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P7_TA(2013)0590

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

European Parliament legislative resolution of 12 December 2013 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 (COM(2012)0407 — C7-0198/2012 — 2012/0199(COD))

(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)

(2016/C 468/84)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to Parliament and the Council (COM(2012)0407),

— having regard to Article 294(2) and Article 167(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C7-0198/2012),

— having regard to Article 294(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to the opinions of the Committee of the Regions of 15 February 2012 ([1]) and 30 November 2012 ([2]),

— having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education (A7-0226/2013),

1. Adopts its position at first reading hereinafter set out;

2. Calls on the Commission to refer the matter to Parliament again if it intends to amend its proposal substantially or replace it with another text;

3. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

P7_TC1-COD(2012)0199

Position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading on 12 December 2013 with a view to the adoption of Decision No …/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*

[Amendment 84 (*)]

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular the first indent of Article 167(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinions of the Committee of the Regions ([1]),

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([1]) OJ C 113, 18.4.2012, p. 17.
([2]) OJ C 17, 19.1.2013, p. 97.
(*) Amendments: new or amended text is highlighted in bold italics; deletions are indicated by the symbol ▌.
([1]) ***OJ C 113, 18.4.2012, p. 17 and OJ C 17, 19.1.2013, p. 97.***

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure ([1]),

Whereas:

(1) The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) aims at an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe and confers on the Union the task, inter alia, of contributing to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore. In this respect, the Union, where necessary, supports and supplements Member States' action to improve the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples.

(2) The ***Commission's*** communication ▌ on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world ▌, endorsed by the Council in ***a*** resolution of 16 November 2007 ▌ ([2]) ***and by the European Parliament in its resolution of 10 April 2008*** ([3]), sets the objectives for future activities of the Union in the field of culture. These activities should promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. They should also promote culture as a catalyst for creativity within the framework of growth and jobs, as well as a vital element in the Union's international relations.

(2a) The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which entered into force on 18 March 2007 and to which the Union is a party, aims at protecting and promoting cultural diversity, fostering interculturality and raising awareness of the value of cultural diversity at local, national and international levels.

(3) Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ([4]) ▌ established a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019.

(4) The evaluations of the European Capitals of Culture as well as the public consultation on the future of the action after 2019 reveal that the Capitals have progressively become one of the most ambitious cultural initiatives in Europe as well as one of the most appreciated by European citizens.

(5) In addition to the original objectives of the European Capitals of Culture, which were to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share and to promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens, cities holding the title have also progressively added a new dimension by using the leverage effect of the title to stimulate the city's more general development ***in accordance with their respective strategies and priorities***.

(6) ***The*** objectives ***of the European Capitals of Culture action*** are fully in line with the objectives of the Creative Europe Programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([5]) which aims to ***safeguard, develop and*** promote European cultural and linguistic diversity***, to promote Europe's cultural heritage*** and to strengthen the competitiveness of the ***European*** cultural and creative sectors***, in particular of the audio-visual sector***, with a view to supporting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. ***They also help to strengthen the feeling of belonging to a common cultural area, and stimulate intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.***

(6a) To achieve those objectives, it is important for the cities holding the title to seek to develop links between, on the one hand, their cultural and creative sectors, and, on the other hand, sectors such as education, research, environment, urban development or cultural tourism. In particular, past evidence show the potential of European Capitals of Culture in acting as a catalyst for local development and cultural tourism as highlighted in the

([1]) Position of the European Parliament of 12 December 2013.
([2]) OJ C 287, 29.11.2007, p. 1.
([3]) ***OJ C 247 E, 15.10.2009, p. 32.***
([4]) ***Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019*** (OJ L 304, 3.11.2006, p. 1).
([5]) ***Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 221).***

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Commission's Communication of 30 June 2010 entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', welcomed by the Council in its conclusions of 12 October 2010 ([1]) ***and endorsed by the European Parliament in its resolution of 27 September 2011*** ([2]).

(6b) It is also important for cities holding the title to seek to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities and do their utmost to ensure the broadest possible involvement of all the components of civil society in the preparation and implementation of the cultural programme, with special attention being paid to marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

(7) The evaluations and the public consultation have ***convincingly shown*** that the European Capitals of Culture have many potential benefits when they are ***carefully*** planned ▌. They remain first and foremost a cultural initiative, but they can also ***bring*** significant social and economic benefits, particularly when they are embedded ***within*** a long-term ***culture-led*** development strategy in the city concerned.

(8) The European Capitals of Culture ***action is*** also highly challenging. Staging a year-long programme of cultural activities is demanding and some ***European*** Capitals ***of Culture*** have been more successful than others in capitalising on the potential. Therefore, the action should be reinforced in order to help all cities to make the most of the title.

(9) The European Capital of Culture title should continue to be reserved to cities, ***irrespective of their size,*** but in order to reach a wider public and amplify the impacts, ***those*** cities should also continue to have the possibility of involving their surrounding ***area***.

(10) The award of the title of European Capital of Culture should continue to be based on a cultural programme created specifically for the European Capital of Culture ▌, which should have a ▌strong European dimension***. The*** programme ***should also*** be part of a longer-term strategy ***with a sustainable impact on the development of the local economic, cultural and social environment***.

(11) The two-stage selection process based on a chronological list of Member States and carried out by a ▌panel of independent experts ***(the 'panel')*** has proven to be fair and transparent. It has enabled cities to improve their applications between the pre-selection and the final selection phase on the basis of expert advice received from the panel, and has ensured an equitable distribution of ***European*** Capitals ***of Culture*** across all Member States. ***Furthermore, to safeguard the continuity of the action and avoid the loss of experience and know-how which would result from all members being replaced simultaneously, the replacement of panel members should be staggered.***

(11a) National expertise should continue to be ensured by allowing the Member States to appoint up to two experts to the panel responsible for the selection and monitoring of cities.

(12) The selection criteria should be ***made*** more explicit in order to give ***better*** guidance to the candidate cities ***regarding the objectives and requirements they need to comply with in order to obtain the title of European Capital of Culture. The selection criteria should also be easier to measure*** in order to help the panel ▌in the selection and monitoring of cities. ▌ In ***this regard, there should be a*** particular ***focus on the candidate cities' plans for*** legacy ***activities embedded in*** a long-term cultural policy strategy***, which can generate a sustainable cultural, economic and social impact***.

(13) The preparation phase between the designation of a city and the year of the title is of crucial importance for the success of a European Capital of Culture. There is ***a broad*** consensus among stakeholders that the accompanying measures introduced by Decision No 1622/2006/EC have been very useful for the cities. Those measures should be further developed, in particular through more frequent monitoring meetings and visits to the cities by panel members, and through an even stronger exchange of experience between past, present and future ***European*** Capitals ***of Culture***, as well as candidate cities. ***Designated cities may also develop further links with other European Capitals of Culture.***

([1]) ***14944/10***.
([2]) ***OJ C 56 E, 26.2.2013, p. 41.***

(14) The Melina Mercouri Prize has acquired a strong symbolic value which goes far beyond the actual amount of the prize which may be awarded by the Commission. However, in order to ensure that the designated cities fulfil their commitments, the conditions for payment of the prize should be made more stringent and explicit.

(14a) Candidate cities should explore the possibility, where appropriate, of seeking financial support from Union programmes and funds.

(15) It is important that the cities concerned make clear in all their communication material that the European Capitals of Culture ***is an action*** of the Union.

(16) The Commission's evaluations of the results of past European Capitals of Culture cannot provide primary data on the impact of the title and are based on data collected at a local level. Therefore, the cities themselves should be the key players in the evaluation process and should put in place effective measurement mechanisms.

(17) ***Past*** experience ▌ has shown that the participation of candidate countries can ***help*** to bring them closer to the Union by highlighting the common aspects of European cultures. The European Capitals of Culture should, therefore, be open again to the participation of candidate and potential candidate countries after 2019.

(17a) However, for reasons of equity with the cities in the Member States, every city in candidate and potential candidate countries should only be allowed to participate in one competition during the period from 2020 to 2033. Furthermore, also for reasons of equity with Member States, each candidate country or potential candidate country should only be allowed to host the title once during the period from 2020 to 2033. Therefore, cities from those candidate and potential candidate countries which have already been awarded the title during the period covered by this Decision should not be allowed to participate in the subsequent competitions during that same period.

(18) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Decision and, in particular, the provisions concerning the designation of the European Capitals of Culture, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission.

(19) Decision ***No*** 1622/2006/EC should be repealed and replaced by this Decision. Its provisions should, however, continue to apply for all the European Capitals of Culture up to 2019 which were already designated or are in the process of being designated.

(20) Since the objectives of this Decision, ***namely to safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, to highlight the common features they share and to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities,*** cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States ***given*** the need, in particular, for common, clear and transparent criteria and procedures for the selection and the monitoring of the European Capitals of Culture, as well as for a strong coordination between the Member States, but can rather, ***by reason of the scale and the expected effects of the action***, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in ***Article*** 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that ***Article***, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Establishment

▌ A Union action ***entitled*** 'European Capitals of Culture***' (the 'action') is hereby established*** for the years 2020 to 2033.

Article 2

Objectives

1. The general objectives of the action shall be the following:

(a) 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 space***;

(b) to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities ***in accordance with their respective strategies and priorities***.

2. The specific objectives of the action shall be the following:

(a) to enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural ***offering*** in cities, including through transnational cooperation;

(b) to widen access to and participation in culture;

(c) to strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its ***links*** with other sectors;

(d) to ***raise*** the international profile of cities through culture.

Article 3

Access to the action

-1. The competition for the European Capital of Culture title shall only be open to cities, which may involve their surrounding areas.

-1a. The number of European Capitals of Culture in a given year (the 'year of the title') shall not exceed three.

The designation shall apply each year to a maximum of one city in each of the two Member States appearing in the calendar set out in the Annex (the 'calendar') and, in the relevant years, to one city from candidate and potential candidate countries or to one city from a country that accedes to the Union in the circumstances set out in paragraph 3a.

1. Cities in Member States shall be entitled to be designated as European Capitals of Culture for one year ***in accordance with the calendar***.

▌

▌

3. Cities in candidate and potential candidate countries ***which participate in the Creative Europe Programme or in the subsequent Union programmes supporting culture at the date of the publication of the call for submission of applications referred to in Article 10 may*** apply for the European Capital of Culture title ***for one year*** in the framework of an open competition organised every third year ▌ in accordance with the calendar ▌.

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

Furthermore, each candidate or potential candidate country shall only be allowed to host the title once during the period from 2020 to 2033.

3a. Countries acceding to the Union after the adoption of this Decision but before 31 December 2026 shall be entitled to host the European Capital of Culture title according to the rules and procedures applicable to Member States seven years after accession. The calendar shall be updated accordingly. Countries acceding to the Union after 31 December 2026 shall not be entitled to participate under this European Capital of Culture action as Member States.

However, in years where there are already three European Capitals of Culture according to the calendar, the cities in the countries acceding to the Union shall only be entitled to host the European Capital of Culture title in the next available year in the calendar, in order of their accession.

If a city from a country acceding to the Union has previously participated in a competition for candidate and potential candidate countries, it cannot participate in any subsequent competition for Member States. Where a city of an acceding country has been designated as European Capital of Culture during the period from 2020 to 2033 in accordance with paragraph 3, that country shall not be entitled to nominate another of its cities as a European Capital of Culture under this action after its accession.

If more than one country accedes to the Union on the same date and if there is no agreement on the order of participation in the action between those countries, the Council shall organise a draw.

Article 4

Applications

▌

2. A common application form based on the criteria laid down in Article 5 ***(the 'application form')*** shall be prepared by the Commission and used by all candidate cities. ***Where a city involves its surrounding area, the application shall be made under the name of the city.***

3. Every application shall be based on a cultural programme with a strong European dimension. ***The cultural*** programme shall last one year and shall be created specifically for the European Capital of Culture title, in accordance with the criteria ***laid down*** in Article 5. ▌

Article 5

Criteria

The criteria for the assessment of the applications ***(the 'criteria')*** are divided into six categories: '***contribution to the*** long-term strategy', ▌'European dimension', '***cultural and artistic content***', '***capacity to deliver***', 'outreach' and 'management'.

1. As regards the '***contribution to the*** long-term strategy', the following factors shall be ***taken into account***:

(a) ***the fact that a cultural*** strategy for the ▌city ▌is in place at the time of the application, ***which includes the European Capitals of Culture action and plans for*** sustaining ***the*** cultural activities beyond the year of the title;

(b) the plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural ***and creative sectors, including developing long-term links between the cultural, economic and social sectors in the city concerned***;

▌

(d) the envisaged long-term cultural, social and economic ***impact, including urban development,*** that the title would have on the city;

(e) the plans for the monitoring and ***the*** evaluation of the impact of the title on the city ***and for disseminating the results of the evaluation***.

▌

4. As regards the 'European dimension', the following factors shall be assessed:

(a) the scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe***, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens***;

(b) the scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration ***and current European themes***;

(c) the scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, cooperation with operators or cities in different countries ***including, where appropriate, other European Capitals of Culture,*** and transnational partnerships;

(d) the strategy to attract the interest of a broad European ***and international*** public.

4a. As regards the 'cultural and artistic content', the following factors shall be assessed:

(a) a clear and coherent artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme of the year;

(b) the involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme;

(c) the range and diversity of the activities proposed and their overall artistic quality;

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(d) the capacity to combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.

4b. As regards the 'capacity to deliver', the candidate cities shall demonstrate that:

(a) the application has broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the local, regional and national authorities;

(b) the city has, or will have, adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title.

5. As regards 'outreach', the following factors shall be assessed:

(a) the involvement of the local population and civil society in the preparation of the application and the implementation of the European Capital of Culture;

(b) the creation of new and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people***, volunteers*** and the marginalised and disadvantaged, including minorities. Special attention shall also be given ▌ to the accessibility of these activities to persons with disabilities and the elderly;

(c) the overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

6. As regards 'management', the following factors shall be assessed:

(a) the feasibility of the ***fund-raising strategy and*** proposed budget***, which includes, where appropriate, plans to seek financial support from Union programmes and funds.*** This budget shall cover the preparation phase, the year of the title in itself***, the evaluation*** and provisions for the legacy activities***, and contingency planning***;

(b) the envisaged governance ▌ and delivery ***structure*** for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture, ***which shall include provision for appropriate cooperation between the local authority and the delivery structure, including the artistic team***;

(c) the ***procedures for the*** appointment ▌ of the ***general and*** artistic ***directors*** and ***their fields*** of action;

(d) the ***marketing and*** communication strategy, ***which*** shall be comprehensive and shall highlight that the European Capitals of Culture ***is*** an ***action*** of the Union;

(da) the existence of a delivery structure the staff of which have the appropriate skills and experience to plan, manage and deliver the cultural programme for the year of the title.

Article 6

Expert panel

1. A ▌ panel of independent experts (***the*** '▌ panel') shall be established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures.

1a. The panel shall consist of 10 experts appointed by Union institutions and bodies in accordance with paragraph 2 (the 'European experts').

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

2. ▌

After organising a call for expressions of interest, the Commission shall ***propose*** a pool of potential ***European experts***.

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission shall subsequently select three experts each from ***the*** pool and appoint them in accordance with their respective procedures. The Committee of the Regions shall select one expert ***from the pool*** and appoint ***that expert*** in accordance with its procedures.

When selecting European experts, each ***of those Union institutions*** and ***bodies*** shall seek to ensure ***complementarity of the competences,*** a balanced geographical ***distribution and gender balance in the overall composition of the panel***.

▌

2a. All experts shall be citizens of the Union. They shall be independent and have substantial experience and expertise in the cultural sector, in the cultural development of cities, or in the organisation of a European Capital of Culture or an international cultural event of similar scope and scale. The experts shall also be in a position to devote an appropriate number of working days per year to the panel.

The panel shall designate its chairperson.

3. The ▌ European ***experts*** shall be appointed for a period of three years.

Notwithstanding the first subparagraph, as regards the first ***establishment of the*** panel, the European Parliament shall appoint its ▌ experts for three years, the Council for one year, the Commission for two years and the Committee of the Regions ▌ for one year ▌ .

4. ***All experts*** of the ▌ panel shall declare any actual or potential conflict of interest in respect of a specific candidate city. In the event of such a declaration by ***an expert***, or if such a conflict of interest comes to light, that ***expert*** shall ***resign and the relevant Union institution or body or*** Member State ***shall replace that expert for the remainder of the mandate, in accordance with the relevant procedure***.

5. ***The Commission*** shall ***publish,*** on ***its*** website***, all reports of the panel***.

Article 7

Submission of applications in the Member States

1. Each Member State shall be responsible for the organisation of the competition between its cities in accordance with the calendar ▌ .

2. The Member States shall publish a call for submission of applications ***at least*** six years before the ▌ year of the title.

By way of derogation, those Member States which are entitled to nominate a European Capital of Culture in 2020 shall publish such a call as soon as possible after … (*).

Each call for submission of applications, aimed at the candidate cities for the title, shall ***contain*** the ▌ application form ▌ .

The deadline for the submission of applications ***by candidate cities*** under each call for submission of applications shall be scheduled ***at the earliest*** 10 months after its publication.

3. Applications shall be notified to the Commission by the Member State concerned.

Article 8

Pre-selection in the Member States

1. Each ▌ Member ***State*** concerned shall convene the ▌ panel for a pre-selection meeting with the candidate cities ***at least*** five years before ▌ the year of the title.

2. The ▌ panel***, after assessing*** the applications according to the criteria, shall agree on a short-list of candidate cities ▌ and ***shall*** issue a ***pre-selection*** report on ***all*** the applications ***providing, inter alia,*** recommendations to the short-listed candidate cities.

3. The ▌ panel shall submit ***the pre-selection*** report to the Member ***States*** concerned and to the Commission. Each of the Member States concerned shall formally approve the short-list based on the report of the panel.

(*) ***Date of the entry into force of this Decision.***

Article 9

Selection in the Member States

1. The short-listed candidate cities shall complete ***and revise*** their applications ***with a view to complying with the*** criteria ***as well as taking into account*** the recommendations ***contained in the*** pre-selection ***report***, and ***shall submit*** them to the Member ***State*** concerned, which shall then ***transmit*** them to the Commission.

2. Each ▌ Member ***State*** concerned shall convene the ▌ panel for a final selection meeting with the short-listed candidate cities ***no later than*** nine months after the pre-selection meeting.

Where necessary, the Member State concerned, in consultation with the Commission, may extend that deadline for a reasonable period.

3. The ▌ panel shall ***assess*** the completed ***and revised*** applications.

4. The ▌ panel shall issue a ***selection*** report on the applications with a recommendation for the nomination of one city in the Member State concerned as European Capital of Culture. However, if none of the candidate cities fulfils ***all*** the criteria, the ▌ panel may recommend that the title should not be awarded that year.

The ***selection*** report shall also contain recommendations to the ▌ city ***concerned regarding*** the progress to be made by the year of the title.

The ***panel*** shall ***submit the selection report*** to the Member State concerned and to the Commission. ▌

Article 10

Pre-selection and selection in candidate and potential candidate countries

1. The Commission shall be responsible for the organisation of the competition between cities in candidate and potential candidate countries.

2. The Commission shall publish in the *Official Journal of the European Union* a call for submission of applications ***at least*** six years before the ▌ year of the title. ▌

Each call for submission of applications, aimed at the candidate cities for the title, shall contain the application form.

The deadline for submitting applications under each call for submission of applications shall be scheduled at the earliest 10 months after its publication.

▌

4. 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 the ▌ application ***form***. No meeting with the candidate cities ***shall*** be organised.

The ▌ panel***, after assessing*** the applications according to the criteria, shall agree on a short-list of candidate cities ▌ and ***shall*** issue a ***pre-selection*** report on ***all*** the applications ***providing, inter alia,*** recommendations to the short-listed candidate cities. ***The panel shall submit its pre-selection*** report ▌ to the Commission ▌ .

5. The short-listed candidate cities shall complete ***and revise*** their applications ***with a view to complying with*** the criteria ***as well as taking into account*** recommendations ***contained in*** the pre-selection ***report,*** and ***shall submit*** them to the Commission.

The Commission shall convene the ▌ panel for a final selection meeting with the ***short-listed*** cities ***no later than*** nine months after the pre-selection ***meeting***. ***Where necessary, the Commission may extend that deadline for a reasonable period.***

The ▌ panel shall ***assess*** the completed ***and revised*** applications.

It shall issue a ***selection*** report on the applications of the short-listed candidate cities together with a recommendation for the nomination as European Capital of Culture of a maximum of one city in one candidate country or potential candidate country.

However, if none of the candidate cities fulfil all the criteria, the ▌ panel may recommend that the title should not be awarded that year.

The ***selection*** report shall also contain recommendations to the ▌ city ***concerned regarding*** the progress ▌ to be made by the year of the title.

The panel shall submit its selection report ▌ to the Commission ▌ .

Article 11

Designation

The Commission shall, by means of implementing acts, officially designate the European Capitals of Culture, having due regard to the recommendations of the ▌ panel. The Commission shall inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions of its designation.

Article 12

Cooperation between the designated cities

Cities designated for the same year shall seek to develop links between their cultural programmes ***and*** the cooperation ***may be considered*** in the framework of the monitoring procedure as laid down in Article 13.

Article 13

Monitoring

1. The ▌ panel shall monitor the preparation of the European Capitals of Culture and provide the cities with support and guidance from the time of their designation to the beginning of the year of the title.

2. To ***that*** end, the Commission shall convene ***three meetings which shall be attended by*** the ▌ panel and the ***designated*** cities ▌ : the first meeting shall take place three years before the ▌ year of the title; the second meeting shall take place 18 months before ▌ the year of the title and the third meeting shall take place two months before the ▌ year of the title. The Member State ***or candidate or potential candidate*** country concerned may nominate an observer to those meetings.

The cities shall issue progress reports to the Commission six weeks before each of the meetings.

During the meetings, the ▌ panel shall take stock of the preparations and give advice with a view to helping the cities to develop a high-quality ***cultural*** programme and an effective strategy. The panel shall pay special attention to the recommendations laid down in the selection report and in the preceding monitoring reports.

3. After each meeting, the ▌ panel shall issue a report on the state of preparations and any steps to be taken.

The panel shall transmit its monitoring reports ▌ to the Commission***, as well as*** to the cities and Member States or ***countries*** concerned. ▌

4. In addition to the monitoring meetings, the Commission may organise visits by ***the*** panel ▌ to the designated cities whenever necessary.

Article 14

Prize

1. ▌ The Commission ***may*** award a pecuniary prize ***(the 'prize')*** in honour of Melina Mercouri to ***a*** designated ***city subject to the funding made available under the relevant multiannual financial framework***.

The legal and financial aspects of ***the*** prize shall be dealt with in the framework of the respective Union programmes supporting culture.

2. ▌ The prize shall be paid no later than the end of ***March*** of the year of the title, provided that the city ***concerned*** keeps to 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 ▌ .

The commitments made at the application stage shall be deemed to have been adhered to by the designated city where no substantial change was made to the programme and strategy between the application stage and the year of the title, and in particular where:

(a) the budget ***was maintained at a level capable of delivering a high-quality cultural programme in line with the application and the criteria;***

(b) the independence of the artistic team was ***appropriately*** respected;

(c) the European dimension remained sufficiently strong in the final version of the cultural programme;

(d) the ***marketing and*** communication strategy and the communication material used by the ***designated*** city clearly reflect the fact that the European Capitals of Culture ***is*** an ***action*** of the Union;

(e) the plans for the monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the title on the city concerned are in place.

Article 15

Practical arrangements

The Commission shall in particular:

(a) ensure the overall coherence of the action;

(b) ensure coordination between the Member States and the ▌ panel;

(c) in the light of the objectives and criteria, establish guidelines to assist with the selection and monitoring procedures in close cooperation with the ▌ panel;

(d) provide ***technical*** support to the ▌ panel;

(e) make public all relevant information and contribute to the visibility of the action at European ***and international*** level;

(f) foster the exchange of experience and of ***good*** practices between past, present and future ***European*** Capitals ***of Culture***, as well as candidate cities***, and promote wider dissemination of the cities' evaluation reports and lessons learned.***

Article 16

Evaluation

1. The evaluation of the results of each European Capital of Culture shall be ▌ the responsibility of the ▌ city ***concerned***.

The Commission shall establish common guidelines and indicators for the cities based on the objectives and the criteria ▌ in order to ensure a coherent approach to the evaluation procedure.

The cities shall ***produce*** their evaluation reports ***and transmit them*** to the Commission by 31 ***December*** of the year following the year of the title ▌. The Commission shall publish ***the evaluation*** reports ***on its website***.

2. In addition to the cities' evaluations, the Commission shall also ensure ***that*** external and independent evaluation of the results of the ***action are produced*** on a regular basis. ▌

The external and independent ***evaluation*** shall ***focus on putting all past*** European Capitals of Culture ***in a European context, allowing for comparisons and drawing useful lessons for future European Capitals of Culture, as well as for all European cities. It shall also assess the*** action as a whole, including the efficiency of the processes involved in running ***it***, ***its*** impact ▌ and how it could be improved.

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

(a) a first interim ▌report ***by*** 31 December 2024;

(b) a second interim ▌report ***by*** 31 December 2029;

(c) an ex-post ▌report ***by*** 31 December 2034.

Article 17

Repeal and transitional provisions

Decision No 1622/2006/EC is hereby repealed. It shall however continue to apply in the case of cities which have been designated or are in the process of being designated as European Capitals of Culture for the years from 2012 to 2019.

Article 18

Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at ▌

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

ANNEX

Calendar

2020	Croatia ▌	Ireland	▌
2021	Romania	Greece	***Candidate or potential candidate country***
2022	Lithuania	Luxembourg	
2023	Hungary	United Kingdom	▌
2024	Estonia	Austria	***Candidate or potential candidate country***
2025	Slovenia	Germany	
2026	Slovakia	Finland	▌
2027	Latvia	Portugal	***Candidate or potential candidate country***
2028	Czech Republic	France	

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2029	Poland	Sweden	▌
2030	Cyprus	Belgium	***Candidate or potential candidate country***
2031	Malta	Spain	
2032	Bulgaria	Denmark	▌
2033	Netherlands	Italy	***Candidate or potential candidate country***