



**Selection
of the European Capital of Culture
for 2016
in Poland**

Selection Panel

Final Selection report

Warsaw, 20-21st June 2011

Acting by virtue of Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the 24th October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007-2019 (hereinafter referred to as 'Decision') and guided by the Resolution No 172/2009 of the Polish Council of Ministers of the 2nd October 2009 on Coordination of Participation of the Republic of Poland in the Community Action for the 'European Capital of Culture' event, the Minister of Culture and National Heritage invited Polish cities to participate in the competition for the title of the 'European Capital of Culture 2016'.

In the Republic of Poland, the procedure of implementation of provisions laid down in the Decision was set forth in the 'Rules of Procedure of the Selection Panel' (hereinafter referred to as 'Rules') set up for selection of 'the European Capital of Culture 2016' which constituted an appendix to the Decision of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage No 23 of the 29th of October 2009, as further amended.

In accordance with the above-mentioned documents, the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland was responsible for the organisation of a national competition, appointment of national experts, composition of the entire Selection Panel, organisation of pre-selection and final selection meetings as well as coordination of visits of the representatives of the Selection Panel to the cities.

The Selection Panel was set up by Decision N° 20 of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland of the 8th October 2010 amended by Decision No 8 of 14 June 2011. All panel members signed a declaration of non-conflict of interest concerning their evaluation of the proposals made by the candidate cities.

In accordance with Article 6 of the Decision the Selection Panel unanimously elected Manfred Gaulhofer as the Chair and Monika Smoleń as the Vice-chair at the beginning of its first meeting at the pre-selection stage. The Selection Panel was nominated for the entire selection process (both first and second rounds). However, on 31st December 2010 the mandate of Sir Robert Scott (one of the members appointed by the European Commission) expired and Sir Jeremy Isaacs was appointed to replace him.

The following cities responded to the call for applications for the title of the European Capital of Culture 2016 announced by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, by submitting their applications by the 30th August 2010:

**Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Lublin, Łódź,
Poznań, Szczecin, Toruń, Warszawa, Wrocław.**

Under Article 7 of the Decision, which deals with the pre-selection stage, the panel assessed these applications against the criteria stated in Article 4 of the Decision. The pre-selection was

held in Warsaw on 12th - 13th October 2010 and the five cities short listed for the second round were:

Gdańsk, Katowice, Lublin, Warszawa and Wrocław.

Following the pre-selection meeting, the Panel submitted a report to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the European Commission containing recommendations concerning the applications made by the five short listed cities.

Final Selection

All five pre-selected cities responded to the call for completed applications for the title of the European Capital of Culture 2016 announced by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage on 17 December 2010, by submitting their application by 16th May 2011.

A delegation of four panel members visited the 5 short listed cities in preparation of the final selection (in chronological order): Lublin (13th June 2011), Warszawa (14th June 2011), Katowice (15th June 2011), Wrocław (16th June 2011) and Gdańsk (17th June 2011). Every short listed city was allocated exactly the same time for the visit.

The delegation consisted of the following members of the Selection Panel: Constantin Chiriac, Joanna Kiliszek, Jacek Purchla and Andreas Wiesand. The Selection Panel was accompanied by a representative of the European Commission (Jacqueline Pacaud) and representatives of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (in turns: Anna Ceynowa, Maria Drabczyk, Hanna Jędras, Marcin Łapczyński, Piotr Mączka).

The final selection meeting was held in Warsaw at the Palace on the Isle in Royal Łazienki on 20-21st June 2011. Seven European and six national members of the panel participated in the meeting. Representatives of the European Commission and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage were present as observers. The 4 delegates who participated in the visits extensively reported back to the other Panel members.

The five short listed cities that attended the Final Selection meeting were represented by local authorities at the level of the mayor, directors of cultural institutions, non-governmental organisation members, artists, curators, advisors, experts, young people and representatives of the institutions appointed to organise the city's cultural programme for the European Capital of Culture 2016. The final selection meeting consisted of a thirty minute presentation by the bidding team of each city, followed by a sixty minute question and answer session. On 20th June 2011 the bids of Gdańsk, Katowice and Lublin were presented followed by the presentations of the bids of Warszawa and Wrocław on the 21st June 2011.

On the basis of the completed applications submitted, the Panel's recommendations following the pre-selection stage, the visits, the oral presentation and the accuracy and relevance of the responses provided by the cities during the question and answer session, the Panel held an in-depth discussion in order to recommend one city for the 2016 European Capital of Culture in Poland. To this purpose, it considered:

- the degree of compliance of the completed applications of the short listed cities with the objectives of the ‘European Capital of Culture’ event, particularly regarding Article 4 of the Decision: the ‘European Dimension’ and the ‘City and Citizens Dimension’;
- the overall capacity of the cities to ensure the implementation of the event, notably the governance, the budget, the support of local authorities and the business sector.

Immediately after the final deliberation (at 4 p.m. on 21st June 2011), a press conference was held at the Old Orangery in Royal Łazienki to announce the result of the selection process. The Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Bogdan Zdrojewski, introduced the press conference.

The Evaluation by the Selection Panel

The Panel noted the dedication of all five cities had shown in the preparation of their bids and the positive changes this preparation had already generated in the cultural life of these cities. The concepts of the cities, the cultural programmes developed for the competition and the cultural activity in general served as catalysts of change, be it mentality change, social change or change in both cultural infrastructure and in the acceptance of artistic challenges. Therefore, the Panel considered all five cities as "winners" of the ECoC competition and stressed how much it admired what they have done.

The Panel also noticed the great effort made by all cities to stick to the objectives of the event, to incorporate the criteria laid down in Article 4 of the Decision (i.e. the “European Dimension”, and the “City and Citizens Dimension”) in their further development of the cultural programme, and to take account in their final bids of the recommendations made by the Selection Panel in its report on the pre-selection phase.

The panel highlighted the following strong points of the five bids.

Gdansk:

The main title of the bid, "Freedom of culture / Culture of freedom", which pays tribute to the revolution for more freedom triggered by the trade union 'Solidarity' in Gdansk in the eighties

and its inheritance in the cultural area, and its successful translation into a programme that envisaged to turn Gdansk into "a young city in old shipyards".

The ambitious cultural programme aimed at strengthening civil society, at increasing solidarity and at involving people more closely in cultural life and its focus on debates and already established initiatives, leaving 30% for debuts and premieres. The Panel was pleased with the idea to include both the whole "Tricity" area and the Kashubian culture into the cultural programme.

The comprehensive regeneration plans of old industrial venues and their re-adaptation for cultural purposes was an important part of the concept with the aim to be filled with life and creativity by the city's strong, vivid and multifaceted arts scene.

The full support by all political and administrative bodies of the city and region, including former Polish President Lech Wałęsa, and by the business community.

Katowice:

The title of the bid, "The city of gardens", which could be understood both in a historical, a practical and a metaphoric sense and the way it communicated the city's clear and strong wish to transform the city through culture, based on the concept of creating synergies between community, culture and ecology.

The well conceived programme, which intelligently combined the industrial past of the city with its cultural tradition as a capital of music in Poland, with contributions of its important artistic academies and with avant-garde movements.

The city's challenging focus on city development that included both the construction of important new cultural infrastructure for music and in the field of museums/ visual arts and the opening of public spaces in the city for new cultural events.

The close co-operation between public authorities and various groups of citizens in the preparation of the bid with a specific emphasis on young people and their initiatives to transform the city and to make it more attractive. The Panel was impressed by the various socio-cultural and artistic initiatives which are seen to be the main drivers of the cultural programme.

The unanimous support by all political and administrative bodies of the city and the broader region of Upper Silesia.

Lublin:

The way the title of the bid, "A City in Dialogue", permeated each part of Lublin's concept as a city at the Eastern border of the European Union well placed to make a major contribution to intercultural dialogue, to help the spread of European strategies and to build a bridge towards the EU's Eastern neighbours.

The long term perspective of the precisely elaborated concept, building on the cultural initiatives the city's authorities have been implementing over the past few years and leading beyond 2016 with a master plan covering the period until 2020.

The city's will to fulfill the highest European standards, its consideration of the European Capital of Culture event in 2016 as "a ticket to modern Europe" and its commitment to accomplish main program elements in the future, whether the city would get the title or not.

The impressive academic and socio-cultural potential of the city which could become a sound basis for placing the city among the important European academic and cultural centres.

The decisive role which the many young people, particularly students, living in the city played in the development of the cultural programme, inspired by a remarkable artistic leadership. The Panel praised the programme as concrete, solid, modest and professional.

The wide support by inhabitants and all political and administrative bodies of the city and the region, including authorities and citizens of cities from the neighbouring Eastern European countries.

Warsaw:

The clear-cut concept of the Polish capital expressed in the title of the bid, "Warsaw – New Energy for Europe", to transform the city through culture, to be a cultural capital for Poland and to become a new heart for Europe. And to put forward its cultural assets and potential to demonstrate that it is not only a financial and political centre, but may also become a true new centre of culture for the whole of Europe.

The well prepared and very professionally presented cultural programme that drew on the great potential of Warsaw, both in artistic life and cultural infrastructure, and offered a good balance of "European Dimension" and the "City and Citizens Dimension".

The latter was well presented using the example of one of the core attempts of the bid, i.e. to bridge central Warsaw with other districts across the Vistula river. This would be expected to lead to more unity in the city as well as to new spaces for the creative industries, artists and local communities.

The focus of the programme for 2016 on the relationship the city already had with Eastern neighbours, including many students from these countries.

The strong support of the bid by all political and administrative bodies, the project for 2016 being the core part of a programme of city development through culture until 2020.

Wrocław:

The motto of the bid, "Spaces for Beauty", that was well translated into the city's objective to affirm and further develop the multi-ethnic and multicultural past of this European city by focusing very specifically on intercultural and interreligious dialogue as well as cultural development and social inclusion.

The convincing programme whose main goals were to improve social cohesion as well as education in culture and art, to enhance participation of people in culture, to foster creativity and to have the city better known internationally.

The advanced process of urban revival through culture with important cultural investments already made in the city - many of which are already completed or under way – and based on a convincing long term cultural strategy, accompanied by its well developed links with cities in neighbouring countries.

The energetic and cosmopolitan leadership of the city, which – together with the support of the programme by all political and administrative bodies as well as by the very dynamic business sector – seemed to provide the necessary stability for the rather complex system of governance of the 2016 project.

All in all, the Panel was convinced that the European Capital of Culture 2016 project would be accurately used by the city for actually placing culture at the core of future development.

All members of the Selection Panel wholeheartedly praised all 5 cities for their excellent work.

During the final closed-door discussion, each panel member openly expressed his/her opinion. The debate focused on the criteria as laid out in Article 4 of the Decision and the quality and sustainability of the cultural programmes presented by the cities. Following this debate, a large majority of the Panel agreed that the bid of **Wrocław** best reflected the objectives and criteria of the European Capital of Culture, and that it provided the best potential for a successful implementation of the event. The panel therefore unanimously recommended that **Wrocław** be designated as the Polish European Capital of Culture for 2016.

However, the Selection Panel recommends all five finalist cities to implement a maximum of the cultural programmes presented in their bidding documents, to take advantage of the work done in preparation of and during the competition and to continue to make culture a focal point of city development.

Recommendations of the Selection Panel to the nominated city

In accordance with Article 8 paragraph 4 of the Decision, the panel makes the following recommendations to Wrocław regarding the progress to be made and the work to be carried out in advance of 2016:

The Selection Panel underlines that Wrocław has been recommended for the title due to the outstanding quality of the cultural programme proposed. Accordingly, the Monitoring and Advisory Panel will lay the focus of its activities on securing that the scope, the content and the quality of the programme be maintained and further developed, as proposed in the application.

The Monitoring and Advisory Panel will also closely monitor the delivery of all commitments made by the city at the application stage.

The Selection Panel recommends the artistic team to make sure that artistic excellence is respected as the core objective of programme development throughout all phases of the proposed programme development process.

The Selection Panel highlights that the European Dimension of the project still requires some improvements, be it through the themes put forward in the projects of the programme for the event, or be it through an intensified cooperation with European artists and cultural operators. The Monitoring and Advisory Panel will monitor this issue and closely check whether the actual programme sticks more closely to this criterion.

The Selection Panel recommends Wrocław to take a closer look at the organisational and management structure of the entity that will prepare and implement the ECoC programme in order to clarify the structure and make it more efficient. In particular, it recommends that precise responsibilities are assigned to each member of the team.

The Selection Panel recalls the importance of constant and stable support by the political authorities throughout the preparation of the project, while safeguarding full independence of the artistic team in the cultural choices.

The Selection Panel recommends Wrocław to quickly extend and intensify its links with the Spanish city selected for 2016 and to come forward with joint project proposals at the first meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Panel.

The Selection Panel would welcome efforts by Wrocław to co-operate with the other four finalist cities in joint projects in the future.

The Selection Panel stresses the importance of displaying the official logo of the European Capital of Culture title on communication material regarding the event.

The Selection Panel further emphasises that the award of the Melina Mercouri Prize by the European Commission is not automatically granted as a result of winning the title. The city will have to deserve the prize by meeting its main commitments made at the application stage while taking into account the comments and recommendations of the Selection and Monitoring Panel.

Next Steps towards the designation:

- The present report, submitted to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland and the European Commission, is to be published on their relevant websites;
- The Polish Government will formally nominate one city for the “European Capital of Culture” title for 2016 in Poland on the basis of this report and will notify the European Parliament, Council, Commission and the Committee of Regions by the end of the 2011 year at the latest. The European Parliament may forward an opinion to the European Commission within three months after it receives the nomination;
- The EU Council of Ministers, upon a recommendation of the European Commission drawn up in the light of the opinion of the European Parliament and the justification based on the Selection Panel’s Report, will formally designate the European Capital of Culture for 2016 in Poland, probably at its meeting in May 2012.

Monitoring Phase

In accordance with the Decision, the 2016 European Capitals of Culture, once designated by the EU Council of Ministers, will be submitted to a monitoring phase until the beginning of the event.

The monitoring panel will be comprised of the seven members designated by the European Institutions. The first monitoring meeting will take place by late 2013 and the final one by spring 2015.

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 of the action and have implemented the recommendations made after the Selection as well those issued later on by the Monitoring and Advisory Panel. The prize shall be monetary and shall be awarded in principle – if all necessary conditions are met - three months before the start of the relevant year that means by September 2015 for the 2016 title.

Warsaw, 21st June 2011

The Selection Panel:

Manfred Gaulhofer, Chair
Monika Smoleń, Vice-chair
Constantin Chiriac
Danuta Glondys
Erna Hennicot-Schoepges
Sir Jeremy Isaacs
Joanna Kiliszek
Tadeusz Kowalski
Michał Merczyński
Jacek Purchla
Elisabeth Vitouch
Andreas Wiesand
Tadeusz Zielniewicz