

**REPORT
OF THE SELECTION MEETING
FOR THE EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF
CULTURE 2010**

**Issued by
The Selection Panel for the European Capital of
Culture (ECOC) 2010**

April 2006

This is a report of the meeting of the European capital of Culture Selection Panel on 14 and 15 March 2006. The report is addressed to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission and the Committee of Regions.

I Background

The European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) initiative, a major European Union activity, is a way of bringing together people from the European Union and other European countries who are involved in culture. The objective is to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater mutual knowledge and understanding among Europe's citizens.

“The European City of Culture” project was launched in 1985 by the Member States meeting in the Council on the initiative of Mrs Melina Mercouri. Since then, the event has grown in popularity every year, and is now well known to European citizens.

Until 2004, the European Capitals of Culture were designated by the Council on the basis of intergovernmental cooperation. Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council established a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019. By this decision, a *new nomination procedure* was introduced whereby each year, one city of a Member State is designated as European Capital of Culture, following the order listed in the annex to the decision.

A modified Decision was adopted in February, 2005, in order to integrate the 10 Member States which joined the EU in 2004. The modification means that for each year from 2009 to 2019, two Member States will be entitled to make proposals to the EU : one from the Member States which joined the EU in 2004, another one from the others.

Moreover, article 4 of Decision 1419/1999/EC, as modified by Decision 649/2005/EC, makes it possible for European non-member countries to participate in the action by making proposals of cities for the title of ‘European Capital of Culture’.

For the year 2009 onwards, the *nomination procedure* for member states is as follows:

- The national authorities of the relevant countries nominate one or several cities, four years before the event is due to begin. The nominations are notified to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions by the Member states concerned four years before the event is due to begin.
- A selection panel meets and issues a report on the nominations judged against the objectives and criteria specified in the decision. The report is submitted to the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council.
- The European Parliament may forward an opinion to the Commission on the nominations within three months after the receipt of the report.

- The Commission gives a recommendation on the designation of the Capitals of Culture to the Council. The recommendation takes the opinion of the Parliament and the selection panel's report into consideration.
- The Council officially designates the cities in question (one from each Member State entitled to make proposals, plus a maximum of one city from the European non member countries) as the European Capitals of Culture for the year in which they have been nominated. The Decision specifies that the Council can designate a maximum of one city from non-member countries for a given year and that the designation of a city from a non-member country has to be taken unanimously.

According to Article 2 of Decision 1419/1999/EC, the *selection panel* shall be composed of seven leading independent figures who are experts on the cultural sector, of whom two shall be appointed by the European Parliament, two by the Council, two by the Commission and one by the Committee of the Regions.

II The selection panel and the candidate cities for 2010

1. The selection panel

On 2 March 2006, the Commission appointed Mr Didier Fusillier and Lord Chris Smith of Finsbury by written procedure number E/342/2006.

The European Parliament decided, during its Conference of Presidents of 16 November 2005, to nominate Mr Jordi Pascual i Ruiz and Ms Veronika Ratzenboeck.

The Council appointed Mr Claude Frisoni and Sir Jeremy Isaacs, on 14 November 2005. The two candidates had been nominated by the Luxemburg and the British Council presidencies, in accordance with the Council Decision of 17 December 1999 (2000/C 9/01).

The Committee of the Regions presented their choice of member, Mr Myllyvirta, with Mr Seamus Murray as alternate, in their letter of 9 March 2006 from President Delebarre to Commissioner Figel'.

2. Candidates for 2010

With his letter of 26 September 2005 to Commissioner Figel', the Head of the permanent representation of Germany to the EU submitted the nomination of Essen and Görlitz for the title of European Capital of Culture, referring to annex I of the (modified) Decision 1419.

With his letter of 21 December 2005, the Hungarian Minister Andràs Bozoki submitted the nomination of Pécs for the title of European Capital of Culture, referring to annex I of the (modified) Decision 1419.

With his letter of 18 July 2005 to President Barroso, the Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism Atilla Koç submitted the nomination of Istanbul for the title of European Capital of Culture, referring to article 4 of the (modified) Decision 1419.

With his letter of 15 December 2005 to Commissioner Figel', the First vice Prime Minister of Ukraine Stanislav Stashevskyi submitted the nomination of Kiev for the title of European Capital of Culture, referring to article 4 of the (modified) Decision 1419.

The Commission sent all the applications to the selection panel on 23 February 2006.

III Meeting of the selection panel in Brussels, 14-15 March 2006

1. Organisation of the meeting

On the initiative of the Commission, the panel members were invited to a meeting on 14-15 March 2006 in Brussels. The applicant cities were invited to present their applications and to answer questions from the panel members.

The agenda of the meeting was as follows:

14 March 2 p.m – 7 p.m :

1. Introduction by Christine Boon - Falleur, European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture.
Presentation of the context and role of the selection panel in accordance with Decision 1419/199/EC amended by Decision 649/2005/EC.
Nomination of the Chairman.
2. Presentation of the proposal by representatives from Kiev and questions from the selection panel to the delegation.
3. Closed discussion.
4. Presentation of the proposal by representatives from Istanbul and questions from the selection panel to the delegation.
5. Closed discussion.

15 March 10.15 a.m – 5.30 p.m :

1. Presentation of the proposal by representatives from Pècs and questions from the selection panel to the delegation.
3. Closed discussion.
4. Presentation of the proposal by representatives from Essen and questions from the selection panel to the delegation.
5. Presentation of the proposal by representatives from Görlitz and questions from the selection panel to the delegation.
6. Closed discussion.

Lord Smith was available and participated in the meeting only on 15 March. Mr Myllyvirta was not available and Mr Murray replaced him during the whole meeting.

Representatives of each nominated city gave a presentation of their candidature and answered questions from the selection panel.

The following were present from the European Commission as observers: Harald Hartung (Head of the Culture Unit of DG Education and Culture), Jacqueline Pacaud (Culture Unit), Aikaterini Xethali (Culture Unit).

Sir Jeremy Isaacs was elected chairman and conducted the meeting.

2. Summary of the presentation of the nominated cities:

A) Istanbul :

As a European Capital of Culture, “Istanbul, a city of the four elements” would function as a bridge, connecting Europe to its East. It is a living example of the meeting of civilisations. It has been at the crossroads of European civilisations for centuries and it has learned to “live differences”.

The programme of the year is built around the four elements of the universe, which have a special meaning to Istanbul: “Earth” refers to tradition and transformation ; “Air - heaven sent” will bring local and foreign musicians together. “Water - the city and the sea” will focus on a multitude of activities on the Bosphorus and “Fire - forging the future” will focus on modern arts and events for large parts of its population.

With its project, the delegation underlined, Istanbul has started a novel “bottom up” process, mobilising large parts of its population and civil society organisations already in the planning phase for the project, by which civil society and its organisations become the owners of this process. During the ECOC year, the delegation stressed,

the arts would go public in order to attract also parts of the population which, in the past, would not have been the primary target groups for such activities. Furthermore, emphasis would be put on promoting young artists, for whom the ECOC year would be a unique opportunity to become known at the international level. The ECOC team will work together closely with Istanbul's network of partner cities and, in particular, with the former and future European Capitals of Cultures in order to make best use of their expertise.

The initiative for the candidature of Istanbul was started by civil society organisations. These organisations (including cultural organisations) are the backbone of the project's concept, planning and implementation. They have chosen a structure which leaves the door open to all who wish to join and have put in place a new model of co-decision. While participation in preparing the programme and the different events is open, a clear management structure has been put in place, consisting of an administrative and an executive board which meet at regular intervals and monitor progress of the programme and the events leading up to the ECOC year 2010.

Special attention will be given to communication and promotion activities. Special partnerships with newspapers, radio and TV stations will be established. In addition, the organisers of the 2010 project will work together closely with 26 schools of communication and will make its young artists "ambassadors" of Istanbul 2010 abroad. One of the funding actions in Istanbul is to levy a particular gasoline tax for the Capital of Culture event, making gasoline stations into discussions points about the ECOC event for the local population.

By way of conclusion the delegation underlined that the Capital of Culture title and event in 2010 would turn the glorious city of Istanbul of the present and the past into a vibrant city of the future.

B) Kiev :

The delegation from Kyiv stressed that by becoming European Capital of Culture, the city would like to restore the historic truth concerning its European identity. It would present the historic and cultural legacy of the city to Europe and it would regain its unique place as a crossroads of Western and Eastern cultures. The ECOC event would encourage the active participation of its citizens and, in particular, of young people in cultural life, facilitate their spiritual and intellectual growth, and attract visitors from abroad.

With regard to its capacity to host big international events, the delegation highlighted the various festivals hosted by the city as well as its popular fairs in order to illustrate the dynamism of the city. It presented the different aspects of the urban regeneration through culture envisaged by the city: restoration of the cultural heritage (both material and non-material), transformation of old buildings, recreation. The tradition of tolerance was underlined (ethnic minorities, religions), as well as the numerous twin cities of Kyiv and its regular exchange of experience with other European cities.

The delegation recalled that the city had been designated as the “European region of the year” and hosted the Eurovision competition in 2005.

A chart of the organizational structure, the budgetary planning from 2006 to 2010 as well as the outlines of the cultural programme and the objectives of Kiev 2010 was presented. The budget is estimated to 60-80 Million € coming from three sources: local, state and private sponsorship.

By way of conclusion, the delegation stressed that the city had undergone a considerable process of transformation since 2004. It underlined that the ECOC title would give the city the chance to highlight its European identity and to attract the attention of Europeans, both essential elements for which it has been struggling for so long.

C) Pécs :

Pécs’ authorities presented the central idea of the programme for the year, based on the fact that the city belongs to a cultural periphery in a variety of ways: to create a “borderless city” (as the slogan for the year says). The city would like to become one of the cultural centres of an international region at the border of Western and South-Eastern Europe. The delegation underlined that the artistic community of Pécs is the second most important in the country (after Budapest) and that the whole region would profit from this event.

The delegation stressed the location of the city in Hungary and its history and the cultural layers which have shaped it, including that of Romanians.

The Pécs’ authorities in charge of this project devised the event as a “Cultural gateway to the Balkans”.

The delegation wished to establish new forms of cooperation with regional and international partners and, in particular, to further deepen its relationships with the past and future ECOCs. A partnership project involving 7 cities in several neighbouring countries would be built on already strong historic ties from the past.

The concept of the proposal is focused on three main themes: rediscovering urbanity/ cultural shift in urban development/ changes in urban cultural policy. Until 2010, each year is dedicated to one item related to culture:

- 2006 : the year of cultural heritage,
- 2007 : the year of education and learning,
- 2008 : the year of environmental culture and health care,
- 2009 : the year of religious culture

The city’s expenditure for the event would be estimated at some €141 millions, whereas the operating expenditure would be in the range of €36 millions for the 2006-2011 period. The main source for operating funds would be the state, followed by the city.

In its concluding remarks the delegation underlined that one of the main elements for the city to be selected at national level (before forwarding the proposal to the EU) was its citizens' commitment to the project and its implementation.

D) Essen and the Ruhr

The central idea of the concept was to regenerate through culture the vast space devoted to and despoiled by industrial development and to create a metropolis – the Ruhr metropolis- resulting from bringing together the smaller cities of the region.. To win the title of the European Capital of Culture would help the region in its quest for a new identity through a unity – a unity not imposed from above but achieved from its roots – “bottom up” – with culture as the driving force.

Regeneration and redevelopment of the region was the core of the project for 2010. “Transformation through culture, culture through transformation” was the slogan for this operation. The authorities would like to transform the region into a European cultural metropolis and to transform the “black image” of Essen (corresponding to the industrial past) into an image of dynamism.

The global concept focused on 3 items : urbanism, identity and integration. These items constituted the basis for selecting the projects that would be integrated in the programme. They would be interconnected with the 3 themes that structure the year 2010, namely : the city of possibilities/the city of arts/ the city of culture.

Several culture and general infrastructures were presented, as well as projects for 2010 (such as “the invisible city” or “the land for free projects”).

The cities as well as the region could build on a cultural history, with many theatres and concert halls. In addition, new and innovative venues would be created by the transformation of the industrial buildings.

The ECOC title and year would not be seen as a one off event limited to the year 2010. It would find its place in a long term cultural development with specific programmes already starting now and going beyond the year 2010. Therefore, a number of projects have already started such as the “Melez festival” the main project related to migration in the region and the “Twins 2010”, a network involving over 150 towns. Cultural diversity as well as integration was an important part of the programme which should be achieved through celebration, integration and mutual understanding.

The whole operation would cost 78 million € among which a budget of 48 millions has been earmarked as a basic budget for the preparation and the implementation of the Ruhr's programme of activities as ECOC 2010. The main sources of funding would come from the Federal Government , the local government and the region as well as sponsors.

The representatives of the “Essen for the Ruhr” delegation concluded that the Ruhr region was a replica of Europe at a smaller scale. Steel and coal were at the origin of EU integration (“Coal and Steel Treaty”) – and they were at the origin of the Ruhr region. The problems and questions of post-industrialisation the Ruhr was confronted with were fundamental questions raised all over Europe today. The model of transformation and regeneration of post-industrial societies and landscapes through arts and culture, given by the Ruhr, could set an example for other regions in Europe to follow. The legacy of the event would be a new identity for the region in the European scene.

E) Görlitz / Zgorzelec

The delegation presented the unique history and story of the city which was symbolic of European integration after World War II. Görlitz was divided into one Polish part (Zgorzelec) and one German part (Görlitz), separated by the river Neisse. In 1989 the two cities have started a process of dialogue and “europianisation” of every day life and became one city of two nations.

The bridge that unites the two cities would be the centre of this project. The slogan displayed for Görlitz 2010 was : “living cultural unity, living cultural diversity - From the middle of nowhere to the heart of Europe”. The delegation explained that this “European city” was full of memory and heritage and, at the same time, a laboratory for the European idea.

The delegation presented the two aspects which characterise the concept of the application : “work in progress” in which the German-Polish double city is growing together and the “profiling” of the positioning of the region in its dialogue with Europe.

The concept of the application was based on five main projects: The bridge Park –A New Urbanity; Border Crossings of Arts; The Stone Chronicles of European City Architecture; Via Regia – Dialogue of Horizons; The Lake Berzdorf – Re-naturalization of a former strip mine. The cultural networking with the region was ensured by the “Regionet” and the correspondence project.

The new urban quarter “Bridge Park” would be the heart of Görlitz as one of the European Capitals of Culture for 2010. The library of Arts & Science, the Concert Hall, a museum and a synagogue already existed. The Forum for Arts & Media would be created.

In order to give evidence of its know how, the city representatives explained that Görlitz hosted already various regional festivals such as the “Festival of Greek song” and the “Festival of Forgotten music”. Many bilingual projects already existed and/or are planned for the future such as the existing bilingual kinder garden or the bilingual music school.

The city demonstrated its will to cross the border and to communicate and cooperate with several cities in neighbouring countries as well as with previous and future ECOCs. Through culture the East and the West would meet in order to create a new city for future generations. The delegation highlighted the direct involvement of the youth in the city and European associations/networks of youth in the project. The delegation underlined that it lived out cultural unity in the midst of national diversity.

The funding of the project would be provided by the public sector: the City, the State as well as the Federal Government. The operational expenditures are estimated at 61 million € spread over 10 years (2002-2012) ; more than half of this budget would be earmarked for the year 2010. Capital investments are estimated to 91,8 millions of euros for the 2006-2010 period. An additional commitment has been included in the budgetary planning of the city for 2011 and 2012 on order to secure the sustainable effects of the event.

IV The panel's assessment

In accordance with article 2 of Decision 1419/1999 as amended by Decision 649/2005, the role of the selection panel consists of assessing the proposals judged against the objectives, characteristics and criteria set out in the Decision (article 3 and Annex II) and delivering some advice on how to improve the project if necessary.

This article states that the nominations shall include a cultural project of European dimension, based principally on cultural co-operation, in accordance with the objectives and action provided for by Article 151 of the Treaty.

Consequently, the specifications of Article 3 as well as the criteria contained in annex II of the decision were fully taken into account by the panel during the meeting. The panel based its assessment exclusively on the merits of the applications, evaluated against the objectives and criteria as set out in Article 3 and Annex II of the decision.

The recommendations of the jury are based on the extent to which the received bids meet the criteria and objectives laid down in the Decision (see Article 3 and Annex II of Decision 1419/1999/EC).

The criteria are attached to the report. At any stage of the meeting, the Commission guaranteed that all candidate cities were treated on an equal footing .

1) Assessment and Conclusion

During the question and answer time with each of the delegations, discussions focused on the European dimension and the European value added of the proposals, on the infrastructure of the cities to host big cultural events together with a big

number of visitors from all over Europe, on the sustainable character of the cultural programme as well as of the infrastructure to be put in place. Furthermore, the committee inquired into if and in what way the capital of culture programme for 2010 would make the appearance of the city, its cultural life and the direct involvement of its citizens different from any other year. Finally, the committee asked additional questions related to the management structure and artistic coordination of the project for the years to come as well as to the financing of the artistic programme and of the infrastructure to be put in place for the year 2010 and beyond.

A) Kiev and Istanbul:

The selection panel welcomed the initiatives undertaken by these two cities from non-EU countries. The panel members acknowledged that the candidatures from both cities included considerable cultural assets and attractive events.

With regard to Kiev, the panel acknowledged the wish of the city to become European Capital of Culture in order to highlight its European identity for which it has been struggling so hard. The panel took due note of Kiev's capacity to host big international events and of the substantive restoration work which was going on in the city. It welcomed the aim of the city to make its citizens participate actively in the ECOC programme and to ensure, in particular, the active involvement of its youth. However, the panel noted that the specific difference and distinctiveness of the ECOC programme for 2010 as compared to other years could be further developed and be better brought in line with the ECOC concept and the related objectives and criteria as defined in Decision 1419/1999.

As to the candidature of Istanbul, the panel noted that the proposal was the result of a long and careful preparation and of an in-depth reflection on the nature and purpose of the ECOC action. The panel thought that the delegation had a clear view of the concept and the tools and methodologies needed in order to achieve the event. The experts expressed satisfaction with the innovative character of programme and the strong European dimension of the project.

The idea of a program articulated around the four elements was considered to be very valuable because it was viewed both as innovative and as building on the roots of the city at the same time. The bottom-up process, as well as the active role of civil society, were viewed as crucial assets of the proposal. The sustainable character of the programme, starting in 2007 and going beyond the ECOC year, was noted positively, as well as the intention to reach out to parts of the local population which would normally not be the primary target groups for cultural events. The communication strategy which was developed as an integral part of the proposal could serve as example to be followed by other candidate cities

The panel concluded that Istanbul's proposal responded to all criteria set in Decision 1419 and decided unanimously to recommend the designation of Istanbul as an ECOC for 2010 on the basis of Decision 1419/1999.

In its role of advisory body, the panel invited the delegation of Istanbul to pay particular attention to the selection process that it will have to set up for the projects to be included in the programme. The panel felt that the monitoring and advisory process to be implemented by the Commission under the new Decision will be a useful tool to assist the preparatory work to be achieved by Istanbul 2010.

With regard to Kiev, the panel encouraged the city to continue to develop further its cultural policies and programmes for the years to come, and to build on the international contacts and exchanges it has developed in the context of the ECOC candidature.

B) Pécs :

The panel was satisfied with the quality of the proposal and its compliance with the criteria of Decision 1419/1999. The experts took a positive stand on in the positioning of Pécs as the “the gateway” to the South-East of Europe, as this reflects its historic role which is considered an asset for its future. In its international contacts related to the ECOC project, Pécs built on the historic ties it had developed over centuries with some regions of Europe. Although Pécs could be considered as a smaller city when compared to other ECOC candidates, the panel believed that its 47 neighbouring municipalities working together would provide for the necessary infrastructure to host the event. The panel felt the concept of the proposal was well balanced as far as history and tradition were concerned, and it included new and innovative ideas, in particular, in the multicultural aspects of the projects.

By way of conclusion the panel recommended unanimously the designation of Pécs as European Capital of Culture.

In its role as advisory board and in view of the setting up of the monitoring and advisory process as envisaged in the new decision on the European Capitals of Culture, the panel invited the delegation from Pécs to pay particular attention to further developing the artistic content of the programme for the years to come. To this end, an artistic director should be appointed as soon as possible. The choice of an artistic director would be a crucial point for the following months. This person should be given a certain level of independence within the organizational structure in order to create, monitor and implement creative events.

C) Essen and Görlitz/ Zgorzelec

The panel members considered the two cities with intense attention. The selection committee was deeply impressed by the two German candidatures, in particular, by the well thought through concepts of their projects, by the informative and exhaustive documentation they submitted and by their presentations. Both had a very strong story to tell. Both cities convinced the jury of their sound financial planning as far as the

cultural programme and the infrastructure were concerned. Both candidates had already put in place organisational structures for the management of the project. In both cases, the artistic directors of each of the cities would only be appointed once they had been awarded the title. Taking into account the criteria and objectives laid down in decision 1419/1999, the committee assessed both proposals as excellent although very different in scale. It appreciated the strong European added value of both projects.

With regard to the candidature of Görlitz/Zgorzelec the panel was moved by the unique history of the cities and appreciated their efforts to restore dialogue and to build bridges beyond the border. The panel underlined the importance of the bridge over the Neisse river and the related bridge Park as the centrepiece of the 2010 project and as a symbol of the reconciliation of two nations and of a city divided by war. It was the symbol of a reconciliation process, which has been at the heart of European integration since the 1950s. It welcomed the efforts of Görlitz to not only take symbolic action in this context, but to live this reconciliation and “Europeanisation” in a practical way in everyday life. It recognised the efforts of the city to move “from the middle of nowhere” to the heart of European integration. Furthermore, the committee highlighted that the micro-cosmos of this town was an ideal example of what growing together within the European Union could look like in practical terms.

The main challenge as exposed in the candidature of “Essen for the Ruhr” lays with regenerating through culture an industrial region of 53 municipalities with 5.3 million inhabitants and 140 nationalities and transforming it into a new living metropolis. The committee underlined the innovative character of some of the main projects like the “Flying City Hall”, “The Invisible City” or the “Melez” laboratory and festival, would offer a wide variety of events to visitors from abroad. At the same time, it recognised the efforts envisaged to integrate the steadily increasing number of children and teenagers from immigrant families via “integration through culture “and to encourage them to participate actively in the 2010 projects.

While fully recognising the merits of the approach and symbolic character of the candidature of Görlitz, the committee was convinced by the challenging concept of the “Essen for the Ruhr” project, by its innovative character and by the great variety of projects and approaches which would form the Essen 2010 programme. Furthermore, it believed that this innovative concept and programme could raise the interest of many European citizens, attract a large number of visitors from throughout Europe and further a field and could mobilise important parts of the local population to take part actively in the event. Finally, it felt that this transformation of what was once Europe’s biggest industrial region and the “coal pit” of Europe into a vibrant metropolis of the future via “Transformation through Culture” could become a symbol of the new role that culture needs to assume in any European metropolis, and could become a symbol to other city agglomerations in Europe that face similar challenges.

After an exhaustive debate based on the objectives and criteria of the ECOC action, the panel reached a firm consensus to recommend Essen for the title, given the innovative and distinguished character and the importance of the project the city intends to achieve for 2010 and beyond.

The committee recalled that on previous occasions both German candidates indicated that they would work closely together and that the city designated for the 2010 title would establish close cultural links with the other candidate for the same year in order to make maximum use of the expertise, know how and enthusiasm this city has developed in its project over the last few years. The committee, therefore, invites Essen to further pursue this idea and to establish close links with Görlitz for the 2010 Capital of Culture year.

2) The panel's recommendation

On the basis of an overall evaluation of the applications the panel – while suggesting some improvement in the areas commented upon - reached a consensus to recommend to the Institutions of the European Union that Essen, Pécs and Istanbul host the European Capital of Culture in 2010.

The Committee also takes this opportunity to invite all cities which have submitted a proposal for the 2010 title, be it at national or at European level, to continue the efforts they have started during the selection process and to further deepen the contacts in the field of culture, they have built up during the preparatory phase. It calls on the regional and national authorities to give these cities the support they need in order to further develop and implement their cultural programmes for which they had laid the ground during the selection phase for the Capitals of Culture.

In a more general context the committee underlines that the recommendation for and designation of a European capital of culture is not the end but the beginning of a process leading to the ECOC event 2010. Therefore, the committee invites all cities concerned to step up their already considerable efforts to make the ECOC 2010 year a success.

3) Monitoring phase

Provided that the proposal made by the Commission concerning the ECOC action (COM (2005) 209 final) is adopted as amended by the European Parliament (EP CULT and EDUC committee) in February, 2006, the 2010 ECOCs will be submitted to a monitoring phase between the designation and the beginning of the event.

The monitoring will be carried out under the responsibility of 7 members designated by the European Institutions. This panel is called the monitoring and advisory panel. It shall be convened on two occasions between the designation and the beginning of

the event to give advice on, and to take stock of the preparations for the event with a view to helping cities to develop a high-quality programme with a strong European dimension.

On the basis of the report issued by the monitoring and advisory panel after its second meeting, a prize in honour of Melina Mercouri shall be awarded to the designated cities by the Commission provided that they meet the criteria laid down in Article 3 and have implemented the recommendations made by the selection as well as the monitoring and advisory panels. The prize shall be monetary and shall be awarded in full at the latest three months before the start of the relevant year.

It will be paid via the new framework Culture programme.

Claude Frisoni
(Council designation) signed

Didier Fusillier
(Commission designation) signed

Sir Jeremy Isaacs
Elected chairman
(Council designation) signed

Seamus Murray
(Committee of Regions designation) signed

Jordi Pascual i Ruiz
(Parliament nomination) signed

Veronika Ratzenboeck
(Parliament nomination) signed

Lord Chris Smith of Finsbury
(Commission designation) signed