

MOMENTS FROM THE REVITALISATION OF PÉCS

CAN CULTURE GET A CITY BACK ON TRACK?

Team Hungary • Dürr, Miklós János • Mojzes, Kinga Csilla • Rapcsák, Ádám • Szuda, Ágnes

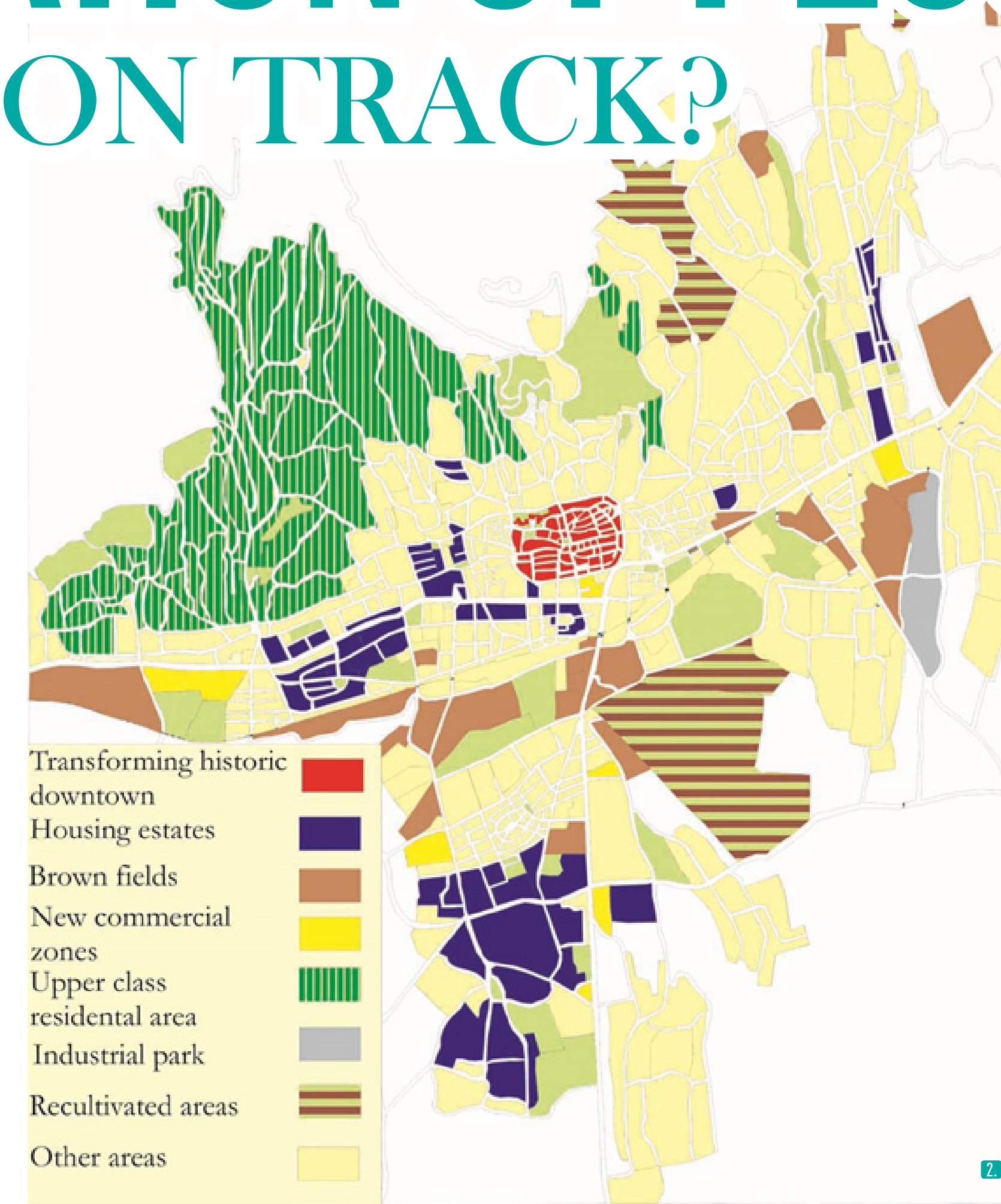


Pécs

160,000 inhabitants

The loss of traditional economic position is a worldwide issue. Brownfields initiate a range of socioeconomic problems from visual pollution to worsening living standards. To reverse this decline, many cities, including Pécs, specialise in **cultural economy** and carry out **culture-based development**.

CULTURAL ECONOMY
Cultural economy (disputed expression): a complex of services and products connected to culture.



The rich historic heritage of Pécs provides an excellent ground for cultural economy.

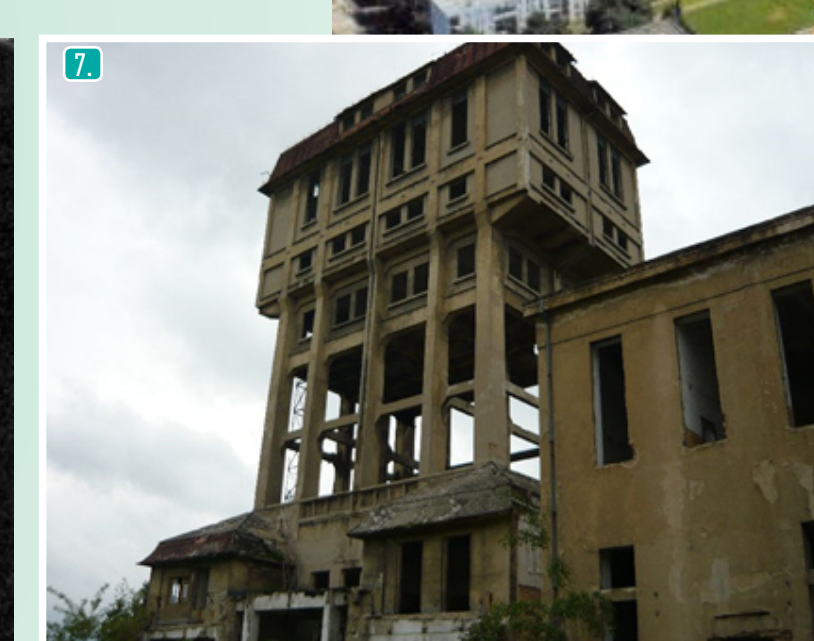
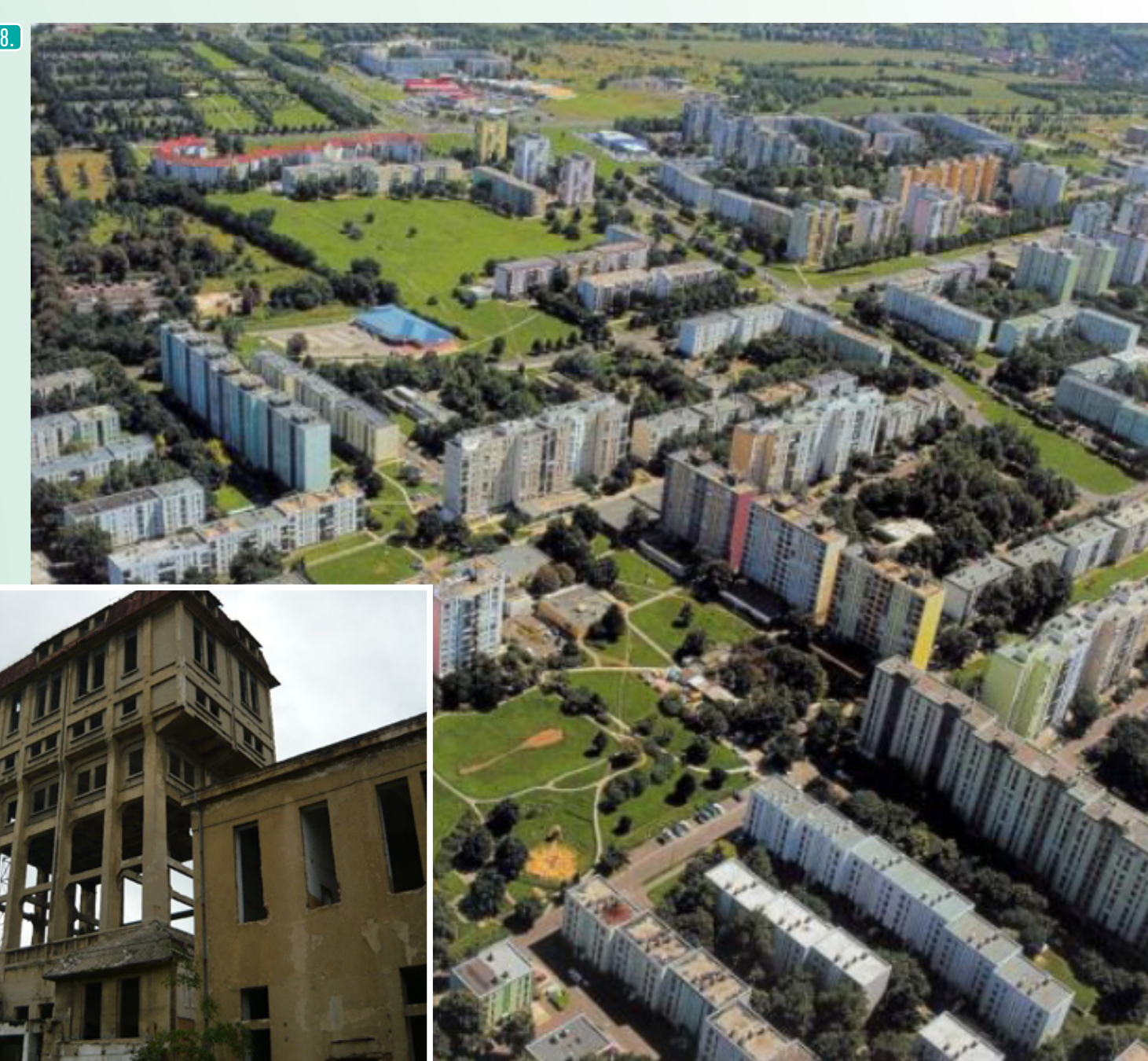
- Early Christian Necropolis from Roman times: **UNESCO World Heritage Site**
- medieval cathedral, oldest Hungarian university (1367)
- Ottoman rule (1543-1686) rich Islamic architectural heritage
- multicultural city (ethnic minorities) **cultural diversity**
- 14 famous museums and prestigious art festivals



economic restructuring

Despite its cultural heritage, formerly Pécs used to be an **industrial city**:

- mining: black coal, uranium ore
- manufacturing and food processing
- socialist era (1945-1989): industrial functions were strengthened
- LPS buildings



End of the socialist rule:
deindustrialisation, crisis → education- and culture-based **regeneration**, development of **cultural economy** (higher education, research and cultural tourism)

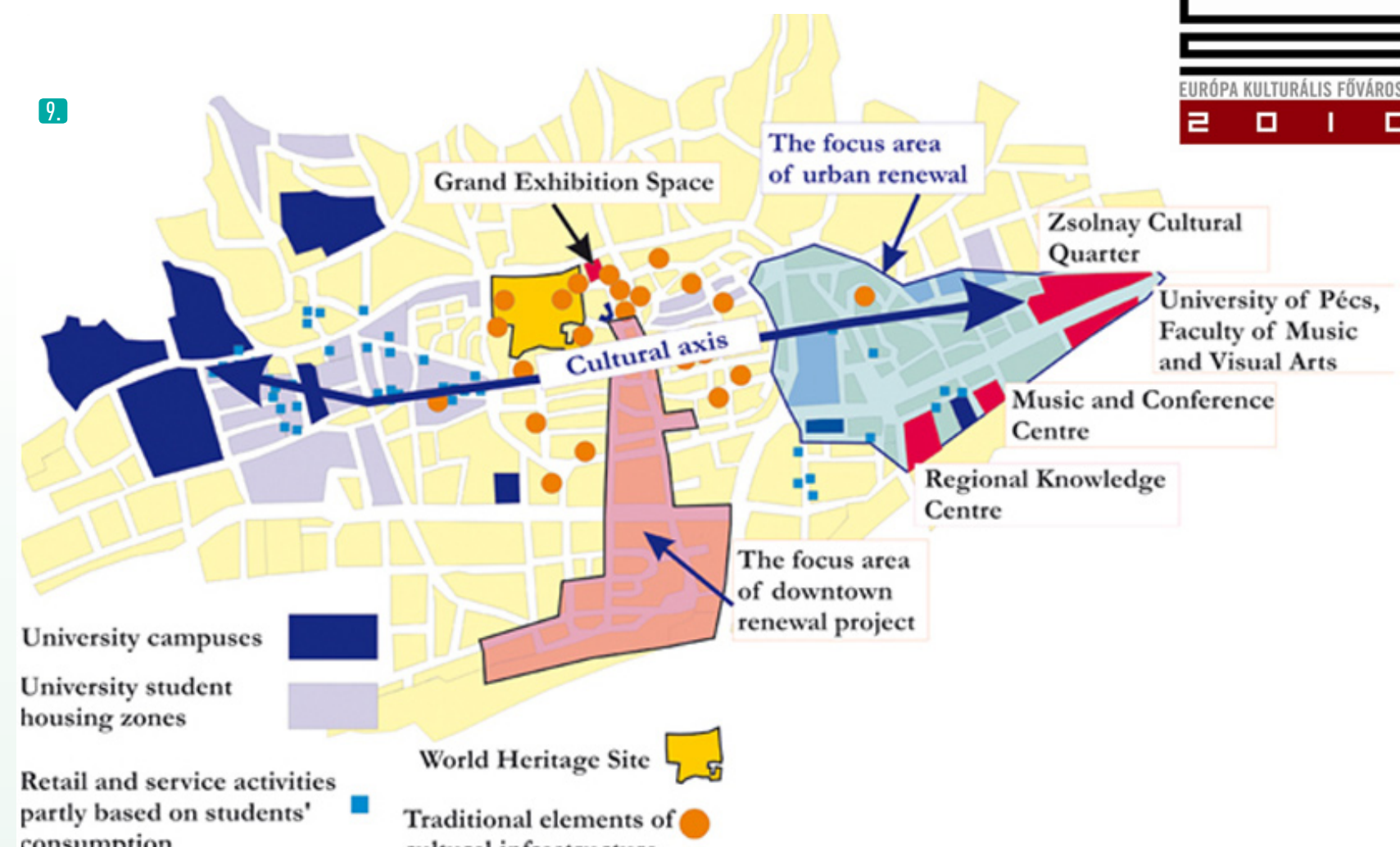
European Capital of Culture

In 2010 Pécs became the European Capital of Culture (ECC) → culture-based urban renewal.

Have the changes created a liveable and sustainable city?

- liveable cities:
- have a strong sense of community
 - promote tolerance
 - have lots of green spaces
 - use partnership approach
 - are secure, clean and sustainable

culture-based urban renewal



THE FIVE KEY PROJECTS OF ECC:

1. **Reconstruction of public spaces and the total renewal of the downtown** → improve living standards

flagship development:

Széchenyi Square (main square of Pécs):

POSITIVE EFFECTS:

- **pedestrianisation**: social hub
- **environmental psychology**: balustrades removed → feeling of independence

Environmental psychology: our environment influences our behaviour and feelings.

- improved accessibility: former staircases removed for disabled and elderly people
- new fountains and water pools

2. **The creation of the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter**

- the symbol of Pécs and one of the world's most renowned porcelain factories, BUT it started to decline industrial production is now limited to a manufacture scale
- culture-based brownfield revitalisation and heritage management: the flagship development of the ECC
- profitable and of multiple use: industrial historic park with museums, a visitor centre, halls, restaurants, hotels and other services; local residents also attend its theatres, parks and university faculties

3. **Kodály Music and Conference Centre**

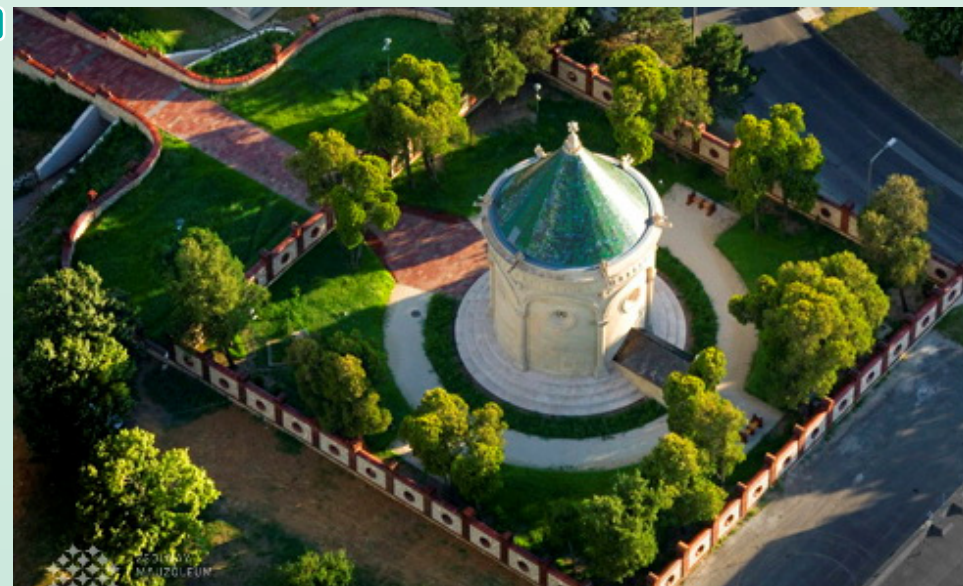
- Initially successful, but now concerns regarding its sustainability (lack of demand)
- Signature architecture

4. **Regional Knowledge Centre**

- a huge collection of books and IT facilities

5. **The renovation of the Museum Street's facilities and the creation of the Grand Exhibition Centre:**

- modern infrastructure for cultural tourism

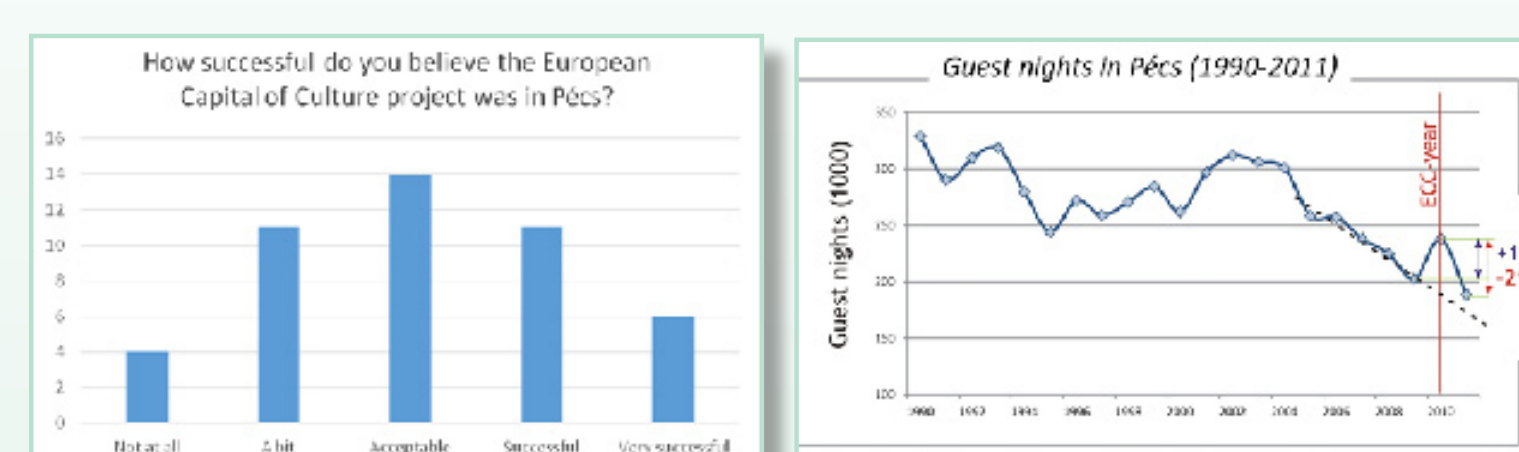


We carried out a street poll in Pécs in June 2014, asking 50 local residents of all age groups. Analysing and interpreting the data shown on the diagrams, we could draw important conclusions.

The outcome of the ECC project:

POSITIVE RESULTS:

- elements of cultural infrastructure (essentials of cultural economy) were established
- **Reimaging, rebranding**: the formerly unknown Pécs was put on the touristic map of Europe
- 19% more visitors



NEGATIVE RESULTS:

- 2008 financial crisis lack of private investment, city debt increased
- people were not asked regarding the projects they did not feel involved
- limited renewal in the whole city with some projects finished too late (2012)

university city, knowledge-intensive sector

The revival of educational function with the help of knowledge economy was emphasised after 1989:

- the university has one of the highest number of students in Hungary
- the largest employer in the region (5,000 employees)
- several research institutes

WILL CULTURAL AND KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY BECOME A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO INDUSTRY FOR PÉCS IN THE FUTURE?

Based on fieldwork investigations, we have suggestions to make Pécs more liveable:

Security problems: bad reputation in media, but Pécs is not as insecure as it is told to be

- rebranding – campaigns stating that Pécs is a safe place: tourists would not be distracted
- reinforce local police with personnel, street patrol and surveillance cameras in public areas

The opinion of residents is not considered

- introduce partnership approach

partnership approach (discussion between the government and local people) is really important, as locals' knowledge can contribute to the success of developments. Regarding residents as stakeholders helps in community development.

community development: plant-a-tree days, rubbish collecting

