

**Impacts 08 - The Liverpool Model**  
**European Capital of Culture Research Programme**

**Press Impact Analysis (1996, 2003, 2005)**

A Retrospective Study: UK National Press Coverage on  
Liverpool before, during and after bidding for  
European Capital of Culture status

Dr Beatriz Garcia

*Centre for Cultural Policy Research*  
*University of Glasgow*

**December 2006**

Impacts 08 is a joint project of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University  
Commissioned by Liverpool City Council

# Press Impact Analysis (1996, 2003, 2005)<sup>1</sup>

## A Retrospective Study: UK National press coverage on Liverpool before, during and after bidding for European Capital of Culture status

Dr Beatriz Garcia  
Centre for Cultural Policy Research  
University of Glasgow<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Introduction

This report analyses developments in the repositioning of Liverpool as a ‘world class’ city in the context of its nomination as European Capital of Culture (ECoC).

The study focuses on the analysis of UK national press coverage referring to the city of Liverpool over the following points in time: 1996 (before the bid process); 2003 (the bid and nomination); and 2005 (event preparations). This work will be complemented in subsequent reports by the study of local and regional press coverage over the same time periods, and by the study of local, regional, UK national and international press coverage in 2007 (Liverpool 800 year), 2008 (European Capital of Culture) and 2009-10 (post-event press legacies).

The analysis of press coverage on Liverpool provides a basis to determine evolving narratives about the city and likely influence of these narratives on the perceptions of local residents, regional visitors and tourists (from both the rest of the UK and abroad). This will inform the key questions to be introduced in survey questionnaires, one-to-one interviews and focus groups. The analysis will also contribute to the assessment of less easily quantifiable cultural impacts, such as improvements in local confidence, and the effectiveness of marketing/branding messages, locally, nationally and internationally.

### 2. Report Index

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Report Index .....	1
3. Executive Summary .....	2
4. Samples and newspaper typology.....	3
5. Findings .....	4
5.1. General thematic categories across time .....	4
5.2. Category sub-themes .....	6
5.3. Attitudinal variations .....	16
5.4. Centrality of Liverpool and the ECoC 2008 to press debates .....	17
6. Conclusions.....	19
7. Appendix 1: Notes on the Methodology .....	20
7.1. Data collection process.....	20
7.2. Time periods .....	22

<sup>1</sup> *Impacts 08* commissioned this research in 2005 as part of an ongoing press content analysis programme.

<sup>2</sup> Project team: Principal Investigator: Beatriz García; data sampling support: Floris Langen; data coding: Floris Langen and Philippa Smith. Beatriz Garcia acted as external collaborator and was based at the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University of Glasgow, prior to becoming director of *Impacts 08* at the end of April 2006.

### 3. Executive Summary

The analysis of UK national press coverage about Liverpool in the years 1996, 2003 and 2005 offers a first indication of the impacts of bidding and winning the ECoC title on external representations of the city. These three time periods are relevant because they allow us to compare press references to Liverpool across time: that is, several years before the decision to bid, during the actual bid process and nomination, and in an interim year (post-nomination but well before the actual event in 2008). Subsequent analysis will look into local (city-based) and regional press representations.

The main thematic trends emerging from this retrospective analysis are as follows:

- National coverage referring to Liverpool is overwhelmingly dominated by sport and, particularly, football (up to 80% coverage). Football stories have been excluded from this analysis to allow a more in-depth understanding of other thematic trends. In future reporting, we will analyse a selection of football/sport stories presented in the context of the ECoC or Liverpool 08 specifically;
- Most national references to Liverpool are presented in the context of crime, drugs and violence stories (19.5%), which are the main sources of negative perceptions of the city;
- Since the ECoC nomination, there has been a continuous growth of stories about culture and the arts, particularly, galleries and visual arts (17%). This is the main source of positive perceptions. Coverage on the city's music scene is also growing but is not directly associated with ECoC;
- The third most common area of coverage relates to economic issues (14%). Business is treated in a positive light, while employment-related stories are predominantly negative. Debate on inward investment is the area showing the greatest growth since the ECoC nomination, and it is another key source of positive perceptions;
- Coverage on social issues/inclusion has grown consistently after the award of ECoC status (from 2.5% in 1996 to 14% in 2005). However, many stories are treated with a negative tone, suggesting a failure to meet bid-related expectations. This situation is, however, less damaging than the trend in 1996 to associate social and race relations stories with crime and violence almost exclusively;
- Coverage on city leadership, management, policy and funding has maintained low levels (7%) but is increasingly linked to the ECoC. Public leadership and funding are the two predominant themes, attracting similar levels of positive and negative coverage;
- Finally, against our expectations and the suggestions of stakeholder interviews, national coverage about Liverpool's physical and environmental development has remained quite low (4%). This subject tends to be treated in slightly negative terms (60%), except for a very few references to cultural infrastructure development, which are mostly positive (75%).

Attitudinal variations:

- Overall, the tone of articles on Liverpool is quite balanced between positive and negative stances, although stories generally tended to be more negative in 1996 and more positive in 2003;
- The main themes attracting negative coverage are: crime and violence; social issues; employment; and health issues;
- The main themes attracting positive coverage are: galleries/visual arts; business and inward investment; TV media and entertainment; the music scene; mixed cultural events; the Beatles; and universities/research.

Impact of the ECoC nomination on press representations:

- The ECoC has had a direct impact on the growth of stories about Liverpool's culture and the arts, inward investment, and social inclusion. The first two stories are mainly positive, while the last is negative. The negative press treatment of social issues should be resolved as a matter of priority, as it may have a negative impact not only on perceptions of the city, but on ECoC itself;
- The ECoC has so far not had an impact on national references to physical developments nor on debates around the city's tourist and conference appeal. This is likely to develop over the coming years.

## 4. Samples and Newspaper Typology

This analysis has focused entirely on the English edition of UK national papers (both broadsheets and tabloids). As such, the findings reflect the kinds of debate surrounding Liverpool *outside* of its immediate local environment. It is to be expected that city-based and regional coverage during the same periods would offer quite a different angle, and this is to be the subject of follow-up trend reports.

Table 1 shows the national papers being surveyed in this report:

Table 1: National newspapers

National broadsheets		National tabloids / popular press	
Daily editions	Sunday editions	Daily editions	Sunday editions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Guardian</li> <li>▪ The Independent</li> <li>▪ Daily Telegraph</li> <li>▪ The Times</li> <li>▪ Financial Times</li> <li>▪ Daily Mail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Observer</li> <li>○ Independent on Sunday</li> <li>○ Sunday Telegraph</li> <li>○ Sunday Times</li> <li>○ Sunday Business</li> <li>○ Mail on Sunday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daily Mirror</li> <li>▪ Daily Express</li> <li>▪ The People</li> <li>▪ Daily Record</li> <li>▪ Sun</li> <li>▪ Daily Star</li> <li>▪ Metro</li> <li>▪ Morning Star</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sunday Mirror</li> <li>○ Sunday Express</li> <li>○ Sunday People</li> <li>○ Sunday Mail</li> <li>○ News of the World</li> </ul> <p><u>Other Sunday papers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sunday Post</li> </ul>

Our searches for national press coverage referring to Liverpool in the selected years brought up 6,074 articles. We decided to analyse one in every six articles as they appeared chronologically (16.6% of total). After sampling, and excluding irrelevant articles and repetitions, we selected and coded a total of 1,017 articles.

See monthly and year article distributions in the table below:

Table 2: Search results and sampling process

National papers	Total search results				Analysed sample (1 in 6)				
	1996	2003	2005	Total	National papers	1996	2003	2005	Total
Jan	109	227	190		Jan	29	32	28	
Feb	120	173	157		Feb	35	27	19	
Mar	90	219	163		Mar	22	34	20	
Apr	91	152	143		Apr	20	20	17	
May	89	254	157		May	20	32	22	
Jun	59	259	204		Jun	23	33	29	
Jul	115	209	186		Jul	39	32	27	
Aug	130	212	202		Aug	38	35	36	
Sep	114	201	147		Sep	37	21	30	
Oct	76	231	271		Oct	19	33	36	
Nov	92	222	266		Nov	28	36	33	
Dec	109	163	272		Dec	21	25	29	
<b>Total search</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>2522</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>6074</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1017</b>

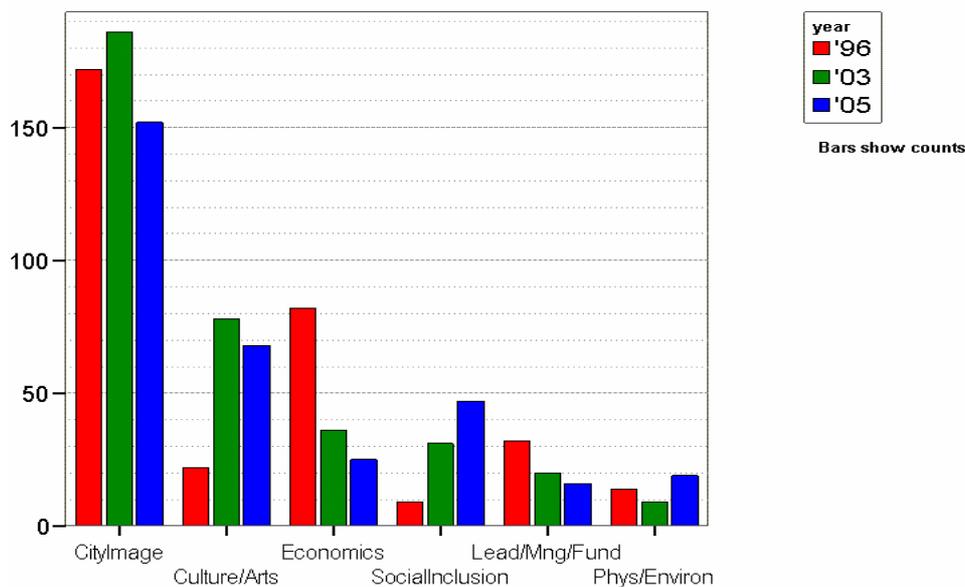
## 5. Findings

### 5.1. General Thematic Categories Across Time

When assessing all national coverage which includes direct references to Liverpool, it becomes immediately apparent that it is overwhelmingly dominated by sport- and, particularly, football-related stories. In some periods, these can account for up to 80% of national coverage. The research team has thus decided to exclude all sport- and football-related stories from the analysis to allow a more in-depth understanding of other thematic trends. This will be complemented in future press analysis with an assessment of the level of reference to sport/football within Liverpool 08 and/or ECoC specific stories.

After excluding sport/football, the main thematic categories of articles on Liverpool are distributed over each of the time periods under study as follows:

Figure 1-: Evolution of thematic categories per year (1996, 2003, and 2005)



Clearly, one of the main effects of becoming ECoC in 2003 is the dramatic increase in stories on culture and the arts as opposed to stories on economic-related issues. It is also interesting to note the continuous growth of stories about social issues/inclusion, and the (so far uneven) growth of stories on the city's physical environment.

The category 'city image' is predominant across all periods. This category represents articles that offer general impressions on Liverpool and which, rather than looking in detail at a particular issue, contribute to perceptions of the city by associating it with a *range* of specific topics or themes. (When the article is focused on a topic in greater depth, we have classified it as belonging to one of the other five categories.<sup>3</sup>) 'City image' is thus understandably integral to most press debates.

Find below a brief description of each of the main six thematic areas identified, ordered according to frequency of press coverage (most frequent to less frequent).

<sup>3</sup> Find a more detailed indication of our coding methodology and the definition of the selected thematic categories in Appendix 1.

### 5.1.1. Main Thematic Trends

**City image** (50% of all coverage): This category includes all articles discussing general topics on Liverpool as a city, its image, internal and/or external perceptions, and its 'quality of life'. This is the predominant topic across the three time periods, and includes sub-themes such as:

- Football (the dominant theme, which has been excluded from this analysis to allow for a detailed assessment of other topics);
- The music scene, the Beatles, and media (TV) and entertainment;
- University life, research, and schools and education;
- Crime, violence, drugs, and alcohol;
- Employment, dock strikes, poverty, and health issues;
- Other generic 'city image' and 'quality of life' debates.

**Culture/arts** (17%): This involves debate around Liverpool's cultural icons, arts highlights, key activities, and events programming. This has become the second most common area of debate, which is a radical change from 1996, when it rarely featured in the national press. It can be argued that the ECoC 2008 bid process and nomination has been at the root of the marked increase of references to Liverpool's cultural heritage and profile since 2003. Dominant sub-themes within this category include:

- Art galleries and visual arts;
- The music scene, bands, and gigs;
- Special cultural events and festivals;
- Liverpool 08 programming.<sup>4</sup>

**Economics** (14%): i.e., discussion about the city's economic development (or the lack thereof). This was the second most dominant thematic category in 1996, but, since the ECoC 2008 nomination, it has now become the third (after coverage on cultural issues). Dominant sub-themes within this category include:

- Business development;
- Employment;
- Inward investment;
- Tourism and conferences.

**Social issues** (9%): This includes debates around local and/or minority inclusion, access to activities and/or services, and social relations (racial, religious, class based, and so on). This is a subject that is progressively becoming more prevalent within national coverage. References have markedly increased since 1996, when such issues were barely discussed, placing this thematic category as the fourth most frequent after culture/arts in 2005.

**Leadership, management and funding** (7%): Involved here are debates about public leadership, key city figures and opinion leaders, event and/or city management, and funding issues (both public and private). Coverage in this category has decreased progressively since 1996, but is likely to grow after 2006 as we approach 2008.

**Physical developments, and environment** (4%): That is, debate on physical city developments, including transport and cultural infrastructures. This category has received uneven levels of coverage. After a decrease in 2003, it grew again in 2005, and, based on the experience of previous ECOCs, it is likely that it will become an ever more relevant area of debate as 2008 approaches.

---

<sup>4</sup> Please note that this subject is still not quantitatively significant within national coverage. We have only found articles fully dedicated to this topic in the coverage of the bid process and nomination in 2003. This theme is re-emerging in 2006.

## 5.2. Category Sub-themes

The six main categories described in the previous section cover a range of specific sub-themes. Figure 2 summarises the main sub-themes covered in 1996, 2003 and 2005, organised by category, while figure 3 indicates the relative proportion of coverage on each sub-theme by year.

Figure 2: Thematic categories and category sub-themes: Total coverage counts

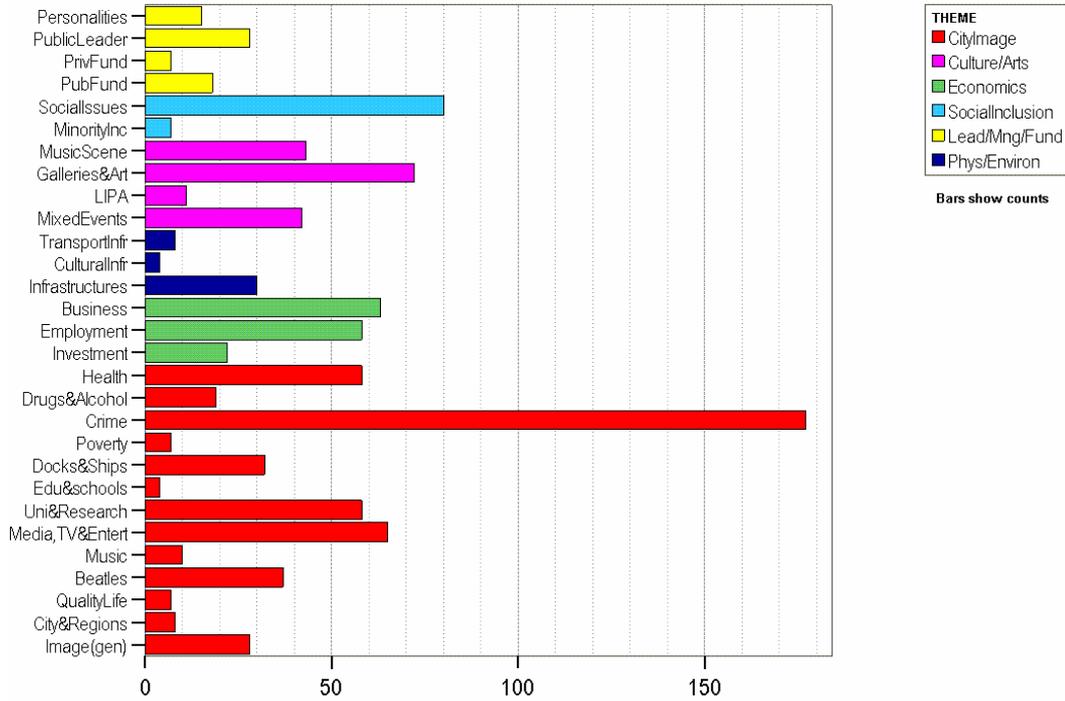
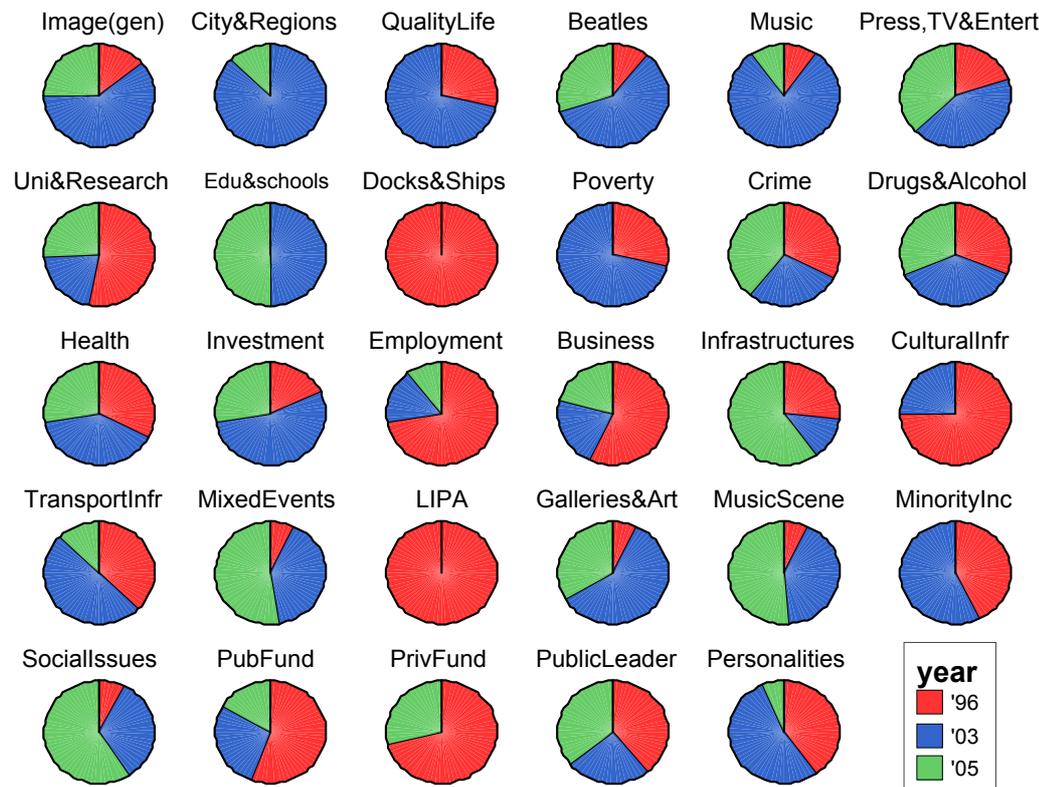


Figure 3: Distribution of thematic references per year



### 5.2.1. Category Sub-themes: Summary of Trends

Crime and violence is - with the exclusion of football - the most predominant theme associated with Liverpool, particularly, in the context of discussions on **city life and image**. Interestingly, the city is also frequently associated with debate on universities/research and media, television and entertainment stories. Discussion on crime has not diminished over the years and is clearly a prevalent source of negative perceptions about the city; however, positive associations - such as references to universities - have grown in 2005, as have the also positive references to the city's potential to transform its image in the lead-up to ECoC 2008.

Coverage around the **city's economic development** is dominated by stories on business and employment. The former has retained a positive profile over the 3 years studied. Employment-related stories, however, are predominantly negative. This is, in part, an effect of high levels of coverage of the Liverpool dock strikes in 1996. Nevertheless, coverage of both business and employment issues is decreasing in comparison with stories about investment, which are mainly positive. References to growth in inward investment – mainly related to the boom in property developments – peaked during the ECoC nomination in 2003, and often refer explicitly to Liverpool 08. Positive coverage about inward investment can, thus, be partly considered an effect of ECoC nomination.

Articles focusing on the **physical/environmental development** category are not frequent within UK national reporting, despite it being a focal point of coverage and public debate at a local level, and it being often referred to as the most direct effect of Liverpool becoming an ECoC. Interestingly, in the articles analysed, we have not identified direct links between reporting on infrastructural developments and ECoC. This theme has, however, grown over 2005 and is likely to become more predominant in following years.

The discussion around **culture and the arts** has grown consistently since 1996, when it was barely present within national press debates. In 2003, this now prevalent sub-theme referred to the city's galleries and visual arts collections, and was often presented in the context of references to ECoC 2008, thus suggesting that the arts were considered a key asset in Liverpool's successful bid. Interestingly, there has also been a growth in references to the city's music scene, with a particular focus in 2005 on upcoming bands. No direct link has been identified between music scene coverage and references to ECoC 2008, which indicates that coverage on this topic would have grown regardless of the nomination. Another area receiving increasing levels of coverage in 2005 is what we have termed 'mixed events', which comprise references to festivals and other arts programming, and, progressively, references to ECoC 2008-related activities. In 1996, a theme attracting headlines throughout the UK was the opening of LIPA. We have not identified articles focused on this topic in 2003 and 2005, but references are emerging again in 2006, on the occasion of LIPA's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

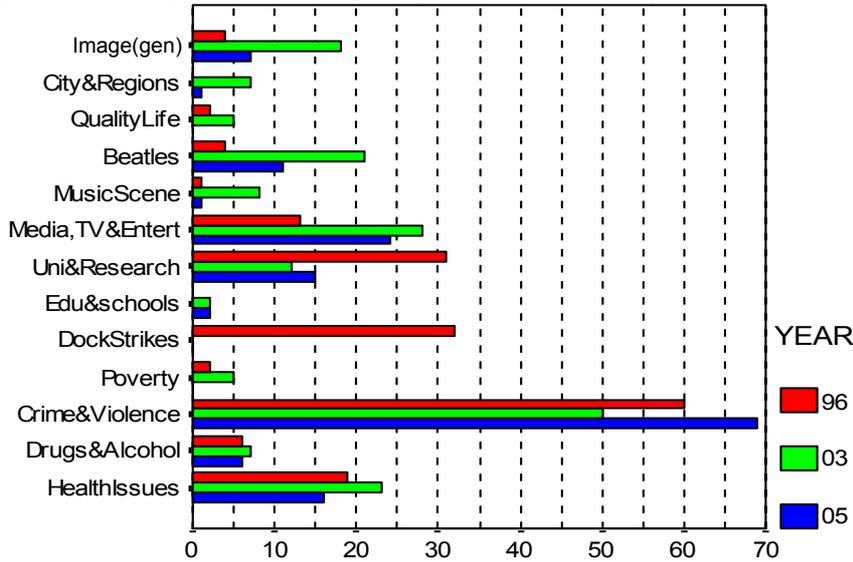
Press reporting on **social issues** has also grown consistently since 1996. Most of the stories offer mixed accounts of social issues. However, at the time of the nomination, we have also observed a marked growth in stories dedicated to debating local or minority inclusion and relating this debate to the opportunities and challenges brought up by ECoC 2008. Against our initial assumptions, most of these stories introduce a negative tone. This may be an effect of the extremely high levels of expectation raised by the bid period, which clearly emphasised issues of diversity and inclusion as the core strengths of Liverpool's proposal. Indeed, these are perspectives presented by the national press and, as such, may well differ from those offered by local papers. It is also worth noting that while in 1996 most stories about race relations were presented in the context of crime, 2003 and 2005 saw 'race relations' presented in the context of 'social cohesion' debates and the progression of 'the multicultural cause'. Most articles within this category are negative (72%); however, this sort of criticism is less damaging to Liverpool's reputation than perhaps it once was, as it is no longer mainly associated with crime and violence stories, and levels of coverage are much lower.

Finally, stories on **city leadership, management and funding** have maintained consistently low levels of coverage across all periods. After 2003, many of these are directly related to ECoC. The predominant area of debate refers to public leadership (in particular, the role of Liverpool City Council), and is treated with similar levels of positivity and negativity. Discussions around funding tend to focus on public funds, and, up to 2005, have not been directly related to ECoC 2008. These are followed by references to Liverpool's non-government-related personalities, or 'celebrities', which peaked in 2003 (during the bid process) and in very positive terms.

### 5.2.2. City Image Category

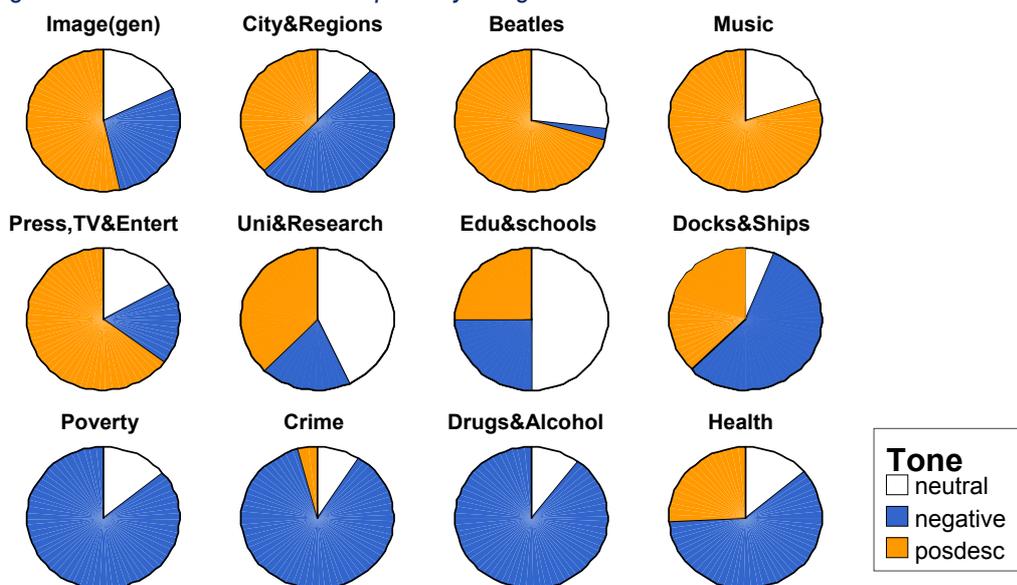
References to Liverpool within the national press tend to offer generic impressions of the city that contribute to nation-wide perceptions and often reinforce established stereotypes, whether this be in negative or positive terms. The 'city image' category includes a range of sub-themes that have degrees of overlap with most of the other six categories. For instance, it includes references to the Beatles and the city's music scene, which, when discussed in detail by journalists, we have classified as 'culture and arts' articles. It also includes generic debates on poverty, crime and violence that relate to the 'social issues and inclusion' category.

Figure 4: Coverage counts of 'city image' sub-themes per year



After sport/football related stories (which have been excluded from this analysis), Liverpool is frequently mentioned in the context of crime and violence-related stories, this being the theme which contributes perhaps most damagingly to negative perceptions of the city. However, it is also interesting to note the range of references to the city in the context of press and television stories, articles about university and academic research, and, predictably, stories on the Beatles; these all contribute to a positive perception. On balance, within this category, 30% of references to Liverpool are positive, while 17% are neutral and 53% are negative.

Figure 5: Distribution of attitudes per 'city image' themes



Crime and violence is clearly the most predominant theme across all years, attracting 17.6% of all coverage mentioning Liverpool. References to this issue diminished in 2003, but increased again in 2005. Coverage is predominantly negative; however, it tends to be of a purely descriptive nature, presented within brief articles (less than ¼ page) and referring to Liverpool only 'in passing' or in the context of other issues and locations. In 1996, a wide range of stories referred to the rising of crime figures and gun crime - in particular, related murder cases, picket line violence, and race and/or sectarian violence. In 2003, many stories related to the so-called 'Alder Hay Hospital organ scandal' and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder of Jamie Bulger (mainly covered by tabloids). In 2005, many stories were focused on the murder of Anthony Walker, rising levels of ethnicity-related violence following the London bombings, the Morecambe Bay cockling tragedy, and the ongoing rise of shootings and gun culture.

The issue of drugs and alcohol has been identified as a separate sub-theme, attracting up to 1.9% of all analysed coverage. However, most of these stories are also linked to crime and violence, which, if combined, would make total coverage of crime rise to 19.5% of the total coverage mentioning Liverpool.

Most crime and violence stories adopt a negative tone; however, some of them are also presented in positive terms, indicating perhaps the resourcefulness of the city in confronting and tackling these issues:

Church Watch, a non-denominational voluntary body set up to monitor levels of church crime, is to organise the scheme, which will be similar to the Neighbourhood Watch schemes used in many residential areas. The new scheme is being tried out in Liverpool, where the local branch of Church Watch recorded 674 thefts, burglaries or attacks last year. (Sunday Telegraph, March 2003)

The second most frequent theme within the 'city image' category concerns the media – that is, press, TV and other entertainment stories (6.4% of all coverage). These stories are positive on 65% of occasions and negative only 15% of the time. Liverpool is often mentioned in the context of television programming, from documentaries to comedy and chat shows (i.e., 'Richard and Judy'). In 1996, there was a wide range of articles discussing TV documentaries on the city's social issues (such as the dramatisation of the Hillsborough disaster and the docks disputes). In March 2005, some of the press entertainment stories in national tabloids displayed a negative undertone, as they referred to the UK's failure to secure any points in the Eurovision Song Contest due to the "dismally tuneless" performance by the Liverpool duo Jemini (Daily Mail, March 2005). Throughout each of the three time periods, there have been a range of references made to the Granada Media group, all of them positive in terms of the city's image.

It is interesting to note that 5.8 % of all national stories referring to Liverpool mention university academics and research-related issues specifically. Most of these stories present quotes from university professors discussing new research findings, but others refer to academic conventions in the city and the universities' positions within the wider UK education and research league. Overall, there is a balance between references to the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University; the stories are 38% positive and 43% neutral (the latter mostly denotes brief references to university professors without direct references to the city itself). In 1996, many of these stories referred to education league tables and the position of Liverpool universities within the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), and took a positive tone. In the same year, there was a number of references to the University of Liverpool's involvement with police schemes to capture criminals. In 2005, there were also a wide range of references to the 'Alder Hay Hospital organ scandal', linked to the University.

Health-related stories account for 5.7% of all references to Liverpool. These tend to be of a negative nature, and cover issues of malnutrition and damaging levels of teenage pregnancy, amongst others. On the positive side, some health-related stories concern breakthroughs in health research at the Liverpool universities. Overall, health stories present a negative picture of Liverpool in 64% of cases, and a positive one in 26% of cases.

References to Liverpool in the context of Beatles stories account for 3.5% of coverage. Although most of these articles are brief, there are also quite a range of long features (more than ½ a page), offering some analysis of, or background reference to, Liverpool and its music scene more widely. These stories are 71% positive (only negative in 3% of cases) and were more predominant in 1996. In 2005, they seem to be substituted with other stories, either on the current city music scene or with specific reference to tourism developments.

It is relevant to note the level of references to the Liverpool dock disputes in 1996. It should be realised that dock strike-related stories have also been coded within the 'economics' category as part of coverage on 'employment' issues; such stories are coded in this way when the strike is referred to 'in passing' and is used to discuss the general state of the city, rather than constituting an in-depth analysis of the issue itself.

There are also a number of articles specifically discussing the city's image and changing perceptions of the city. These have increased steadily since 1996 and continued to grow in 2005. In 1996, a range of stories referred to a major event, the Euro'96, as a possible catalyst in enhancing perceptions of the city:

It has been a bad year for the city's image, with a spate of gangland shootings and a labour dispute at the docks reminiscent of the bad old days. But Euro 96 will bring with it a media horde which will occupy the city for extended periods. Liverpool's propagandists are ready for them. (Financial Times, May 1996)

In 2003, beyond generic references to the potential of ECOC 2008 in changing the city's image, there was also a noticeable range of stories on Liverpool's World Heritage City nomination. In 2005, the debate around Liverpool stereotypes was stirred by the controversial remarks of Boris Johnson in *The Spectator* magazine. Other negative city image stories referred to issues around the 'Scouse accent', the lack of 'character' of some suburban neighbourhoods, and the existence of boarded up shop-fronts on inner city streets:

Provincial accents are a barrier to career success, a survey of businessmen showed yesterday. The Scouse accent was judged the most damaging to promotion prospects. (Daily Mail, December 2005)

Positive stories on the city's image (53%) tend to question established myths, while negative stories (28%) tend to reinforce them:

Here at last is a heartening rebuttal of the myth that you can't eat well in Liverpool. But round these parts eating is only a warm-up for the main event, as I discover when we later descend into the teeming lanes around Concert Square, epicentre of Liverpool nightlife. Modo, Beluga, Rsvp, The Blue Angel (aka The Razz). (Observer, May 2003)

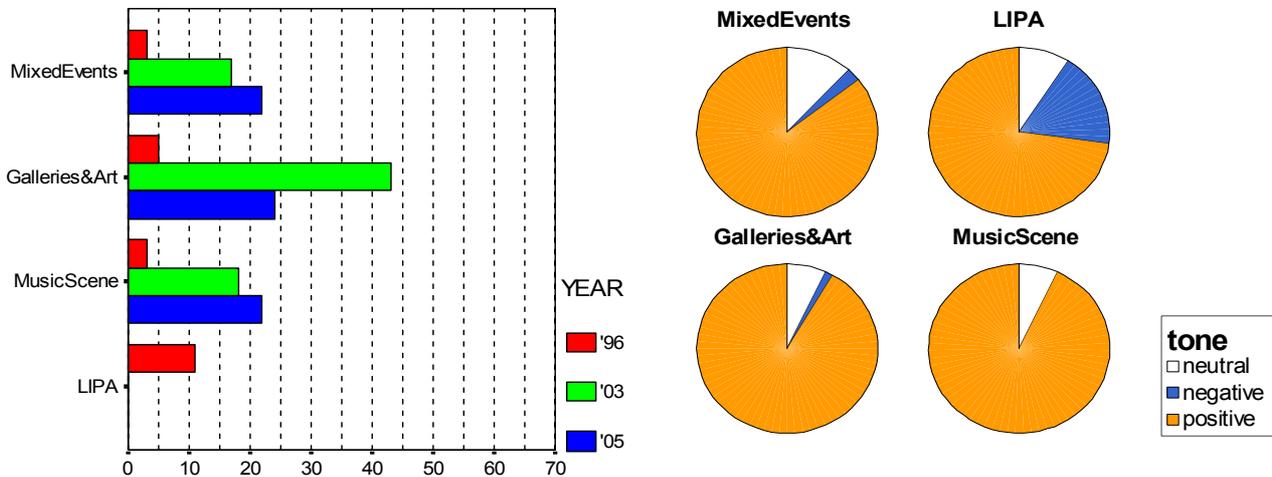
Liverpool is the butt of countless bad jokes about moustaches, tracksuits, accents and thieving. (Daily Mirror, October 2003)

Other city image sub-themes account for less than 1% of press references to Liverpool. These include: discussions about how Liverpool relates to, or compares with, other parts of the North West or the UK; references to the city's overall quality of life; discussion on poverty – which tends to be linked to debates around employment (see the 'economics' category, analysed below); and discussion on children's education and schools. With the exception of 'poverty' related stories, these sub-themes are mainly presented in a positive light.

### 5.2.3. Culture and the Arts

This category constitutes the second most frequent area of coverage due to a dramatic increase in culture-related articles from 2003 onwards; it can be argued that this is a direct effect of the ECoC 2008 bidding process and subsequent nomination.

Figure 6: Coverage counts of 'culture and the arts' sub-themes per year and distribution of attitudes (%)



As shown in Figure 6, most discussion on 'culture and the arts' in Liverpool has focused on the city's galleries and visual arts offer (7.1% of all coverage on the city). This is followed by the debate on Liverpool's music scene (4.2%) and other mixed arts events (3.8%). It is also interesting to note the amount of coverage given to the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA). This coverage was concentrated entirely in 1996 (the year of its opening), and it combined generic references to the venue's official opening, special visits by Paul McCartney and the Queen, and some financial controversies. We have not identified any article fully dedicated to LIPA in either 2003 or 2005. References to the venue, however, are re-emerging in 2006 on the occasion of its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

National coverage of Liverpool galleries and visual arts stories was particularly acute in 2003, during the bid process. This seems to indicate that this was presented as one of the city's key assets and as providing a strong motive for it becoming ECoC. In contrast, 1996 had barely any mentions of this topic. Interestingly, the overall majority of references to this topic (94%) were incorporated within generic articles listing other ECoC candidate cities, or, alternatively, were presented as part of UK national arts listings and/or highlights. As we might perhaps expect, 92% of coverage on this issue has been positive throughout all time periods.

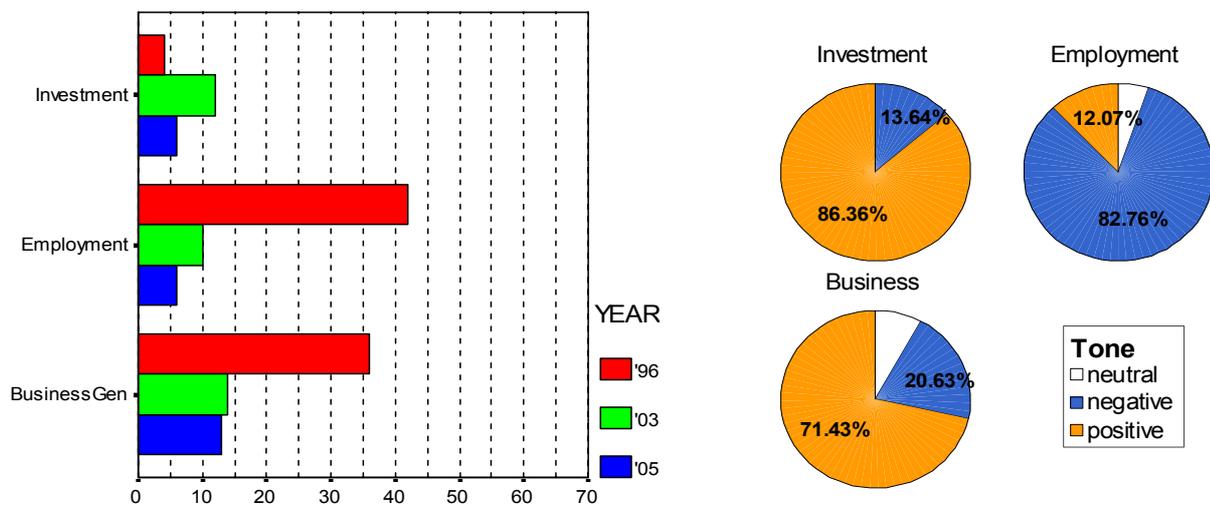
The 'mixed events' sub-theme includes articles debating city festivals, individual performers, and, increasingly, references to specific ECoC 2008 programming. ECoC programming was mostly mentioned in 2003, and provoked some debate about the nature of the programme and whether it should be used to promote local talent or to bring in international stars. In 2005, a range of references were made to 'Sea Liverpool', the first themed calendar year in the lead up to 2008:

As fireworks illuminate the evening sky on another Bonfire Night, Liverpool will be more a city of cordite than capital of culture as a spectacular display takes place this evening against the classy backdrop of the World Heritage waterfront. The event is part of Sea Liverpool, the latest themed calendar year as the city winds up to 2008 and its prestigious 12 months as the European Capital of Culture. (The Independent, Nov 2005)

Debate around Liverpool's music scene has been growing consistently since 1996. It is interesting to note that in 2005 there have been more articles on this topic than there were during the bid period, and that these articles tend to *exclude* any reference to ECoC 2008. In general, they tend to be very brief articles (¼ of a page or less) referring specifically to bands or gigs. They are positive towards Liverpool on 84% of occasions; we have not identified any negative references to the city in this particular sub-theme.

### 5.2.4. Economic Development

Figure 7: Coverage counts of 'economic' sub-themes per year and distribution of attitudes (%)



In 1996, the 'economics' category was the second most frequent area of coverage after generic city references. However, practically all related sub-themes received decreasing levels of coverage in 2003 and 2005. The only theme that has increased in frequency relates to 'investment', which was recurrent in the 2003 coverage.

The most frequent economic sub-theme is 'business in general', including references to company merger processes, international trade links and the development (or loss) of export markets, and so forth. In 1996, a particular story catching the attention of the national press was the oil and field development of the Liverpool Bay company. The majority of stories on this subject are clearly positive (over 73%), particularly from 2003 onwards.

Employment was the most predominant area of economic debate in 1996. The main reason for this was the extensive level of coverage attracted by the dock strikes in that year. In our analysis we have categorised these articles into two groups: one as part of the city image category, which refers to generic perceptions of the city; and another within this category, implying a more in-depth debate and analysis of the issue. Beyond the dock disputes, many of the references to Liverpool in the context of articles about 'employment' had to do with job losses, particularly in 1996 and 2003. Almost 83% of employment stories refer to Liverpool in a negative light; however, reporting has become more positive in 2005, referring to upcoming opportunities for job creation.

Discussion on investment has grown remarkably from 1996 to 2003, although there has been a slight decrease in 2005. This sub-theme mainly reflects stories on property developments and real estate markets. The tone of investment-related stories is overwhelmingly positive (86%) and tends to be linked to ECoC 2008. Find below a range of representative quotes on this issue:

Phil Lawton of Sutton Kersh estate agents which has nine outlets in Liverpool says: "There was a flurry of interest after the announcement of Capital of Culture. We are seeing lots of big investors, but also individual professionals showing an interest. People are looking to provide for their pensions. I wouldn't want to overhype the situation but Liverpool is a good bet." (Guardian, July 2003)

The award of European capital of culture to the city should have a very positive effect on property values across the board. (Guardian, June 2003)

Prices are zooming up in Liverpool, European City of Culture 2008. But the average house is still under Pounds 40,000 - attracting increasing numbers of investors. (Sunday Times, August 2003)

The wave of optimism that greeted Liverpool's successful bid to become the European Capital of Culture for 2008 has spread to its housing market. (The independent, August 2003)

After many years of seeing other parts of Liverpool going through change, we have learned the lessons of the 1970s, which is why housing market renewal will bring a mix of demolition, refurbishment and new-builds. The first phase of renewal in this neighbourhood will consist of 107 properties: a mixture of one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom, two- or three-storey houses and apartments. Most importantly, this will deliver choices that don't exist and give local people the opportunities to stay, rather than reasons to leave. (Guardian, November 2005)

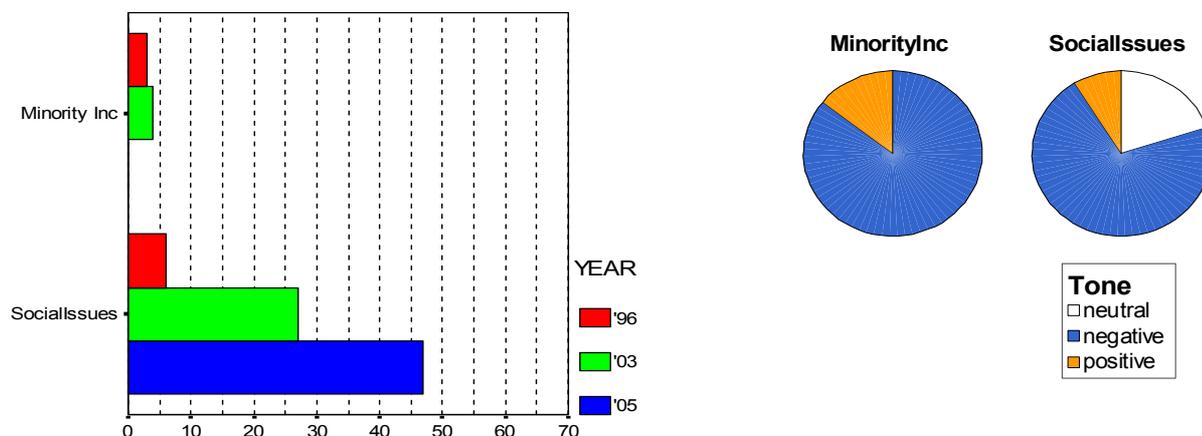
Scouse house prices go mad: The butt of many jokes, Liverpool has the last laugh as its property market rockets. Famous the world over as the birthplace of the Beatles, the city has been unloved by the public and investors alike, who associate it with urban neglect and devastating riots in the Toxteth area more than 20 years ago. But now, after being named the European Capital of Culture for 2008, Liverpool has regained the spring in its step and property prices are rocketing. (Financial Times, June 2003)

Against our expectations, in our analysis of these time periods - particularly 2003 and 2005 - we have not found a significant number of articles focused on discussion about tourism and conference markets. Some articles have emerged in 2005 referring to the need to develop hotels and hospitality offers, but not to a sufficient extent to be made a separate sub-category; they have, rather, been included within the 'investment' sub-theme.

### 5.2.5. Social Inclusion and Access

National coverage on social issues related to Liverpool is often popularly presented in the context of crime and violence stories; we have analysed and included such coverage within the 'city image' category. Articles included within this 'social issues' category reflect more in-depth debates around issues of inclusion, minority relations, access, and participation.

Figure 8: Coverage counts of 'social' sub-themes per year and distribution of attitudes (%)



Interestingly, the mixture of issues here make it difficult to assign them specific sub-themes. However, in 1996 and 2003 we have been able to identify a series of articles clearly stressing 'minority issues', ranging from race/ethnic relations, disability, and local community and identity issues. It is important to note that, in 2003, all of those articles were dedicated to discussing the impacts of ECoC 2008; worryingly, all of those were discussed in negative terms. Find below a couple of representative quotes:

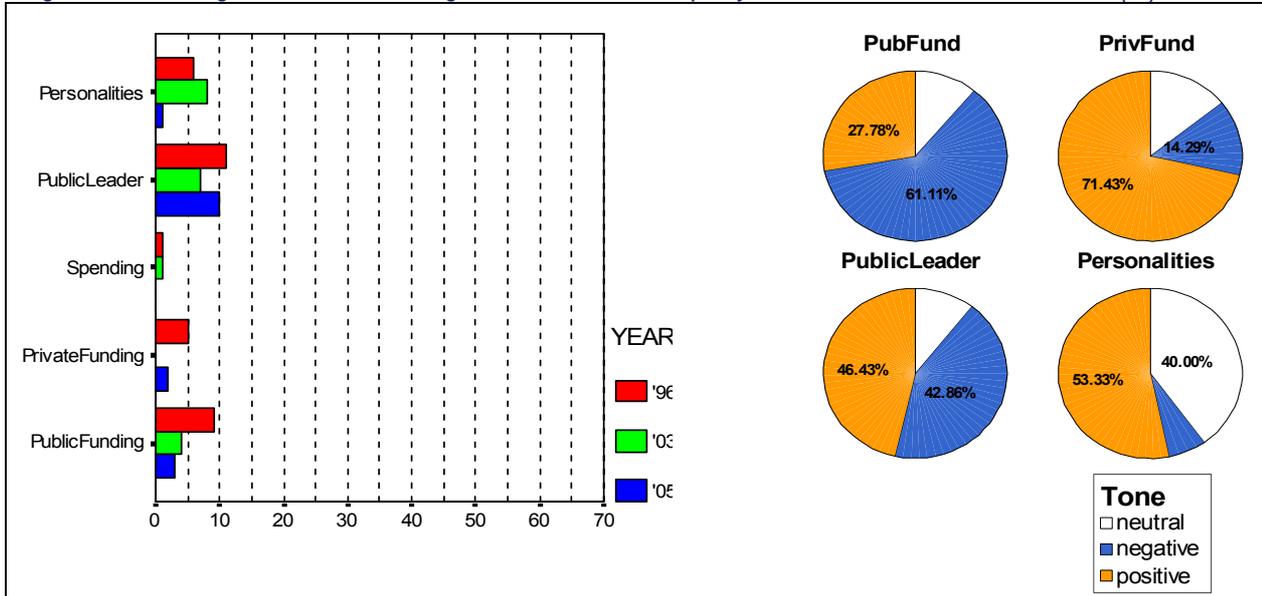
Catherine Pepinster's article "How to make Liverpool fab" (8 June) was acutely observed. She is spot-on when she pleads that those developing the programme leading up to 2008, when the city becomes European Capital of Culture, make the local population's contribution and character central. Liverpool has been colonised by apparatchiks from the community arts and culture industries. And, all too often, local people feel excluded from the process of artistic and cultural regeneration, as though they can't be trusted. Unless there is evidence of a flowering of art and music made here in Liverpool, as well as the inevitable "spectaculars", then the enterprise will, for me at least, be a failure. (Independent on Sunday, June 2003)

While Liverpool City Council rejoices in being voted European City of Culture, preparations are under way for festivals and events, including art and drama productions for the deaf. Meanwhile, some facilities for the deaf in the city are falling into disrepair. A deaf drama group was recently excluded from using the superior facilities at the Queen's Drive Centre in Liverpool.

So, while the citizens of Liverpool celebrate, they should spare a thought for those deaf projects that need more funding now. (Daily Mirror, June 2003)

### 5.2.6. Management, Leadership and Funding

Figure 9: Coverage counts of “management” sub-themes per year and distribution of attitudes (%)



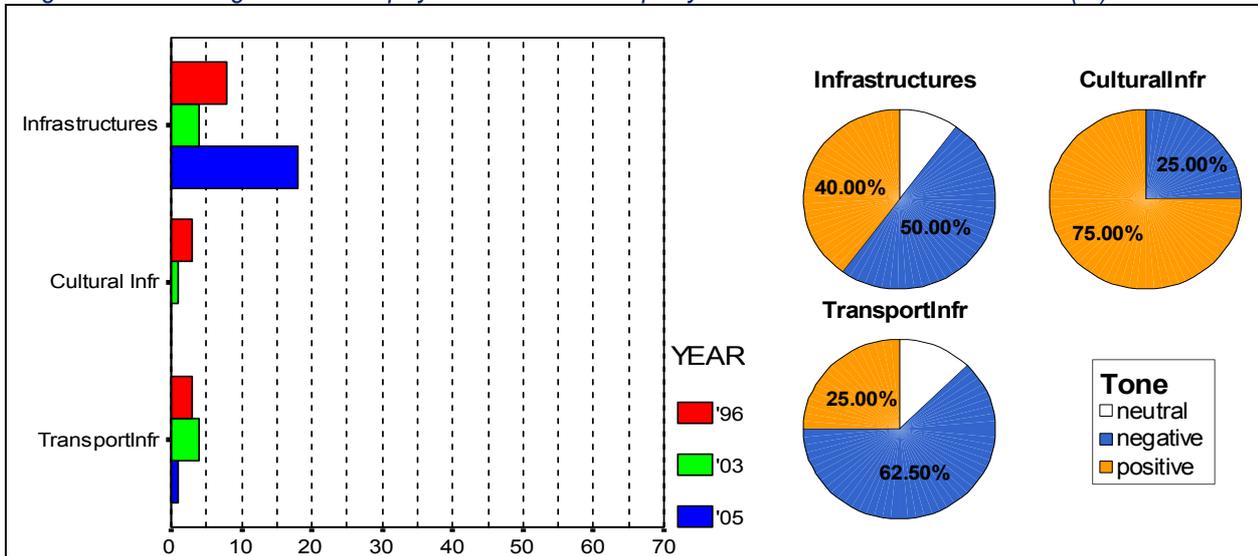
This category has attracted low levels of coverage after the bid period relative to 1996. However, discussions on public leadership in the city and the role of key personalities and celebrities tend to be directly linked to ECoC 2008 debate and with positive undertones ( the public leadership debate, however, also attracts similar levels of negative coverage). From these trends, we may conclude that coverage on leadership and management is likely to develop and grow over the coming years, although it is likely that it will retain a low profile within UK national press debates in contrast to city-based press discussions.

It is interesting to note that discussion on Liverpool public funding occurred more frequently in 1996 than it has in subsequent time periods. In 2003, the national debate was dominated by stories about council tax, European funds for deprived areas in Liverpool and 4 other large cities around the UK, and NHS cuts. None of these stories reflect any link to ECoC 2008 and they are predominantly of a negative nature (61%). In contrast, references to private funding, although lower – and practically non-existent in our analysis of 2003 – present Liverpool in a positive light (71.3%).

### 5.2.7. Physical/Environmental Debate

In the time periods analysed, this is the category which generally received the lowest levels of coverage at a national level, although generic references to infrastructural developments grew rapidly in 2005. Within our sample, we have not identified stories directly linking the city's physical development to ECoC 2008. However, the overwhelming majority of these stories place Liverpool at the centre of the article, contrasting with most of the other sub-themes which tend to discuss the city in the context of other places or merely 'in passing'.

Figure 10: Coverage counts of 'physical' sub-themes per year and distribution of attitudes (%)



Most of the general infrastructure coverage is centred on housing developments and the effects of demolitions, and is presented with similar levels of positive and negative coverage. In 2005, coverage is particularly dominated by the John Prescott 'bulldozers' story and its effect on the North West, as reflected by the following quotes. This story is presented in unequivocal negative tones by the national press (in future reporting, we will complement these stories with the opinions of local residents):

As if the bulldozers hadn't already done their worse in the wrecking-ball-swinging Sixties, Prescott's so called 'strategy for urban regeneration' includes plans to flatten up to 400,000 homes in northern cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. (Daily Mail, Feb 2005)

A Victorian terrace house in Liverpool has been modernised for little more than it would cost to demolish in an exercise that has cast doubt over the value of the Government's plans for knocking down 200,000 homes across the North of England. (Daily Telegraph, Apr 2005)

"Better homes" does not necessarily mean demolish and start again. If they want new homes, surely their housing association can look to build on one of the housing areas already cleared around Liverpool, mending its broken urban fabric, rather than tearing up its precious history and destroying the rest of the community. (Guardian, Dec 2005)

It is also worth quoting from a particular article highlighting the effects of demolition on other city tourism efforts:

The vividly painted Magical Mystery Tour bus pulled up outside Ringo Starr's childhood home in Liverpool yesterday. As tourists craned their necks to gawp at 9 Madryn Street, where the Beatles' drummer was born, the residents were contemplating their future. The 150-year-old two-up, two-down terrace house is one of 6,800 homes in the city which have been earmarked for demolition in one of Liverpool's worst batterings since the Luftwaffe. (Guardian, April 2005)

We also have identified a range of stories dedicated to debating cultural infrastructures specifically, but they are a small minority. In 1996, they referred to the reopening of a Beatles club. It is worth noting that in the same year there were also many stories about the opening of LIPA; however, these have been included within the 'culture and the arts' category, as they debated the actual venue programming and wider agenda, rather than the building itself.

### 5.3. Attitudinal Variations

Overall, the tone of articles on Liverpool is quite evenly balanced between positivity and negativity. We have not detected any *major* change in either positive or negative attitudes after the nomination; however, it is possible to observe a slight predominance of negative stories in 1996 and predominance of positive stories in 2003. We have also tried to distinguish between descriptive (factual) and analytical (opinion-led) articles. A clear majority of stories are fit into the former category, offering negative or positive impressions as a statement of fact (e.g., reporting crime = negative; art galleries = positive) rather than as a judgement or personal opinion. The latter tend to have a greater impact on readers' perceptions as they are usually presented within longer pieces, be it news or, particularly, opinion pieces and features.

In 1996, there was a greater range of (positive and negative) analytical stories. Negative analytical pieces on the city have focused on debate around infrastructural developments, followed by crime, employment and poverty. Positive analytical pieces have focused on debate about investment growth, the city's changing image and the strengths of public leadership, particularly with reference to the City Council.

Figure 11: Attitudinal variations per year (total counts)

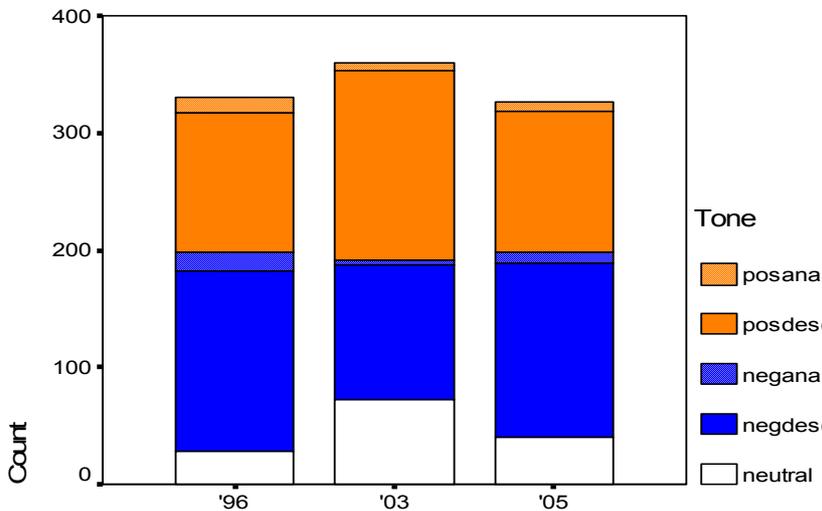


Figure 12: Attitudes by category (in percentage)

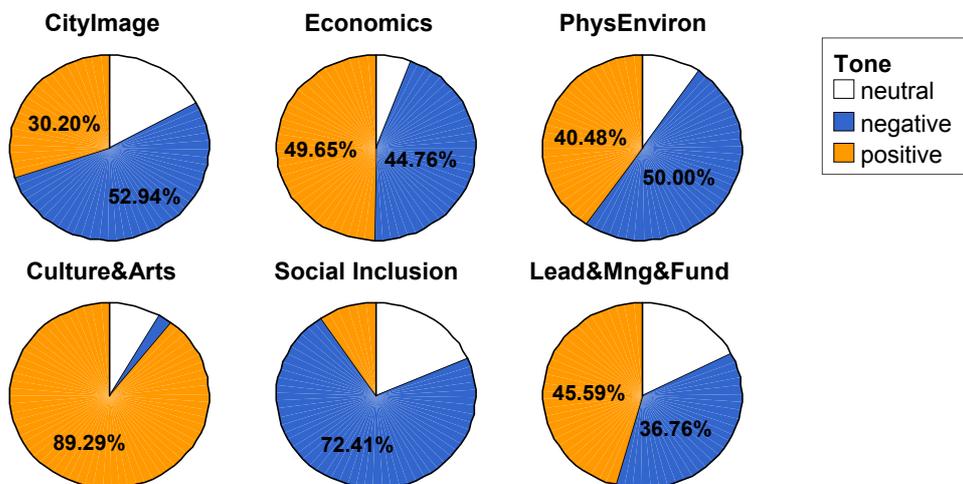


Figure 12 offers a generic indication of the *range* of attitudes per thematic category, *independently of levels of coverage*. Clearly, culture and arts stories have been predominantly positive and, thus, have been the main area of debate contributing to improved perceptions of Liverpool. This is followed by stories on the city's economic development, stories on leadership and management issues, and stories on Liverpool's physical developments (although the neither of 'leadership' nor 'physical development' stories are statistically relevant due to low levels of coverage).

In contrast, discussion on social issues and inclusion is remarkably negative, as is debate on city image, which is presented largely through the lens of crime and violence stories. Levels of crime and limitations in addressing social issues are the two areas which most contribute towards negative perceptions of the city.

The main themes attracting negative coverage across the different periods have been the following (ordered from most to least dominant):

- Crime and violence (more negative in 1996);
- Social issues (with a slight trend towards increased criticism in 2005);
- Employment (no overall variations, though a slight trend towards less negative coverage in 2005);
- Health (the overall debate was slightly more positive in 1996).

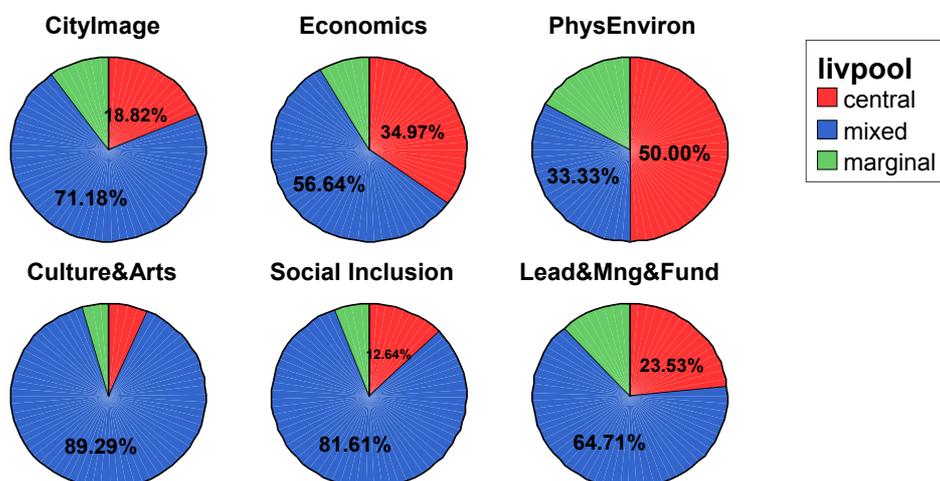
The main themes attracting positive coverage have been:

- Galleries and visual arts scene (consistently positive, but particularly so in 2003);
- Business and inward investment (more predominant in 1996, though more positive in 2005);
- Press and entertainment (some negative stories in 2003, rapidly decreasing in 2005);
- Music scene (clear growth in positive reporting from 2003 onwards);
- Cultural events (mixed) (increasingly positive up to 2005);
- The Beatles (balance between positive and neutral stories, with predominance of the former);
- Universities and research (balance between positive and neutral stories. Slight increment of negative references in 2005).

#### 5.4. Centrality of Liverpool and ECoC 2008 to Press Debates

Most articles referring to Liverpool (excluding those on football) mention the city in the context of other issues and locations. We have marked this as 'mixed reference' (71% of all articles). Liverpool is the core issue of discussion in 20% of all analysed articles, being only a partial reference – a sentence or brief mention in an article not dedicated to debating the city – in 9% of articles. Figure 13 shows the centrality of references to Liverpool across the six main thematic categories identified.

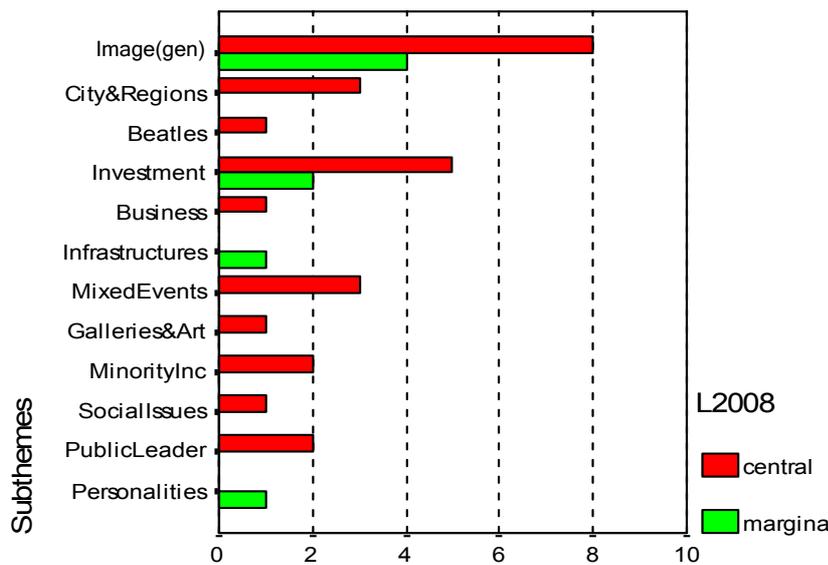
Figure 13: -Centrality of references to Liverpool by category (distribution in percentage)



Clearly, articles referring to the city's physical development - although only representing 4% of coverage - constitute the category most directly focused on Liverpool. However, articles on economic development do also place Liverpool at the centre of the debate on 35% of occasions. This is followed by debate on leadership and management and debate on city image.

Direct references to ECoC 2008 have been scarce within UK national coverage. References peaked in 2003 during the bid and nomination periods; however, they have rapidly decreased again in 2005. References to ECoC 2008 have been coded according to three main categories: (i) central - meaning the article is entirely focused on debating the Capital of Culture year; (ii) marginal - meaning ECoC 2008 is only mentioned in passing; and (iii) 'no reference'. Figure 14 shows the themes introducing central or marginal references to ECoC 2008 in both 2003 and 2005.

Figure 1: Coverage counts of direct references to ECoC 2008 by theme ('no references' excluded)



The figure indicates that the theme most clearly linked to ECoC 2008 is specific coverage on the changing image of the city, which is predominantly positive. This is followed by references to inward investment (also predominantly positive), cultural/arts events, social inclusion (combining both debate around 'minorities' and wider social issues), the positioning of Liverpool in the region and in the rest of the UK, and public leadership. Of these, debates around 'social issues' are the only ones attracting some negative coverage and are, thus, the only ones offering a critical view of the city in the context of ECoC 2008.

## **6. Conclusions**

ECoC 2008 has had a direct impact on the growth of national press stories about Liverpool's culture and the arts, social inclusion, and inward investment. National debate about social inclusion and access has been mainly negative, but has substituted the trend of 1996, in which most social relations stories were treated as crime and violence stories. This is clearly an improvement. The growth in references to culture and the arts has been mainly focused on presenting Liverpool as a centre for the visual arts and, increasingly as containing a strong music scene. The former has benefited directly from the ECoC 2008 nomination, while the latter may have gained similar levels of coverage regardless of the prospects of 2008. Finally, the growing debate on inward investment is focused on the rise of real estate values and Liverpool's renewed potential to attract and/or retain professional and high income/educated groups as an effect of becoming ECoC.

Independently from the effect of becoming ECoC, it is also interesting to note that, despite the ongoing predominance of damaging crime- and violence-related stories, the city is also strongly associated with the prestige of its universities and leading academic research, and benefits from positive associations with popular television programmes and the continuing allure of the Beatles legacy.

Areas that are not receiving high levels of national coverage so far are the city's tourism potential and the development of cultural infrastructures. These topics are, however, treated as a core priority within stakeholders' interviews, which shows a discrepancy between the core interests of the city's key players and the main aspects catching the attention of the national press. A possible explanation for this situation is that, up to 2005, the average story on Liverpool had not been centred on, or even mentioned directly, ECoC 2008 (with up to 10% of all stories referring to Liverpool in the context of other locations/issues, and 20% of stories focusing on the city itself). Building on the experience of previous cities hosting the title, it is likely that the proportion of references to ECoC 2008 will grow in upcoming years, and with it, the amount of references to core city regeneration debates.

Overall, national representations of the city present an even balance between the positive and the negative. The rapid growth of culture and arts stories as a result of the ECoC 2008 nomination has been a key source of positive imagery. However, the continuous predominance of crime and violence stories makes it difficult to argue that the city is overcoming old stereotypes. In future research, we will compare this situation with the press reporting on the previous ECoC, Glasgow 1990. The other source of damaging perceptions of the city, and ECoC 2008 in particular, is the trend towards treating social inclusion stories in negative terms. This is the one area in which the city should focus most communication efforts in the short term, especially as it was presented as one of the key bid selling points in the first place. The development of initiatives such as the Creative Communities programme should help advance this argument; however, in order to have an impact on UK-wide perceptions (rather than only the local), it is crucial that it reaches, and is reflected by, the national papers.

## **7. Appendix 1: Notes on the Methodology**

Our approach to press content analysis is based on the study of press narratives, that is, through examining themes and attitudes emerging from articles which discuss a given city and its people, so as to trace the origins of (local, national and international) perceptions. This methodology provides a key image indicator and is a critical data source for the assessment of cultural (soft) impacts.

Content analysis has been defined as an approach to the analysis of documents and text that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner. Traditionally, the technique is supposed to focus on the objective quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. However, a limitation of this approach is the focus on counting text rather than analysing content. In order to address this limitation, we have combined established quantitative techniques (centred on coding objective states, such as date of publication and so forth) with a qualitative approach, focused on the identification of themes and attitudes. The latter approach has required interpretation on the part of the coders, and an understanding of the social and cultural context for the items under analysis. This is explained in more detail in the 'coding approach' section. Before then, we offer a brief explanation of the data collection process and justification for the time periods selected for analysis.

### **7.1. Data Collection Process**

This study has assessed the nature of all UK national coverage referring to the city of Liverpool over 3 different years. This has been an extremely ambitious task that has required a complex approach to sampling and taken up a lot of the team's research time.<sup>5</sup> Studying the nature of articles referring to Liverpool in general, rather than ECoC 2008 specifically, has been deemed important to gain a broader and more representative understanding of the impact of ECoC 2008 on general public perceptions. This has been particularly relevant in the assessment of national press coverage, as it can offer an indication of whether references to Liverpool beyond its immediate metropolitan or regional environments have been directly affected by the decision to bid for, and subsequently win, the status of ECoC.

The research team has relied on the electronic database Lexis Nexis to access all UK press coverage. Relying on a generic database rather than a specific Liverpool-built press resource has forced us to spend considerable amounts of time testing the validity and relevance of the articles identified. In order to narrow the search as much as possible, we decided to exclude all stories on Liverpool dedicated to football or sport, as they clearly dominated within national press debates (on occasion, they constituted 70% to 80% of stories). We also tried to identify and exclude other references to 'Liverpool' which were not related to the city itself. We devised the following search query within the specified periods of time:

- "Liverpool" as major mention, OR "Liverpool" as 3 or more mentions;
- NOT "sport" OR "football" OR "soccer" OR "Liverpool FC" OR "Everton" OR "Reds" OR "FA Cup" OR "Manchester United" OR "Liverpool Victoria" OR "Liverpool Street" OR "Liverpool Road" Anywhere.

In addition, the industry term ("sports & athletics") was excluded from the search.

---

<sup>5</sup> Please note that during this phase of the study, the research team has been based at Glasgow University, where this methodology was first devised, tested and applied to the analysis of the press representations of Glasgow's ECoC 1990. Building on this expertise has been crucial in strengthening our methodological design. However, we have not been able to benefit from the range of press materials being collected by the Culture Company and, particularly, the Liverpool City Council Newscentre. To identify and sample relevant press clippings, we have relied instead on the generic press database Lexis Nexis and needed to devise a sophisticated search and validation process to establish a manageable sample. Future analysis will combine the generic Lexis Nexis searches with an assessment of the clippings collected and coded by the Liverpool City Council Newscentre.

Articles were selected according to source groupings: national press, Liverpool press, and regional daily press. As indicated at the start, this report only offers the results of national press analysis, comprising the following newspapers:

Table i: National Newspapers

National broadsheets		National tabloids / popular press	
Daily editions	Sunday editions	Daily editions	Sunday editions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Guardian</li> <li>▪ The Independent</li> <li>▪ Daily Telegraph</li> <li>▪ The Times</li> <li>▪ Financial Times</li> <li>▪ Daily Mail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Observer</li> <li>○ Independent on Sunday</li> <li>○ Sunday Telegraph</li> <li>○ Sunday Times</li> <li>○ Sunday Business</li> <li>○ Mail on Sunday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daily Mirror</li> <li>▪ Daily Express</li> <li>▪ The People</li> <li>▪ Daily Record</li> <li>▪ Sun</li> <li>▪ Daily Star</li> <li>▪ Metro</li> <li>▪ Morning Star</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sunday Mirror</li> <li>○ Sunday Express</li> <li>○ Sunday People</li> <li>○ Sunday Mail</li> <li>○ News of the World</li> </ul> <p><u>Other Sunday papers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sunday Post</li> </ul>

The automatic searches brought up 6,074 articles for the three years in question. We decided to analyse 1 in 6 articles as they appeared chronologically (16.6% of total). After sampling and excluding irrelevant articles and repetitions, we selected and coded a total of 1,017 articles.

See monthly and year article distributions in the table below:

Table ii: Search results and sampling process

Lexis Nexis search results					Analysed sample (1 in 6)				
National papers	1996	2003	2005	Total	National papers	1996	2003	2005	Total
Jan	109	227	190		Jan	29	32	28	
Feb	120	173	157		Feb	35	27	19	
Mar	90	219	163		Mar	22	34	20	
Apr	91	152	143		Apr	20	20	17	
May	89	254	157		May	20	32	22	
Jun	59	259	204		Jun	23	33	29	
Jul	115	209	186		Jul	39	32	27	
Aug	130	212	202		Aug	38	35	36	
Sep	114	201	147		Sep	37	21	30	
Oct	76	231	271		Oct	19	33	36	
Nov	92	222	266		Nov	28	36	33	
Dec	109	163	272		Dec	21	25	29	
<b>Total search</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>2522</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>6074</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1017</b>

In subsequent coding stages, we expect to access the Newsbrief database, designed and regularly updated by Liverpool City Council Newscentre. This will allow us to access local weekly papers, not available through Lexis Nexis. We will also rely on the clippings being collected by the Mersey Partnership and agencies such as Weber Shandwick to access international press clippings.

## 7.2. Time Periods

The first phase of our content analysis has been entirely retrospective and has attempted to establish a base-line of press representations.

Current analysis:

- Pre-bid period - 1996: This period has been included to assess approaches to national coverage before the city decided to bid. 1996 is the chosen year as it represents the city in a different political, social, economic and cultural climate. This provides a base-line from which to assess change in press attitudes, thematic emphasis, and the length and diversity of articles about the city after it becomes ECOC;
- Bid and announcement - 2003: Over this period we can identify the initial impact of associating Liverpool with ECoC 2008. ECoC 2008-related stories over the bid period place Liverpool in the context of other candidate cities and establish comparisons. The nomination and announcement allows us to identify key national press reactions and their effect on other Liverpool-related stories;
- Pre-event period – 2005: This can be considered an interim period in the progression towards 2008. Direct references to ECoC 2008 within the national press may have decreased as there are no specific events or activities to report. In this context, it is relevant to identify whether non-ECoC-related representations of the city are significantly different from those of the pre-bidding period.

Future analysis:

- Event period - 2007 to 2008: This period will be characterised by a dramatic increase in coverage about the event itself (including 'Liverpool 800') and the reporting of activities as they occur;
- Post-event period - 2009 and early 2010: This will allow an assessment of variations in press references once the event is over. It will be characterised by the retrospective approach taken by journalists towards event issues and their effect on Liverpool, and will offer a first indication of image legacies in the medium to long term.

### 7.2.1. Coding Approach

Following established methods of content analysis, the clippings have been individually coded according to a series of categories that reflect key indicators to measure image change.<sup>6</sup> These include both demographic categories and qualitative categories.

Demographic/profile categories:

- Date of publication;
- Newspaper title and type (daily and Sunday broadsheet, daily and Sunday tabloids);
- Geographic remit (at this stage, only UK national papers have been included);
- Article length, by column inches (short, medium, long);
- Article format (news, editorial, opinion/comment, feature, preview, and so on).

The identification of qualitative categories, such as thematic focus, a paper's attitudes, and the centrality of references to Liverpool in the context of respective themes, has required a more complex process of analysis and interpretation. The core themes have been identified before embarking on the analysis proper, but have developed over time so that they reflect the particularities of press discussions about the city. Building on previous research<sup>7</sup> and the *Impacts 08* approach to establishing a thematic framework in which indicator clusters will sit, we have identified the following core thematic categories:

---

<sup>6</sup> Key 'image change' indicators vary depending on the case study, but have been extensively tested in a major study on Glasgow 1990 long-term cultural legacies led by Beatriz Garcia (University of Glasgow, 2002-2005). See note below.

<sup>7</sup> See reports, links and periodical updates on the 'Cities and Culture Project. The long term cultural legacies of Glasgow 1990, European Capital of Culture', at [www.beatrizgarcia.net](http://www.beatrizgarcia.net)

Table iii: Relation between Impacts 08 thematic clusters and press thematic categories

Indicator clusters	Categories and sub-themes for press analysis
Identity, image and place: positioning/ repositioning of Liverpool; understanding and impression of the city by inhabitants, visitors, and media; readability, quality and influence of the public realm; strength of collective identity and sub-identities (multiple-identities); and multi-culturalism/diversity.	<i>1 City image: representing Liverpool:</i> Image and perceptions of the city, and promotion/place marketing; City & regions – links to the NW, England, and UK; 'Quality of life'/city image; Football/sports (excluded from this analysis); Beatles, music, TV/Entertainment; University/research, schools/children's education; Shipbuilding/docks, poverty; Crime & violence, drugs/alcohol, and health issues.
Economic impacts and significance: Jobs created; direct and indirect revenue generated; turnovers; tourism; increased levels of investment; and cultural industries.	<i>2 Economics: bringing business to Liverpool:</i> Business and leisure tourism/visitor numbers; Inward investment (i.e., office spaces, real estate); Employment (job creation or unemployment); Business in general.
Public realm, physical and environmental infrastructures, sustainability: Quality and type of the physical infrastructure of culture; and physical access issues and the environmental sustainability impact of the programme.	<i>3 Environment: physical developments:</i> Infrastructural developments (general); Cultural refurbishments/new cultural venues; Transport developments (or lack of).
Vitality and sustainability of the cultural system and creative economy of the city: Strength and directions of flows and relationships; patterns of cultural creation; production and consumption; and cultural value.	<i>4 Culture: arts and cultural offer:</i> Galleries/art collections; Mixed events (festivals, cultural programming); Music scene; Cultural highlights (e.g., LIPA, Biennial).
Cultural access and participation: Access to opportunities and experiences; inequalities; and sub-cultures and groups (defined by gender, ethnicity, age, education, socio-economic factors).	<i>5 Social issues: social inclusion and access</i> Cultural inclusion/accessibility for the people of Liverpool (inclusion/engagement); Inclusion/accessibility for minorities within Liverpool (ethnic and religious, diversity); Inclusion/access for young people and children; Inclusion/access for people with disabilities; Direct participation in culture; Neighbourhood cohesion, and other social issues.
Social capital, well-being and health: Impact of cultural resources on personal and community development; community cohesion; trust-building; the capacity for collective action; social inclusion and exclusion; learning outcomes; issues of 'equity'; and understanding diversity.	
Management of the process: Leadership issues; governance challenges; and public and media perceptions.	<i>6 Leadership, management, funding</i> Public funding, and sponsorship and/or other private funding; Public/government leadership; Key personalities ('leading the way'; non-L2008).

Press articles (clippings) have been coded according to their primary theme, identified through assessment of heading, sub-heading, first paragraph, photograph, and/or overall article emphasis. When appropriate, a second theme has also been coded. Each article has also been coded according to the attitude the journalist takes towards the key issues identified. Attitudes have been categorised broadly as follows:

Table iv: Attitudinal categories

Code	Description
<b>Neutral</b>	Articles with no clearly discernable attitude towards the main theme;
<b>Negative, descriptive</b>	Articles that cover negative facts in a descriptive manner – this is often the case within news articles;
<b>Negative, analytical</b>	Articles expressing a negative attitude (by the journalist/paper) towards the main theme – this tends to occur within opinion/editorial/review articles;
<b>Positive, descriptive</b>	Articles that cover positive facts in a descriptive manner – mostly, news articles;
<b>Positive, analytical</b>	Articles expressing a positive attitude (by the journalist/paper) towards the main theme (opinion/editorial/review articles).