



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 27.05.1998  
COM(1998) 350 final

97/0290 (COD)

**Amended proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision for the establishment of a Community action in favour of the “European City of Culture” event.**

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 189 a (2)  
of the EC-Treaty)



Explanatory Memorandum  
**European City of Culture**

**Amended proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision for the establishment of a Community action in favour of the “European City of Culture” event.**

1. On 30 October 1997, the Commission presented a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision for the establishment of a Community action in favour of the “European City of Culture” event (COM 97/549-97/0290 COD).

On 30 April 1998, the European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution (A4/0083/98), in which they approve the Commission proposal, subject to certain amendments.<sup>1</sup>

This modified proposal integrates those amendments which have been accepted by the Commission, during discussions with the Parliament. It is worth noting that the Commission has, in most cases, accepted the amendments, as suggested.

2. Of the amendments accepted, some are drafting changes, some add new elements to the proposal.
3. In a limited number of cases, the Commission was not able to include the amendments. These concern four main points: (the procedure for designating cities, the participation of certain third countries, the ending of the European Cultural Month and the total finance for the initiative), which were not able to be incorporated for the following reasons:
  - The procedure proposed by the Commission, while fully involving all of the Community institutions, was relatively flexible in order to allow for the decision to be made within a reasonable amount of time. A more laborious procedure, such as that envisaged by Article 189b would, from a purely practical point of view, not operate effectively and would hinder the functioning of the programme. Moreover, as the legal service of the European Parliament has confirmed, the Commission proposal is legally correct in the sense that “this is not a measure with any legislative function, but instead a decision implementing or applying a legislative act adopted under the co-decision procedure”.
  - The Commission proposal has taken into account the undertakings and agreements which bind the European Union as regards the participation of associated third countries in Community programmes. These agreements envisage that, as with other Community programmes, this initiative will be open to the countries of the European Economic Area, to the associated countries of central and eastern Europe, to Cyprus and to other European third countries which

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<sup>1</sup> Oral hearing N°258301, page 16

central and eastern Europe, to Cyprus and to other European third countries which have concluded co-operation agreements with the European Union containing a cultural clause.

- The Commission planned to bring to an end the European Cultural Month because, firstly it did not wish to continue an initiative which, due to its limited duration has not had significant impact and secondly, and most importantly, because the “European City of Culture” was to be opened to the EEA and CEE countries.
- The total financing for the “European City of Culture” is envisaged in the Commission proposal for the establishment of a “Cultural Framework Programme”, of which this initiative will be an integral part.

European Parliament amendments contained in the Commission modified proposal

1-2-3-4-5-6-11

Amendments accepted in part

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Amendments not accepted

7-8-10-12-13-14

<b>Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision</b>	<b>Amended Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision</b>
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Proposal for a

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND  
COUNCIL DECISION**

establishing a Community initiative

for

"The European City of Culture" event

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND  
THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN  
UNION

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 128 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 189b of the Treaty,

1/ Whereas Europe has, throughout its history, been the site of exceptionally prolific and varied artistic activity; whereas urban life has played a major role in the growth and influence of the European cultures;

2/ Whereas the EC Treaty gives the Community competence in the cultural field (Article 128); whereas all Community activity designed to promote the arts should therefore be placed on the new legal basis, in accordance with the objectives and means assigned to the Community by the Treaty;

3/ Whereas, on 13 June 1985, the Ministers responsible for cultural affairs meeting within the Council adopted a resolution concerning the annual

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2/ Whereas the EC Treaty gives the Community competence in the cultural field (Article 128); whereas all Community activity designed to promote the arts should therefore be placed on the new legal basis, in accordance with the objectives and means assigned to the Community by the Treaty;

3/ Whereas, on 13 June 1985, the Ministers responsible for cultural affairs meeting within the Council adopted a resolution concerning the annual

organisation of the "European City of Culture", the main aim of which was to make certain cultural aspects of the city, region or country in question accessible to the European public, an event for which the European Community has provided financial support;

4/ Whereas Parliament, in the discussions leading up to its opinion of 7 April 1995 on the Kaleidoscope programme,<sup>1</sup> asked the Commission to present a specific programme on the European City of Culture after the year 2000 on the basis of Article 128 of the EC Treaty;

5/ Whereas any Community initiative to promote the "European City of Culture" must satisfy predefined objectives and use the resources provided for by the Treaty in accordance with Article 128;

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4/ Whereas Parliament, in the discussions leading up to its opinion of 7 April 1995 on the Kaleidoscope programme,<sup>1</sup> asked the Commission to present a specific programme on the European City of Culture after the year 2000 on the basis of Article 128 of the EC Treaty;

5/ Whereas any Community initiative to promote the "European City of Culture" must satisfy predefined objectives and use the resources provided for by the Treaty in accordance with Article 128;

5/a. Whereas the study which has been carried out of the results achieved by European Cities of Culture shows that the event has a positive impact in terms of media resonance, cultural and tourist development and the realization by inhabitants of the importance of their city having been chosen;

5/b. Whereas the positive effects have nonetheless not always produced results lasting beyond the duration of the project itself and whereas the attention of public decision-makers in the cities chosen should be drawn to the need to integrate the cultural project into a dynamic medium-term process

5/c. Having regard to the dual importance of this initiative both for strengthening local identity and for European integration;

5/d. Whereas this initiative may be of

particular importance for medium-sized cities;

6/Whereas, in compliance with the principles for action laid down by Article 128, a “European City of Culture” is to be selected each year to organise a cultural project on a specific, European theme, possibly in association with other European cities;

6/Whereas, in compliance with the principles for action laid down by Article 128, a European City of Culture is to be selected each year to organise a cultural project of such a nature as to lend effective support to cultural creativity on a theme based on its own identity, specific characteristics, history and future, supported by its own living economic, social and cultural forces and geared to the desire to contribute to European cultural development in all its diversity;

6/a. Whereas the project should be developed in association with other European cities, since such an arrangement is likely to be beneficial; whereas the city which submits an application must, for reasons of consistency, assume responsibility for programming vis-à-vis the European authorities and the partner cities;

7/ Whereas the “European Cultural Month” event should be discontinued;

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8/ Whereas the Community has in the past made a contribution, to the “European City of Culture” and the “European Cultural Month” events under the Kaleidoscope Programme, which is due to expire in 1998;<sup>2</sup>

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9/ Whereas the Council adopted a Decision on 30 June 1997 calling on the Commission, in accordance with Article 152 of the EC Treaty, to conduct a study prior to presenting proposals for a single programme for culture by May 1998, into which an Action “European City of Culture” will be incorporated, including funding arrangements,

9/Whereas the Council adopted a Decision on 30 June 1997 calling on the Commission, in accordance with Article 152 of the EC Treaty, to conduct a study prior to presenting proposals for a single programme for culture by May 1998, into which an Action “European City of Culture” will be incorporated, including funding arrangements,

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**Article 1**

The Community shall organise a promotional initiative entitled “European City of Culture”. The purpose shall be to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures, and the features they share, and promote greater mutual acquaintance between Union citizens.

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**Article 2**

From 2002, the “European City of Culture” shall be chosen in accordance with the following procedure:

- three years before the event is due to begin, the Member States concerned shall submit to the Commission an application for the town or towns, as described in Article 3, for the year in question;
- the Commission shall form a Selection Panel which shall deliver its opinion on the applications, judged against the objectives and characteristics of this Action. The Selection Panel shall be composed of seven leading independent figures of whom two shall be appointed by Parliament, two by the Council, two by the Commission and one by the Committee of the Regions. The Selection Panel shall present its opinion to the Commission;

**Article 2**

From 2002, the “European City of Culture” shall be chosen in accordance with the following procedure:

- three years before the event is due to begin, the Member States concerned shall submit to the Commission an application for the town or towns, as described in Article 3, for the year in question;
- the Commission shall each year form a Selection Panel which shall deliver its opinion on the applications, judged against the objectives and characteristics of this Action. The Selection Panel shall be composed of seven leading independent figures who are experts on and are from the cultural sector, of whom two shall be appointed by Parliament, two by the Council, two by the Commission and one by the Committee of the Regions. Membership of the Selection Panel shall be incompatible with the exercise of any public elective office. The Selection Panel shall elect a

~~chairman from among its members~~  
The Selection Panel shall present its opinion to the Commission.

- on a proposal from the Commission and after the European Parliament has been consulted, the Council, acting by qualified majority, shall designate the 'European City of Culture' for the year in question.

### Article 3

The application must present a cultural project focusing on a specific European theme and based principally on cultural cooperation, in accordance with the objectives and measures provided for by Article 128 of the EC Treaty. The project may be organised in association with other European cities.

The application must specify how, within the scope allowed by the theme, the applicant city intends:

- to highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution;
- to promote cultural events and works involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States of the Union and leading to lasting cultural cooperation;

- to receive citizens of the Union and reach as wide an audience as possible for the various events by employing a multimedia, multilingual approach; and

- on a proposal from the Commission and after the European Parliament has been consulted, the Council, acting by qualified majority, shall designate the 'European City of Culture' for the year in question

### Article 3

The application must present a cultural project focusing on a specific European theme and based principally on cultural cooperation, in accordance with the objectives and measures provided for by Article 128 of the EC Treaty. The project may be organised in association with other European cities, to be chosen by the proposing city, which shall lead the project throughout.

The application must specify how, within the scope allowed by the theme, the applicant city intends:

- to highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution;
- to promote events involving people active in culture from other cities in Member States of the Union and leading to lasting cultural cooperation, and to facilitate their movement within the European Union;
- to support and develop creative work, which is an essential element in any cultural policy;
- to ensure the mobilization 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 festivities;
- to encourage the reception of citizens of the Union and the widest possible dissemination of the various events by employing all forms of multimedia,

- to promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world.

particularly audiovisual media, by creating an Internet site and by means of a multilingual approach, in order that as wide a public as possible in the city, the Union as a whole and beyond can participate in the cultural programmes and thereby promote the initiation of lasting cultural cooperation projects;

- to promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world and, in that spirit, to optimize the opening up to, and understanding of, others, which are fundamental cultural values;

- to optimize the historic heritage, urban design and the quality of urban life, which are indissociable from the cultural dimension of cities, and, in particular, highlight the relationship between using the existing heritage and contemporary creative work.

#### Article 4

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 shall be allowed to participate in this initiative.

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#### Article 5

The Commission shall be responsible for the implementation of this initiative Each year it shall produce a report evaluating the results of the previous year's event. This report shall be presented to Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions.

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**Article 6**

This initiative, containing detailed information on procedure and closing dates for submission of applications, shall be published each year in the C Series of the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

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**Article 7**

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- <sup>1</sup> See report by Mr Augias PE 211.116/fin of 27 March 1995;  
Amended Commission proposal COM(95) 373 final of 28 July 1995;  
Decision 719/96 of 29 March 1996 (recital 11) establishing a programme to support artistic and cultural activities having a European dimension (Kaleidoscope).
- <sup>2</sup> See European Parliament and Council Decision 719/96 of 29 March 1996 establishing the Kaleidoscope Programme (Action 4).



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