




Procedure file

Basic information	
COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Decision	1997/0290(COD) Procedure completed
European capital of culture: Community action, years 2005 to 2019 Amended by 2003/0274(COD)	
Subject 4.45.02 Cultural programmes and actions, assistance	

Key players			
European Parliament			
	Former committee for opinion		
	JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
Council of the European Union			
	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Culture	2427	23/05/2002
	Culture	2261	16/05/2000
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2175	10/05/1999
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2160	08/02/1999
	Culture	2100	28/05/1998
	Culture	2048	24/11/1997
	Culture	2022	30/06/1997

Key events			
30/06/1997	Debate in Council	2022	
30/10/1997	Legislative proposal published	COM(1997)0549	Summary
17/11/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
24/11/1997	Debate in Council	2048	
26/02/1998	Vote in committee, 1st reading		Summary
26/02/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A4-0083/1998	
29/04/1998	Debate in Parliament		Summary
30/04/1998	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T4-0240/1998	Summary
27/05/1998	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1998)0350	Summary

24/07/1998	Council position published	09268/1/1998	Summary
17/09/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
14/12/1998	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
14/12/1998	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0509/1998	
12/01/1999	Debate in Parliament		
13/01/1999	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T4-0007/1999	Summary
08/03/1999	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		
08/03/1999	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0106/1999	
09/03/1999	Debate in Parliament		
11/03/1999	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T4-0173/1999	Summary
10/05/1999	Act approved by Council, 2nd reading		
25/05/1999	Final act signed		
25/05/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
01/07/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1997/0290(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
	Amended by 2003/0274(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 151
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/4/10375; CULT/4/10376

Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal		COM(1997)0549, OJ C 362 28.11.1997, p. 0012	30/10/1997	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		B4-1099/1997	16/12/1997	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0083/1998 OJ C 138 04.05.1998, p. 0004	26/02/1998	EP	
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0448/1997 OJ C 180 11.06.1998, p. 0070	12/03/1998	CofR	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0240/1998 OJ C 152 18.05.1998, p. 0018-0058	30/04/1998	EP	Summary
Modified legislative proposal		COM(1998)0350, OJ C 208 04.07.1998, p. 0006	27/05/1998	EC	Summary

Council position	09268/1/1998 OJ C 285 14.09.1998, p. 0005	24/07/1998	CSL	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(1998)1533	15/09/1998	EC	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0509/1998 OJ C 104 14.04.1999, p. 0005	14/12/1998	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading	T4-0007/1999 OJ C 104 14.04.1999, p. 0036	13/01/1999	EP	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0106/1999 OJ C 175 21.06.1999, p. 0012	08/03/1999	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading	T4-0173/1999 OJ C 175 21.06.1999, p. 0183-0243	11/03/1999	EP	Summary
Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading	COM(1999)0154	15/04/1999	EC	Summary

Additional information

European Commission

[EUR-Lex](#)

Final act

[Decision 1999/1419](#)
[OJ L 166 01.07.1999, p. 0001](#) Summary

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

OBJECTIVE: Community- level nomination of the 'European City of Culture', the purpose of which is to highlight the cultural wealth and diversity of the cities of Europe whilst emphasizing their shared cultural heritage. **SUBSTANCE:** in accordance with the wishes of the European Parliament, which, in its opinion of 7 April 1995 on the KALEIDOSCOPE programme (COD94188), had called the presentation of a specific programme on the European City of Culture after the year 2000, the Commission has tabled a proposal to incorporate this event into the Community framework (Article 128 of the Treaty). Hitherto, decisions on the European City of Culture have been taken at intergovernmental level in the context of the EU Culture Council. The Commission therefore proposes that: - each year from 2002, a city be chosen to carry out a cultural project on a specific European theme (possibly in association with other European cities), - the 'European Cultural Month' event be discontinued, - from 2000 to 2005, a 'European City of Culture' event be organized at Community level as part of, and financed by, the future single 'Culture' programme, - these proposals be adopted under the codecision procedure and the European City of Culture be designated by the Council, after consulting Parliament, by a qualified majority, - in order to ensure proper preparation of the programme for the event, the Council should designate, as an exception during the transition period, the European City of Culture for 2001 (the cities for 2000 having already been selected). The proposal lays down details regarding the procedure for choosing the European City of Culture (formation of a selection panel, applications) and stipulates that the initiative is open to the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus, EEA countries and all European countries which have concluded a cooperation agreement containing a cultural clause. ?

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

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.?

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

Commissioner Oreja stated that the Member States must play an important role in the presentation of projects, in a way that, thanks to their support, the financial feasibility of the initiatives will be ensured. This is the reason why he rejected amendment 8. As for amendments 9 (last part) and 10, the Commissioner cannot accept them because co-decision is an instrument provided by the Treaty as a means to adopt measures that aim at cultural promotion and a general scope; this is not the case for designation procedure of a town as cultural capital, which must be quick and simplified. On these 2 points, the rapporteur replied, on the one hand, that the fact of allowing towns to directly submit their documents to the Commission should be used to underline the Community aspect of the procedure by avoiding the diminishing of the role of the European Capital of Culture; as for the assumed length of the co-decision, the procedure in question shows that the Parliament is in a position to give its opinion as a co-decider in less than three months; and he concluded by calling on the Executive to reinforce, instead of destroying, the cultural symbols of the Union.?

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

In adopting the report by Mr Philippe MONFILS (ELDR, B), the European Parliament approved the proposal to establish a Community initiative for the European City of Culture event, but with numerous amendments. These concerned four main aspects of the proposal: 1) selection of the City of Culture: the Selection Panel which delivers an opinion on the candidacies of the cities should meet annually. It should comprise seven personalities from the cultural sector, and membership of the Selection Panel should be incompatible with the exercise of any public elective office. On the basis of the Selection Panel's opinion, the city should be selected by means of the codecision procedure, involving the Council and Parliament. The cities themselves, rather than Member States, should put themselves forward as candidates. Parliament wishes the city to be selected from among cities in the Union, i.e. it should be located in one of the current 15 Member States. However, other European cities or regions (in the EEA, Eastern Europe, Cyprus or any other third country in Europe which has concluded a cooperation agreement) may be associated with the project, with the proviso that the city selected (within the Union) must lead the project throughout, and remains responsible for compliance with the rules governing the granting of subsidies; 2) selection criteria: social impact should be taken into account by mobilizing as many of the population as possible in support of the initiative. Maximum promotion and dissemination are to be sought for all events using all possible modes of communication (including the Internet). The extension of the action beyond the actual year in which the events take place will also be an important criterion. The project must promote dialogue in order to optimize the opening up to, and understanding of, others. Other aims include optimizing the historic heritage and urban design of the city selected and supporting creative work as part of the proposed cultural project; 3) funding: subject to the decisions of the budgetary authority and compliance with the Financial Perspective, a maximum reference amount of ECU 2 m is projected as the annual direct contribution by the European Union; 4) European Cultural Month: whereas the City of Culture initiative is of a strictly European Union nature (in the sense that the City must be located within the Union), Parliament upholds the idea of a European Cultural Month project, which would be open to participation by the countries of the European Economic Area, the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and European third countries which have concluded cooperation agreements with the Community containing a cultural clause.?

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

In its amended proposal the Commission has incorporated 8 of the 14 amendments adopted by Parliament on first reading, relating essentially to the organization of the 'European City of Culture' event and the selection of applications. The Commission incorporated the amendments relating to: - the members of the selection panel responsible for designating the European City of Culture: the selection panel shall meet each year; it shall be composed of seven leading independent figures from the cultural sector; membership of the selection panel shall be incompatible with the exercise of any public elective office; - responsibility for the cultural project: where a project involves several cities the proposing city shall lead the project throughout; - selection criteria: it must be specified how the project will support and develop creative work, ensure the widest possible participation of large sections of the population and continue the impact of the action beyond the year of the festivities, encourage wide dissemination of the various events by means of an appropriate Internet site and measures to promote mutual understanding and optimise the historic heritage of the city concerned. However, the Commission was unable to adopt certain amendments which were regarded as essential by the European Parliament concerning the following: - codecision procedure for designating cities, since the Commission considered that it was too cumbersome and undermined the smooth functioning of the programme; - the participation of certain third countries: the initiative must be open to eastern European third countries as provided for in the Association Agreements with these countries and not restricted to the 15 Member States of the European Union as Parliament wishes; - at the ending of the European Cultural Month: unlike Parliament, the Commission is not in favour of maintaining this initiative because of its limited duration and hence its lack of impact - and because of the opening of the 'city' initiative to EEA and CEEC third countries; - the total finance for the initiative: the Commission disagrees with Parliament's proposal for an annual budget of ECU 2 m for the project which is for funding for this initiative to be included in the 'culture' framework programme (COD98169).?

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

The Council's common position radically changes the approach taken by the Commission in its initial proposal. The text adopted by the Council is the result of a unanimously reached compromise which is a long way removed from the Community procedure for the designation of the European cities of culture. More precisely, the common position confines itself to a pre-defined list of countries based on the rotation of the Council presidency, from which the Council will select the 'European Capital of Culture' to be elected. Consequently, this list significantly alters the Commission proposal in that it eliminates the jury of independent high personalities called upon to judge the cultural content of the dossier presented by the candidate city. In addition, the common position considerably weakens the role of the European Parliament in that selection of the city remains entirely down to the Council. Notably, this common position also changes the reference period for the selection of the European city as the new selection system does not cover the years 2001 to 2004, for which the current status quo is maintained (intergovernmental selection). As regards the European Parliament's amendments, virtually none of the proposals made by the Assembly has

been adopted by the Council, except by very indirect means (e.g. ?cities may choose to open their programme to participation by their region? instead of ?the project may involve several European cities, of which one would remain in charge of operations?). More specifically, the common position is structured as follows: 1) Member States propose the candidacy of a ?European Capital of Culture? (and not ?City?), in turn and in the order set out in the Annex from 2005 to 2019 (these candidacies are presented 4 years before the final selection to the Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions); 2) the Council officially selects each capital for the year set out in the Annex (N.B. the chronological order of proposed countries may be amended by common agreement, hence Holland and Greece have already exchanged their positions on the list); 3) the action is open to European third countries who can propose the candidacy of one of their own cities. The Council will decide unanimously on the admissibility of such a candidacy (in other words, the Council foresees the participation of two cities per year: one in a Member State and one in a third European country); 4) the selected capitals propose a year-long programme (or possibly shorter) of cultural events involving cultural actors from other European countries. They can also involve their regions in the proposed programme; 5) the capitals must ensure that their programme has a cultural value (an Annex specifies the programming and evaluation criteria to be taken into account by the candidate cities in their programme proposals) and outline the programme to the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions six months before the beginning of the event. In this respect, the Commission will set up an advisory committee made up of personalities known in cultural circles and appointed by the Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions. This committee may help the Council in choosing between candidate cities.?

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

In its opinion on the Council common position on the European capital of culture, the Commission regrets entirely the text adopted unanimously by the Council. It feels that this common position significantly changes its own proposal, even if the fundamental objective of the proposal, namely the realisation of a large-scale European action, and its visibility remain the same. Nonetheless, the Commission considers that the compromise arrived at does not contribute to strengthening the European and cultural character of the event. It underlines this in particular by means of a declaration it made at the time of the text's adoption by the Council, in which it announced that it would reserve the right to subsequently take any initiative which would ensure the European and cultural character of this event. Stressing that the common position is only a step in the legislative process, the Commission hopes that, during the co-decision process, an agreement may be reached between the institutions with a view to making this action part of a Community framework. Finally, the Commission warns the European Parliament against re-presenting its amendments, which it considers to have already been quasi-rejected.?

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

Philippe Monfils (B, ELDR) on behalf of the Committee, will be recommending that the House rejects Council's common position on the European capitals of culture. This common position lays down a rota system for the member states to nominate cities from 2005 to 2019, replaces the selection panel originally proposed with a weaker guidance panel and removes the cultural value of programmes as a selection criterion. Mr Monfils is challenging the procedure which the Council wants to use from 2005 onwards for selecting the capitals of culture. In order to adopt the declaration of intention to reject the common position, a majority of MEP's (314) must vote in favour in plenary on 13th January 1999. It is important to note that rejection of the Council's position would in no way affect the cities already selected in a decision by the member states' governments. These cities are: Rotterdam and Oporto in 2001, Bruges and Salamanca in 2002, Graz in 2003 and Genoa and Lille in 2004. ?

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

Under codecision procedure, second reading, the European Parliament approved the proposal of Philippe Monfils (B, ELDR) for a declaration of intended rejection of common position (EC) No 47/98 established by the Council with a view to adopting a European Parliament and Council Decision establishing a Community action for the "European Capital of Culture" event for the years 2005 to 2019. The vote did not affect existing choices up to 2004.

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

The Parliament adopted a recommendation concerning the decision on the common position (EC) 47/99 on a Community action for the 'European Capital of Culture' drafted by Mr. Philippe MONFILS (ELDR, Belgium). MEPs voted to endorse the compromise reached with the Council over proposed arrangements to be adopted in selecting European cultural capitals over the 2005 to 2019 period, following achievement of a compromise between Council and Parliament which is embodied in the amendments that were adopted. The principle of rotation by country was accepted and several towns from the same country will be able to present their candidature on the basis of a programme of cultural events. Finally, a selection panel of independent experts will draw up a report, Parliament will deliver its opinion and the Commission will make a recommendation with Council making a final decision.?

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

In its text regarding the modification of the proposal on the European Culture Capital and following the European Parliament's second reading, the Commission accepted all of the latter's amendments. As a consequence, it has amended its proposal by integrating the amendments aimed at: - reintroducing into the body of the decision the system of an independent panel, as well as the criteria on which the submission would be evaluated, as provided for in the Commission's original proposal (cultural project with a European dimension); - specifying the criteria to assure the cultural quality and the European dimension of the programme of the designated Cultural Capital; - modifying the date of the end

of the Kaleidoscope Programme (1999 instead of 1998) in the framework of which a contribution has been envisaged up to now for the European Cultural Capital; - deleting the former criteria for the cultural evaluation of submissions and the former steering committee composed of independent persons; - taking into consideration of the future enlargement of the Union.?

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

PURPOSE: to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features that they share, as well as to promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens via the annual European City of Culture designation. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** European Parliament and Council Decision 1419/1999/EC establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019. **CONTENT:** this decision seeks to modify the procedure followed up to now regarding the designation of the 'European Capital of Culture' (intergovernmental designation procedure with unanimity in the Council). It provides that from 2005 onwards, the designation of the European Culture Capital will be done in a more transparent way and according to a procedure involving the other European institutions. However, the designation of the Capital can only be made in the context of a calendar pre-established by the Council for the period 2005-2019 and using a system of rotation of candidates by Member State. More specifically, the decision provides that: 1) Four years before the beginning of the event, the Member State cited in the list should submit to the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions the candidacy dossier of the eligible cities for the year under consideration; 2) The Commission will gather together each year a selection panel composed of important independent persons (7) who are experts in the cultural sector (2 designated by the Parliament, 2 by the Commission, 2 by the Council and 1 by the Committee of the Regions) who will be asked to compile a report on the various candidates put forward. The Parliament may transmit an opinion to the Commission on the candidate(s) within the three months that follow the report; 3) On the Commission's recommendation and in light of the Parliament's opinion and the report of the selection panel, the Council will designate the European Culture Capital for the year under consideration. The decision contains specific details regarding the presentation of the candidate's submission. The nomination shall include a cultural project of European dimension, based principally on cultural cooperation. This project may be undertaken in cooperation with other European cities. The submission shall specify how the nominated city intends to: - highlight artistic movements and styles shared by European which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution; - promote events involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States and leading to lasting cultural cooperation, and to foster their movement within the EU; - support and develop creative work which is an essential element in any cultural policy; - ensure the mobilisation and participation of large sections of the population and, as a consequence, the social impact of the action and its continuity beyond the year of the events; - encourage the reception of citizens of the Union and the widest possible dissemination of the various events by employing all forms of multimedia; - promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world and, in that spirit, to optimise the opening up to, and understanding of others, which are fundamental cultural values; - exploit the historic heritage, urban architecture and quality of life in the city. The initiative is open to European non-member countries. These countries need to notify the Parliament, Council, Commission and the Committee of the Regions of their wish to participate in the initiative. The Council shall officially designate one of these nominated cities as a European Capital of Culture for each year. The list indicating the planning and evaluation criteria is set out in the Annexes. Each year the Commission shall produce a report evaluating the results of the previous year's event, including an analysis by the organisers of the latter. The report shall be presented to the Parliament, Council and Committee of the Regions. It should be noted that the decision does not modify the system of intergovernmental designation of the European Capital of Culture for the years 2001 to 2004 (the cities are Rotterdam and Oporto in 2001, Bruges and Salamanca on 2002, Graz in 2003, Genoa and Lille on 2004). **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 27.07.1999.