part of our cellular memory. Our grandparents were refugees and our parents were immigrants.

Our candidacy is based on two pillars: poetry and solidarity. To remain true to our history, our moral values, and our culture, we must join our weapon and our shield, namely poetry, with our moral values that shaped our sense of solidarity. Solidarity is a cultural value. It rejects the building of walls and enables you to accept difference, adopt it and create something with it. Poetry clears the field with its transcendence. Financial differences, social distance, racial prejudice are replaced by solidarity as the supreme blessing. The combination of this way of thinking with new ideas and innovative actions produces the result we wish to carry to our European fellow citizens. We wish to convey it with the same extrovert spirit that the old islanders demonstrated when they transported their wares to Europe. With culture as our boat, it would be a shame to miss an opportunity to contact, interact and mutually complement other cultures.

Over the past few years, through an arduous adjustment, we rediscovered the forgotten gift of introspection and the necessity of filtering through the old material. We understood that Lesbos does not signify just a home but a way of living in this land. We shared the joy of creating a new cultural product that transformed our perception of art and life. We achieved all this without losing the primordial essence of the island's culture.

Solidarity, therefore, even in culture, as a value and an action. We rally around contemporary trends, novel sounds, new images, different traditions. We are open to new ideas and welcome all visitors to Lesbos in 2021, whether they come to stare at the night sky, to use earth itself as a canvas, to immerse themselves in the deep blue sea, to partake in the culture of ouzo, or lose themselves in Medora's words ("Egli non riede ancora") from Verdi's opera *Il Corsaro*, carried on the wind from



the castle of Mytilene. This is the promise of Lesvos for 2021: beauty and high quality with a human dimension.

Our ECoC candidacy allows us to imitate the wandering flamingos, regular visitors to the Bay of Kalloni, and fly skywards, till we reach our dreams.

Poetry is our answer:

*Enough we worshipped danger and it's time it repaid us.*

*Odysseas Elytis*

## Intro.2 Does your city plan to involve its surrounding area? Explain this choice.

Lesvos has an area of 1,636 square kilometres (632 square miles) with 371 kilometres (230.5 miles) of coastline, making it the third largest Greek island. It is located in the northeastern Aegean Sea, in the embrace of the Gulf of Edremit. Mytilene is the largest urban centre with a population of 27,871 inhabitants. Since antiquity, Mytilene is the island's main city, at the forefront of historical, financial and political developments. It is the seat of the governor of the North Aegean Region and all its main agencies, as well as the seat of the Secretariat General for the Aegean and Island Policy. The University of the Aegean Administrative Headquarters are located in Mytilene.

The current municipality of Lesvos includes the entire island with all its towns and villages. The total population is 86,436 inhabitants (2011 Census), with two thirds distributed in small towns and villages, such as Kalloni, Molyvos, Eresos, Sigri, and Plomari. Lesvos is an amalgam of culture and tradition, celebrated architecture and luscious nature. It is impossible to distinguish between the city of Mytilene and the rest of the island. Like the movements of a symphony, they go together in harmony.

There are shared elements in every community on the island, whether we talk about the capital city or the smallest hamlet. They form an unbroken chain through space and time. The culture of Lesvos cannot be separated from the culture of Mytilene. The reality of a single island-wide municipality demands that we apply for the ECoC title both as a city and an island.

Our strategy and our mottoes embrace both entities and spread our actions from coast to coast. This is evident in the **Collaboration** section. The island's cultural heritage is shared among all communities, however each one exhibits its own particularities. The result is interaction and diversity. But we are not satisfied. As a European Capital of Culture we wish to involve our neighbours, the communities on the coast of Asia Minor, in various actions and events.

## Intro.3 Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.

The first signs of human presence on the island of Lesvos appeared 600,000 years ago, but the earliest firm evidence is dated to the end of the 4th millennium BC. The following centuries marked the island with wonders of human activity. Today Lesvos is a living proof of a region with







an uninterrupted cultural evolution, despite being surrounded by the sea. The islanders' particular way of life, since antiquity, was intimately connected, one way or another, with culture, the arts, and especially the letters.

The prosperity from the cultivation of the olive tree and the abundant gifts of the sea, facilitated the growth of an intellectual life, of music, and of literature. The island's peculiar geography, with two bays and natural harbours in the crossroads between East and West, an outpost of Europe in the threshold of Asia, turned Lesbos into a route through which culture developed. A culture that stands with one leg on Asia Minor and the other on European Lesbos. The particularities and unique character of the local culture is due to this position. The skills of the local merchants in trading with foreign lands during the 18th and the 19th century endowed the island with its European character, its architectural wonders, and its cosmopolitan way of life.

The various conquerors were never able to check this culture. Even after the arrival of Greek refugees from Asia Minor, the 1922 population exchange between Greece and Turkey, and the Cold War tactics between the two countries, this way of life and this culture got stronger. After the Second World War, all this strength was unable to incorporate the rapid technological advances in Europe. Mytilene – Lesbos, similar to most other regions in Greece, failed to keep pace with the European rate of growth.

The last few decades, after Greece became a member of the European Union, Lesbos began to rediscover the old rhythms. The need for extroversion, contact, dissemination of its cultural character, and interaction with the broader European cultural developments, has grown stronger.

But, first, let us take a minute to explore the long history of Lesbos through the centuries.

## HISTORY

The evidence for human activity in Lesbos goes back to the late Neolithic period (late 4th millennium BC). During the Bronze Age (3rd and 2nd millennium BC) Lesbos came under the influence of the Trojan civilization. The organized settlements established commercial relations with Troy, the Asia Minor coast, the islands of the northern Aegean, the Cyclades, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete and the Mycenaean centers in Peloponnesus and Central Greece. According to Homer, the king of Lesbos at the time of the Trojan War was called Macareus.

The Aeolians were the earliest settlers. Herodotus calls them "Pelasgians". They came from Thessaly under the leadership of Lesbos, son of Lapithes and grandson of Aeolus, after whom the island came to be named. Lesbos married one of Macareus' five daughters, Methymna. During the 8th century BC there were a number of organized settlements on the island. Mytilene was the preeminent city and controlled the Aeolian centers along the coast of Asia Minor, from the Dardanelles to Smyrna. The local forms of government changed rapidly from monarchy to democracy, with intermediate periods of oligarchy and tyranny. When the Persian king Cyrus defeated Croesus (546 BC) Lesbos became a



Persian subject.

In the 5th century, after the Persian defeat, Lesvos found itself actively involved in the affairs of Greece. During the Peloponnesian war the island suffered from the catastrophic consequences of her participation in the conflict. The inhabitants alternated their support between the Athenians and the Spartans. In 405 BC the Spartans won and kept Lesvos under their control until 394 BC.

The Persian Empire conquered Lesvos once more, in 357 BC. The occupation lasted until the arrival of Alexander the Great in 332 BC. During the Hellenistic period the island belonged to the kingdoms that succeeded Alexander's empire. The Romans conquered Lesvos in 201 BC. Their presence is still visible in the impressive aqueduct in Moria, the numerous mosaics discovered in Mytilene, and the Sanctuary of Artemis Thermia.

### BYZANTINE AND MEDIEVAL LESVOS

During the reign of emperor Theodosius I (379–395 AD) Lesvos belonged to the Insulae province of the Roman Empire. The sense of security, a direct result of the wider peace that prevailed at the time, is reflected in the island's prosperity and robust finances.

Christianity arrived in the years following Theodosius' death but it failed to prevail. The old Greek religion had many followers, as did the worship of the emperor. Paul arrived in the spring of 58 AD but the hostile reception discouraged him from continuing his efforts on the island and he departed the next day. Nevertheless Christianity slowly spread, especially in the form of austere asceticism. An outburst of construction endowed the island with more than 100 early Christian basilicas, while many Greek temples were transformed in Christian churches.

The seventh century BC constitutes a significant turning point. The economy stubbornly preserved its rural character while trade suffered

as a result of the uncontrollable increase in the number of pirates in the open sea. Widespread unrest in neighbouring Asia Minor further hampered trade and caused a recession.

Mytilene remained the most important city on the island. It was chosen as the capital of Lesvos while the island became a place of exile for emperors, empresses, and high-ranking officials of the Byzantine Empire.

Rebels, Saracens, pirates, Russians and Turks repeatedly plundered the island's coast and settlements. Nevertheless, the island's economy grew rapidly, especially during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118). This prosperity is reflected in the works of Christophoros of Mytilene (1000–1054), a famous poet, hymn writer and high-ranking state official in Constantinople. His work belongs to the centuries-long poetic tradition of Lesvos. In the 12th century the Venetians began a series of raids until 1204, when the island was occupied by the Franks and was presented to the Latin emperor of Constantinople. Catholicism was established in Lesvos alongside the Greek Orthodox hierarchy and ecclesiastical organization. The worship of Saint Valentine arrived in Lesvos with the Catholic Church and his relics still lie on the island. In 1228 Ioannis III Doukas Vatatzis conquered Lesvos, only to lose it to Domenico Cattaneo. In 1336 the Byzantines returned to the island.

In 1355, Lesvos passed peacefully into the hands of the powerful Genoese family of Gattilusi. Francesco I Gattilusio was an ally of John V Palaeologus in the latter's attempt to claim the throne of the Byzantine Empire. He married the emperor's sister, Maria Palaiologina, and received the entire island of Lesvos as a dowry. Francesco was intelligent and laid the foundation for the island's development. Genoa was in the process of establishing a string of trade posts across the north Aegean in order to control effectively the trade of the East and the Black Sea and Mytilene played a crucial role in the process.

In 1404 the Spanish ambassador Ruiz Conzalez de Clavizio noted that the Genoese refrained from acting as conquerors. On the contrary, they coexisted peacefully with the local Greeks. He described Mytilene as a populous city: "the houses crown the top of a promontory that juts out into the sea, with a harbour on each side. A strong wall, with many wall towers, encloses the city, while a large suburb extends behind it."

### OTTOMAN AND MODERN LESVOS

In September 1462, after the Ottomans conquered the island, the Greek historian Michael Critobulus noted that Mehmed the Conqueror walked in the city and found it "perfect and beautiful." During the Ottoman occupation the island was raided by the Venetians, the French, the Knights Hospitaller, and pirates. It became a subject of folktales and a source of inspiration for numerous writers.

Hayreddin Barbarossa was born Khizr or Khidr in the island of Lesvos. His father was a Turk of Albanian origin and his mother was a local Christian Greek woman. Barbarossa was a famous corsair before rising to the rank of admiral and organizer of the Ottoman fleet. His name became associated with legends. Around 1530 a group of pirates from Lesvos, members of his crew, established the city of Medline in the





north coast of Tunisia. The city reminds one of the original Mytilene of the time and is still inhabited.

The period of reforms that followed the Supreme Edict of the Rosehouse in 1839 and the Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856, transformed the island's economy, from an enclosed agricultural system to a centre of production of soap and olive oil that were exported to the European markets. The population grew and the economy flourished. Christians and Muslims coexisted peacefully. The 1850 frost played a decisive role in this transformation. The cold destroyed the crops and killed most of the animals, so the inhabitants turned to business and trade. The factories belonged almost exclusively to Christians, because, as B. Lewis stated, the Muslims adhered to the teachings of Islam and failed to adjust to the new circumstances. The result was the decline of the Ottoman presence in Lesvos.

Lesvos was liberated from the Turks on 8 November 1912 but her incorporation to Greece was only finalized in 1914.

During the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and the subsequent clash with Turkey that resulted in the 1922 population exchange, Lesvos received a large number of Asia Minor refugees. The island was cut off from the coast across the sea and the local industrial production suffered as a consequence. On the other hand, the refugees offered abundant cheap labour and helped introduce new crops.

In 1941 the German army occupied the island. Lesvos was liberated in 1944. Today the island's economy is still based on the cultivation of the olive tree, fishing, stock-breeding and the cultural industry. During the 1980s the tourist industry developed into a mainstay of the island's economy and a primary source of income.

### POETRY DESIGNS THE CITY

After 1850 the people of Lesvos established trade networks and came into contact with the European cultural developments of the time. The resulting influence cannot be doubted. The city of Mytilene is a perfect example of this trend. Hundreds of stately mansions create an architectural miracle of eclecticism and serve as indicators of an extrovert society that converses with Europe on equal terms. Since the Ottoman population coexisted peacefully with the local Greeks, this prosperity lasted until 1922, when it was shuttered during the population exchange. Nevertheless, the people of Lesvos managed to incorporate the cultural strengths of the Asia Minor refugees. The result was an intellectual blossoming during the 1930s that became known as the "Lesbian Spring." The same way that history always bears witness to the eternal development of thought on this island, we set the goal of developing our ideas on the pillar called "Poetry Designs the City."

Even today, more or less, most of our fellow citizens practice some form of art, be it writing or something else. It should be noted that many painters from Lesvos thrived overseas in modern times.

Since the Renaissance the European cultural heritage is influenced by the great ancient poets from Lesvos (Sappho, Alcaeus, Terpanthus, and the mythical poets/musicians Arion and Orpheus). European poetry, painting, and music always drew their subject matter from our poets.



Neither history nor literature ever stopped relating to Pittacus (one of the Seven Sages of Greece) and Theophrastus (father of botany). It is a privilege that glorifies the island and inspired us to design the city.

World painting drew inspiration from the great poets of Lesvos. The same heritage accounts for all the visual artists born in Lesvos during the modern era: Georgios Iakovidis, Fotis Kontoglou, Manolis Kalligiannis and many more. Above them all rises the local folk artist Theophilos Hatzimihail, a peculiar artist who became widely known thanks to the efforts of Tériade (1897-1983). Tériade was among the greatest art critics, collectors and art publishers. He was active during the revolutionary period in modern painting and visual arts in early twentieth-century Paris. Matisse, Picasso, Dalí, Miro, Modigliani and Braque created the entire mosaic of discovery and promotion that Tériade offered in twentieth-century art. He bequeathed to the city of Mytilene a museum dedicated to Theophilos and a second museum that bears his name and exhibits his collection (with emphasis on 20th-century art). The connection between Tériade (from Mytilene) and the European cultural landscape was never severed and allowed many painters from the island to cross its borders.

Lesvos has five galleries, ten archaeological and thematic museums, twelve multi-use venues outside the city (old olive-oil processing factories and tanneries), nine theaters (eight of which belong to the local theater companies), ten schools built in the neoclassical style, 63 accessible archaeological sites (covering the whole range of local history, from antiquity to the present day) and 38 traditional coffee shops. These have contributed (and still do) to the social mixing and cultural development of the unique culture of Lesvos, a combination of tradition and contemporary culture.

As a UNESCO Geopark, the whole island offers unique routes that include thermal springs, signs of its volcanic structure, and landscapes enriched with a remarkable flora and fauna (Bay of Kalloni natural reserve). Homer praised it and Aristotle experimented and recorded it in his *Historia Animalium*. Thus it was here in Lesvos that the science of biology was born.



## SOLIDARITY IS CIVILIZATION

Today, the island that was always a crossing between East and West is going through one of the most crucial phases of its history. The refugee crisis and the solidarity of the island's inhabitants towards the wave of refugees that washed across Lesvos, became a topic on the world media and Mytilene was rightfully declared the Capital of Solidarity. This solidarity is due to the collective memory and education of the local people. Their memory has always been cultivated and used in a way that corresponds to their significant cultural heritage. We are thus led to declare that solidarity is civilization.

Taking into account our poetic look in all our activities and our humanitarian look in all our actions we institute and use the past and the present to capitalize on our cultural heritage and build an innovative beginning and path to the future.

Within this context, we believe that the ECoC title will provide us with sufficient intercultural and inter-civilizational networking and communication to equip us with the dynamic and the European dimension that is necessary for our incorporation into the contemporary European cultural developments.

TEDx has organized live presentations in Mytilene to discuss the refugee crisis. There are 28 NGOs, youth organizations, and 110 cultural associations, many of which concern themselves with tradition and cultural industries, as well as various forms of artistic expression and even solidarity.

But there is a number of people who do not accept this framework. Many people on the island demonstrate no solidarity towards the refugees, while some people refuse to remain on the fringe, even though they constitute only a minority. These malcontents exist and we must act accordingly, to help them understand the refugee crisis and, if at all possible, join our cause. Our goal is to penetrate deep into the social fabric and transform this indifference to personal contribution and volunteerism.

### Intro.4 Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city is designated as European Capital of Culture.

After the population exchange of 1922, Lesvos acquired a homogeneous population. The Cold War between Greece and Turkey isolated the island from its contacts in the Asia Minor coast. The population loss in the immediate postwar period, due to outmigration, and the decline in trade, forced the island to turn inwards and seek values such as tradition and the cultural industry. At the same time literature, letters, painting and theater grew but were limited on a local or national level. Only isolated cases managed to succeed abroad, like the world-famous baritone and composer Titos Xirellis and the art critic and collector Tériade. There were also some isolated painters like Iakovidis, Theophilos, Kalligiannis, Protopatsis and Athinaios. This introversion preserved the island's character intact and saved Lesvos from the uncontrolled tourist development or the forced modernization of the 1960s and 1970s.

The result was the blossoming of an introvert but demanding culture,

endowed with strength, endurance and widespread acceptance by the society.

Our motto "Poetry Designs the City" we attempt to highlight the extant cultural dynamic with innovative ideas and activities. The people of Lesvos, loaded with memories from their refugee and immigrant ancestors, and armed with their cultural tradition and history, can recognize that solidarity is a supreme cultural good. In the early days of the refugee crisis eleven local theatre companies took the initiative to transform the classic financial relation between tickets and patrons into donations of medication, clothing and food items for the refugees, with great success. Our motto, "Solidarity is Civilization," and the multiple activities that result from it, can serve as a vehicle to establish many innovative cultural structures.

The combination of these innovative cultural structures with the older infrastructure creates an explosive unity and a contemporary view of culture, where society, as the core and the final recipient, can interact and communicate with the wider cultural community, where it naturally belongs.

The European Capital of Culture title will form a link in the new cultural "spring" with a European dimension and glow. Its eyes will face the common European Tomorrow.

In the context of our European dimension, a quarter of our actions involve foreign artists and creators, while 45% of our solidarity actions are collaborations with cities and agencies from Europe and the rest of the world.

While keeping an open eye to the future, we designed actions that confirm our decisions:

- The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC, dedicated to Melina Merkouri who came up with the idea of the ECoC, will record, classify and disseminate the European spirit. It will be among the main agents in supporting and evaluating our effort.
- Our cooperation with all the departments of the University of the Aegean offers the scientific support and the strengths of the young people we depend upon.
- The establishment of the "Academy of the Muses" will add a poetic dimension and the artistic interaction that we must organize. It will provide the necessary training to support new artists and creators from Greece, Europe and Asia Minor. They will be able to exchange views, practices and experiences with intercultural solidarity.
- The combination of innovation and tradition will capitalize on the cultural heritage with new ways and methods, and will create an innovative cultural product open to communication and dissemination in the wider European area and cultural unity.
- The growth in human resources and in a so-called **Bank of Ideas** will result in a rate of expansion that will offer Lesvos the necessary support and modernization to move forward in the 21st century towards the future.





## 1. Contribution to the long-term cultural strategy

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### 1.1 Describe the cultural strategy that is in place in your city at the time of the application, as well as the city's plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including through the development of long term links between these sectors and the economic and social sectors in your city. What are the plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title?

Culture, in its broadest sense, has always been intimately connected with the unique lifestyle of the citizens of Lesvos, and the island's extrovert nature that followed the paths of the ships, carrying the products of the olive tree, the ouzo and the bounty of the sea all over the world. This distinctiveness consists in the production of culture and the solidarity towards mankind that became abundantly clear during the immigration and refugee crisis, over the past five years. After all, our island has been at the crossroads between Asia and Europe since prehistoric times. The island is dotted with the remnants of an industrial activity that flourished over the last century and a half. As technology and the nature of commercial investment changed since the late 1970s, most of these industrial buildings have been transformed into spaces that accommodate culture and art, or attempt to preserve the island's cultural heritage. This is to the benefit of younger generations that were able to adapt to the new circumstances and are in a position, today, to use

and enjoy these spaces. Since 2013, the North Aegean Administrative Region and the Municipality of Lesvos cooperate with the University of the Aegean and various non-governmental organizations to create a long-term plan for the redevelopment of archaeological and cultural areas and routes. They plan to coordinate the generation of products in the fields of the arts or the cultural and creative industries.

Looking forward to the year 2027, and taking into consideration the large influx of refugees, many of our partners adjusted their actions to ensure solidarity towards the refugees.

The basic framework consists of the municipal and regional cultural infrastructure. It was established to create a network for the citizens' social sensitisation with the motto Solidarity is Civilization.

The city took the initiative to employ its own infrastructure and to cooperate with our neighbours in Ayvalik and Smyrna, as well as 38 international NGO's that are currently active on the island, to provide the basics for the support of the arriving refugees and to ensure the interactivity between the refugees and the locals.

Using the island's contemporary culture, we hope to employ social



cohesion, so recently demonstrated and publicized through the world-media, to establish an inventive cultural model that promotes the European dimension of a modern city in every field of production. This model will be adapted to the current context and will satisfy the demands of an altogether modern investment in culture, as set out in the European Capital of Culture program. The city possesses state-of-the-art cultural venues and many more will become available by 2021.

While keeping an eye out for the development of institutions with urban and humanist characteristics and based on the promotion and readjustment of our human resources, we focus our attention at our cultural actions. The emphasis of our recently adopted five-year development plan is on the remodelling of urban centres and rural districts.

Innovative actions:

- The establishment of a Center for Euro-Asian Studies. Its main purpose will be to identify solutions to the refugee crisis.
- A proposal to the global community is the creation of a digital database that will record the populations that move towards Europe, will predict their needs and will provide genuine and complete information on the refugees that pass through the island of Lesbos. This database will remove past frictions and will offer a useful tool to measure the refugee flows towards Europe.

As a result of our strategic planning and our orientation towards Europe we have identified four core areas of action:

- **Redevelopment**
- **Enactment**
- **Expansion**
- **Collaboration**

## REDEVELOPMENT

- Mytilene and every other community on the island (towns and villages) exhibit their own architectural style and comprise a unique subject of study. The islanders' diaspora to the four corners of the earth brought back to Lesbos a wealth of new forms and the zeal to reproduce them locally. The result was a miracle of eclectic architecture in Mytilene. The city could rightfully claim the title of an open-air museum of eclecticism in architecture. An extensive process of urban renewal will create a route to connect sites of architectural interest. We are establishing a program of digital tours for all appropriate areas.
- The island is dotted with archaeological sites and buildings going back to the beginning of its history. Prehistoric settlements,

ancient Aeolian temples, Byzantine and Genoese castles, classical Greek, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman buildings are restored and enhanced with digital tours to become accessible as part of a broader archaeological route open to the public.

- The old public swimming facility in the port of Mytilene is remodelled to become a modern conference centre that will also function as a theatre with a 1600-person capacity and state-of-the-art equipment. The managing agency aspires to ensure its financial viability and independence.
- The few houses that remain within the walls of the castle of Mytilene are being restored. They will serve as headquarters to promote the main themes of the city's culture. The city's historical core will be united with the castle.
- Numerous extant Ottoman buildings are being restored. Lesbos possesses exquisite specimens of Ottoman architecture.
- All public areas are remodelled and enhanced with digital equipment. Accessibility for people with mobility limitations is a top priority. The road and sidewalk network throughout the island is improved and equipped with ramps, audible street-signals, etc.

## ENACTMENT

- Our goal is to establish institutions that will place the island of Lesbos at the core of the European reality, as capital of Solidarity and as the European Capital of Culture. These institutions will follow the E.U. guidelines and rules. Funded by the local and the national government, they will participate in European programs that will enable them to embark on ambitious long-term cultural projects. It is expected that the new institutions will maintain their political independence and that they will generate cost-effective cultural products without dependence on European, state or private sponsorships. We hope to design a city that will become the archetypal European Capital of Culture.

## EXPANSION

- The unification of archaeological sites and the adoption of a single admission fee valid for all of them.
- The utilization of the available cultural infrastructure for organizing events with an international appeal during the European Capital of Culture year and in the years leading to it. Our schools and academies can be of great value in this regard.
- The creation of a visual art core and the numerous events associated with it.
- The various remodelling projects that employ a large number of people.
- The establishment of multiple-themed networks such as the Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music network, in collaboration with



Corfu and Volos, cities that are also applying for the European Capital of Culture title. This particular network takes advantage of our cooperation with our European partners, namely the city of Trapani in Sicily, the island of Gozo in Malta, the city of Paphos in Cyprus and the cities of El Djem and Metline (founded in 1540 by corsairs from the island of Lesbos, the city still preserves elements of the language and the architectural style of Molyvos) in Tunisia. Lesbos already participates in networks such as R.E.M.A., a platform that allows us to establish cultural and economic contacts with our European partners.

- The use of digital marketing to promote our cultural industry and its development as an exportable commodity, in the form of ancient techniques (pottery, wood-carving, textiles) and more contemporary culinary products created by bio-organic units identified as P.D.O. (Protected Designations of Origin).



## COLLABORATION

- Everything we have stated so far can be achieved with the collaboration of our partners in the E.U. and the contribution of our twin cities and our neighbours. The people of Lesbos have always been familiar with extroversion and continuous exchanges. Even today, should Mytilene-Lesvos is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, this familiarity will expand.

### 1.2 How is the European Capital of Culture action included in this strategy?

Mytilene – Lesbos took the decision to apply for the European Capital of Culture title with a small delay, due to the complex and intricate problems created by the inflow of large numbers of refugees.





Nevertheless, we believe it was the right decision that confirms the enduring European prospect of our island.

We are convinced that should you choose to award the European Capital of Culture title to Mytilene (and therefore to the whole island of Lesvos) it will be a privilege for the European Union and us in particular, since we are the European border that is closest to Asia. We consider this to be a privilege because Lesvos, being the easternmost border of Europe, permeated throughout with its civilization, will acquire, once more, its old prestige. The series of actions and strategies planned as part of our European Capital of Culture candidacy will allow us to employ our familiar extroversion through culture, which is the only “weapon” of peace, coexistence, brotherhood, and democracy available to Europe.

Our optimism for the success of our endeavour and the achievement of our goals is well-founded on the compassionate side of the citizens of Lesvos, as they try to ameliorate the difficulties faced by the refugees, while building, on a daily basis, a strong foundation of solidarity and awareness of diversity. The presence of more than one hundred cultural associations across the island, and the leading role assumed by our youth, send strong, positive messages and demonstrate, most clearly, the need felt by the people of Lesvos to embrace new ideas and treat culture as a reliable product of progress and improvement. Mytilene – Lesvos demonstrates that it has the ability and the capacity to carry on and bring to fruition Melina Merkouri’s vision, a vision that motivates all European citizens.

This is, perhaps, because lyric poetry was born in this land: “Poetry Designs the City”. In a similar erotic, creative, and passionate way the entire island keeps searching for its European identity, discovering it in philosophy, literature, and science. After all, this is the genuine birthplace of the scientific method, in the work of Aristotle. Apart from poetry and music, this is the land that inspired Longus, the 2nd century A.D. writer, to compose the first novel of Western Civilization.

Our strategy was initially conceived in 2013 and aimed at the year 2027. It has laid the foundation of the successful preparation and organization for the 2021 European Capital of Culture title. This is due to the five-year program established by the Municipality of Lesvos and the North Aegean Administrative Region. We have foreseen all coordinated actions that will ensure the long-term development between the years 2021 and 2027.

The prospect of Lesvos winning the 2021 European Capital of Culture title is evaluated and incorporated in every step of local development and growth, including those elements of infrastructure we are currently implementing, in an effort to deal with the refugees’ immediate problems. We have planned, and are in the process of building, emergency health care stations, centers for children and



mothers who arrive helpless on the island. We are also establishing Information Centers to allow refugees to gather pertinent information about the European Union. This infrastructure and these actions are part of our strategy as a Capital of Culture. It is an indication that the island of Lesbos fully comprehends the concept of culture as solidarity and the treatment of our fellow human beings with equality, fairness, and social inclusivity.

At the same time, Mytilene – Lesbos borrows from the old tradition Greek saying “The city puts on its very best clothes” and plans to implement it at its fullest. Archaeological sites and public spaces are remodelled so that, by the year 2021, it will be in a position to employ the full scope of its abilities to manage the importance, the honour, and the seriousness of the title.

The designation of Mytilene as the European Capital of Culture constitutes an invaluable prospect for the Municipality of Lesbos, in the context of its 2013-2027 programme. The needs of the ECOc determine all aspects of the island’s long-term restructuring plan. The combined effort of all agencies and organizations, through constant and evolving actions, aims at disseminating, as widely as possible, the application for the title.

More than a thousand publications in the European and world press have made public Lesbos’ willingness to win the title of European Capital of Culture. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, informally awarded to the island of Lesbos the title of World Capital of Solidarity.

We firmly believe in, and work to energize all, available resources to promote and communicate to the world the island’s advantages.

The constant publicity and targeted communication has lauded a significant portion of Lesbos’ treasures: the Petrified Forest, member of the UNESCO-assisted Global Geoparks Network; more than twenty museums; fifty-eight archaeological sites accessible to visitors; the cities (Mytilene as a living museum of eclectic architecture and the unique architecture of other towns and rural communities); the remodelled buildings and routes; the activities of 120 cultural associations; the confederation of eleven theatrical companies; the cultural industries; the unique gastronomy; six schools of classical and traditional music; two international festivals in Mytilene and Molyvos; the festival and the free zone created by lesbians in Eressos; the European platforms in which we participate, currently and in the future. These are just a few of our island’s highlights and only a handful of the organizations and the agencies working towards the successful design and implementation of the ECOc.

Finally, the key to a successful ECOc year is the establishment of

institutions that will provide the island with the prospect of an enduring and long-lasting living culture. These institutions will capitalize on our cultural heritage and our academies of art, they will organize conferences on philosophy and literature (“Poetry Designs the City”), establish zones of free expression and initiative for our youth and the refugees that coexist and remain on the island. In the context of creating new institutions, we envision the establishment of an organization to promote the pre-eminently European idea of a cultural capital, as envisioned by Melina Merkouri. Its goal will be to promote Merkouri’s vision and to offer the technical know-how to future applicants, who wish to succeed in winning and implementing the ECOc title.

### 1.3 If your city is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what do you think would be the long-term cultural, social and economic impact on the city (including in terms of urban development)?

In terms of culture, Mytilene – Lesbos will emphasize the creation of institutions such as:

- The Academy of the Muses, a fully-staffed academy with classes dedicated to all art forms.
- The Institute of Digital Cultural Technology, established in cooperation with the University of the Aegean, which specializes in this field.
- Organizations dedicated to philosophy and literature.
- Numerous festivals. Those that are not yet established will be planned and organized as soon as the ECOc title has been confirmed.

We will cooperate with the entire North Aegean region, the associated countries and our neighbours across the sea, on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. Mytilene – Lesbos 2021 is taking advantage of its key geographic position, at the crossroads of East and West, to work towards the establishment of institutions to ensure the interactivity of cultures and the mutual familiarization of the European, Asia Minor and Middle Eastern civilizations. We are thus contributing to building, understanding and negotiating a European southeastern cultural framework.

Mytilene – Lesbos 2021 and the people of the island engage with all art forms, consciously and over a long period of time, either in a professional manner or as amateurs. A core axis of our strategy, independent of our candidacy, will be the citizens’ continuing art education and training. We have, already, successfully implemented a number of European training programs, while many more are in the process of implementation, both by the municipality and the regional administration.

Finally our goal is to invigorate and secure intracultural relations





across the Mediterranean basin and Europe, to facilitate the exchange of ideas. The institution that will support this initiative will be called The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC and it will work for the dissemination of the Capitals of Culture concept.

In terms of society, Lesvos has proved her sensitivities, her tolerance and her strengths. A prime example is the effort to deal with the refugee crisis over the past five years. The solidity and compact nature of its social fabric is a key element in the perpetual creation of culture.

Prime examples of the combination of culture and solidarity to combat marginalization are the establishment of the Center for Euro-Asian Studies; the creation of a digital platform to observe population movements from Asia Minor towards Lesvos; the cooperation of 38 NGO's and local organizations created for this purpose.

Lesvos proves her intercultural identity, particularly in the areas of tolerance and acceptance without divisions or racism, in the following ways:

- \*the cultural and social activity of lesbian women -over the past 25 years- in Eresos, with remarkable results
- \*the initiative of local theatre companies to transform the classic financial relation between tickets and patrons into donations of medication, clothing and food items for the refugees. This approach proved a spectacular success.
- \*the creation of attractive and flexible nuclei of interactive cultural productions of a) music b) performing arts c) film and d) digital arts. These actions will bring refugees and citizens closer together, while, at the same time, sensitizing our European partners through cultural dissemination.

Using these actions as a guideline, the people of the island are training to follow this strategy. As a result, our cultural production will

incorporate the current refugee crisis in the subject matter of cultural events. The ECoC title will facilitate the dissemination of our motto "Solidarity is Civilization".

In terms of urban, environmental and economic development in the city of Mytilene, the idea of its designation as ECoC has resulted in a creative orgasm associated with the remodelling and optimization of its environmental development. A series of projects in the port area, selected archaeological sites and the city center are already under way with most in a very advanced state of implementation (see Redevelopment). The urban redevelopment and remodelling is not limited to these examples. On the contrary it will encompass the redevelopment and change of use for three old oil-mills and salted products factories.

The economic progress will become apparent in two ways:

- a) The availability of an original cultural product, created in Lesvos, thanks to innovative actions. This product will become available for dissemination and export upon the awarding of the ECoC title (various events, publications, audiovisual products, visual creations, and the exportation of processed culinary goods).
- b) The increase in the number of visitors to the island. Overseas and Greek friends of the arts will visit Lesvos as a result of its designation as ECoC. It is estimated that they will contribute to a growth rate close to 2.3 percent of the region's total GDP, despite the financial crisis currently prevailing across Greece.

#### 1.4 Describe your plans for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the title on your city and for disseminating the results of the evaluation.

In addition to the grand urban tradition of the capital Mytilene, Lesvos possesses a wide network of rural areas, home to approximately 2/3 of the island's population. Taking this reality into consideration, we will proceed with actions that will aim at formulating and configuring a precise plan to socially strengthen and unite every region of the island through art and culture.

With this prospect in mind, we developed a plan based on the islanders' unique way of living, whether in an urban or a rural environment. This plan connects cultural activities with the reality of daily life on the island. Another crucial parameter, associated with the European Capital of Culture process, is the targeted assistance, direction and reorganization of the ways in which our citizens express their cultural capabilities. We must offer them the opportunity to find an outlet and a knowledge-based field of action for cultural creativity.

Further down the line, Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 envisions the creation of effective and functional methods of communication with our partners



to ensure that this effort will not be limited to the narrow framework of the ECoC but will demonstrate duration, interactivity, and extroversion. We are optimistic that this is something we can accomplish, because we know that access to the means of creation and education unite the social fabric. They also create everlasting ties and a field for the exchange of ideas and creativity with our partners.

### Who will carry out the evaluation?

The evaluation and the results from the designation of Lesvos as ECoC and the implementation of our program, will be carried out in two stages, an internal and an external one. The School of Social Sciences of the University of the Aegean, which is based in Mytilene, will be responsible for the external evaluation. A specialized team from the Melina Merkouri Organization will conduct the internal evaluation. The university will carry out the main evaluation while the internal evaluation will be limited to a progress report of our cultural program. Meanwhile, the city, as a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music platform, will be evaluated on a regular basis by the platform's internal evaluation mechanism and the Creative Europe agencies.

Our internal regulations will anticipate an additional interactive voluntary evaluation. Teams of volunteers from cultural associations will invent innovative methods of evaluation and monitoring of the ECoC total programme implementation and management.

### Will concrete objectives and milestones between the designation and the year of the title be included in your evaluation plan?

Of course. The evaluation plan will be as follows:

- 2016** Establishment of Evaluation Teams among volunteer groups.  
Team training.  
Meeting with the University Scientific Evaluation Team to deliver plan and growth strategy.  
Meeting of designated cities in Greece, Romania and the third country, yet to be chosen.  
Establishment of basic evaluation criteria.
- 2017** First evaluation by volunteers and first evaluation by the University of the Aegean.
- 2018** First self-evaluation of all Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC departments.  
First official evaluation and publication of the results.
- 2019** Annual evaluation by all three evaluating bodies. Progress report on all area remodelling and urban projects.  
Disclosure of the projects.

- 2020** Reconsideration and inspection by the Melina Merkouri Organization regarding the European orientation and the ECoC indices.  
Review of development and preparation indices by all evaluation systems.  
Second official evaluation and publication of the results.
- 2021** Comprehensive monitoring and analysis for the duration of the Capital of Culture year.  
Regular public release and presentation of data and indices.
- 2022** Final report on October 2022.  
Academic, cultural, and urban review of the results. Publication.  
Analysis of the cultural heritage capitalization. Publication.
- 2026** Public release of a comprehensive evaluation of Capital of Culture influences on October 2026.

### What baseline studies or surveys – if any – will you intend to use?

Our baseline studies include the study of living standards on the island of Lesvos conducted by the North Aegean Regional Administration; the Regional Strategic Plan 2015-2020; the Regional Strategic Plan 2021-2026; the 2013 environmental study of the School of the Environment of the University of the Aegean; the 2013 Urban and Suburban Survey of the School of Social Sciences of the University of the Aegean; the 2010 study "Culture in Lesvos"; and the 2015 United Nations report on the movement of refugees towards the island of Lesvos.

What sort of information will you track and monitor?

Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 strives to find outlets for the perennial cultural activity of its citizens, and the motivation to re-establish contact with the old ecumenical spirit as it was expressed in the work of the 1979 Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis. The structural activities associated with our culture (Redevelopment-Enactment-Expansion-Collaboration) converge towards the renewal of Lesvos' ability to export a cultural product capable of succeeding in the European cultural market. This ambitious plan strengthens, in our opinion, the ECoC institution. The capitalization of our cultural heritage, through the promotion of the cultural industry; the direct dissemination of our actions and products, locally and internationally, through the media; the indirect 2021 ECoC advertising through the production of cultural and audiovisual programmes referencing the events associated with the year 2021 in Lesvos, are key elements that enhance the region's potential to become a production hub for a cultural product of unique quality and rarity.

"Poetry Designs the City" is the motto under which our cultural production and strategy converge to create a concrete visual field and connections between all cultural products to achieve innovation, exceptional quality standards, and longevity. Three distinct institutions



serve as observers of our efforts, as a sort of statistical observatory: a) the Melina Merkouri Organization b) the School of Social Sciences of the University of the Aegean and c) the Academy of the Muses. These three institutions comprise the evaluation committee for the implementation of our strategy. Their evaluation over the following years will help us to better carry out our work. Another key parameter of the qualitative statistical observation is the creation of a digital platform with all relevant information to allow for the prompt and transparent disclosure of our actions. As is well known, not everyone in Europe's South is famous for his or her transparency.

The collection sources for qualitative data consist of national and international publications, both printed and digital, that make references to us; the evaluation teams' non papers; the organized culture teams of our volunteers; interviews with private individuals conducted by the Melina Merkouri Organization research team, that will serve as an observation point for the intra-island interactivity; and the guest teams of institutions or artists, during the preparation stage and the duration of the ECoC year. Finally, the Melina Merkouri Organization team will analyze the penetration of the ECoC and its actions in the daily lives of the island's inhabitants, in order to extract conclusions regarding participation and influences.

Cultural Growth 2015		
Object	Indices	Sources of Information /Evaluation Tools
Cultural activities	<div>Poetry: (900, 40%,) Literature Philosophy Arts Cultural Heritage Environment Education</div> <div>Solidarity: (1175, 50%) Expression of solidarity</div> <div>Remodelling of reception sites and health facilities</div> <div>Education</div> <div>Crossing: (260, 10%) Preparation to apply</div>	<div>Studies and evaluation by the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication of the University of the Aegean</div> <div>Statistical evaluation reports by volunteers</div> <div>Survey forms</div>

	<div>for the Capital of Culture title</div> <div>Collaborations Invites Co-organizations with NGO's</div> <div>Education</div>	
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Cultural Growth 2016-2020		
	<div>Poetry: (1800, increase 100%,) Literature Philosophy Arts Cultural Heritage Environment Education</div> <div>Solidarity: (1800, increase 50%) Expression of solidarity</div> <div>Remodelling of r eception sites and health facilities</div> <div>Education</div> <div>Crossing: (1000, increase 150%) Preparation to apply for the Capital of Culture title</div> <div>Collaborations Invites Co-organizations with NGO's Education</div>	

Cultural Growth 2021-2022		
	<p><b>Poetry:</b> <b>(3600, increase 100%,)</b> Literature Philosophy Arts Cultural Heritage Environment Education</p> <p><b>Solidarity: (2400, increase 50%)</b> Expression of solidarity</p> <p>Remodelling of reception sites and health facilities</p> <p>Education</p> <p><b>Crossing:</b> <b>(1500, increase 50%)</b> Preparation to apply for the Capital of Culture title</p> <p>Collaborations Invites Co-organizations with NGO's</p> <p>Education</p>	
<p>With this report, and on a regular basis after 01/01/2016, and especially after 01/07/2016, once the results of the ECoC application are announced, we begin the gradual establishment of the core elements of our programme:</p> <p>A) Academy of the Muses (2017): participation of local cultural organizations and artists up to 50%; cultural activities of the agency 30% of our total programme.</p> <p>B) Melina Merkouri Organization (2017): cultural activities 9% of the total programme; capitalization of privileges and advantages deriving from the ECoC title; capitalization of the heritage and the ECoC title; statistical evaluation and promotional activities regarding the ECoC title; and interactive, digital and audiovisual recording and use of all the total sum of cultural products that will result during 2021 and the years to follow, 75% of the total actions.</p> <p>Γ) Digital solidarity platform (2nd half of 2016): number of events 20% of the "Solidarity is civilization" actions.</p> <p>Δ) Institute of Lesbian gastronomy and traditional arts (establishment 2017): 20% of the total action programme.</p> <p>E) Film and Audiovisual Organization (establishment 2018): 15% of the total action programme.</p> <p>Regarding the environment, we maintain and strengthen programmes that are already in place (2nd half of 2016).</p>		

How will you define «success»?

Success is defined by the achievement of our goals and indices to the greatest extent possible. We wish to:

- GENERATE a pure cultural and exportable product.
- AIM towards interactivity and the dissemination of the Capital of Culture institution on a social level and towards our partners well beyond the year 2022.
- SUCCEED IN CAPITALIZING our cultural heritage and the advantages bequeathed by the ECoC.

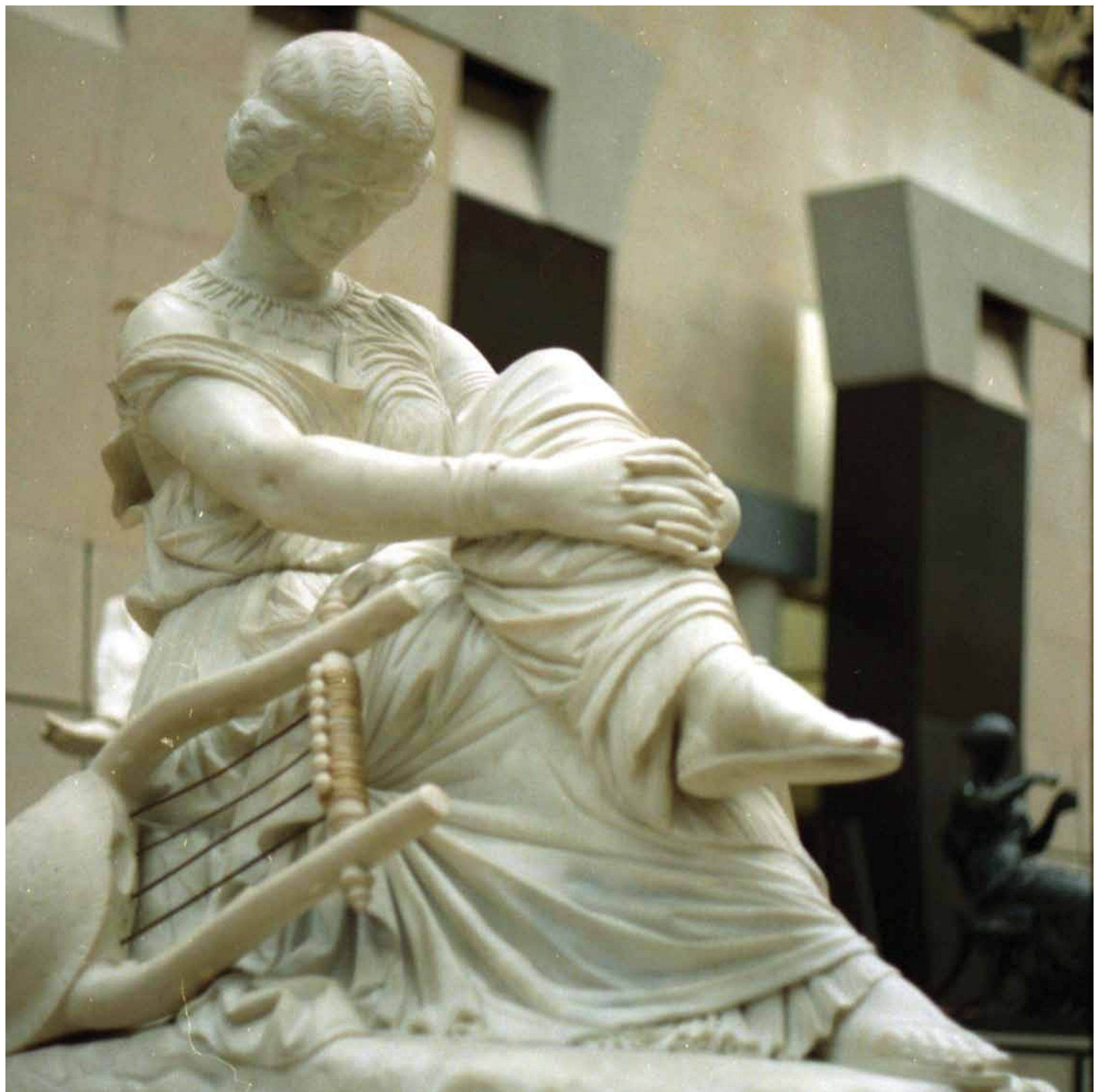
This is the level we wish to reach in the organizational and social domain and in the interactivity among our citizens, with qualitative indices and a faithful adherence to the evaluation plan. The infiltration of the ECoC organization process in the living standards will be measurable, with the methods we devised, by the volunteers and the society at large. The number of people used in the evaluation will be high, because of the broad appeal of volunteerism in the island and the world.

Over what time frame and how regularly will the evaluation be carried out? The various mechanisms conduct the evaluation three times per year in 2016 and 2017. The third evaluation in 2016 serves as the first official report. Another review of the evaluation in the third quadrimester of 2017 and a second official progress report on the ECoC preparations in the third quadrimester of 2018. The third official report before the title year will be submitted in the second quadrimester of 2020 and the final report will be ready in the third semester. The official comprehensive report will be submitted in the third quadrimester of 2022, while the public disclosure of the final dossier, with all relevant data, will be published in 2026.

The Melina Merkouri Organization will continue to track developments for many years. The organization will publish its findings at regular intervals, while maintaining the interaction between the partners and the subsequent Capitals of Culture. The same organization will be responsible for all publications, in print or in digital form, before and during the title year. It will also reserve all the rights derived from hosting the ECoC.











## 2 . European Dimension

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### 2.1.Elaborate on the scope and quality of the activities: a. Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens?

#### POETRY DESIGNS THE CITY – SOLIDARITY IS CIVILIZATION

Poetry is intercultural and touches everybody's soul. It is the quintessential expression of the harmonious agreement between all the elements that make us human, since it expresses the noblest features of human nature.

In the land of the "Tenth Muse", as her contemporaries called Sappho, only poetry could provide the springboard for a series of activities: and because of poetry, these activities can encompass the modern world and its history in its entirety. Sappho's voice knows no boundaries, no ages, just like a tenth Muse, daughter of the Titanide Mnemosyne, the mother of the Muses (whose name means "search for philosophy and knowledge"), who endow mortals with the inspiration to create. Sappho's voice, therefore, inhabits everybody's mind and heart, calling on us to think of knowledge as a memory, just like Plato says in his dialogue "Phaedo".

Knowledge, a precondition of civilization, resides in the memories that

promote the current realities of Mytilene – Lesvos. And culture, human culture, knows no boundaries and no distinctions.

Public awareness, dissemination and evaluation of the activities during the preparation stage and the ECoC year (as well as in the years to come) are based on the active participation of local cultural and volunteer/humanitarian organizations. They will take full advantage of intercultural dialogue and communication. The rallying cry that defines the actions and the attitude of the people of Mytilene – Lesvos, as well as our own motto, is **"Solidarity is Civilization."**

Recently the world media declared Mytilene-Lesvos **"European Capital of Solidarity."**

There is no doubt that over the last few years there has been a blossoming of cultural activities, volunteer and humanitarian initiatives in Mytilene – Lesvos. It marks the reconnection with a centuries-long island tradition and brings to the fore a series of considerations that confirm the birth of a new conscience based on education and a psychological mood that is markedly different from what we knew up until now.

This cultural reality of Mytilene – Lesvos is defined by faith in the future, the speed of the modern world, the strength of an educated and healthy



youth, individuality and free will, creative ambition, “demanding” art, a cultural growth that respects the past and the cooperation with international culture agencies.

The planned actions are based exactly on these elements of the cultural movement in Lesvos. It is also heavily dependent on its leading figures with respect, by definition, towards diversity as well as the intercultural and international aspect and communication.

Recent events associated with the drama of the refugees in Lesvos, have highlighted the contributions of the island’s volunteer groups. Their reaction has been effective and immediate. Many of these groups are theater companies, who asked their patrons to donate food, medicine and clothing instead of charging for a ticket. Other groups were twinned with groups in cities abroad, engaging them in the process of caring for the refugees and raising the issue on the world stage. Members of the NGO “Siniparxi” and volunteers from the “Chorio tou oloi mazi” (“Village of All Together”) cooperated with representatives of German humanitarian organizations like the “Diakonie Rheinland-Westfalen-Lippe”, an organization whose members include Kostas Eleutheriadis (who has family roots from Lesvos) and his wife Ioanna Zacharaki (municipal councillor in Solingen and vice president of the European Network of Elected Greeks in Local Authorities Abroad) and the social organization KEPPLER- RWL- Diakonie Dusseldorf with its president Heike Müller(Keppler), who came to the island for the meeting).

Note: Recently, the website [avaaz.org](http://avaaz.org) organized an online petition asking for signatures so that Lesvos and the local volunteer groups would be considered for the Nobel Peace Prize. Citizens from around the world are invited to support Lesvos’ candidacy. More than 1000 signatures had been collected in 24 hours.

The cultural activities we plan envision, for the most part, the cooperation with the 25 internationally recognized lesbian groups that visit or are based in Mytilene – Lesvos, thus accomplishing the acceptance of diversity. For the past forty years Mytilene – Lesvos is a point of reference and congregation for lesbians all over the world. Since September 2000 the International Eressos Women’s Festival by Sappho Women organizes workshops, photography exhibitions, performing art events, presentations, concerts, and festivals. Diversity is a pertinent issue on a global scale. The local society in Lesvos accepts and embraces the festival that attracts visitors and artists from around the world and constitutes a compelling attraction for the local tourist industry.

The prospective redevelopment projects concern monuments of all historical time periods of Mytilene-Lesvos’ cultural heritage (ancient, byzantine, ottoman and modern buildings). The architectural environment reinforces the programme’s intercultural appeal: the Mytilene-Lesvos ECoC will take place in a setting of European history



that is still alive, carrying the mark of its long history from antiquity to the present day. Our concern and goal is to ensure that art, thought and science are accommodated in venues where Mnemosyne and her daughters, the Muses, would be able to enrich the meaning of the works of art, created there, with memory and inspiration. Beyond the references to the shared European culture through architecture, we propose the open intercultural dialogue through the concrete historical memory.

Since “Poetry Designs the City,” beginning in the second half of 2016, once Mytilene-Lesvos has been declared ECoC, we will establish the “Academy of the Muses” with departments dedicated to music, literature, theater, dance, visual and audiovisual arts, and film. The “Academy of the Muses” will use art to promote intercultural dialogue and innovative teaching methods. At the same time it will promote international student exchanges and it will create rounds of seminars, conferences and festivals.

One of our planned actions focuses on the art of writing and promotes the translation of works of poetry, philosophy and fiction written in languages not widely spoken, such as Greek. We will encourage the teaching of Greek to facilitate the dissemination of its poetic, philosophic and literary wealth in its original version. After all, the heritage of ancient Greece was pivotal in creating the European cultural identity and the intercultural nature of the European spirit; while language, the primary tool of artistic expression, plays a pivotal role in promoting intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and communication.

The philosophy upon which we shape the capitalization of our cultural heritage follows the same line of thought: it is inspired by an extrovert and quintessentially communicative spirit. After all, Mytilene-Lesvos is where Europe always meets the East. Our

programme was designed to reflect this philosophy.

The establishment of the “The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC,” will support the formation of intercultural relations with Europe and the Mediterranean basin. This will facilitate the movement and exchange of people, ideas and initiatives, as becomes evident when one considers the European programmes already in place and the prospective establishment of new ones, by the Municipality and the Regional Administration. The European orientation is evident.

**b. Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes?**



**REMEMBERING THE PAST, RECALLING THE FUTURE**

Mytilene-Lesvos is the birthplace of the European Romantic Movement. Mytilene – Lesvos is a relatively small place in the northeast Aegean Sea but it is a land that motivates humankind’s imagination all over the world. The influence of this place on ancient thought and art is indelible. It has shaped the innovative character of its cultural life, since, in ancient times, women’s academies, like the one presided over by Sappho, were considered quite bold.

Mytilene – Lesvos: homeland of sages, poets, musicians and philosophers like Pittacus (one of the Seven Sages of Greece), Sappho, Alcaeus (both a testament to the fact that Orpheus’ lyre never left the island), Theophrastus (who succeeded Aristotle in the Lyceum), Theophanes (the historian who wrote a book about Pompey’s expedition to Asia), the legendary corsair Hayreddin Barbarossa and the setting for the romantic story “Daphnis and Chloe”, written by Longus and beloved by everyone. This land has shaped deeply and indelibly the shared European subconscious and imagination. It has exerted a direct and decisive influence on the evolution of art and our own lives, since art creates our image of the world.

The acceptance of diversity and the intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue defines the social reality of the local community and this is a fact that enables us to base our proposal on the cornerstone of the island’s social life.

The greatest and most serious issue that illustrates this attitude is the recent handling of the refugee crisis and the immediate and effective way it was (and still is) dealt with by the local population. The residents’ solidarity and their efforts to mobilize local, state and international agencies and organizations disseminated information about these actions across Europe.

The measures to be adopted through the ECOC strategy for its subsequent solution and the naming of Mytilene – Lesvos as “World Capital of Solidarity» are points that indicate the firm connection of our programme with the collective European problems and issues. We claim that “Solidarity is Civilization” and that arts and letters build culture; the eternal wish of Europe to protect and promote, develop and establish whatever has the ability to promote culture. With our roots buried deep in the history of this land and its current social reality we aim to support those elements that can nourish civilization. This is the goal of our programme and we believe that this proposal is pertinent to the cultural unity and integration of Europe.

**c. Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships. Name some European and international artists, operators and cities with**





which cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question. Name the transnational partnerships your city has already established or plans to establish.

European and international artists will breathe life into our vision of artistic renewal for the island – cradle of poetry and the arts. They will also function as educators, since the Academy is laying the foundation of a future far beyond the end of the ECoC year.

Since the inception of its philosophy, the “Academy of the Muses” embraces all artistic creations and art cannot exist without creators. It is essential to the realization of our plans to ensure the cross-cooperation of as many agencies, cities, groups and programmes as possible, between states and across Europe and the rest of the world. To achieve this we need people who can cooperate in the organizational field, in order to co-plan and implement such a diverse programme.

We have already initiated contacts with established artists from a number of countries. Among those who have agreed to support our endeavour are the following:

- Classic Music: Dariusz Mikulski (conductor and director of the East Berlin Festival) Andrea Certa (conductor and artistic director of Trapani) Bruna Baglioni, and Cheryl Studer
- Classical music record labels: Giovanna Nocetti, Kicco Music, and Carlo Torriani, Discover
- Contemporary Music: Angélique Ionatos
- Visual Arts: Tzeli Hadjidimitriou, Evita Frantzola, Stratis Athinaios, Pier Paolo Bisleri (set designer and professor at the Accademia di Brera in Milan), Ledio Konxholli (costume maker) and Zandra Rodes (set designer)
- Literature: Elena Mathiopoulos (writer), Dr. Martin Schaefer (professor of archaeology)
- Film: Efthimis Kosemund Sanidis, Manos Efstratiadis, and Nikolaj Arcel (Danish filmmaker whose film “A Royal Affair” was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the Academy Awards).
- Theater: Christos Hadjipanayiotis, Veronique Alter
- Dance: Ricardo Cue (choreographer, director of the Madrid Royal Ballet).
- Libby Tata Arcel, associate professor of Clinical Psychology in the University of Copenhagen. She specializes in immigration traumas.



*These are only some of the world-famous artists who participate in the artistic committee supporting the creation of the Capital of Culture. All of them have developed strong ties with the island of Lesbos and will be among the founding members of the Academy of the Muses.*

We have already begun the process of:

- Participating in multiple-themed platforms, such as the “Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music” network, where we collaborate with Corfu and Volos, as well as our European partners, namely the city of Trapani in Sicily, the island of Gozo in Malta, the city of Paphos in Cyprus, the cities of El Djem and Metline in Tunisia, and the 2021 ECoC candidate city of Braşov in Romania.
- Participating in existing networks such as R.E.M.A.
- Participating and collaborating with festivals such as the East Berlin festival and the Gaulitana Music festival in Gozo.
- Cooperating and signing programme agreements with the following cities:

#### **Italy**

Trapani  
Crotone  
Naples  
Cervinara  
Venice

#### **Cyprus**

Paphos (twin city)

#### **Romania**

Braşov  
Iaşi

## **Spain**

San Sebastián 2016 ECoC

## **France**

Nice  
Marseille

## **Japan**

Setouchi (twin city) – former Ushimando

## **Turkey**

Smyrna  
Ayvalik

## **Greece**

Preveza  
Lamia  
Corfu  
Kalamaria

### **2.2 Can you explain your strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?**

#### **MYTILINI – LESVOS 2021: BUILDING A BRIDGE OVER TIME**

Mytilene – Lesvos is a classic tourist destination with its landscapes, the sea, and its cultural attractions. It combines nature and geophysics with culture. Its natural beauty and its monuments attract a large international audience which becomes a dedicated friend and supporter of the island during their stay in Lesvos.

A considerable number of people know Lesvos through the international lesbian organizations and the “The International Eressos Women’s Festival.” Many visitors associate the island with particular products such as the ouzo of Plomari or the Papoutsanis olive oil soap. As of this year the issue of solidarity was added to the list. The care and hospitality towards the refugees attracted wide publicity. The land, therefore, already has a large “audience.”

It is important that while the island was full of refugees, there was no reduction in number of tourist arrivals and no planned cultural event was postponed. This is a sure sign of a serious tourist infrastructure, municipal readiness, and a network of services in the public and private sectors. This image, which will significantly improve once the city becomes ECoC, is important in order to change the general view of Greece as a disorganized country with serious weaknesses in the public and health care sector, and its tourist infrastructure.

A series of actions will begin as Mytilene – Lesvos prepares for the

ECoC year, to increase interest and disseminate relevant information:

1. Cooperation with all the former ECoC cities through the innovative “The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC”. The organization will record, digitize and store data pertaining to all events and activities associated with the ECoC title since the beginning of the institution.
2. Effective diffusion of information through the web with a series of e-learning, e-marketing and audiovisual production activities.
3. Generate promotional material with innovative methods and bold ideas full of dignity, information and culture.
4. Bolstering gastro-tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism.
5. Mobilization and organization of volunteers.
6. Remodelling and restoration of archaeological, architectural and other monuments to increase their attraction and accessibility.
7. A pan-European call for studying and suggesting the modernization of multi-centers and theatre venues, so that they can accommodate the anticipated activities before, during, and after the ECoC year.
8. Activation and implementation of inter-European programmes and participation in the institutions of other cities.
9. Design and implement Erasmus + programmes for students and young people.
10. Invite international artists to present their work and/or teach within the framework of the “Academy of the Muses.”
11. “KEEP AN OPEN EYE ON THE FUTURE”

While the city prepares for the ECoC year, we intend to mobilize the international art community inviting new artists and ideas, partners and partnerships, co-investors in the effort represented by Mytilene – Lesvos ECoC for the cultural and civilizational future of Europe.

### **2.3 To what extent do you plan to develop links between your cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title?**

Since one of the most important actions of the Establishment core area is the “The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC” it is essential that we cooperate with all the cities that succeeded or applied to become European Capitals of Culture. We believe that the creation of an ECoC city network is another step towards intercultural communication and European inter-cultural integration.

**To the present day we have set in motion the process of securing the cooperation of the following cities:**

#### **Corfu**

Mytilene and Corfu are twin cities. A cooperation has been in place for the past four years, within the context of the Lesbian Summer



Festival, between the Summer Music Academy of the Ionian University Department of Music Studies and the Lesbian Summer Festival organization. This action will be mutually incorporated in the ECoC programme, with the establishment of the “Academy of the Muses” and the existing Summer Music Academy of the Ionian University Department of Music Studies under the auspices of the Corfu Capital of Culture Association. There is also a programme contract for cooperation on the Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music platform, as well as the Ancient and Religious Music Festival we are currently planning.

#### **Volos**

The same programme contract we have signed with Corfu applies to our cooperation with the city of Volos. We will develop shared activities inspired by the great painter from Lesbos, Theophilos, who lived and painted for many years in Volos. The use of digital technology will allow visitors to the Theophilos Museum in Lesbos to see works by Theophilos currently dispersed all around Volos and in the local museum. There is also a programme contract for participation in the Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music platform.

The signing of a programme agreement with **Thessaloniki, Patras and Athens** is pending.

#### **Paphos**

Mytilene and Paphos are twin cities. An initiative to be launched in 2017 is the action “Lesvos in Paphos, Paphos in Lesbos”. Our cooperation consists in the exchange of visual art exhibitions and a common action / event called “Traditional Gastronomy Today.”

#### **Braşov**

We have already signed a protocol of cooperation in the following issues: a) Marginalization b) mapping of the social fabric - best practices exchanges and cultural cooperation c) artists’ exchanges with particular emphasis on artists with disabilities d) common ideas for European programmes on culture, youth and urban development.

#### **Iaşi**

We have already signed a protocol of cooperation in the following issues: a) Drama Therapy b) artists’ exchanges and interactive visits to modern architectural monuments. Exchanges based on tradition.

#### **San Sebastián**

In March 2016, between the 16th and the 19th, we will participate as an ECoC and a UNESCO Geopark in the European Geoparks Meeting at San Sebastián (2016 ECoC). Further cooperation in the ECoC level for issues of art and the environment is pending.

#### **Paris**

We are negotiating with three respected companies of the French theater scene to participate in the Lesbian Summer Festival, namely



the Comédie-Française, a production of the Festival d’ Avignon, and the famous contemporary dance company Théâtre du Corps Pietragalla.

#### **Madrid**

We are in the process of negotiating with Ricardo Cue, the famous choreographer of the Teatro Real in Madrid, to commission a new ballet production, inspired by the life of Sappho. It will premiere in Mytilene in the summer of 2021.

#### **Valletta**

In collaboration with universities in Mytilene and Valletta, we are planning a series of actions between 2018 and 2021 focused on the translation from languages not widely spoken to languages widely used the context of translating from languages not widely spoken. There will also be events regarding art and the sea.

#### **Venice**

We are planning, in collaboration with the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana an exhibition of old maps, produced between 1204 and 1700. In collaboration with the famous Cipriani Hotel we will organize a series of gastronomical events. We are also negotiating with the Patachin Company for their participation in the Street Theater Festival.

As our programme evolves, we add more suggestions concerning other ECoC cities and candidates.

We are currently awaiting a response on the following innovative actions:

“Walk on the Stars”» in the Conferences and Meetings / Enactment section, in collaboration with the Bo aziği University (Bosphorus University).

“Keep an Open Eye on the Future” in the Institutions / Enactment section, in collaboration with the city of Bologna (Italy).





### 3. Cultural and artistic content

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#### 3.1 What is the artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme of the year?

##### Main Themes - Targets

##### Poetry Designs the City – Solidarity is Civilization

Approximately 2700 years ago a woman was born on the island of Lesbos. She was destined to become Plato's "Tenth Muse". Sappho (630 – 570 BC), also known as Psappha, will always be considered the undisputed mother of lyric poetry. Over many centuries of history and culture, Lesbos never ceased to give birth to inspired creators in literature, philosophy, and science.

This land feels blessed with the touch of the olive tree, the gift of Goddess Athena and an ancient symbol of peace and culture. Here, to the present day, we generate culture in every field.

The Capital of Culture title would bestow on the city grace, prestige, and extroversion and would introduce the world to the cultural goods produced in Lesbos. An organized and well-structured plan of action, in

connection with a well-planned series of programmes, would go a long way towards familiarizing the world with the cultural products of the island. Lesbos is not limited to literature and philosophy. It can supply interesting samples in all fields of art. Tériade (the nom de plume of Stratis Eleftheriades) and his contribution to European painting is a prime example of what we did in order to design a plan that will allow us to make Lesbos a truly innovative European Capital of Culture. We aim to use the four core areas of action, listed below, to include and to institute all the actions that will allow Lesbos to claim her rightful place.

##### Core Areas of Action

##### Redevelopment – Enactment – Expansion – Collaboration

These four core areas of action require that we include projects of city planning and urban growth, activities to promote cultural organizing, artistic events of a varied nature, activities of social mobility and solidarity towards refugees and schemes to create bridges and bonds between cities in Greece and abroad before, during and after the ECoC

year. We establish institutions thinking of the future, so that they will survive for a long time and preserve those demands and dreams that will allow us to create and bequeath a city where development follows in the steps of culture and collaboration walks hand in hand with solidarity. The innovative spirit, the cultural heritage, the local talent and the ingenuity of the inhabitants will benefit future generations.

*“...They have been very generous with me, the violet-strewing Muses; thanks to their gifts I have become famous.”*

*Sappho*

The artistic and cultural planning and the resulting strategy for the ECoC year programme is based on the combination of two pillars.

### Poetry Designs the City - Solidarity is Civilization

This combination will be achieved by following the four core areas of action, already mentioned.

#### CROSSING

#### Building a Bridge over Time - Remembering the Past / Recalling the Future

#### Redevelopment - Enactment - Expansion - Collaboration

- a) Solidarity is Civilization: Poetry reinforces solidarity. Institutional actions support solidarity. Solidarity enriches culture with collaborative actions.
- b) Remembering the Past – Recalling the Future: Solidarity is inspired by memory and invests in a better tomorrow with collaborative and developmental activities. Tomorrow is built with the aid of memory so that it takes advantage of the existing social fabric with actions of enactment and renewal.
- c) Building a Bridge over Time: With the knowledge of the past and our eyes facing the future we build activities of expansion and renewal, capitalizing on the cultural heritage. Activities of enactment and collaboration contribute to the intercultural character of communication. We build the future beyond the limits of diversity.
- d) Poetry Designs the City: Expansion bridges the gaps by investing on culture and culture supports expansion with education and the spreading of knowledge to encourage contact between cultures. Poetry redesigns the city beyond Time through innovative artistic and cultural suggestions that respect “memory”, with activities of enactment, redevelopment, collaboration and expansion.

*“...in poetry, as in dreams, nobody grows old”*  
*Odysseas Elytis*

We dream of transforming Lesvos into a Capital of Culture. To achieve

this goal we accept as a mandatory prerequisite the cooperation with artists, scientists and specialists from Europe, the Mediterranean, and the rest of the world. They will broaden our horizons and allow us to create an innovative cultural product.

*«... [in Lesvos], with my two arms, I do not aspire to touch the sky»*  
*Sappho*

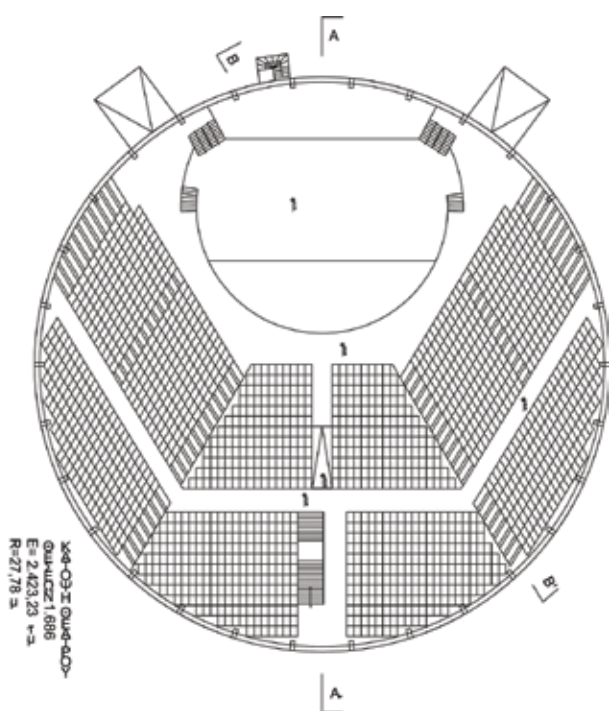
**3.2 Describe the structure of the cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year. For each one, please supply the following information: date and place / project partners / financing. (Date and place / project partners / financing are optional at pre-selection stage)**

#### Redevelopment

In the preparation stage the Municipality's five-year plan, and the long-term master plan of the North Aegean Regional Administration envision an extensive programme of remodelling and restoration of archaeological and historic sites. An extensive network of routes and guided tours, as well as general accessibility for people with mobility limitations is also planned to be completed by 2020.

- Remodelling of the area around the harbour of Mytilene and Sappho's Square.
- The old public swimming facility in the port of Mytilene is remodelled to become a modern conference centre that will also function as a theatre with a 1600-person capacity and state-of-the-art equipment. The official opening in early 2021 will feature the opera *Il Corsaro* (The Corsair) by Giuseppe Verdi, based on Lord Byron's poem *The Corsair* and set on a Greek island in the Aegean.
- The Castle of Mytilene is redeveloped and partially restored, with particular emphasis in the Moat Theatre. The project is approved by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Estimated Delivery: 2019.
- The Ottoman fort in Sigri is restored. The project is approved by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Estimated Delivery: 2018.
- Remodelling of the Tsarsi Hamam (Turkish baths), restored by the municipality, will be remodelled. Estimated Delivery: 2020.
- The Yeni Mosque and the Valide Mosque will be restored by the Archaeological Service and the Municipality. Estimated Delivery: 2019.
- The archaeological site of Mythimna is restored and made accessible. The project is approved by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Estimated Delivery: 2017.
- Study for the restoration and accessibility of the archaeological site of the sanctuary of Klopédi. Estimated Delivery: 2019.
- Restoration of the Georgiadis Mansion as a Cultural Centre for the North Aegean Administrative Region. Estimated Delivery: 2018.





- ## Enactment

Lesvos is the land of poetry and poetry designs our actions. In the second half of 2016 we will establish the Academy of the Muses with departments dedicated to music, literature, theatre, dancing, visual and audiovisual arts, and film.

## Academy of the Muses

The Academy of the Muses will promote intercultural dialogue and innovative teaching. It will encourage international student exchanges and host seminars, conferences and festivals. The Academy will be accessible to professionals and amateurs (workshops, master classes). There will be an agency to organize conferences, symposia and meetings.

The Academy will establish close cooperation with the eleven theatre companies now active on the island and the Athens School of Fine Arts and the University of the Aegean-Department of Cultural Technology and Communication. It will create an organization dedicated to hosting film and audiovisual festivals, while Erasmus+ programmes will facilitate student exchanges with Europe and will attract educators from around the world.

It will include the following art departments:

- **Music**

Departments of classical, contemporary and traditional music.

- **Literature**

Establishment of an agency to organize conferences, symposia and meetings. There will be a Department of Creative Writing.

- **Theater**

Establishment of a training workshop to teach the art of theater, with the cooperation of the island's eleven theater companies and the available manpower. Traditional events will be combined with contemporary Street Theater techniques.

- **Dance**

Establishment of a School of Orchestral Music and a Department of Traditional Dances, to enable the study and cataloguing of all its forms.

- **Visual Arts**

Exhibitions, installations and assorted events.

- **Film – Digital & Audiovisual arts**

A dedicated organization is established with departments dedicated to planning film festivals ("Films for Everyone") and producing audiovisual content.







This Academy will be independent and will operate throughout the year. It will be actively involved in all aspects of the ECoC preparations.

#### **The Melina Merkouri Organization for the Dissemination of the ECoC**

*To record, classify and connect with the European spirit.*

The Melina Merkouri Organization is a Capital of Culture agency aimed at the capitalization, maintenance and promotion of the ECoC institution. It will record and evaluate every ECoC activity once the city is awarded the title. The organization will establish a digital database to record and classify the activities during the preparation stage, the ECoC year, and afterwards. It will record and utilize all activities either in digital or printed form and will engage in evaluation and research projects. A separate statistics agency will be in charge of this process. The Melina Merkouri Organization will coordinate and motivate the volunteers to ensure that the Capital of Culture spirit will remain alive within the social fabric. The Organization will assist in the exchange of ideas and the interaction with other Capitals of Culture and it will handle Creative Europe projects.

#### **The Lesbian Festival and Conferences Organization**

This institution will coordinate all existing and new festivals we will create as part of the ECoC process or our participation in European projects and platforms. The Organization will operate the island's cultural venues, to ensure the creation and presentation of cultural and artistic activities.

#### **Lesbian Summer**

It is primarily a contemporary music, theater and dance festival. It

was established in 1985 and takes place during July and August in cultural venues across the island. The festival aims to reflect the broad spectrum of the Greek and international music scene with the participation of established artists. It is very popular with the island's younger audience. Respected theater companies, mostly Greek, participate with a fine selection of Greek theatrical productions. During the 2020-2021 period we aim to internationalize the festival by inviting important contemporary music groups to increase its penetration among the younger audience. The Royal Shakespeare Company, the Comédie-Française, and the National Theater are some of the companies with which we are negotiating to secure their presence during the 2020-2021 ECoC period.

- **Molyvos International Music Festival**

The Molyvos International Music Festival (MIMF) is a unique project that brings together the greatest international young talents for a celebration of world-class classical music. It is held each August in the Castle of Molyvos and allows new artists to connect with established artists. The festival is autonomous. We hope to include the MIMF in the Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music platform to promote its alternative character as a place where young talented musicians from around the world can find the means to express themselves.

**Once the ECoC title is awarded, we will establish:**

- **Ancient and Religious Music Festival**

It will celebrate a music tradition that connects Terpsandros' lyre to the end of the Baroque period and the byzantine kontakion to the great compositions that glorify God. The Ancient and Religious Music Festival will open its doors in the spring of 2019, to ensure that by 2021 it will be a member of the R.E.M.A., the European Early Music Network. In Lesbos the Byzantine music meets the Gregorian chant. We hope to secure the cooperation of established and respected groups, like those from Smyrna and Ayvalik (Turkey) which have already agreed to participate. The highlight of the 2021 programme will be the presentation of a baroque opera, a co-production with the Luglio Musicale Trapanese festival. In regards to Byzantine music there are numerous groups on the island that are active in such performances like the School of Byzantine and Traditional Folk Music of the Holy Metropolis of Mytilene. All these groups will find means of expression in the festival that will be held during the month of May in Mytilene and Sigri.

- **The Academy of the Muses Theater Festival**

The festival's goal will be the introduction of contemporary European theatrical innovation to the local theater scene. Eleven theater companies and the Federation of Theater Companies of Lesbos, in cooperation with the Academy of the Muses, will host a theater festival beginning in winter 2018. They will produce their own plays and invite companies from around the world; they will host a children's theater

and master classes with established actors. In 2021 the Festival will take place over two periods: it will have the form we just described during the winter period but it will become a Festival of Street Theater in the summer, just before the opening of the Lesbian Festival, with the participation of European theater companies.

- **Academy of the Muses Film Festival**  
**“Cine Script”**

**Films inspired by literature Festival**

During the summer there will be open-air screenings using state-of-the-art equipment. The screenings will take place in all available venues and will be known as “Cine Lesvos”. The actual festival will take place in September and will be hosted in Eresos, Molyvos and Sigri. The closing ceremony will take place in Mytilene. Workshops will be held throughout the year for students in the Erasmus + programme, young people interested in this form of art, and invited guests from all over Europe. A creative script writing workshop will operate during the festival.

**Narrating Stories to Homer**

As a sidebar to the festival, we will organize a two-day meeting dedicated to children, with animated films inspired by topics of the shared European mythology, especially elements associated with the island of Lesvos. Participation will be open to all European candidates. A secretariat to select the films will be established from the Department of Audiovisual Arts of the Academy of the Muses and the University of the Aegean. Another committee will be responsible for organizing the festival. The selected material will be screened throughout the school year in schools and the students will serve as jury. The films that will gather the highest number of votes will be publicly screened during the two-day meeting. In addition to the film screening, there will be workshops of digital and traditional cartoon drawing, open both to children and adults.



**Festival devoted to marginalization**

**“Highlighting Variations”**

Our second pillar is Solidarity is Civilization. It is not possible while planning for the future of a European Capital of Culture to turn a blind eye to the issue of refugees and discrimination in every field. Our vision includes, at its very core, a series of actions to alleviate the problems associated with welcoming and caring for the refugees, such as remodelling areas for recording and identification, as well as health facilities for refugees and minorities. Interactive programmes will never allow diversity to become grounds for social exclusion.

The programme agreement we signed with Braşov and Iaşi (Romanian 2021 ECoC candidate cities) emphasizes themes such as marginalization, art as therapy, the artistic expression of people with mobility limitations. The agreement envisions an international meeting of educators who specialize in the field of Drama Therapy.

This meeting serves as a pretext for an Erasmus + programme with the participation of Romania, Italy, and Greece to encourage educators and professionals, who specialize in the field of Drama Therapy, to come together in 2018. Among the Italian participants we plan on inviting are Annet Henneman, Vito Minoia, and Mariano Dolci.

The meeting will be an introduction to the establishment of a festival devoted to marginalization and diversity. The festival will include:

- Educational section on Drama Therapy for educators and students
- Seminars on Sport Therapy and Therapeutic horseback riding, in collaboration with the informal groups that rear the “mintilides”, a breed of horses originating in Lesvos.
- Targeted theatrical, visual and music workshops for mixed groups (people with mobility limitations or not)
- Mixed group creative writing workshops
- Theater – dance performances for mixed groups
- Mixed group concerts and exhibitions
- Drama therapy actions
- Film and documentary screenings devoted to marginalization

The festival will take place in May-June.

**Narration Festival**

**“Once Upon a Thousand Years”**

Mytilene – Lesvos is the quintessential home to writers. During the 1930s numerous writers with a revolutionary innovative style and content contributed to significant changes in Greek language and literature, as part of a movement that became known as the “Lesbian Spring”. Notable among these writers were Stratis Myrivilis and Elias Venezis.

The large number of local authors reminds us of the strong bond between Word and Memory, the oral tradition that nourished poetry in antiquity and keeps supporting Creation as expressed in the work of Hans Christian Andersen and the Grimm Brothers in northern Europe. To facilitate the flow of this so-called “memory” and the natural flow





of language and allow them to take their rightful place, we thought that the areas that serve as meeting places for the people of the city and the island will become narrative meeting points. During the warm summer evening, in open air venues wherever possible, in a spirit of summer camp but with all the necessary equipment for hosting the event (first aid, concession stand, technical support) men and women will narrate for four days. In the winter months, the event will move indoors, in venues such as the Agiassos Library or the island's numerous traditional coffee shops. They will be days dedicated to a meeting – informal narration contest, where participants will be judged not solely on the content of their narration but their narrative skills. The event is aimed primarily at including elderly participants. The presence and participation of refugees will transform this “special festival” into a strong element of intercultural education and a tool in the fight against marginalization.

The recording of the material in digital and printed form, and the subsequent translations, will support the effort for intercultural cooperation, communication and research. It will evolve into a particularly useful material for anthropological and sociological research.

We will also create a blog to facilitate the interaction of all those interested in narration.

#### **Extreme Sports Art – Land Festival “Traces on Earth”**

This will be the quintessential “youth” festival. Young artists from around the world will participate in a Land Art competition. In various locations across the island (usually the least readily accessible) young artists create art that integrates physical elements (sand, dirt etc.) of the landscape into the finished piece. The natural colours and materials, used on a large scale, have no permanent effect on the



natural environment and do not harm the ecological balance.

The art creations can be recorded digitally and viewed only from above. It is therefore necessary to employ an innovative method for viewing this open-air exhibition: hot-air balloons.

The festival focuses not only on the final result but the creative process, both for the artists and the audience.

We are already in discussions with Italian companies that make and employ hot-air balloons in L'Aquila and Novara.

The theme will change each year. The festival, apart from its artistic quality, will offer a unique opportunity to explore and record the natural environment and signifies an investment in it.

The digital material that will result from the festival will support a permanent exhibition and archive, and it will enrich scientific conferences and meetings in the Geopark.

#### **“Keep an Open Eye on the Future”**

##### **Open Call to young creators for Cooperation**

There will be an open call to young creators from across the world to offer new ideas and suggest areas of cooperation or ways to organize volunteer, humanitarian, and art networks. The goal is to promote alternative uses of modern technology, knowledge and science for reasons of research and cooperation.

This action is based on concentric circles: Mytilene-Lesvos as 2021 ECoC is at the centre and the circles spread indefinitely like ripples circling on and on.

##### **Conferences and International Meetings**

Our motto “Poetry Designs the City”, whether used literally or figuratively, highlights the exceptional literary tradition of the island of Lesbos. From the 7th century BC to the present day, an uninterrupted literary production by intellectual leaders serves the humanitarian studies in Greece and abroad. By invoking this ancient heritage, we plan on causing the interactive procedures that will result in works of art, conclusions and a dialogue with world literature. This is the land of Sappho, of Alcaeus, of Longus, the island where Aristotle and Theophrastus established the concept of modern science. Thus it is here that we plan and realize meetings and conferences that allow contemporary literary production to express itself.

We firmly believe that knowledge should spread far and wide, therefore most of the conferences and meetings listed below will be broadcasted live on the internet.

- **International Poetry Symposium**

Poets, literature critics and researchers from around the world will meet in October 2020 to discuss “Lyricism as the primary means of expression of world poetry: the connection of poetry and music.”

- **European Meeting of Philosophy**

Philosophy and sociology converse around the same table with the help



of the University of the Aegean – School of Social Sciences. The first topic, in 2017, will be “Population Movements and Refugees: Common influences on Western Civilization: Civilization as a philosophical position and stance of the Western World.”

- **International Meeting of Poetry, the Arts and Free Expression in Eresos, Birthplace of the Tenth Muse.**

A major symposium on ancient poetry will also function as a step for contemporary poets to recite their work and promote their books. Each year there will be dedicated to an art form and all ECoC festivals and activities will be able to participate interactively. This ten-day period, in honour of the tenth muse, will be enhanced with workshops, exhibitions and retrospectives, depending on the honoured art. The meeting will be held during the last ten days of June.

- **International UNESCO Conference on Global Geoparks 2021**

The International Intensive Course on Geoparks began eight years ago with the participation of 34 countries. The course is held annually in Lesvos during the last ten days of June. In 2021, with the assistance of the University of the Aegean and the agency dedicated to organizing conferences, symposia and meetings, Lesvos will host an International Geoparks Conference. The conference will be organized every four years by the International Intensive Course on Geoparks institution. It will be an opportunity to maintain an initiative that began thanks to the ECoC title for years to come.

- **Walking on the Stars**

Meetings to observe the night sky will take place during the summer months. They will be open to all interested members of the public. In collaboration with the Boğaziçi University (Bosphorus University) we are planning a series of lectures on astrophysics, quantum mechanics, and the research at CERN, with lectures from European universities. Our long-term target and wish is the establishment of an institute dedicated to the study of astrophysics, quantum mechanics, and neurobiology.

### **Visual Arts**

- Five museum – art galleries operate in Lesvos and reflect a selection of the cultural heritage bequeathed by the island’s master painters. Tériade succeeded in transferring to Lesvos a genuine selection of the twentieth century’s revolution in art.
- The Tériade Museum has a collection of paintings by most world renowned 20th-century artists, mostly Europeans.
- Next to the Tériade Museum is the Theophilos Museum that displays the paintings of the famous local folk artist Theophilos Hatzimihail. Tériade played a pivotal role in securing Theophilos’ international reputation.
- The Digital Museum George Iakovidis. George Iakovidis was appointed as Head of the Greek School of Fine Arts. He was a

master artist of the Munich School of Painting.

- The Municipal Art Gallery is housed in an old three-floor building (it belonged to Halim Bey). The gallery hosts works of accomplished Greek artists, who cast a long shadow over those who followed on their footsteps and established their presence in the visual arts.
- The Department of Visual Arts of the Academy will promote this rich heritage by reorganizing the existing permanent exhibitions and inaugurating new retrospective exhibitions dedicated to the work of the Lesbian masters. For example, a George Iakovidis Retrospective Exhibition in collaboration with the National Gallery in 2021, and a series of audiovisual events in various locations associated with Theophilos, in collaboration with the University of the Aegean – Department of Cultural Technology and Communication.
- Also, a major retrospective exhibition devoted to Lesbian master painters who are no longer with us, such as Manolis Kalligiannis, Antonis Protopoulos etc.
- As far as contemporary expression is concerned, we are thinking of creating an Art Biennale in 2019 devoted to sculpture, painting, visual installations and video art. Contemporary and new creators from Greece and the rest of the world will converse in enclosed and open spaces. The topics will vary. In 2019 the topic will be “The blue of the sky and the sea of Lesvos”, while in 2021, the ECoC year, the topic will be “The Light”. The exhibition will not have a set date; it will open in the spring and will last for two months.
- The exhibition will be accompanied by various books and parallel events.
- Works of art will remain in public spaces for the duration of the ECoC year.

### **Dance**

We want to bring to Lesvos an advanced expression of contemporary dancing. It will be presented in archaeological sites, abandoned buildings and various urban and rural sites under the general title “Movement and Space”. Our goal is to enliven the island’s urban web in an unexpected way.

All dance activities will be spread across the island and throughout the year. There will be workshops and master classes.

### **Expansion**

Today we find ourselves at the meeting point of cultural tradition and creation. This is the only way to describe the current situation in Mytilene - Lesvos. The combination of these two elements will form the capital we will invest to achieve growth.

The growth model we will adopt is a systemic model that takes into consideration the available human resources and the exploitation of the final product to ensure the island’s development.





Tourism, traditional industries (including those that produce traditional products), new learning sectors (foreign languages, translations), interactive methods on Diversity (sport therapy, therapeutic horseback riding, e-learning, e-mapping, interactive walks in inaccessible regions), innovative actions (Walking on the Stars”, “Traces on Earth”, “Keep an Open Eye on the Future”), as well as all the conferences and international meetings, upgraded thanks to modern technology that allows for the instant production and dissemination of audiovisual material, become levers of growth. They will generate new employment opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers and new possibilities to affect the economic and cultural level of growth. They will also shatter the image of the island’s isolation during the winter months, as well as thinking of Lesbos as an exclusively summer destination.

This model, whose dissemination and processing depends on innovative methods based on new technologies, comprises the main axis of expansion mechanisms.

The cultural foundation shared by all Europeans facilitates the successful dissemination of this model across Europe and contributes to the continent’s intercultural unity.

#### **Institute of Lesbian Gastronomy & Tradition**

The institute will be established in 2016 to highlight the rare and unique gastronomy of Lesbos, and the wide variety of local products, many of which are identified as P.D.O. (Protected Designations of Origin). The cultural industry and the ancient festivals that survive intact to this day, comprise an immense wealth that will be recorded and systematized by the institute to become one of the most important products of the cultural heritage. The management, the extroversion and the dissemination of this heritage will be the main goal of this institute. It will promote the beauty and the richness of this tradition in print and in digital form. The institute will help standardize the products of the local cultural industry. The institute’s stamp of approval will endow the products with the quality assurance they deserve.

We envision the creation of:

- a) An e-shopping internet platform
- b) A website to promote local products (e-market)
- c) Audiovisual material to record and disseminate information
- d) e-mapping to assist customer traffic and access to information
- e) A unique website with information on the history of local products and traditions, available in numerous languages

#### **Gastronomy & Tradition Festival**

Lesbos is home to numerous festivals throughout the year. The Institute of Lesbian Gastronomy will coordinate these events and complete the core of the Lesbian Cultural Industry. This festival will take place throughout the year. Depending on the season, it will highlight all those activities that are intimately connected with the island’s life, with the participation of young people. Products will be promoted on season and in combination with tradition and art projects such as the gathering of the olives in the fall and the harvest of the sea in the summer. This four-season festival of tradition and gastronomy will be combined with custom-made environmental walks to enable visitors to admire and learn about the astonishing natural environment of Lesbos. More than 1800 species of flora and 700 species of fauna combine with the Petrified Forest in this ancient land, which UNESCO inducted into the Global Geopark Network of UNESCO.

#### **“The Word in the World”**

We will create a network of actions in the form of an Open University with a Department of Translations that will contribute to the interactivity of our programme and will facilitate the teaching of Greek and the establishment of an association of local publishing houses.

1. Design and promote the teaching of the Greek language through the internet with innovative e-learning platforms.
2. Design and promote translations from Greek to English, French, Italian and German (and vice versa) through the internet with innovative e-learning platforms.
3. Cooperation with the University of the Aegean to promote Erasmus + programmes to facilitate the exchange of students and faculty members.
4. Cooperation with local groups to promote Erasmus+, LifeLearning and Youth programmes in a broader target group.
5. Creation of three-month long campus workshops on translation and the teaching of European languages that are not widely spoken.
6. Cooperation with local and European publishing houses to ensure an extrovert result that ensures access to the European and international reading public.
7. Support for the establishment of new publishing houses and plans for the creation of a Publishing House Association of Lesbos.

## “Tracking”

New routes that upgrade the tourist product and the perception of the natural and cultural environment. They are also relevant to how we treat Diversity, since digital guided tours and the improvements in the accessibility and transportation will facilitate people with mobility limitations.

1. e-mapping across the island.
2. Digitization of routes through selected landscapes (the Petrified Forest, Orpheus’ cave in Antissa, Mountain Olympus, the island’s coastline beginning in Petra etc.).
3. Digitization of routes in the architectural wonders of Mytilene.
4. Digitization of routes in archaeological sites and museums.
5. “A Walk in the City”: guided tour of the city of Mytilene and visit to buildings with distinctive architecture.
6. “Balancing Time”: Walks and unification of archaeological sites. Establishment of routes to connect archaeological sites and museums.
7. «Following Daphnis and Chloe”: The natural environment is used for education purposes through walks and visits to the Geopark.
8. Special guided tours: climbing, diving.
9. Guided tours and walks with horses. Horseback riding therapy.
10. Mountain biking.
11. Expansion of the routes of the electric vehicle that serves people with mobility limitations.
12. Gastronomic tours.

## Prevention and Medical Assistance

- Establishment of three health care stations to provide basic assistance and medical exams to those who land on the island.
- New facilities to assist mothers and children. Facilities to allow children to be creative and engaged.

## Collaboration

With the term collaboration we refer to common actions and participation with our partners in the Creative Europe projects and various platforms and networks.

We have already begun the process of collaboration with the following:

- The **Euro-Mediterranean Cities of Music network**: this is a platform where we collaborate with Corfu and Volos, as well as our European partners, namely the city of Trapani in Sicily, the island of Gozo in Malta, the city of Paphos in Cyprus, and the city of El Djem in Tunisia. In the near future we will add the city of Metline in Tunisia.
- **R.E.M.A. and “Luglio musicale Trapanese”**: in the context of the Ancient and Religious Music Festival, we will collaborate with the city of Trapani (Italy) and Smyrna and Ayvalik (Turkey).
- **European Festival platform – network**: in the context of the Academy of the Muses and the Lesbian Summer theatrical

productions. Three companies have already agreed to participate: the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Comédie-Française, and the Théâtre du Corps Pietragalla.

- Cooperation and participation in the **East Berlin festival** and the **Gaulitana music festival in Gozo**.
- **International UNESCO Geoparks Conference and establishment of the “Walking on the Stars” initiative**: In collaboration with the Boğaziçi University (Bosphorus University) and San Sebastian (Spain) the International Intensive Course on Geoparks began eight years ago with the participation of 34 countries.
- **Highlighting Variations**: Festival on marginalization. We have already begun the process of collaboration with the Romanian cities of Braşov and Iaşi, as well as the following Italian companies: “Teatro di Nascosto,” “Teatro Aenigma,” and “Nuove Catarsi.” A collaboration with the Romanian cities of Braşov and Iaşi is also in place for the “Tracking” programme. The activities “Traces on Earth” and “Keep an Open Eye on the Future” will take place in collaboration with the city of Bologna (Italy).

## We anticipate:

- Collaborations with all the cities that held or apply to become European Capitals of Culture, under the umbrella of the Melina Merkouri Organization.
- Cooperation and cultural exchanges with Gozo (Malta) for the action “A Word in the World.”
- All artistic and educational activities of the Academy of the Muses and the Conferences and Meetings Organization are envisioned as collaborative.

Initially there will be contacts with Mytilene’s twin cities to sign collaboration agreements. These cities are:

Italy	Turkey
Trapani	Istanbul
Crotone	Smyrna
Naples	Ayvalik
Cervinara	
Venice	Tunisia
Cyprus	El Djem
Paphos (twin city)	Metline
Romania	Malta
Braşov	Gozo
Iaşi	Greece
Spain	Preveza
San Sebastian 2016 ECoC	Lamia
Japan	Corfu
Setouchi (twin city) – former Ushimando	Volos
France	Kalamaria
Nice	
Marseille	





# **TABLE OF COLLABORATIONS**

COLLABORATION	EXPANSION	ENACTMENT	REDEVELOPMENT
I	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Of "Tracking"	Academy of the Muses Theater Festival (Street Theater)	City of Mytilene
II	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation  Database of Inter-European Promotion Model of Promotion, Dissemination and Technology	Conferences and International Meetings Lesbian Summer	Old Swimming Facility
III	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Human <u>Resources</u> Development Model Inter-European Dissemination Base  Dissemination, Diffusion and Technology Model	Lesbian Summer  Academy of the Muses  Melina Mercury Organization  Ancient and Religious Music Festival Visual Art	Castle of Mytilene – Castle Theater
IV	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Human <u>Resources</u> Development Model Dissemination, Diffusion and Technology Model Inter-European Dissemination Base "The Word in the World"	Lesbian Summer  Ancient and Religious Music Festival  Academy of the Muses Film Festival Visual Arts	Sigri Castle – <u>Sigri</u> Theater

V	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Human Resources Development Model Inter-European Dissemination Base	Visual Arts  Ancient and Religious Music Festival	Tsarsi Hamam (Turkish baths)
VI	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation	Academy of the Muses	Valide Mosque
VII	"Tracking"		<u>Mythimna</u> Archaeological Route
VIII	"Tracking"		<u>Klopedi</u> Archaeological site accessibility
IX	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Human Resources Development Model Inter-European Dissemination Base Dissemination, Diffusion and Technology Model Gastronomy & Tradition Festival	Academy of the Muses Film Festival Conferences and International Meetings  Academy of the Muses Theater Festival Marginalization Festival  Visual Arts	<u>Georgiadis</u> Mansion
X	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation Human Resources Development Model Dissemination, Diffusion and Technology Model Inter-European Dissemination Base	Academy of the Muses  Academy of the Muses Film Festival  Academy of the Muses Theater Festival Ancient and Religious Music Festival Narration Festival	Mytilene Municipal Treater
XI	Capitalization of Cultural Heritage and Creation	Narration Festival	Old Municipal Slaughterhouse in the Castle



Inter-European Dissemination Base	Marginalization Festival
Dissemination, Diffusion and Technology Model	Visual Arts
Human Resources Development Model	Conferences and International Meetings

### 3.3 How will the events and activities that will constitute the cultural programme for the year be chosen?

Planning for the Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC is based on the two pillars (“Poetry Designs the City” and “Solidarity is Civilization”) and the crossing between the four core areas of action. We want Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC to function as a Shared Memory and Testament Bank for European ideals on unity, cultural production, development, intercultural communications, diversity, education and learning, the fight against poverty and marginalization.

Our efforts will be judged by the citizens of Mytilene – Lesvos that must invoke to strengthen their cultural present. We embarked all together armed with solidarity, unity, and culture to battle the consequences of the humanitarian crisis caused by recession and the financial crisis. We believe that this is the healthiest way to react. We will respond to hardship with an optimistic investment in the future, following the teachings of Memory.

We will select our activities based on the following criteria:

- Elements that allow the connection of the local and the wider European tradition
- The extent and the method by which the topic of each activity has been used in the shared European cultural tradition
- The extent to which the activity can employ innovative methods
- Whether the proposals place Mytilene – Lesvos to the core of the contemporary European artistic scene
- Whether the proposals encourage learning with innovative methods
- Whether the proposals make use of the local human capital already engaged in cultural activities
- The level of research innovation in the fields of science and philosophy
- The proposals’ penetration quality and dynamic

The majority of our activities targets two core areas of action:

- a) the cultural heritage and
- b) extroversion and intercultural contact.

Our cultural heritage is preserved, reproduced and represented by living cell of our social fabric. Nevertheless, our programme will

materialize through qualitative and quantitative research among all age groups.

Extroversion means strengthening exchanges of the cultural product and the artists, intellectuals, and scientists to secure an intercultural element in every activity. We secure the necessary quality and we adhere to our targets. The artistic director has the general overview of the programme, with the contribution of the artist committee whose members are persons of world renown and respect.

The four principles of our programme (redevelopment, enactment, expansion and collaboration) establish a framework of activities that intersect to contribute and serve our original vision expressed in the mottos “Poetry Designs the City” and “Solidarity is Civilization”. In early 2015 we contacted and secured the support of more than 100 local associations and outlined our strategy. During the period of preparation we will not limit ourselves in invitations for productions and events of a local, national or European nature, but we will aim towards the synergy among our partners.

We aim to support our European dimension while bolstering quality and intercultural contacts. Our goal is to secure the widest possible cooperation and participation on a local and European level. A broad spectrum of activities will cover most requirements and will be achieved and promoted in cooperative fashion. In 2017 we will begin the process of inviting productions suited to the guiding principles of our programme. The invitation concerns local, national and European participants. We will select productions that meet the requirements of innovation, flexibility and broad participation.

Second half of 2016: Institutionalization and commencement of remodelling projects.

- 2017-2018: Selection of programmes and events that match the identity of our programme. Invitations and workshops. Activities, that are already planned, begin.
- First half of 2019: Final selection of programmes.
- Second half of 2019: Processing of final programme and public announcement.
- 2020: Preparation, activation and promotion of the ECoC.
- 2021: Implementation of our programme.



### 3.4 How will the cultural programme combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions?

“Remembering the Past-Recalling the Future” and “Building a Bridge over Time” are two goals and mottos that originate directly from the two pillars of our programme, namely “Poetry Designs the City” and “Solidarity is Civilization”. These are the cornerstones of our strategy.

The cultural industry and the local traditions of Lesbos are intimately connected with the inhabitants’ way of living. This is true to such an extent that a visitor is not always able to discern the boundaries between them. Cultural Heritage is a living experience which is, uniquely, preserved and renewed without losing its character. Our programme is inspired by the same core idea: cultural heritage = base, innovative idea = evolution, cooperation among the two = result.

The result consists of a cultural product that best represents the qualities of our island, in order to best reflect its European essence. It is inconceivable that we will not lean on the island’s cultural capabilities. Our long history grants us the privilege of a wide range of options and experiences upon which to draw in order to combine innovation and tradition, development and growth. All of our activities will be based upon our traditions and our cultural heritage. They will merge with innovative actions to communicate, in the most contemporary manner possible, and ensure the blending of the intercultural aspect we cherish with the extroversion we need. And all this while taking into consideration the younger European generations. Tradition and contemporary life coexist harmoniously in Mytilene (the largest city on the island) and in the smaller communities of the Municipality of Lesbos. The inhabitants of Lesbos have their own unique dialect, with local variations among different communities. This dialect becomes a unique work of art in its literary expression. They are citizens of Greece and Europe without losing old habits that have vanished elsewhere. The younger generation feel perfectly at home in Europe, has achieved a high level of education, is fluent in the most widely-spoken European languages and yet maintain their local idioms and revive local dancing and singing traditions in parallel with contemporary music and dance developments. The island is dotted with 120 associations and cultural industries (pottery, gastronomy, woodcarving, folk painting, traditional soap-making, weaving) that employ more than 24,000 people in the production line, approximately 27% of the island’s inhabitants. This is why the capitalization of our cultural heritage is our primary goal. We wish to combine the cultural heritage and tradition with the most innovative ways of cultural expression.

Actions such as “Keep an Open Eye on the Future” and “Once upon a Thousand Years” (visible correlation between past and future, memory and vision, tradition and innovation), were designed according to this philosophy and complement each other. And yet, there is always the question of bridging the gap between tradition and innovation, local and intercultural. Therefore we designed the following actions:

- The modernization of the local traditional industry and its

promotion through innovative methods and the use of digital technology. The use of e-shopping, e-marketing and e-mapping facilitates the dissemination of information.

- The Department of Cultural Technology and Communication of the University of the Aegean will create audiovisual events to promote local traditions and products and produce new digital material concerning the island’s cultural history.
- Design and styling upgrades. Pottery craft in Mantamados connects with the ancient kilns still in use to produce the famous Lesbian jugs with digital technologies. Interactive technologies enable us to observe every step of the jug making process. Workshops in various cultural venues allow participants to recreate the ancient jugs on a smaller scale using 3D technology and various materials. We hope to combine this action with Cerameus, a programme that began seven years ago and brings together experts in relation to the art of pottery and ceramics from across the Aegean and Turkey.
- The improvement of the tourist industry through the promotion of thematic tourism (cultural, ecological etc.) online (networks, blogs, e-ticketing etc.).
- Observing the night sky (“Walking on the Stars”) is transformed into education and information regarding the latest issues and achievements of modern science.
- The remodelling of buildings and archaeological sites, and actions such as “Tracking” and “Traces on Earth” are based, primarily, on recording, investing, capitalizing and promoting the natural world. Thus they contribute to and are shaped by the principles of sustainable development.
- Actions such as “Tracking” and “Traces on Earth” contribute to the enrichment of the island’s digital guided tour network and offer fresh perspectives i.e. from above (we usually experience space from within, as part of a microcosm). The participant will be able to exit any given space and view it as part of a larger whole, a macrocosm. The principle behind the microcosm can be easily combined with traditional forms of handcrafting and art inside this space, while the principle behind the macrocosm invests in modern technology, refers to it and eventually employs it to produce something new within the context of tomorrow’s art, technology, and science.
- Use of the latest technology in art to produce and create new visual trends.
- A camera network and special links will carry images of traditional events, the landscape and the architecture of the island to people with mobility limitations and elderly residents who are not able to participate and enjoy outdoor activities. Groups of volunteers will carry the cameras on their back, whether they are on foot or mountain bikes, and allow the viewers to enjoy environmental walks, the Petrified Forest, the traditional communities of Molyvos, Mesotopos or Agiasos from the comfort



of their home.

- E-learning platforms to facilitate the teaching and translation of foreign languages. Modernization of traditional typography.
- An association of local publishing houses and promotion on the web.

**3.5 How has the city involved, or how does it plan to involve, local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme? Please give some concrete examples and name some local artists and cultural organisations with which cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question.**

Local society embraced the idea of applying for the 2021 ECoC title. Despite the insurmountable problems associated with the refugee crisis, large numbers of locals have mobilized to ensure proper caring for the stateless people who arrive in Lesbos. We were able to coordinate the setting up of teams, to establish a 15-member committee of citizens that acted as the impetus to provide the art committee with the information required to be able to select the institutional framework within the mandate of the European dimension for drafting our strategy and programme.

All these events are possible thanks to the cooperation of associations such as the Federation of Local Theater Companies, the Association of Potters in Lesbos, the “Anagnostirio” in Agiassos, local artists such as Lightem Fotis of Lightem Genial Records and the Special Digital Technology Lab of the University of the Aegean. There will be numerous interactive events with a strong intercultural element, taking advantage of the island’s artists who create tradition and culture. They will combine with modern currents and technology while these events will be recorded as an important cultural product and will be disseminated through digital media.

Specific examples of the close connection between culture and innovation:

- The eleven local theatre companies and their federation will participate in evaluating the programme with innovative and interactive ways. For example, we have selected two writers to produce a play based on the drowning of a young refugee. His body is washed ashore in Antissa, where, according to mythology, the head of Orpheus landed after he was decapitated. A woman, whose husband and son were both lost at sea, lives nearby and decides to care for the drowned stranger as if he was a member of her family.
- The Cerameus is used both as an element of cultural reality and development.
- Traditional spaces (coffee shops etc.) become cultural venues.
- The streets and the daily reality of living in the city become theater and holds a leading role in the “Academy of the Muses” activities.

- All cultural associations of the island, including the 25 international Lesbian organizations, contribute on a volunteer basis to the implementation of our programme.

- The programme is based in its entirety on the social reality of Mytilene – Lesbos and its recognition.

The two pillars and the four core areas of action, as well as Crossing and our programme reflect the local dynamic. Apart from the local organizations, structures and people we already mentioned, the University of the Aegean and the lesbian NGOs that are currently active on the island, more than 5000 volunteers expressed their support and willingness to participate in our programme. The final result should be the robust trunk of a tree with deep roots that will bear fruit to be used, anew, to grow new trees and collect new fruits.



## 4. Capacity to deliver

### 4.1 Please confirm and evidence that you have broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities

#### National Support

The Hellenic Ministry of Culture customarily subsidizes Capitals of Culture with a satisfactory amount, to enable them to implement their programme. Due to the financial crisis it is possible that the ministry subsidies will not be paid regularly. Nevertheless, the amount available is ten million euro and is provided over a five-year period, in annual two-million euro payments. The first payment is in the second half of 2016. This funding is included in our budget.

#### Private Sector Subsidies

Our decision to apply for the ECoC title was delayed due to the financial crisis and the issues associated with the refugee influx. As a result,

despite the broad support among the local population, we were late in seeking private sector funding. The Lesvos Chamber of Commerce and the Hotel and Tourist Agents Association have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to contribute by covering travelling and hotel expenses during the application process and in the future. Our research indicates that the private sector may be able to contribute up to four million euro. This level of funding is distributed among the activities of our programme. For example, the Molyvos International Music Festival receives €160,000 in private funding annually. In 2021 the same sources will contribute €500,000 in the context of corporate social responsibility. Media companies also contribute by sponsoring events.

#### Support Organization

We have already established a support organization with the assistance of the municipality, local groups and private citizens. This entity is called Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 European Capital of Culture Association. It is independent and responsible for implementing all necessary actions





**ΑΠΟΣΠΑΣΜΑ**  
**ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΟ ΤΗΣ ΑΡΙΘ. 24<sup>ης</sup>/28-9-2015**  
**τακτής Συνεδρίασης του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Δήμου Λέσβου**  
**ΑΡΙΘΜΟΣ ΑΠΟΦΑΣΗΣ 635/2015**

**ΘΕΜΑ 7<sup>ο</sup> εκτός Διεκδίκηση Πολιτιστικής Πρωτεύουσας της Ευρώπης 2021.**  
**Η/Δ:**

Σήμερα την 28<sup>η</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 2015, ημέρα Δευτέρα και ώρα 18:30 το Δημοτικό Συμβούλιο συνήλθε σε δημόσια συνεδρίαση στην αίθουσα του Περιφερειακού Συμβουλίου, ύστερα από την αριθ. 59065/28-9-2015 πρόσκληση του Προέδρου του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου, που δημοσιεύθηκε και επιδόθηκε με αποδεικτικό στους Δημοτικούς Συμβούλους, σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 67 του Ν. 3852/2010.

Πριν από την έναρξη της συνεδρίασης ο Πρόεδρος του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου, κ. Ψάνης Γεώργιος, διαπίστωσε ότι υπάρχει νόμιμη απαρτία, δεδομένου ότι σε σύνολο σαράντα πέντε (45) μελών, ήταν παρόντα τα τριάντα δύο (32) μέλη του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου, ήτοι:

**ΠΑΡΟΝΤΑ ΜΕΛΗ**

1. Ψάνης Γεώργιος (πρόεδρος)
2. Φλώρος Γεώργιος (αντιπρόεδρος)
3. Πάλλης Γεώργιος (γραμματέας)
4. Ακριώτης Δημήτριος
5. Αλεξίου Δημήτριος
6. Αμπουλός Ιωάννης
7. Αντωνέλλη Αναστασία
8. Αποστόλου Στέφανος
9. Βέρρος Ταξιάρχης
10. Δαγκλής Ευστράτιος
11. Ζωγράφου-Στεργιανού Χρυσούλα
12. Ιωσηφέλλη Αθηνά
13. Καραγιάννης Δημήτριος
14. Καραγιάννης Θεόδωρος
15. Καρασάββας Νικόλαος
16. Καρπέλης Νικόλαος
17. Κατζανός Γεώργιος
18. Κατσαβέλλης Παναγιώτης
19. Κατσαρός Κωνσταντίνος
20. Κοτζαδημητρίου Κωνσταντίνα
21. Κουμαράς Αντώνιος
22. Κουνιρέλλης Ηλίας
23. Κουρτζής Νικόλαος
24. Κυρατζής-Χρυσοστόμου Ευστράτιος
25. Πέτρου Δαμιανός
26. Πνακά Ταξιαρχούλα
27. Ρούσσης Μιχαήλ
28. Στεργίου Θεόδωρος
29. Τζιμής Ευστράτιος
30. Τσαμπλάκος Προκόπιος
31. Τσιριγώτη Νίκη

**ΑΠΟΝΤΑ ΜΕΛΗ**

1. Αλβανόπουλος Παναγιώτης
2. Αρμενάκας Εμμανουήλ
3. Αστυρακάκης Κωνσταντίνος
4. Γεωργούλας Ευστράτιος
5. Γυμνάγος Προκόπιος
6. Θεοδώρου Φακίων-Γεώργιος
7. Καραγεωργίου Ευστράτιος
8. Μόλβαλη Ελένη
9. Ξανθούλης Ιωάννης
10. Ταμβακέλλης Μιχαήλ
11. Χαλαλάμπους Συμεών
12. Χατζηχρήστου Ιγνάτιος
13. Ψωμάς Νικόλαος

### 32. Τσουπής Παναγιώτης

Ο Δήμαρχος κ. Γαληνός Σπυρίδων προσκλήθηκε νόμιμα και παρίσταται στη συνεδρίαση.

Επίσης προσκλήθηκαν νόμιμα όλοι οι Πρόεδροι των Δημοτικών & Τοπικών Κοινοτήτων του Δήμου Λέσβου και στη συνεδρίαση παραβρέθηκε ο Πρόεδρος Δημοτικής Κοινότητας Μανταμάδου.

Στη συνεδρίαση παραβρέθηκε η Χωριατέλλη Νίκη, υπάλληλος του Δήμου, για την τήρηση των πρακτικών.

- Μετά τη συζήτηση του 1<sup>ου</sup> θέματος ημερήσιας διάταξης προσήλθαν οι Δημοτικοί Σύμβουλοι κ.κ. Ψωμάς Νικόλαος και Χατζηχρήστου Ιγνάτιος.
  - Μετά τη συζήτηση του 20<sup>ου</sup> θέματος ημερήσιας διάταξης προσήλθε ο Δημοτικός Σύμβουλος κ. Χαράλάμπους Συμεών
  - Μετά τη συζήτηση του 52<sup>ου</sup> θέματος ημερήσιας διάταξης αποχώρησε ο Δημοτικός Σύμβουλος κ. Χατζηχρήστου Ιγνάτιος
- Στη συζήτηση του συγκεκριμένου θέματος παραβρέθηκε ο Δημοτικός Σύμβουλος κ. Αστυρακάκης Κωνσταντίνος

- ❖ Με ομόφωνη απόφαση του Σώματος συζητήθηκε το πρώτο θέμα της ημερήσιας διάταξης πριν τη συζήτηση των εκτός ημερήσιας διάταξης θεμάτων.

Στη συνέχεια ο Πρόεδρος εισηγήθηκε τη συζήτηση οκτώ (8) θεμάτων εκτός ημερήσιας διάταξης, λόγω του κατεπείγοντος χαρακτήρα τους:

1. Αποδοχή δωρεάς στο Δήμο Λέσβου μιας αυτοκινούμενης σκούπας δρόμων «ME-82058» από την εταιρεία ΗΛΕΚΤΡΩΡ του ομίλου ΕΛΛΑΚΤΩΡ
2. Έγκριση αποφάσεων 43-44-45-46/2015 Εκτελεστικής Επιτροπής Δήμου Λέσβου
3. Έγκριση διενέργειας προμήθειας τροφίμων και ειδών καθαριότητας –ευπρεπισμού για τις ανάγκες α) Νομικών Προσώπων του Δήμου [ΝΠΔΔ Κοινωνικής Προστασίας και Αλληλεγγύης, Ζαχάριος Πρότυπος Μονάδα Ηλικιωμένων «Η Αγία Παρασκευή», Σχολική Επιτροπή Πρωτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης, Σχολική Επιτροπή Δευτεροβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης β) Παιδικών & Βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών γ) Υπηρεσιών -Εργατοτεχνικού προσωπικού του Δήμου Λέσβου
4. Αποδοχή πίστωσης 500.000,00 ευρώ από το Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών για αντιμετώπιση έκτακτων αναγκών πρώτης υποδοχής πολιτών τρίτων χωρών.
5. Διαγραφή βεβαιωμένων παραβάσεων Κ.Ο.Κ λόγω ένδειας.
6. Είσπραξη ελάχιστης καταβολής για πραγματοποίηση εκδηλώσεων στις δημοτικές ενότητες Δ. Λέσβου
7. Διεκδίκηση Πολιτιστικής Πρωτεύουσας της Ευρώπης 2021
8. Έγκριση επιχορήγησης Σωματείου Εθελοντών Πυροσβεστών Νήσου Λέσβου

#### ΤΟ ΔΗΜΟΤΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ

Έχοντας υπόψη τις εισηγήσεις και τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 67 του Ν. 3852/2010 περί σύγκλησης του δημοτικού συμβουλίου,

#### Αποφασίζει ως εξής:

**ΚΡΙΝΕΙ** τα προτεινόμενα θέματα 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 ομόφωνα και το θέμα 6 κατά πλειοψηφία ως κατεπείγοντα και δέχεται να συζητηθούν στη σημερινή συνεδρίαση του Δ.Σ., ως έκτακτα.

Το 5<sup>ο</sup> θέμα στην έναρξη συζήτησής του, ύστερα από πρόταση του αρμόδιου εισηγητή, αποσύρθηκε.





Στη συνέχεια, ο πρόεδρος εισηγούμενος το 7<sup>ο</sup> θέμα εκτός ημερήσιας διάταξης έδωσε το λόγο στον **Αντιδήμαρχο Αστυνακάκη** ο οποίος αναφέρθηκε στην αριθμ. πρωτ. 59985/28-9-2015 εισήγησή του, που έχει διανεμηθεί στο Σώμα και αποτελεί αναπόσπαστο τμήμα της παρούσας απόφασης, ζητώντας την έγκρισή της.

Η εισήγηση έχει ως εξής: «Προτείνεται η προετοιμασία, η εκπόνηση φακέλου, οι ενέργειες και η τήρηση των διαδικασιών εκείνων που χρειάζονται, για τη διεκδίκηση του τίτλου: Μυτιλήνη-Λέσβος, Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης 2021.

Με τον τίτλο :

**“ΜΥΤΙΛΗΝΗ-ΛΕΣΒΟΣ 2021-Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης”** κατέρχεται σύσσωμη η Λέσβος στη διεκδίκηση του τίτλου.

**Γιατί η Λέσβος;**

**Οι Λόγοι**

Οι λόγοι που η Λέσβος αξίζει και μπορεί να γίνει Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης για το 2021

Η παρουσίαση του πολιτισμού του νησιού που χρονολογείται αποδεδειγμένα από το 5.000π.χ. ως σήμερα.

Η Λέσβος υπήρξε ανέκαθεν πατρίδα των ποιητών. Από τη Σαπφώ και τον Αλκαίο ως τον Ελύτη κι ακόμη πιο πέρα, υπάρχει μια αδιάκοπη αλυσίδα την οποία δεν μπόρεσαν να σταματήσουν ούτε οι διάφοροι κατακτητές που πέρασαν από το νησί. (Λεσβιακή Άνοιξη κτλ)

Η Λέσβος ακολούθησε την πολιτιστική ανάπτυξη μαζί με την οικονομική της εξέλιξη δια μέσω των αιώνων και οι λέσβιοι είχαν πάντοτε την εξωστρέφεια να μεταλαμπαδεύουν τον πολιτισμό τους μαζί με την κουλτούρα της Ελιάς στα πέρατα της γης.

Η πολυμορφία του τόπου σε πολιτιστικά και γεωγραφικά χαρακτηριστικά π.χ. Το Γεω-Πάρκο με το απολιθωμένο δάσος, Μνημείο της UNESCO. Οι γεωθερμικές πηγές είναι μερικά από τα θέματα της νήσου.

Η Μυτιλήνη ως πόλη, με τον “εκλεκτικιστικό” αρχιτεκτονικό ρυθμό της, η ξεχωριστή αρχιτεκτονική του νησιού γενικότερα, η οποία είναι μοναδικής ιδιομορφίας.

Η τεράστια πολιτιστική αρχαιολογική κληρονομιά.

Τα θρησκευτικά μνημεία.

Το βιομηχανικό παρελθόν της και η μετεξέλιξη του.

Η μεγάλη ανεκτικότητα της κοινωνίας του νησιού σε θέματα κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού. □

A. Η Λέσβος ως Πύλη μεταναστών και προσφύγων πολέμου προς την Ευρώπη □

B. Η αποδοχή της διαφορετικότητας με το ειδικό Φεστιβάλ της Ερεσού.

Η πολυμορφία της λαϊκής παράδοσης , η ζωντάνια και διατήρηση της μαζί με την γαστρονομία της. Η Κουλτούρα του λαδιού , του Ούζου, της μεταποίησης των προϊόντων της γης και της θάλασσας. □

Η βιοποικιλότητα του Νησιού. Η Πανίδα του.

Η συγκλονιστική ωραιότητα του τοπίου και χιλιάδες άλλα που ως κάτοικοι αυτού του τόπου τα γνωρίζουμε άμεσα, μας κάνουν να θέλουμε να διεκδικήσουμε τον τίτλο της **Πολιτιστικής Πρωτεύουσας της Ευρώπης για το 2021.**

**Ο Σκοπός**

Ο κυριότερος σκοπός είναι η προβολή του νησιού στην εξωστρέφεια και τον Ευρωπαϊκό του προορισμό. Με συνέπεια την ασφαλή προώθηση του τουρισμού και τη διακλάδωση του πέραν του καλοκαιριού, λόγω των ποικίλων δράσεων που θα γίνουν με την ανάληψη του Τίτλου, από το τέλος του 2016 ως και το 2022.

**Τα οφέλη**

Η εδραίωση θεσμών για τον πολιτισμό αλλά και τον τουρισμό.

Η ανάπτυξη του νησιού μέσω των συντεταγμένων Ευρωπαϊκών προγραμμάτων τα οποία υποβοηθούνται για την ανάληψη τους, εφόσον ο τίτλος έρθει στο νησί μας. π.χ Ανάπτυξη προσβασιμότητας στους αρχαιολογικούς και τουριστικούς προορισμούς μας, Ανάπτυξη της πόλης της Μυτιλήνης, μ προσβασιμότητα των ανθρώπων με ειδικές ανάγκες σε όλο το νησι , στα δημόσια κτήρια ,μουσεία κτλ



Η απευθείας σύνδεση για το μεταναστευτικό με τις Βρυξέλλες και όχι μόνον μέσω κρατικής μηχανής.  
Η δημιουργία ως εκ τούτου θεσμού και υποδομών για την υποδοχή όλων αυτών των ανθρώπων διότι η κατάσταση λόγω γεωγραφικής θέσης είναι αναπόφευκτη.  
Η τεράστια προβολή διεθνώς μέσω της ανάληψης τού τίτλου. Η ευρεία και συστηματική προβολή του νησιού λόγω της πρόσβασης στα μέσα διεθνώς με θετικό πρόσημο κι όχι αυτό της μετανάστευσης.  
Η επιτακτική ανάγκη σύνδεσης απευθείας του τόπου με την Ευρωπαϊκή του θέση ως Ανατολικό Ευρωπαϊκό σύνορο και ο καθορισμός του.  
Η αναβάθμιση, απόκτηση ή αποκατάσταση και αναπαλαίωση κτιριακών υποδομών, για τον πολιτισμό και το κοινωνικό σύνολο.  
Τέλος θεωρούμε Εθνική αναγκαιότητα, ο τίτλος αυτός να δοθεί στη Λέσβο και θα το καταστήσουμε σαφές τόσο στους κρατούντες όσο και στους Ευρωπαίους εταίρους μας.»  
Ο Δήμαρχος κ. Γαληνός αναφέρθηκε στη σημασία διεκδίκησης του τίτλου «Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης 2021», στις ευεργετικές συνέπειες που φέρει μια τέτοια επιλογή. Μίλησε για τις πολλαπλές δράσεις, για τα έργα που και τα οφέλη που θα προκύψουν, παρουσιάζοντας επιμέρους διαδικασίες.

Ακολούθησε διαλογική συζήτηση, η οποία περιλαμβάνεται στα απομαγνητοφωνημένα πρακτικά, ύστερα από την οποία:

#### ΤΟ ΔΗΜΟΤΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ

Αφού έλαβε υπόψη του:

1. Τις διατάξεις των άρθρων 65 και 67 του νόμου 3852/2010 «πρόγραμμα ΚΑΛΛΙΚΡΑΤΗΣ»
2. Την αριθ. πρωτ. 59985/28-9-2015 εισήγηση του Αντιδημάρχου κ. Αστουρακάκη
3. Την εισήγηση του Αντιδημάρχου κ. Αστουρακάκη
4. Τη γενόμενη συζήτηση και τις τοποθετήσεις Δημοτικών Συμβούλων

#### ΑΠΟΦΑΣΙΖΕΙ ΟΜΟΦΩΝΑ

**ΕΓΚΡΙΝΕΙ** την προετοιμασία, την εκπόνηση φακέλου και τη διενέργεια όλων των απαραίτητων ενεργειών που χρειάζονται για τη διεκδίκηση του τίτλου: Μυτιλήνη-Λέσβος, Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης 2021, για τους λόγους, το σκοπό και οφέλη που αναφέρονται στην αριθ. πρωτ. 59985/28-9-2015 εισήγηση που αποτελεί αναπόσπαστο τμήμα της παρούσας απόφασης.

**{ΨΗΦΟΦΟΡΙΑ:**

- Σύνολο παρόντων: Τριάντα τέσσερις (34) Δημοτικοί Σύμβουλοι
- Πλειοψήφησαν υπέρ της πρότασης: Τριάντα τέσσερις (34) Δημοτικοί Σύμβουλοι

Αναθέτει στον Αντιδήμαρχο κ. Αστουρακάκη την εκτέλεση του παρόντος και κάθε άλλη περαιτέρω ενέργεια.

Η απόφαση αυτή πήρε αύξοντα αριθμό 635.

Μετά τη σύνταξή του το πρακτικό υπογράφηκε όπως παρακάτω:

Ο Πρόεδρος του Δημοτικού  
Συμβουλίου Λέσβου



Τα μέλη του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λέσβου

ΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΕΣ









to complete the preparations and secure the collaborations within the ECoC framework.

**Political support**

The decision, which is included in the application package, was taken unanimously by the Municipal Council. No political party voted against Mytilene’s candidacy. We are also enclosing the decision of the governor of the North Aegean Regional Administration that expresses his support and promises to financially support our programme once Mytilene – Lesvos is chosen as ECoC. Beyond this political support, the Municipality of Lesvos will increase its budget for culture, beginning in 2016, by 36.4% per year. This increase will reach a level of 127% during the ECoC year. The following information confirms the support we receive among the local society, the associations and the volunteers. The local government approves of our efforts. The next municipal election is in 2018. The current municipal government’s commitment, though, is firm and reflects the will of all parties and groups to support the ECoC programme.

**4.2 Please confirm and evidence that your city has or will have adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title. To do that, please answer the following questions:**

**1) Explain briefly how the European Capital of Culture will make use of and develop the city’s cultural infrastructure.**

Lesvos possesses, as described, cultural venues and multi-centers, theaters located in archaeological sites, and a municipal theater in the city of Mytilene; the city will remodel the old swimming facility and convert it into a conference center and a venue utilized for the staging of assorted large-scale events. There are also eight theaters that belong to local theatrical workshops, additional venues housed in monuments (Turkish baths), concert and exhibition venues, as well as industrial buildings and sites that can accommodate events associated with the ECoC without endangering the natural environment. All these venues will be used, from a very early stage, by local groups, new associations that will result from our collaborations, educational and volunteer events. The administration, the art education programmes and smaller events that do not require a large audience will be housed in the buildings of the ECoC-associated organizations, buildings that belong to the University of the Aegean, and neoclassical schools (especially during the summer).

**2) What are the city’s assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?**

All island communities, big or small, are connected with an extensive

road network. KTEL (the main intercity public transport bus service in Lesvos) offers a regular daily service across the island, from 05.00 to 00.30, with departures every half hour. The main bus depot is in Mytilene. During the summer months additional bus routes serve the increased traffic towards popular destinations. There is a regular urban bus service in all major cities and towns (Mytilene, Petra, Kalloni, Agia Paraskevi, Agiassos). Molyvos, Sigri and Eresos have no such service because they are declared traditional communities. Small boats travel to and from some popular tourist destinations (beaches) in the summer months. Lesvos is also accessible by boat and ferries. Ferries depart twice per day from the port of Mytilene carrying passengers and commercial traffic. The island is connected to the port of Piraeus and Thessaloniki. There is daily service to and from the surrounding islands (Samos, Chios, Rhodes, Crete, and Cyprus). There is also frequent boat service to the coast of Turkey, with ten departures daily. The Mytilene International Airport «Odysseas Elytis» is served, almost throughout the year, by international flights to and from most European countries (see map): the United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Israel, Cyprus, Norway, Holland, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Turkey, and others.

AIR LINKS





Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and Finland. Direct flights between Istanbul and Mytilene will commence in December 2015. Four airline companies offer five domestic flights daily between Mytilene and Athens during the winter months. The island is also connected to Thessaloniki, Crete, Limnos, Chios, Rhodes, Ikaria, Samos and Volos.

INDICATIVE TABLE OF APPROACHES CRUISERS  
FROM SEPTEMBER 2014 UNTIL AUGUST OF 2015

MONTH - YEAR	NUMBER APPROACHES
SEPTEMBER 2014	8
OCTOBER 2014	10
NOVEMBER 2014	2
DECEMBER 2014	0
JANUARY 2015	0
FEBRUARY 2015	0
MARCH 2015	1
APRIL 2015	2
MAY 2015	4
JUNE 2015	9
JULY 2015	7
AUGUST 2015	13

Official data from the Ministry of Mercantile Marine and Aegean, Central Mytilini Port.

Six new companies plan to increase their visits by 15% beginning in April 2016. The new Mytilene Marina has been remodelled and will be delivered in March 2016. It will provide berthing facilities for 600 sailing ships and motorboats, as well as all the necessary passenger and crew amenities.

3) What is the city’s absorption capacity in terms of tourists’ accommodation?

Large hotel units in the city of Mytilene provide 915 beds. There are an additional 5704 beds across the island. 322 private tourist establishments offer 510 rooms with 1049 beds.

TOURIST HITS

MEANS OF TRANSPORT	YEAR	NUMBER OF VISITORS	AVERAGE TIME OF STAY
AIRPLANE	4/14-3/15	106.707	6 DAYS
FERRY	4/14-3/15	175.008	8 DAYS
PRIVATE BOATS / OTHER TRANSPORTATION	4/14-3/15	12.000 approximately	3 DAYS

The data resulting from the administration of the International Airport Odysseas Elytis, Mytilene Central Port Authority and the Association of Hoteliers.

4) In terms of cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure what are the projects (including renovation projects) that your city plan to carry out in connection with the European Capital of Culture action between now and the year of the title? What is the planned timetable for this work?

1. Remodelling and change of use of the old public swimming pool facility into a conference, theater and events venue with a 1600-person capacity.

According to the organizational chart, remodelling will begin in 2017 and the venue will be delivered in 2021. It will accommodate conferences, symphony orchestras, opera, large-scale theater productions and various events listed in our programme.

2. Remodelling and partial restoration of the Castle of Mytilene with particular emphasis on the Moat Theater.

According to the organizational chart, remodelling will begin in the second half of 2016 and last until 2019. The Castle is restored by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and the Lesvos Archaeological Service. The Moat Theater already accommodates many events during the Lesbian Summer festival, but it will be modernized without disturbing the monument and the environment.

3. Restoration of the Ottoman fort in Sigri. Construction of a theater.

According to the organizational chart, work will begin in 2017 and will conclude in 2018. The construction of the theater will begin in September 2016 and will be completed in the spring of 2017. The theater will accommodate the events listed in our programme for the region of Sigri, as well as events during the Lesbian Summer festival, in anticipation of the venue’s participation in the ECoC year.



4. Remodelling and restoration of the Tsarsi Hamam (Turkish baths), by the municipality

The restoration of the Tsarsi Hamam was completed ten years ago. Beginning in May 2020 we will remodel the building and replace the old machinery (for heat, water, light and ventilation) with state-of-the-art equipment that will not be visible to the visitor. The Hamam will then be able to accommodate music events (classical etc.) and provide a permanent home for the municipal orchestra.

5. Restoration of the Georgiadis Mansion as a Cultural Centre for the North Aegean Administrative Region.

This is a mansion right next to an industrial building. Both venues are used for exhibitions, film screenings and small events. The mansion was never properly restored, therefore we will proceed with its restoration beginning in early 2017. The project will be completed in early 2018 and will include the installation of state-of-the-art equipment. It will accommodate educational events, Drama Therapy actions and film screenings. The modernization is a joint project by the North Aegean Region Administration and the Municipality.



6. Modernization of the Municipal Theater of Mytilene and the equipment of "Culture Centers."

In the summer of 2016 the Municipal Theater will be remodelled and provided with state-of-the-art lighting and sound equipment, an upgraded stage, a hydraulic-powered orchestra pit, and a remodelled auditorium and dressing rooms. It is a municipal project and will be delivered in December 2016.



7. Remodelling of the Old Slaughterhouse in the Castle of Mytilene into a Digital Museum of European and Lesbian Culture.

The project was approved by the Municipality and the Archaeological Service. Remodelling will begin in 2017 and will be completed in 2020. This venue will operate in collaboration with the University of the Aegean Department of Cultural Technology and Communication. It will include recreational areas and serve as a meeting place for young people.











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## 5 . O u t r e a c h

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### 5.1 Explain how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year?

The local population and the civil society have been involved in the application's preparation from the moment Mytilene – Lesvos decided to participate. As we have already mentioned, the local population was the main driving force behind the application for the ECoC title.

To coordinate the activities of the volunteers and the local agencies and secure the desired results we planned the following:

- 1) **Volunteers are registered.** The number of participants keeps increasing (more than 5000 volunteers so far).
- 2) **Volunteers participate** in the events in various capacities and assist in organizing, executing and evaluating them.
- 3) **Young volunteers are already training as drivers** – route managers, especially to assist people with mobility limitations. For example, members of the local riding associations have

contacted specialized instructors to organize therapeutic horse riding programmes. In the summer of 2017 they will be able to lead the teams that will participate in the routes.

4) **Teams to take over various key administrative positions in the offices charged with promoting the ECoC** (administration; security; welcoming; transportation; cleaning; assisting the elderly, people with mobility limitations, and children).

5) **They are active in disseminating information and networking:** the broad network of volunteers comprises a circle that radiates activity for winning the ECoC title to the wider circle of spectators, visitors, and tourists. This second circle includes people with no access to electronic devices and depends on information received through daily social contact and exchange. Information is thus disseminated throughout the island far more effectively than through the exclusive use of social networks and media.

For example, our activities and any developments concerning the ECoC are discussed in coffee houses, in the library of











Agiassos, in the local theaters. This method is tried and true. The establishment of solidarity actions to assist the refugees followed a similar course.

6) In early 2016 all the activities that concern the information of the local population and its active participation in the ECoC preparation programme will be amalgamated in the newly created “**Human Resources Bank**.” The self-organization adopted by local groups is the source of this idea (for example, Papastratis).

The “**Human Resources Bank**” will be divided in three interrelated sections:

- **Time Bank** (you are credited with the time you offer as a volunteer which then you can redeem for time of service from another volunteer)
- **Bank of Happiness** (you are credited with your labour which you can redeem for happiness, the opportunity to participate or attend events and activities that can be a source of happiness)
- **Bank of Solidarity** (particularly active with refugees and minorities)

These sections will operate within the broader framework of the Bank of Ideas and will serve as active indicators of the citizens’ will and involvement. The Bank of Ideas will be an informal institution/agency during the preparation period and the ECoC year, but with a provision to be formally established at a later date.

**The events and activities of local organization currently happening in Mytilene – Lesvos become vehicles to promote and prepare for the 2021 ECoC year:**

As preparations intensify, a series of events inform the local population on the ECoC and plan ways to support the relevant activities. All these activities are preserved and incorporated into the corresponding proposals of our programme.

For example, the Lesbian Summer Festival, and the Molyvos International Music Festival are incorporated intact into the ECoC programme. The same applies to the meeting of local theater groups (that collaborate with the activities of the Academy of the Muses), the AegeanDocs International Documentary Film Festival (that will be associated with the Academy of the Muses Film Festival), the participation of the 3rd Lyceum of Mytilene in European physics and space research competitions will be strengthened with the “Walking on the Stars” seminars. Local celebrations, festivities and the Saint Valentine procession will be incorporated in the Lesbian Gastronomy & Tradition Festival etc.

#### In depth:

1. Meeting of Amateur Theatrical Teams of the Aegean Sea. It was founded in Mytilene in 1988. It takes place annually on a different island.
2. Exhibition of pottery in the Mantamados Multicenter. It takes place annually with the participation of potters from Lesbos, Turkey, Cyprus, Italy and other Mediterranean countries. Mytilene – Lesbos is at the forefront of the Cerameus programme and will establish a permanent exhibition of pottery and ceramics in Mantamados.
3. Each September students from all over the world can attend the Cheryl Studer Master Class and International Opera Workshop of the North Aegean Music Festival in the Municipal Theater of Mytilene.
4. The Lesbian Summer Festival was inaugurated in 1983. In 2012 the Hellenic Ministry of Culture declared the Lesbian Summer Festival as the biggest and most comprehensive local festival in Greece. Over the years it has hosted acclaimed theater and music productions from Europe and the rest of the world i.e. Scorpions, the Bolshoi Ballet company, Angélique Ionatos etc.
5. Partnership with the Metropolitan Opera House and the Royal Opera House for a series of high-definition opera and ballet performance transmissions to the Municipal Theater of Mytilene for the past four years. Students of music schools and choir members in Mytilene attend the broadcast free of charge.
6. The annual AegeanDocs International Documentary Festival is transmitted to all the islands in the north Aegean. Seminars on documentaries are taught during the festival. They are funded by the Municipality of Lesbos and target students and the general public. Documentaries made by students over the course of the previous year are screened during the festival.
7. The Molyvos International Music Festival is a project that brings







together the greatest European talents for a celebration of world-class classical music in the Castle of Molyvos. The festival is accompanied by seminars and events in various venues all over Molyvos.

8. Litany of the holy relics of St. Valentine on February 14th, attended by multitudes of people irrespective of religion and visitors even from Turkey.
9. Painting and photography exhibitions with the participation of Greek, European, American, Turkish and other foreign artists, held each year in the galleries of Mytilene, Molyvos, and the Georgiadis Mansion.
10. Traditional dance, music, and customs events in various communities. These events are associated with the local religious heritage, local products (ouzo, sardines, tarhana, gkiouzlemedes), and traditional occupations, especially fishing. The events are open to local musicians, inhabitants and foreign visitors.
11. During the winter weekends, in the evening, the small theater of the Municipal Theater Workshop hosts plays where the audience donates food and clothes (instead of purchasing a ticket) for the refugees and vulnerable social groups.
12. Since 1994 the local government provides funding for two- or three-day long events known as "Spring days – Culture days". They are open to all local schools that participate with theatrical performances and environmental projects.
13. Each summer, the Plomari Multicenter hosts a Summer School with the participation of foreign universities.
14. Each year, the Music School of Mytilene organizes music contests in the Municipal Theater of Mytilene. Funding is provided by the Municipality of Lesvos. The contest is open to all schools on the island. Students compete to win in singing and playing a musical instrument.
15. Each year the students of the 3rd Lyceum of Mytilene participate in European physics competitions, present inventions and research relating to space exploration and have won many awards for their ingenuity.
16. The Regional Directorate of Education of the North Aegean funded a programme whereby educators from European countries attended seminars on immigration in order to be able to educate students on the issue. The educators had the opportunity to prepare their own activities of solidarity in support of the immigrants, with emphasis on nutrition.
17. There are a number of cultural activities of extroversion and interaction each year, in cooperation with foreign language associations (especially Russians and French). A good example is the French Film weekend in the

Municipal Theater of Mytilene.

18. The International Eressos Women's Festival by Sappho Women: the activities during the festival bring together lesbians from all over the world and the local society. The festival proves the broad spirit, the education and the deep faith of the island's inhabitants in equality, freedom of expression and the rejection of racism and obsessions.
19. Great examples of the island's extroversion is its designation as a UNESCO Geopark and the subsequent active involvement in the European Geoparks Network; and the collaborations of the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest in Sigri for the promotion of the island's natural beauty.

#### RECENT INFORMATION PROJECTS IN SCHOOLS AND SOLIDARITY EVENTS ORGANIZED BY LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- In October 2015 a painting contest was held with the participation of nursery and primary schools across Mytilene and Lesvos. The topic was "Our Island as 2021 ECoC." Students used their ingenuity and spontaneity to present their own versions of what the island will look like during the ECoC year. The exhibition visitors were impressed by the final results, which we have permission to use in our activities.
- In late September 2015 the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 12th, 13th and 17th lyceums organized a two-day long rock music festival to collect money, medicine, food, and clothes as an act of solidarity and assistance towards the refugees. More than 6500 people attended the event and donated €30,000 and three thousand boxes of medicine, clothes and food items.

The goal is the promotion and dissemination of the island's culture, the cooperation, collaboration, and exchange of activities with other European countries, the extroversion and the innovative ideas that reflect the shared values and cultural background of Lesvos and Europe.

Should Mytilene – Lesvos become the 2021 European Capital of Culture, the determination of its inhabitants to frame their activities with "poetry" and "solidarity" as guidelines would increase. They would achieve the goals listed in the "Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC" programme and follow its strategy. We should keep in mind that these goals have been identified by the local society as meaningful and therefore of a high priority. The inhabitants themselves will be among the first to offer their services in the effort to prepare for the ECoC year.

**5.2 How will the title create in your city new and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, volunteers, the marginalised and disadvantaged, including minorities? Please also elaborate on the accessibility of these activities to persons**



**with disabilities and the elderly. Specify the relevant parts of the programme planned for these various groups. (This question is optional at pre-selection stage)**

The majority of people of Mytilene – Lesvos already participate in cultural activities. This participation is not superficial but the end result of a profound cultural process. There is, therefore, a thirst for a renovating approach on matters of culture, and participation is a given from the very beginning.

The crucial element is the formation of an energetic team of young people who will assume the responsibility for continuing this activity as members of a larger unit, with which they will maintain contact. New trends in culture, art, science, and intellectual activities will only grow if we fertilize them with communication and inter-cultural contacts.

Students at the local high-school that spend their time experimenting with Physics and the young people who voluntarily flock to cultural associations have already raised the bar. They will form the audience of targeted and quality activities, achieving their stated intention of







renewing and raising the level of culture.

Regarding persons with disabilities, children, and minorities, we have planned a series of actions to ensure their active and unimpeded participation:

- Custom-made tours with the use of horses and hot-air balloons ("Traces on Earth" & "Extreme Sports Art – Land Festival"). These tours will be supervised by local riding associations and will abide by all safety regulations.
- Digital guided tours, which can become educational material distributed in schools. History and the natural environment will become a living experience from an early age.
- Star gazing programme ("Walking on the Stars") with the use of telescopes. The programme is targeted to children. Some high

schools in Mytilene have already incorporated similar activities in their curricula. The seminars that accompany our star gazing programme take this fact into consideration.

- The animated film programme ("Narrating Stories to Homer") which will be hosted in local schools, and the associated workshops of digital and traditional cartoon drawing, open to children.
- Children's Theater organized by the "Academy of the Muses". The Academy's activities in terms of art education, workshops and the Children's Theater is an investment for the future. The main concern is to allow children to approach the arts through innovative methods and to educate the audience, artists, and intellectuals of the future.
- Remodelling projects include ramps and structural adjustments to improve accessibility for people with mobility limitations.
- Narration evenings ("Once Upon a Thousand Years") are primarily actions directed to children, the elderly, people with mobility







limitations and participants from different cultural backgrounds.

- Routes and guided tours with an electric vehicle, specifically for people with mobility limitations and pre-school age children. We believe that at the end of the ECoC year the local audience will evolve into a passionate recipient and user of the island's culture and its dissemination.

### 5.3 Explain your overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

- Our primary tools to ensure audience development are open

calls to participate in the process; multiple invitations regarding the issues and the ways of organizing events and activities; an alternative method to produce culture that employs the element of innovation and radical thinking; the use of all local history sources that have established points of reference on an international scale; and the recognition that the local social fabric and the youth of Europe carry a degree of responsibility.

- The methods of information dissemination vary and alternate. The oral tradition and the internet, the mass media and social networks. We will also promote our activities on the radio and television stations on a local, national and international level.
- Preparation and publication of printed material along with local industry products.
- Production and sale of commemorative memorabilia with the Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC logo.
- Digital online channels will internationalize the event and the activities during the preparation stage and the ECoC year.
- Creation and operation of a digital web channel devoted to Mytilene – Lesvos 2021 ECoC. It will begin broadcasting in 2019 and will connect with all social networks.
- Information network and a website for schools will provide information on ECoC events pertinent to schools and it will publicize activities organized by the students themselves.
- Interconnection with the Hellenic Theater/Drama Education Network and promotion of our activities through it.
- Expand the round of seminars concerning art in education offered by the "Academy of the Muses".
- Connection with all associations of people with disabilities and mental health in Greece and as many as possible in Europe. They will be invited to participate in the festival against marginalization (Highlighting Variations) and its activities.
- Promote the Erasmus+, Erasmus+ Youth, Erasmus+ Lifelong Learning programmes for youth and adults.
- Print the ECoC logo and the address of information kiosks and websites on public transport tickets to inform tourists about where they can get information concerning the European Capital of Culture.
- Advertise in local, national and European publications.
- Creation and promotion of a dedicated menu served by local restaurants across the island. Cocktails and desserts.
- Mobilization of the local population to include announcements on the ECoC programme in local festivals.

We want this European Capital of Culture to become a living organism that will interact with the international and European environment. We believe that today the world is open to new challenges more so than to invitations, since the cost associated with the former can only be paid by participating.

Therefore our motto "Remembering the Past, Recalling the Future" becomes a "Bridge over Time": we invest in us as a challenge to the future.











## 6.Finance- Additional information

### A. Finance

#### City budget for Culture

What has been the annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years

Year	City’s annual budget (in euro)	City’s annual budget (in percentage % of the annual budget of the city)
2011	€2,493,100.00	4,72%
2012	€3,884,850.00	7,24%
2013	€2.651.414,70	4,38%
2014	€1.320.000,00	2,24%
2015	€1.303.298,00	2,67%



-In case the city planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount starting from the year of submission of the bid until the ECoC year

The city is not planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture in order to finance the ECoC, as Public sectors (City, Government) have already voted or have undertaken financial commitment to cover the operational cost, with the exception of the Region where is expected to vote soon. According to the below schedule, the income for operational expenses cover should have been absorbed by the city and / or the conveyor (carrier) who is in charge for he preparation and implementation of the project, in case city receives the title of ECoC

Income sources for operational expenses	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
E.U.		7.510.000,00 €	6.170.000,00 €	6.722.000,00 €	7.100.000,00 €	4.310.000,00 €
Government	1.400.000,00 €	2.000.000,00 €	3.500.000,00 €	2.500.000,00 €	2.800.000,00 €	2.000.000,00 €
City	1.202.000,00 €	1.202.000,00 €	1.202.000,00 €	1.202.000,00 €	1.202.000,00 €	2.800.000,00 €
Region		1.100.000,00 €	1.080.000,00 €	1.080.000,00 €	1.000.000,00 €	1.000.000,00 €
Sponsors			1.000.000,00 €	1.000.000,00 €	1.000.000,00 €	1.000.000,00 €
Other						

-Which amount of the overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the ECoC year and in % of the overall annual budget

In case city receives the title of ECoC for the year of 2021, will continue to use funds from its annual budget with a respective percentage (3-4%) similar to the ones which are being disbursed annually for the growth, promotion and resumption of its culture activities.

Operating budget for the title year

Income for the public sector for operational needs cover	In Euro	%
Government	10.000.000,00 €	15,60%
City	8.810.000,00 €	13,75%
Region	5.260.000,00 €	8,21%
E.U. (excluding "Melina Merkouri" award	36.012.000,00 €	56,20%
Other	4.000.000,00 €	6,24%
Total	64.082.000,00 €	100%

We believe that we can support our budget. Some projects –the smaller ones- will be giving a higher percentage but for most projects we will be operating on a very simple set of culturally entrepreneurial principle, providing start-up capital to new ideas and we believe in or completion financing to worthy projects that come in with a part of their budget already secured.

Our financing structure is designed to radically increase the amount of money invested annually in culture not to redistribute it.

The City's contribution has been ensured without drawing any resources from the existing budget, relying instead of the efficiency-raising re-allocation of operational expenditure and by embarking on a concerted programme of income raising strategies.

The Government's contribution to Mytilene-Lesvos 2021, constitutes a bonus set aside specifically for CoC and will not effect existing contribution.

The Region's contribution, will be calculated in proportion to each municipality's size and we waiting the best for our city.

Any EU funds will be in addition to those already committed and we will do our best with the experience staff to get more.

We want our programme to be flexible and dynamic and we design it this way. We are determined, in the middle of the worst financial crisis in generations, to be ready to be able to work hard and delivered.

We prepared to "sell" ourselves. Branding is very important for us. Our commercial items t-shirts, posters, maps, signs, special designed products are start already to find the ways soon to go to market.

#### **- Has the Public sector voted or has undertaken financial commitment for to cover operational expenses ?**

Public sectors (City, Government) have already voted or have undertaken financial commitment to cover the operational cost, with the exception of the Region where is expected to vote soon.

#### **- What is your fundraising strategy to seek financial support from E.U., programs and funds in order to cover the operational expenses ?**

Our fundraising strategy to seek financial support from programs / E.U. funds to cover operational expenses, is based on experienced staff who have the appropriate experience in securing funds.

Accessing European funds was a priority for all of us, fact demonstrated by the good degree of absorption up today. This aspect is a solid argument with regard to the area's capacity to attract in

the perspective of 2021 grant resources for implementing projects, including cultural ones.

We looking programs as CREATIVE EUROPE: For projects involving training for people working in the creative field, developing audiences and increasing visibility at European level, actions in all kinds of culture: architecture, theater, music, literature, cultural heritage, Also programs like: Erasmus +, Erasmus for Young, Horizon 2020, POCU, POCA

#### **Income from the private sector:**

The strategy for the info, motivation and attracting private sponsors is based on the following components:

- Ensuring visibility of the project by creating an adequate information campaign to motivate businessman to engage either through direct funding or by providing sponsorship to cultural activities and projects
- Developing partnership and public / private cultural consortia, thus ensuring the involvement and motivation of the private sector in financing / co-financing cultural initiatives
- Starting a crowdfunding project on the topic Mytilene-Lesvos ECoC 2021, which may involve both locals and other persons interested in supporting the project. To conduct the fundraising campaign, specialized online platforms will be used and social media and websites will promote this initiative in the virtual environment.
- Establish "The Cultural Fund" where all citizens are encouraged to donate.







Operating expenditure

Expenses schedule	Marketing & promotion	Marketing & promotion	Wages, general expenses and administration	Wages, general expenses and administration	Rehabilitations and Creation	Rehabilitations and Creation	Total of operating expenditure
(In percentage %)	(In euro)	(In percentage %)	(In euro)	(In percentage %)	(In euro)	(In percentage %)	
	6.125.120,00	9,55%	5.359.480,00	8,36%	52.597.400,00	82,09%	64.082.000,00

Analysed per year :

Expenses schedule	Marketing & promotion (In euro)	Marketing & promotion (In percentage %)	Wages, general expenses and administration (In euro)	Wages, general expenses and administration (In percentage %)	Rehabilitations and Creation (In euro)	Rehabilitations and Creation (In percentage %)	Total of operating expenditure
2016	580.576,00 €	9,48%	640.580,00 €	11,95%	6.585.000,00 €	12,52%	7.806.156,00 €
2017	784.178,00 €	12,80%	707.735,00 €	13,20%	7.850.960,00 €	14,93%	9.342.873,00 €
2018	895.030,00 €	14,61%	701.000,00 €	13,08%	9.520.654,00 €	18,10%	11.116.684,00 €
2019	1.158.956,00 €	18,92%	859.000,00 €	16,03%	11.650.452,00 €	22,15%	13.668.408,00 €
2020	1.247.480,00 €	20,37%	1.101.165,00 €	20,54%	10.983.569,00 €	20,88%	13.332.214,00 €
2021	1.458.900,00 €	23,82%	1.350.000,00 €	25,20%	6.006.765,00 €	11,42%	8.815.665,00 €

**The costs of our program** beginning with the start of the assignment, development projects, supporting research initiatives and effective exchange with cities and institutions outside the country. It grows with the organization of events raising awareness both locally and internationally, particularly in 2020 and during the peak year of the Cultural Capital. To ensure that the ECoC will be successful, locally, we tie gradually the expenses until 2020 and 2022, with the gradual reduce over the next two years.

**Promoting our program** will slowly start to raise awareness and promote volunteerism at the local level, before an international campaign and a strategy that will begin dynamically, locally in 2021.

We will not do anything special for the coming years after ECOC because its success will do all the work alone and give all our energy and irrelevantly in 2021.

**Our promotion expenditure** will start slowing small, restricted to raising awareness and promoting volunteerism at the local level, before an international campaign and a project – specific strategy kicks in at the local level in 2021. We do not think that we much carry on for the next years after ECoC as ECoC's success will do the work by itself and we will give all our attendance in the year 2021.

#### Budget for capital expenditures :

In the following table all costs in detail relating to the implementation of Rehabilitation, Creations and Production projects, specifically analysis of the total amount of € 52,597,400.00 as follows:

ANALYSIS OF REHABILITATION, CREATION AND PRODUCTION EVENTS			
			REHABILITATION CREATION AND PRODUCTION
01.	Remodeling of the area around the harbour of Mytilene and Sappho's square Programs already approved by North Aegean Region and Municipality Of Lesvos as well as by the Ministry of Merchant Marine. Estimated delivery 2020.		16.200.000,00 €
02.	Remodelling of the old swimming Pool to a modern Conference center and theatre with capacity of 1600 persons		5.850.000,00 €
03.	Consolidation of the archeological sites of the city		2.700.000,00 €
04.	Redevelopment and partially restoration of the Castle of Mytilene and with particular emphasis in the Moat Theater. Project approved by the Greek Ministry of Culture.		7.000.000,00 €
05.	Restoration of the Ottoman Fort in Sigri. Project already approved by the Greek Ministry of Culture.		2.800.000,00 €
06.	Remodelling and restoration of the "Tsarsi Hamam" by the Municipality of Lesvos.		280.000,00 €
07.	Restoration of the ottoman Mosque Valide. Project already approved by the Greek Ministry of Culture.		862.000,00 €
08.	Restoration of the ancient promenade of Mythimna. Project approved by the Greek Ministry of Culture.		600.000,00 €
09.	Restoration and accessibility of the road to the archeological site of the sanctuary of Klopodi. Municipality of Lesvos and Greek Ministry of Culture.		460.000,00 €
10.	Upgrade of Mytilene Municipal Theatre with state-of-the art equipment, as well as equipment for all the Cultural Centres.		
10.	Restoration of the Georgiadis Mansion as a Cultural Centre for the North Aegean Administrative Region. Projects approved by the Municipality of Lesvos		260.000,00 €
11.	Upgrade of Mytilene Municipal Theatre with state-of-the art equipment, as well as equipment for all the Cultural Centres. Projects approved by Municipality of Lesvos and North Aegean Regional Administration.		850.000,00 €
12.	Reforming of the old slaughterhouse in Mytilene Castle, in Digital Art Museum.		420.000,00 €
			38.282.000,00 €
	<b>Department of Music</b>		1.300.000,00 €
13.	Productions	700.000,00 €	
13.1	Education	300.000,00 €	
13.2	Other Students' activities	300.000,00 €	
13.3			





14.	<b>Literature Department</b>		1.050.000,00 €
14.1	Conferences	400.000,00	
14.2	Symposiums and meetings	350.000,00	
14.3	Creative writign department	300.000,00	
15.	<b>Theater</b>		800.000,00 €
15.1	Education workshop	450.000,00	
15.2	Synergy events and street theater techniques	350.000,00	
16.	<b>Dance</b>		800.000,00 €
	Orchestral school	450.000,00	
	Traditional dances department	350.000,00	
17.	<b>Fine Arts</b>		650.000,00 €
17.1	Exhibitions	350.000,00	
17.2	Education and various actions	300.000,00	
18.	<b>Festivals</b>		8.715.400,00 €
18.1	Lesbian Summer	1.200.000,00	
18.2	Classical Music festival of Molyvos	350.000,00	
18.3	Ancient and Religious Music festival	430.000,00	
18.4	Festival of Muses Academy theater	380.000,00	
18.5	Academy Film festival	380.000,00	
18.6	Action : Telling storeis in Homer	280.000,00	
18.7	Festival of Social exclusion	550.000,00	
18.8	Narration festival	120.000,00	
18.9	"Traces on Earth" festival	120.000,00	
18.10	Action: Keep An Open Eye on Future	140.000,00	
18.11	International Poetry conference	380.000,00	
18.12	Art Biennale	450.000,00	
18.13	Institute of Lesbian Gastronomy and tradition – Annual Tradition Festival	600.000,00	
18.14	Synergy with third countris +Internationa Engagements for 2021 +	500.000,00 2.185.400,00	
18.15	Volunteers' Action from 2017 up to 2021	700.000,00	
19.	<b>"MELINA MERKOURI" Oraganisation</b>	1.000.000,00	1.000.000,00 €
			<b>14.315.400,00 €</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>52.597.400,00 €</b>

## B) Organization structure

### What kind of governance and delivery structure is envisaged for the implementation of the ECC year?

According to the most recent legislation on the structure of the local government, it is not permitted to establish a limited company, even though this would be the best option for our cooperation with the local government. This is the reason why the ECoC candidate cities proposed the creation of a new developmental company, with a special purpose, called "2021 European Capital of Culture," with the addition of the successful candidate city's name. We asked the appropriate minister to include the establishment of the company in the next omnibus bill concerning the Local Government. The bill will be discussed and approved (or not) in the Hellenic Parliament, before the end of 2016.

#### Supreme City Council

The Supreme City Council consists of the Mayor of Lesvos (as president), the Governor of the North Aegean Regional Administration, responsible for Lesvos (as vice-president), and members from all political parties, cultural

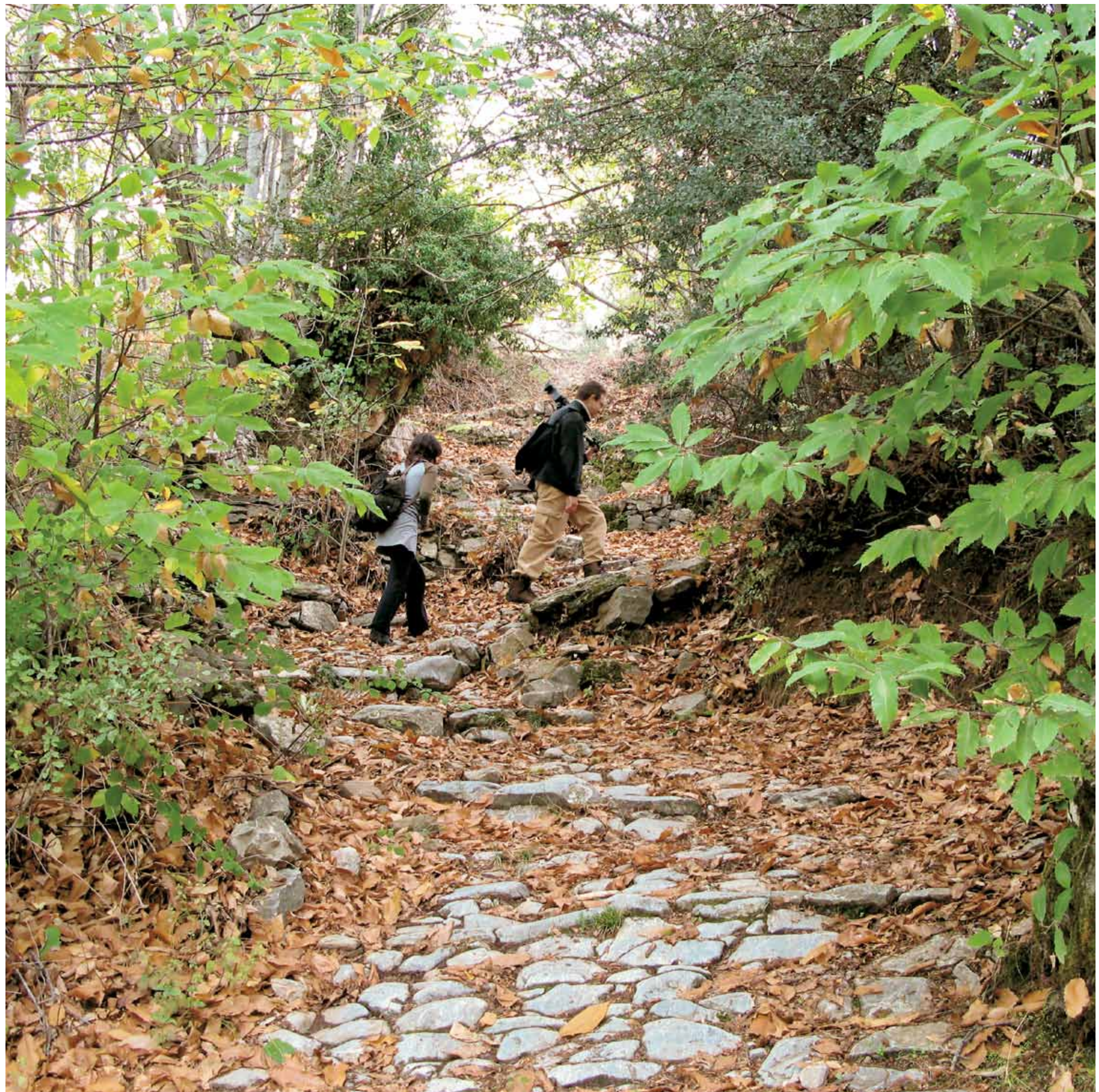
and professional associations, and notable local personalities. This structure guarantees the broad political support we require. The Supreme City Council also promotes our candidacy on an international level between now and the ECoC year.

#### The Delivery Structure

The only lawful structure we could establish, as indeed we did, is called "Mytilene – Lesvos Cultural Organization." It will provide a flexible management structure until we can create the appropriate legal framework for a new company. Should the parliament fail to pass the proposed legislation, the structure already in place will be able to carry out all of our programme's actions. The structure was founded with broad political support in the local level and consists of 21 members from all the local political and professional groups: members of all parties on the City Council, members of trade associations, representatives of the University of the Aegean, representatives of artistic associations etc. The vice-mayor responsible for Culture serves as the President of the Council and head of the organization. The organization's primary responsibilities include:

a) Approve the budget based on our detailed planned actions and our artistic programme.









b) Manage the Capital of Culture and its finances based on the expected income (administration, marketing, programme and institution and action advertising).

This is the structure that will establish all the institutions, with the exception of the Melina Merkouri Organization, which will be funded by the organization but will remain independent to evaluate the ECoC. It will also partially fund (but not manage) the Organization of Citizens and Volunteers. Finally, according to the organizational chart, this structure will supervise all actions and collaborations.

#### Independent Organizations

- Melina Merkouri Organization. An independent organization with its own board of directors. It will serve as an evaluation agency.
- Organization of Citizens and Volunteers. An independent but informal organization. It will be self-governed by its own members and aims to cover the overall volunteer work and establish evaluation teams among the volunteers.
- Independent Internal Legal Authority. It will oversee and monitor the organization's legal acts.

**How will this structure be organised at management level? Please make clear who will be the person(s) having the final responsibility for global leadership of the project?**

According to our organizational chart and the association's internal regulations, the association is governed by the President and the Board of Directors, who have the responsibilities mentioned above. It will have a General Manager, with experience in the cultural sector and cultural management. The General Manager will be responsible for selecting the artistic and the scientific committee and will report to the organization's President and the Board of

Directors. We have established three special committees and three sections.

#### Committees

- **Scientific Committee:** The Scientific Committee consists of seven members who are scientists with specialization in legal, managerial and cultural fields, such as philosophy, literature, archaeology, natural and urban environment etc.
- **Artistic Committee:** The Artistic Committee consists of seven members, selected by the Director who is the head of the committee. The members are musicians, visual artists, and individuals active in the theater, film and dance industry.
- **Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee consists of three experts in Cultural Management. Their role is to manage the available human resources, the materials and the projects. The Executive Committee is in close cooperation with the Legal and the Technical Councils, as well as the Department of Public Relations and Communication. The role of the executive marketing jury is the promotion, the marketing and the planning of parallel promotional activities for the ECoC.

#### Public Relations and Communication

The Public Relations and Communication Office will operate branches in Mytilene and Athens. It will promote and disseminate information, and cooperate with our partners and other European Capitals of Culture. It will also serve as a media center, while during the 2020-2021 period it will be upgraded to the "2021 Capital of Culture Media Center". It will hold regular press conferences during the preparation stage and the ECoC year.

#### Central Management Axis

The Central Management Axis consists of the Director, the Financial Director,



the Administration and a General Production Manager. Institution Managers report to them (i.e. the managers of the “Academy of the Muses”, the various festival managers etc.). Central Management coordinates the citizen and volunteer networks and the ECoC Work Team. This structure includes an internal evaluation team.

### Networks

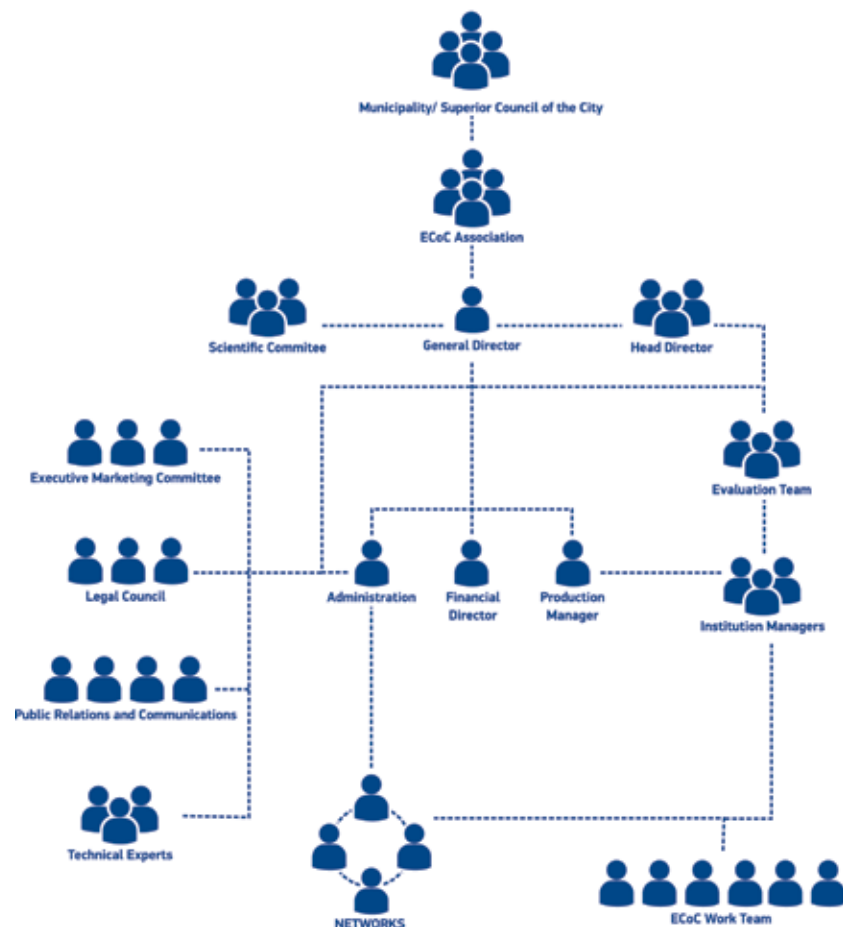
Networks are groups of citizens and volunteers who specialize in the ECoC actions and offer additional support to the specialists. They participate actively, both during the preparation and the implementation stage, in the capacity of support and dissemination teams.

### ECoC Work Team

The ECoC Work Team consists of young people with specialization in cultural management. They will assume the responsibilities of executive production managers for each action. Each will have their assigned fields of action and answer to a General Supervisor, namely the General Production Manager. They report to the General Institution Managers, whenever their action is within the framework of an institution, and select the appropriate volunteers from the available networks, depending on their needs.

In this manner we expect the broad dissemination of the ECoC among the local society with the central motto:

**“In 2021 Mytilene – Lesbos no one is redundant. Everyone is needed and has a say.”**



**How will you ensure that this structure has the staff with the appropriate skills and experience to plan, manage and deliver the cultural programme for the year of the title?**

### Management Policy

During the preparation stage, and after rigorous vetting, we selected those individuals that proved effective in a short period of time in all fields of action. The vetting was conducted by the Candidacy Committee. The small amount of time available to this team is due to the refugee crisis and the problems it caused. Nevertheless, the team managed to coordinate all local associations and agencies, create a strong movement of volunteers and establish the necessary mechanisms in terms of organizing and planning the programme, as well as in the field of communication.

The Supreme City Council and the Candidacy Committee selected Vassilis Anastassiou to formulate the candidacy and the application package. Mr. Anastassiou is a director with experience in cultural management. He has directed festivals and large productions of opera, theater and concerts. Mr. Anastassiou established an expanded artistic committee with members of an international reputation.

### Artistic Committee

Konstantinos Astyrakakis (president of the ECoC Association), Dariusz Mikulski (conductor), Cheryl Studer (soprano), Elena Mathiopoulos (writer), Angélique Ionatos (singer), Tzeli Hadjidimitriou (photographer), Ricardo Cué (choreographer), Pier Paolo Bisleri (set designer), Tania Kitsou (director), Stratis Athinaios (painter), and Christos Hadjipanayiotis (actor)

We have also established a Scientific Committee:

### Scientific Committee

Nikolaos Zouros (president of the committee and professor at the University of the Aegean with expertise in geology).

Panagiotis Tsoupis (architect and Municipal Remodelling Counsellor).

Dr. Pavlos Triantafyllidis (director of the Mytilene Ephorate of Antiquities).

Dr. Martin Schaefer (professor of classical archaeology, German Archaeological Institute at Athens).

During this period we established a public relations and communication team in Mytilene and Athens with excellent results in publicity and communication. With the support of our committees and all local groups we established the necessary structure. When the city is selected as the 2021 European Capital of Culture we will issue an open call to applicants interested to work in the organization and fill most positions with strict criteria of quality and experience among the candidates. The vetting committee will be presided by the head of the organization, Konstantinos Astyrakakis, and will consist of committee members and specialists with many years of experience in cultural production and management, as well as in financial and technical management.

The participation of the local population in cultural associations is very high. There is also considerable recent expertise in organizing large cultural and sport events (the Lesbian Summer Festival accommodates large events since





the 1980s, while there are numerous other large festivals such as the Molyvos International Music Festival, the International Eressos Women's Festival by Sappho Women, conferences, exhibitions etc.). The island possesses a considerable pool of potential future partners with the necessary experience that we could engage in the appropriate fields during the ECoC preparation period. The unprecedented mobilization of volunteers and supporters from all over the world and the contacts we established in such short period allows us to believe that there will be a wide and generous response to the European challenge we are about to issue.

**How will you make sure that there is an appropriate cooperation between the local authorities and this structure including the artistic team?**

The broad political support towards our effort originates from two main pillars, the Municipality of Lesvos and the North Aegean Regional Administration. The everlasting occupation of the island's inhabitants with culture in general and professions associated with it, in particular, even on a volunteer basis, is an amalgam that endows us with a rich pool of talent, from which to draw our future partners. These individuals will receive training and evaluation during the ECoC preparation period and will eventually comprise the work teams' core to assist and implement our actions.

No one is redundant in Lesvos. This is an absolute truth. There is a constant struggle, under way, with time and the memory of all the people of Lesvos, who pushed us towards Europe to disseminate our messages and our positions.



The vacant positions of specialists and counselors will be filled after pan-European competitions. We will employ young people, who have demonstrated their abilities in international master classes and educational programmes. We will ask them to remain on the island and work with us, as a recognition of their skills and the opportunity to gain experience.

The Artistic Committee gathered our ideas, at meetings held on the island and other teleconferences, organized a plan of proposals, which we started discussing with our cultural institutions, to be able to make sure whether there is the required social penetration. Without that their implementation would not be possible.

In this way, we formed an informal artistic group, as a central axis to support the practical realization of our project.

**According to which criteria and under which arrangements have the general director and the artistic director been chosen – or will be chosen? What are – or will be – their respective profiles? When will they take up the appointment? What will be their respective fields of action?**

The ECoC Director has already been selected by the City Council, based on the following criteria:

**Administrative criteria:**

- Specialized studies in cultural management
- Ten years of experience in administrative positions
- Six years of experience as a manager of cultural organizations
- Eight years of experience as a producer of large-scale cultural events (opera, theater, large concerts)
- Experience in accepting and completing European programmes
- Leadership skills, communication skills, human resources management skills
- Availability for the 2017-2022 period
- Ability to comprehend what constitutes a European Capital of Culture

His fields of action include:

- Managing the overall programme, the committees and the management team.
- Managing funding and large European programmes
- Compiling the budget
- Directing primary organizations and networks
- Supervising and managing the subordinate organizations

Date of commencement: Second half of 2016.

**Artistic criteria:**

- Thirty years of experience in the cultural sector
- Demonstrated experience in the cultural and artistic field
- Many years of experience in collaborating with public agencies
- Many years of experience in managing complex events and programmes

- Contacts with European networks and programmes

Responsibilities as artistic director:

- The artistic director has the final say concerning the artistic programme and the design of the overall programme's actions
- The artistic director manages and directs the artistic committee and the artistic teams
- The artistic director represents the ECoC association in regards to its artistic and administrative work

## C. Contingency planning

### - Have you carried out/ planned a risk assessment exercise?

Yes; recently, the whole island has been found under pressure and in the need to handle the refugees' matter and take care of them. Thus, there have been carried out, until now, a lot of risk assessment exercises. The evaluation of the risk assessments has been done by the international organizations present on the island of Mytilene- Lesvos , because of the refugees' issue, such as " Doctors without Borders" , " Angalia" and other 35 of them.

We program to repeat the exercise every semester

note: according to the International Residency database, Lesvos is the entrance gate for a percentage equal to 60% on the total number of refugees moving towards Europe.

### What are the main strengths and weakness of your project?

Sector	Strengths	Weakness
Cultural- Artistic programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our programme has a pyramidal structure, which permits us to exercise an immediate control on the programmed actions and handle effectively possible critical situations.</li> <li>• .Most of the activities/ events of our programme are based on already existing local events, so we can forecast-up to a good point- the exit and the rank of success we will achieve.</li> <li>• The activities and events are characterized by a wide-spread opening towards young people, new proposals and ideas, while being structured on the cultural tradition of the local society; thus we can ensure a mass contribution of volunteers and a ready response from the local public</li> <li>• There is already a net of active organizations for culture and art , all formed by volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present time ( in our country) is particularly difficult, in social as well as in economical level: if you fail to fulfill the social dimension of our programme, there is the danger to be criticized as committing an unnecessary and frivolous exaggeration</li> <li>• It is needed a big number of specialists in order to ascertain the programme's functionality; thus it is difficult to replace anyone, in case problems accrue</li> <li>• Persons that work presently and will work in the future for ECC, in any sector or position have to be distinguished for their idealism: it is not asked just to offer their knowledge and capacity , but their loyalty to the purpose</li> </ul>	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacts with the local authorities are excellent, a fact that ensures a relation of trust and strong political support.</li> <li>• All members occupying the ECC Organizing and Artistic Committee are persons having strong preparation base and precious experience on events' organization, team-work, volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our country , because of the economical crisis and the frequent political changes, now days there are objective difficulties to deal with State Institutions and Authorities; this may cause delays not easy to deal with</li> </ul>

	training and production management : this way we afford to believe we can face difficult situations with flexibility and readiness	
Financial sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All redevelopment projects are already approved and covered at 90% by the N.S.R.F. programme</li> <li>• Greek Ministry of Culture has deliberated a fund equal to 10.000.000 euro for ECC 2021</li> <li>• Region deliberated the support of Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021 with the total amount of 6.000.000 euro ( 1.000.000 per year)</li> <li>• We have already build a strong net of collaborations and partnerships with other European Cities and institutions</li> <li>• A big number of the programmed activities are based on Volunteerism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is the possibility, because of the economical crisis the Region could not in position to respond to the economical support the decided to deliberate for ECC 2021.</li> <li>• Because of the capital controls in the banks there are objective difficulties for cash liquidity :</li> </ul>
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They actually are our stronghold</li> <li>• There are 1330 associations in the island , that are all well-manned, consolidated and proved to be responsible; they are our basic tool and strongest supply: effective and coherent in its present state, volunteering will develop further more, by the establishment of the <b>Bank of Time, Bank of Joy and Bank of Solidarity</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of the programmed activities, both in the organizing and executive field have been based on the volunteers : this can be proved to be a weak point , risking to loose control</li> <li>• In any case , until now is something that has never happened , so we cannot estimate the real risk.</li> </ul>





**How are you planning to overcome weakness, including with the use of risk mitigation and planning tools, contingency planning etc**

As we have already analyzed in many ways, the BASE of our strategic planning and of our programme IS THE LOCAL COMMUNITY of MYTILENE-LESVOS : this places us in the excellent position to be able to declare, that, the collaborators and supporters for both preparation and implementation of the activities/actions for the ECC, and also further on, are the inhabitants of the Mytilene-Lesvos. Our common- ours and theirs- fundamental concern is to improve life for all the people that live and are hosted on the island, and make it possible in any way and under any point of view; hoping that, if this happens, further changes and interactions all over Europe will become possible .

	Probable risks- weakness	Risk percentage	Treatment of risks- response
Cultural – artistic planning & infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the risk that the programme will not respond to the demands of the social reality / contingency</li> <li>The lack of flexibility in changing the work team experts ,if occurred , while there is a high probability that changes will be necessary, because of the economical crisis and the long time-terms of the frame-work for the implementation of the activities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very low</li> <li>Moderate</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is already agreed that the entire amount of “Melina Mercouri” financial prize, in case we win the title for ECC 2021, will be directed for the refugees’ issue, against social exclusion and for solidarity activities</li> <li>Most of the actions/ activities regarding solidarity and social exclusion are based on international exchanges - collaboration projects and Volunteering.</li> <li>2. It will be prepared a list with the names of possible substitutes and compile a special programme for their training</li> </ul>
Financial sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The risk of having reduced the financial support ( ex. The support from the Region, that might be reduced)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The estimation of the probability is of 55%</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment expenses are covered up to 90% on the overall budget: In case of financial reduction we decide that some not-immediate need renovation will not be done. The information about the final amount by financial support programmes will be known by the end of 2016:</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>according to this , the final choice of the artistic and cultural events will occur , thus : events and activities that could result self-financing</li> <li>An intensive marketing program will be inaugurated, in order to activate “private sponsorship auctions” , at least for the most world-wide famous events ( π.χ, Royal Shakespeare Company, Comedie Francaise)</li> <li>a big number of activities are based on Collaboration projects</li> <li>on planning- preparation level, a lot of expenses will decrease because of volunteering and the parallel function of the <b>Bank of Time, Bank of Joy and Bank of Solidarity</b></li> </ol>
infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The infrastructure of the Mytilene-Lesvos ECC 2021 Agency has been designed in base of the real conditions : so it does have the impact of interaction between planning and executive sectors, but also places control procedures positions, that could be transformed in “energy jam” points , causing a significant rigidity, when quick decisions and actions are necessary.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low - Moderate</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an established communication amongst the Myt-Les. ECC 20121 Agency, the Head Director and the Networks , the Executive Committee, the Institutions Managers, the Evaluation Team and the Artistic Committee; Also the direct contact amongst the Production Director, the Institutions Managers and the Legal Council can face and resolve problems and intricate situations, whenever immediate solutions occur during the transaction of the activities.</li> </ol>

## D. Marketing and communication

Could your artistic programme be summed up by a slogan?

**Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021**

where

«Poetry designs the City  
and  
Solidarity is Civilization»

**An island between sky and sea, uncertainties and hope, an instant and eternity**

**What is the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the ECC year? ( in particular with the regard to the media strategy and the mobilization of large audiences)**

The communication strategy for Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021 , even if started relatively late, has an impressive dynamic , mainly because of the international fame the island gained recently regarding the refugees' issue.

-Since 2016 all institutions will be working synchronized and with the support of internet, social networking and Communication Media, as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, blogs etc. The web team is up for a European Network, with the support and contribution of partners all over Europe and through the ECC net.

- Our big advantage will be the media-net of our e-page, connected also with blogs and profiles in the social networks, in order to broadcast all latest news on the procedures for ECC preparation until 2021.
- On our e-page media-net will be provided spaces giving a step to artists, scientists, researchers from all over the world, so that they can interact with the public.
- A separate unity will be preserved for the Volunteers, that are the fundamental support for CCE's success.
- A web-radio and an on-line web tv channel, with a 24 hour broadcasting program, will also be active for ECC's promotion, following step-by-step the activities.

-Since 2017 will start a big promotion campaign in all greek airports, expanding also in the train stations and ports connected to the island. During the period 2017-2018 the ECC's symbol, recognised as trade mark and in collaboration with EOT ( Greek NationalTourist Agency), will be released new products -relative to Mytilene-Lesvos ECC 2021- for tourists and open-markets. Through EOT will also be spread out



the information in all main Travel Agencies, International Trade Fairs, highlighting Mytilene-Lesvos ECC 2021 through out the travel and tourism industry.

-Since 2019 will start a big mass media mobilization , releasing press-conferences and public presentations on the preparations for the Mytilene-Lesvos ECC 2021; famous artists will state in favour of it. A big press-conference will be organized a year before the nomination



of the ECC, in January 2020, enriched with shows and the participation of European artists; while a new campaign, supported by all media and all our partners and sponsors, will be launched during all over the nomination year.

**How will you mobilize your own citizens as communicators of the year to the outside world?**

**The best chance to turn a “just” information into an “active” information is if people believe it: citizens of Mytilene- Lesvos do believe that they are capable of winning the ECC 2021 title for their island.** That is why all media strategies for information and diffusion- internet, local, statal and international Communication Media, print material and promoting material ( such as trailers, fans video-making - specially on social nets and web tv) – **will not transmit or communicate just an information, but will establish a “personal**

**relationship”**. Even in our high-tech contemporary world, nothing can compare to human relations’ warmth; that is why Mytilene-Lesvos local population’s struggle for an international response to the refugees’ issue and needs had such a resonance : because it was a gesture from human to human. The meaning of the word “polis”- i.e. a civil human community- gave birth to the meaning of “politismos”-i.e. civilization: civilization could never exist without human community and human communication; and there can be no human community without the special condition that creativity is; as creativity’s main expression we name **poetry**.

*So: the way we wish to promote “Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021” implicates all citizens/inhabitants of the island in a contemporary myth’s diffusion: a dream-place , that lies on the legendary Aegean Sea, and that, like Neverland, has the power to make us all be innocent and creative, be friends and lovers of ideals and humanitarian values.*



- And so we promote activities as:  
meetings in public spaces for **Bank of Time**, **Bank of Joy** and **Bank of Solidarity** planning
- planning and promotion of the Volunteers' Solidarity activities
- planning of volunteers formative /training activities on the ECC institution subject and on **"Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021"**
- promotion of formative non- formal education activities on creativity, related to arts for children and children expositions and performance projects on "Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021"
- a series of local traditional products and food named after "Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021"
- organization and promotion of the local art products and theatre productions
- visibility of the volunteers and the protagonists of the volunteers activities, also with special dedications on the subject on tv shows and on internet , all throughout the preparation period.
- registration of all volunteering's activities and relative presentations on communication media and web nets.

#### How does the city plan to highlight that the ECC is an action of the European Union?

- We will follow the E.U rules, so the EU symbol will appear with the ECC 2021 symbol in all publications, advertisings etc. , and we will highlight specially the EU decision to be given to us the ECC 2021 title.
- Presentations and lectures will be organized having like special guests scientists and artists from all over Europe, who will analyse and communicate the EU principles , the European Idea and the role of the EU.
- On our e-page, blogs, social nets will be uploaded special references on the EU activities that are related to the ECC institution and the ECC 2021 title.
- Posters with the EU symbol will be all over the city of Mytilene and the other cities of the island, as to highlight the EU presence.  
στο νησί.
- In central points will be placed info desks .
- The international open calls for collaboration , as " (keep) An Open Eye on Future" and "Traces on Earth" towards young artists will be promoted in all possible ways , always emphasizing their European dimension .
- "Street Theatre" and the international workshops will gather artists, experts and public from all Europe.
- Unesco's Meetings/ festival for the Geoparks will promote and highlight the European perception for sustainable development.
- The organization of activities, like the language learning and translation project, through Erasmus + programmes, the meetings- study visits- international exchanges on social exclusion's subject will make public the intercultural and communicative experience of the European citizens.

- The information about Mytilene- Lesvos ECC 2021 will not be a "just" information, but a message filled with nostalgia and prospects, with the desire for timeless and intercultural unity : starting from the Memory of the Past- from the ancient myth of Europe- and building on culture for to built a bridge over time, we are aiming towards a vision for the Future , for a common, better and new "tomorrow", which we wish to look at as United Europe.

#### Additional Information

**in a few lines explain what makes your application so special compared to others?**

**Add any further comments which you deem necessary in relation with your application**

*We led our steps here in Mytilene, in Lesvos , because of a poetess, who is ancient but also contemporary, exactly as this place is. She led us at the seashore of Antissa, where the myth says once Orpheus' head had been brought by the waves.*

*At the same hour, at sunset, at Scamnias seashore, waves are covered by lifejackets.*

*And, even if sunset in Lesvos is of an intense orange, the floating lifejackets do not lose their tint. Loud voices still can be heard , and also a watchword : "people in the sea!". People are diving from the beach as best they can; they are diving to save lives.*

*Then night falls, but the seashore is still coloured deep orange , as it is covered up by hundreds of orange lifejackets.*

We ARE the passage, the crossing- point, at the edge of Europe, but still we are safeguarding this land- our land- , through ancient memories , timeless values and visions for the future.

We are walking on the 21st century's second decade, convinced that we are able to establish a relation with all our European Co-Citizens, not just communicate them information.

- We say "relation", naming so an abstraction, inviting all you to catch the feeling from our land's poetic eroticism and let it become an everlasting nostalgia for the united place named Europe, as well as for a common journey to what we all can "recall" as tomorrow" ; and so, moved by the auspicious winds of past memories, let's go on together.

If these kind of thinking seems that fits to "Neverland" rather than today, then let's face the present :

-We are in a difficult turning point, being the basic "gateway" for refugees towards Europe ( 60%); we didn't ask for it, but we accepted the fact.

So, during this critical circumstance and in a very short time, all the people on the island stirred up and pulled themselves together , in order to get organized and save lives; and now are asking to become ECC 2021.

We all want to communicate this message:





Lesvos is like a small “country” inside our country; is a special spring of energy; is a place that stands up against the alienation of our times- this referring also to the Greek society during the present time of crisis –and that keeps going on with senses wide open and sharp; Lesvos turns to Europe for help, so, that all what has been created out of spontaneity, robustly and voluntarily, could evolve to be a trans-European reality :

This is the decision that has been taken by our 1330 associations, without counting the Mytileneans that are spread out all over the world and that also are organizing , in order to support our request. Although these last times were difficult and complicated , we managed to get together and aim towards a common target : our decision to become the ECC 2021.

All cultural, artistic and financial institutions on the island have been gathered in an incredibly short time, in order, first of all to face the humanitarian emergency , that circumstances brought; the second step was to march on the recovery of their cultural reserves and to decide to compete for the title of ECC 2021.

The local government, moved by this impulse, followed and acted quickly; thus we are now at the point to compete for ECC title. We have acted under a great pressure of time , but also with significant maturity and willing to communicate to our European partners the experience we have gained during this auto-organizing period.

We are now at the point to set consultations and collaborations, which have already started to give results and will give more in the immediate future. This island is about to achieve an interactive cultural communicative level, which cannot be transmitted only through tourism.

#### **Moreover :**

Here is our island’s rare nature and our unique Geopark that inspire us, also for our “special” activities.

Here are our theatre groups, that are waiting for friends in order to exchange ideas and experiences

Here is the place where the young masters of voice from all around the world are looking forward to meeting Terpendros, during Molyvo’s Festival.

Here is the place that the poets will eavesdrop the song of Saffo, while looking at the stars at the top of our Mount Olympus.

There are all these sounds, the sounds of our neighbourhood, that fascinate researchers and artists, the great masters of Ancient Music.

There is, still, the Corsair, that will be back at the Queen’s Tower, in

Mytilene, to get drunk with Verdi’s music and the voice of Ouzo.

There is even more, all deposited at the Bank of Ideas, Space, Time and Inspiration, waiting someone capable to withdraw the whole.

**We are preparing to contend for  
Mytilene - Lesvos ECC 2021!**

p.s. We count our steps.. we count steps while listening to children laughing and voices, that are coming from Mytilene’s 2nd Kindergarten: four and five years old students, their palms full of colour, are painting their country on a big piece of paper; then they add the letters they have learned yesterday , an “E”, then a “C” and yet another “C”...

Well, the same students in 2021 will be eleven years old and they will know how to write :

**Mytilene- Lesvos Cultural Capital of Europe 2021**

**So we do contend for the title of Cultural Capital of Europe 2021**

**and...**

**We can surely make it**

**We start dynamically and we aim at the best. With the Romanians, Italians, the Turks neighbors and with all partners, who support us and are ready to join us at our European future. It was and remains our desire to expand our horizon with an intercultural strategy, which we believe and trust in joining us. With the citizens of Mytilene – Lesvos, compact like a single body, around us.**

**On our island, there is no one- really no one- to be thrown away!**





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Pictures from the photo gallery of the  
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#### PRINTING

Aegean Communications S.A.-Lesvos

Three Angels Productions / Production  
From FOSEV Cultural Management Ltd / Special Advisors  
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