

# European capital of culture: Community action, years 2005 to 2019

1997/0290(COD) - 26/02/1998

As of 2002, "European Cities of Culture" are to be chosen by the EU rather than by agreement between governments. This is a significant development, as it will entail changes in the selection method and criteria. The Committee adopted - unopposed, with one abstention - the report by Philippe MONFILS (ELDR, B) on the Commission proposal for Community action in support of the "European City of Culture" event. The proposed amendments cover the points listed below. Selection of the city The Selection Panel, which is to deliver an opinion on the applications submitted by the cities, should meet annually. It is to be composed of seven leading independent cultural figures and it is proposed that membership of the panel should be incompatible with the holding of any public elective office. The selection is to be made, on the basis of the opinion, under the codecision procedure. A single city must be chosen but applicant cities should be able to submit their projects in conjunction with other cities inside or outside the Union, provided that the chosen city assumes sole responsibility for programming and for compliance with the rules on subsidies. Selection criteria Social considerations must be taken into account. A broad cross-section of society must be involved so that the event does not become an elite preserve. There should be a wide range of events and these should continue beyond the end of the year in question. While it is important to give a boost to the city itself, it is also essential to increase awareness and understanding of people who are different from oneself. Funding Subject to decisions of the budgetary authority (Parliament and Council) and with due regard for the Financial Perspective, a ceiling of Ecu 2m should be provided as the EU's direct annual contribution. European Cultural Month The Committee believes that this idea should be preserved. It would be open to countries of the European Economic Area and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and European non-member countries which have concluded cooperation agreements with the EU containing a cultural clause.