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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 8.4.2009
COM(2009) 167 final

Recommendation for a

COUNCIL DECISION

On the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2012

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Decision 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019,¹ lays down the procedure of designation of the European Capitals of Culture. According to Article 2 of this Decision, from 2009 onwards, two cities of two Member States will be designated as European Capitals of Culture, in turn, according to the chronological order set out in the Annex to the Decision.

In accordance with Article 14, the nomination for European Capitals of Culture concerning the year 2012 is submitted to transitional provisions, as follows.

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

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

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

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

In accordance with article 2 and the Annex, Portugal notified the nomination of Guimarães and Slovenia nominated Maribor for the 2012 title before the end of 2007.

The selection panel met on 23 April 2008 to examine the nominations. This examination included hearings of representatives from the candidate cities. The panel assessed the proposals against the criteria laid down for the event and then invited the cities concerned to develop their plans further, to focus more strongly on the main objectives and characteristics of the action as defined in Decision 1622/2006/EC, including cultural programmes that have a long term impact for the city and the region, and to complete their application accordingly. The panel expected a more detailed programme, especially for artistic events with a major European dimension².

The completed applications were received by the Commission by 30 September 2008 and a new selection meeting took place on 5 November 2008. The panel submitted its report to the Commission in late November 2008; at the request of the panel, the Commission forwarded the report to the other Institutions.

On the basis of an overall evaluation of the applications the panel – while suggesting some improvements, notably concerning Maribor's application - reached a consensus to recommend

¹ OJ L 304 of 3.11.2006, p1

² See the document called "Information about the selection meeting for the European Capital of Culture 2012" sent to the cities concerned following the meeting.

to the Institutions of the European Union that Guimarães and Maribor host the European Capital of Culture in 2012.

The Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament forwarded a letter to DG EAC on 28 January 2009, as a follow up to the panel's report, to highlight the relevant aspects of the designation of the 2012 European Capitals of culture.

Consequently, the Commission, in accordance with Article 14 of Decision 1622/2006/EC submits to the Council the appended recommendation for the official designation of Guimarães and Maribor respectively for the 2012 European Capital of Culture event.

Recommendation for a

COUNCIL DECISION

On the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2012

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Decision n° 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019³, and in particular its Article 14,

Having regard to the Selection Panel report of November 2008 submitted to the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council in accordance with Article 14 paragraph 2 of Decision n° 1622/2006/EC,

Considering that the criteria referred to in Article 14 paragraph 3 of Decision 1622/2006/EC are entirely fulfilled,

Having regard to the recommendation from the Commission of the ----- 2009,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Guimarães and Maribor are designated as “European Capital of Culture 2012” in accordance with Article 14 of Decision 1622/2006/EC.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council
The President*

³ OJ L 304 of 3.11.2006, p1.