

Liverpool Flourishing From Capital of Culture Activity, Report Reveals

LIVERPOOL, UK – 22 May 2007: The first report to assess the impact of Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture 2008 has revealed widespread benefits to the city's economy, employment rates and cultural sector.

The report, produced by academics at the University of Liverpool, shows the city is attracting a high percentage of new visitors – 41% of tourists have never visited Liverpool before, compared with an average figure of 26% for other destinations and visitor expenditure is in excess of £400 million.

The employment volume in Liverpool grew well in excess of the national growth rate between 2000 and 2005 with capital developments and construction activity instigating a 138% increase in jobs in architecture and engineering. In addition, jobs in the city's visitor infrastructure such as hotels and bars have risen by 29% and jobs in the creative industries by 50%. The total value of economic activity in Liverpool has grown from £5.5 billion to almost £7 billion between 2000 and 2004.

The report is part of the Impacts 08 research programme - launched to evaluate the influence of Liverpool becoming European Capital of Culture from its bid stages to 2008 and beyond. The project was set up by the University of Liverpool in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University, as a means of establishing a benchmark model to evaluate the effects of major events such as the Olympics on cities and their surrounding areas.

Liverpool's image and identity were also a key element of the research programme. The report highlights a growth in positive national newspaper coverage relating to the city with the 08 Highlights event in November 2006 generating 50% positive coverage nationally and 68% locally. In addition, national newspapers produced four times more positive stories about Liverpool's arts and culture scene than in 1996.

Dr Beatriz Garcia, Director of the Impacts 08 programme said: "The research model we have developed allows us to effectively map the city's progress since Liverpool won the bid for European Capital of Culture status.

More follows ...



“This report demonstrates how the city is prospering in all areas and we will continue to monitor 2008-related activities so we can identify key areas of impact.”

Commissioned by Liverpool City Council, the Impacts 08 programme involves longitudinal analysis of the social, economic, cultural and physical aspects of the city. The academic team has collected quantitative data as well as qualitative information via interviews with local residents and senior figures in key public and private sector organisations.

Fran Hegyi, Cultural Programme Adviser for the London 2012 Olympic Games, commented: “The Impacts 08 model has proved to be an effective means of evaluating the influence of major events on regions in the long-term. We will explore the Liverpool model when developing a similar research tool in monitoring the impact of the London 2012 Olympic Games on the capital and its suburbs.”

Councillor Warren Bradley, Leader of Liverpool City Council, commented: “It's very important for the future development of our city to ensure that we analyse in detail both the economic and cultural impacts of Liverpool's European Capital of Culture status. This is not just about delivering a highly successful 2008 but how businesses in the city can build on the transformation of Liverpool's image.”

Notes to editors

1. The core messages and benchmark indicators of the Impacts 08 report are available at www.impacts08.net
2. The University of Liverpool is one of the UK's leading research institutions. It attracts collaborative and contract research commissions from a wide range of national and international organisations valued at more than £100 million annually.

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