

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 23.10.2006
COM(2006) 610 final

Recommendation for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2010

(presented by the Commission)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019, amended by Decision 649/2005/EC[1], lays down the procedure of designation of the European Capital of Culture from 2005 and onwards. According to Article 2 of this Decision, from 2009 onwards, two cities of two Member States (one from the EUR-15, one from the new Member States) will be designated as European Capitals of Culture, in turn, according to the chronological order set out in Annex I to the Decision.

The nominations are notified to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions by the Member States concerned no later than four years before the event in question is due to begin.

Moreover, according to Article 4, "European non member states countries may participate in this action. Any such country may nominate one city as a European Capital of Culture and should notify its nomination to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions".

Each year, the Commission forms a selection panel which issues a report on the nominations judged against the objectives and characteristics of this action. The selection panel is composed of leading independent figures who are experts on the cultural sector. The selection panel submits its report to the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council.

The European Parliament may forward an opinion to the Commission on the nominations no later than 3 months after receipt of the report.

The Council, acting on a recommendation from the Commission drawn up in the light of the selection panel's report, officially designates the cities in question for the year for which they have been nominated.

In accordance with article 2 and Annex I, Germany notified the nomination of Essen and Görlitz and Hungary nominated Pécs for the 2010 title before the end of 2005.

Concurrently, in accordance with Article 4, Turkey notified the nomination of Istanbul.

The selection panel met on 14-15 March 2006 to examine all nominations. This examination included hearings of representatives from all the candidate cities. The panel submitted its report to the Commission on 11 April 2006 ; at the request of the panel, the Commission forwarded it to the other Institutions.

On the basis of an overall evaluation of the applications, the panel agreed unanimously to recommend to the Institutions of the European Union that Essen, Pécs and Istanbul host the European Capitals of Culture in 2010.

[1] OJ L 166 of 1.7.1999, p. 1 and OJ L 117 of 4.05.2005, p.20..

The Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament forwarded a letter to DG EAC on 18 July, as a follow up to the panel's report which had been received, to highlight the relevant aspects of the exchange of views it had on this matter.

In conclusion, the Commission, in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 3 of Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision 649/2005/EC submits to the Council the appended recommendation for the official designation of Essen, Pécs and Istanbul respectively for the 2010 European Capital of Culture event.

Recommendation for a

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Decision n° 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision n° 649/2005/EC of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019[2], and in particular its articles 2.3 and 4,

Having regard to the Selection Panel report of April 2006 submitted to the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council in accordance with Article 2 paragraph 2 of Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision 649/2005/EC,

Considering that the criteria laid down in article 3 and annex II of the Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision n° 649/2005/EC are entirely fulfilled,

Having regard to the recommendation from the Commission of the ---------- 2006,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Essen and Pécs are designated as "European Capital of Culture 2010" in accordance with Article 2 paragraph 1 of Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision 649/2005/EC.

Article 2

Istanbul is designated as a "European Capital of Culture 2010" in accordance with Article 4 of Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision 649/2005/EC.

[2] OJ L 166 of 1.7.1999, p. 1 and OJ L 117 of 4.05.2005, p.20.

Article 3

All cities designated shall take the necessary measures in order to ensure the effective implementation of Articles 1 and 5 of Decision 1419/1999/EC modified by Decision 649/2005/EC.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President