

Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033

2012/0199(COD) - 16/04/2014 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a new Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision N° 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 and repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC.

CONTENT: the Decision establishes a Union action entitled 'European Capitals of Culture' for the years 2020 to 2033.

Objectives: the general objectives of the action are:

- to safeguard and promote the **diversity of cultures in Europe** and to highlight the **common features** they share as well as to increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area;
- to foster the contribution of culture to the **long-term development of cities** in accordance with their respective strategies and priorities.

The **specific objectives** are:

- to enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational cooperation;
- to widen access to and participation in culture;
- to strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors;
- to raise the international profile of cities through culture.

Access to the action: the competition for the title shall be open to the cities listed in the Annex to the Decision, and may involve their surrounding areas.

The number of cities **holding the title European Capital of Culture shall not exceed three in a given year.**

Accordingly, the title of European Capital of Culture shall be awarded each year to:

- **one city in each of the two Member States appearing in the calendar** set out in the Annex;
- **one city from a candidate country or a potential candidate, or**
- **to one city from a country that accedes to the Union** in the circumstances set out in the Decision.

Cities in Member States shall be entitled to hold the title for **one year** in accordance with the order of the Member States appearing in the calendar.

Cities in candidate countries and potential candidates which participate in the [Creative Europe](#) Programme or in the subsequent Union programmes supporting culture at the date of publication of the call for submission of applications may apply for the title for one year in the framework of an open competition organised every third year in accordance with the calendar.

Cities in candidate countries and potential candidates shall only be allowed to participate in one competition during the period from 2020 to 2033.

Where a country accedes to the Union after 4 May 2014 but before 1 January 2027, it shall be entitled to host the title 7 years after its accession. Where a country accedes to the Union on or after 1 January 2027, it shall not be entitled to participate in the action as a Member State.

Application: a common application form shall be prepared by the Commission and used by all candidate cities.

Every application shall be based on a cultural programme with **a strong European dimension**.

In order to determine the winning city, criteria for the assessment of applications have been laid down according to the following categories:

- contribution to the long-term strategy;
- European dimension;
- cultural and artistic content;
- capacity to deliver;
- outreach;
- management.

Details of each of these categories are laid down in the Decision, along with the factors to be assessed for each city.

Expert panel: a panel of independent experts will be established for three years to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures. The panel will consist of **10 experts** appointed by Union institutions and bodies. After organising an open call for expressions of interest, the Commission will propose a pool of potential European experts. The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission will then select three experts each from that pool and appoint them in accordance with their respective procedures. The Committee of the Regions will select its own expert.

In addition to the European experts, for the selection and monitoring of a city from a Member State, the Member State concerned shall be entitled to appoint up to **two experts** to the panel in accordance with its own procedures and in consultation with the Commission.

Specific provisions define the eligibility of the experts and the experience required. In any event, experts must be free of any **actual or potential conflict of interest** in respect of a specific candidate city.

Applications in Member States, pre-selection and final selection: each Member State will be responsible for the organisation of the competition between its cities. It must publish a call for submission of applications at least six years before the year of the title. However, derogations are laid down in the Decision.

Each Member State concerned must convene the panel for a pre-selection meeting with the candidate cities no later than five years before the year of the title.

After assessing the applications, the panel will agree on a shortlist of candidate cities and issue a pre-selection report.

Each Member State concerned will convene the panel for a selection meeting with the shortlisted candidate cities, then the panel will assess the applications, after which, panel will issue a **selection report** on the applications of the shortlisted candidate cities with a **recommendation for the designation of a maximum of one city** in the Member State concerned. The panel will submit the selection report to the Member State concerned and to the Commission.

Regarding selection in candidate countries and potential candidates, it will be for the Commission to organise the competition between cities and not the States themselves. The pre-selection of the cities shall be carried out by the panel at least five years before the year of the title, on the basis of their respective applications.

Designation: each Member State concerned shall designate one city to hold the title, on the basis of the recommendations contained in the selection report of the panel, and shall notify the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions no later than four years before the year of the title.

In the case of candidate countries and potential candidates, the Commission shall designate one city to hold the title in the relevant years, on the basis of the recommendations contained in the selection report of the panel.

Cooperation between designated cities: cities designated for the same year shall seek to develop links between their cultural programmes and such cooperation may be considered in the framework of the monitoring procedure laid down in the Decision.

Monitoring: the panel shall monitor the preparation of the designated cities for the year of the title and provide them with support and guidance from the time of their designation to the beginning of the year of the title. The Decision provides for monitoring meetings with the Commission.

Prize: the Commission may award a **pecuniary prize** in honour of *Melina Mercouri* to a designated city. The prize money shall be paid provided that the designated city concerned continues to honour the commitments it made at the application stage, complies with the criteria and takes into account the recommendations contained in the selection and monitoring reports.

Evaluation: each city concerned shall be responsible for the evaluation of the results of its year as a European Capital of Culture. The Commission shall establish common guidelines and indicators for the cities concerned in order to ensure a coherent approach to the evaluation procedure. The cities concerned shall draw up their evaluation reports and transmit them to the Commission by 31 December of the year following the year of the title.

The Commission shall present to the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions a series of reports based on those evaluations, accompanied, if appropriate, by relevant proposals:

- an initial interim report by 31 December 2024;
- a second interim report by 31 December 2029;
- an ex post report by 31 December 2034.

Repeal and transitional provision: Decision No 1622/2006/EC is repealed. It shall however continue to apply in the case of cities that have been designated or are in the process of being designated as European Capitals of Culture for the years from 2013 to 2019.

Annex: the Annex to the Decision contains a list of those countries whose city must be designated as a European Capital of Culture between 2020 and 2033, together with a calendar for designation of a candidate country or potential candidate.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 04.05.2014.