

SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC

17TH PARLIAMENTARY TERM

DOC. XVIII

No 143

RESOLUTION OF THE 7th STANDING COMMITTEE

(Education, heritage, scientific research, entertainment and sport)

(*Rapporteur* Elena FERRARA)

approved at the session of 26 July 2016

ON THE

**PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
COUNCIL AMENDING DECISION NO 445/2014/EU ESTABLISHING A UNION
ACTION FOR THE EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE FOR THE YEARS 2020 TO
2033 (COM(2016) 400 final)**

pursuant to Article 144(1) and (6) of the Rules of Procedure

Sent to the President's Office on 29 July 2016

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The Committee,

having examined, pursuant to Article 144(1) and (6) of the Rules of Procedure, the Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 445/2014/EU establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 (COM(2016) 400 final);

whereas the action for European Capitals of Culture is governed, as regards the years 2020 to 2033, by Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014, to which is annexed a calendar showing in which year each Member State is entitled to host the action (two Member States per year);

whereas competitions for the award of the title 'European Capital of Culture' start six years before the year for which the title is to be awarded, with the publication of calls for applications from the relevant national authorities,

noting in particular that:

Decision No 445/2014/EU extends the action to candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership, providing that they are participating in the Creative Europe Programme, or in subsequent European programmes supporting culture, on the date of publication of the call for applications;

however, Decision No 445/2014/EU does not include in its scope the European Free Trade Association countries which are parties to the Agreement on the European Economic Area ('EFTA/EEA countries' - Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). The title of European City of Culture ('ECOC') cannot, therefore, be awarded to these countries during the period from 2020 to 2033;

in order to reinforce the cultural links between the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries, the Communication therefore proposes to amend Decision No 445/2014/EU to allow cities from EFTA/EEA countries participating in the Creative Europe Programme, or in subsequent European Union programmes supporting culture, to apply for the ECOC title;

The European Union has not carried out any further consultation following that conducted during the preparation of Decision No 445/2014/EU, since the proposal for a new decision is intended solely to extend the scope of the action for European Cities of Culture to include the abovementioned EFTA/EEA countries;

noting, however, that the proposal will not result in a higher number of European Capitals of Culture over the period from 2020 to 2033, because the cities in the EFTA/EEA countries will be competing with cities from candidate countries/potential candidates which were already part of the competition;

whereas the document under consideration may be deemed to comply with both the principle of subsidiarity, since Decision No 445/2014/EU is a legal act of the European Union

and may therefore be amended only by another such legal act, and with the principle of proportionality;

recalling the resolution (Doc. XVIII, No 170) adopted by the 7th Committee during the XVIth Parliamentary term on the preparatory act for Decision 445/2014/EU, in which the Committee expressed the hope that granting the title would have positive long-term repercussions, in economic and social as well as cultural terms, and, therefore, it was felt that the impact of the programme should be properly publicised. The Committee also hoped that the cities selected would focus on activities from which all citizens could continue to benefit, even beyond the context of the events themselves;

noting the comments of the 14th Committee, with particular reference to the possibility of further extending the action for European Cities of Culture, since it serves a strategic objective of the EU, namely to strengthen links with other countries;

issues a favourable opinion, and considers it desirable to extend the action for European Cities of Culture to Europe's 'microstates'.

OPINION OF THE 14th STANDING COMMITTEE

(EUROPEAN UNION POLICIES)

(Rapporteur: LIUZZI)

19 July 2016

The Committee, having examined the proposal,

whereas:

the proposal for a decision would amend Decision No 445/2014/EU establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 to allow EFTA/EEA countries to apply for the title;

the action for European Capitals of Culture is governed by Decision No 445/2014/EU for the titles from 2020 to 2033. The Annex to the Decision contains a chronological list showing the year in which each Member State is entitled to host the action (two Member States per year). Competitions to be awarded the title of European Capital of Culture start six years before the year in which the title is available, with the publication of calls for applications by the relevant national authorities;

Decision No 445/2014/EU extends the scope of the action laid down by Decision No 1622/2006/EC to include candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership, providing that, on the date of publication of the call for applications, they are participating in the Creative Europe Programme or in subsequent Union programmes supporting culture, so that cities from candidate countries or potential candidates may hold the title every third year starting from 2021 (i.e. in 2021, 2024, 2027, 2030 and 2033);

Decision No 445/2014/EU does not cover European Free Trade Association countries which are parties to the Agreement on the European Economic Area ('EFTA/EEA countries') (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein);

noting that, in order to reinforce the cultural links between the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries, the proposal for a Decision would amend Decision No 445/2014/EU to allow cities from EFTA/EEA countries that are participating in the Creative Europe Programme, or in subsequent Union programmes supporting culture, to apply for the ECOC title,

issues a favourable opinion within its sphere of competence, with the following comments:

the legal basis is Article 167(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which provides that 'the Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture [...]';

this is the same legal basis used to adopt Decision No 445/2014/EU and the Committee therefore entirely agrees with this choice;

the Communication complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, since Decision No 445/2014/EU is a legal act of the European Union, which may therefore only be amended by another such legal act. The Member States cannot act individually in this respect;

the proposal complies with the two criteria for subsidiarity, namely that the European action must be necessary and must offer added value;

strengthening ties with EFTA/EEA countries, in addition to those with candidate countries and potential candidates, is deemed a strategic objective of the European Union and the proposed decision would contribute to achieving this objective;

it is also deemed desirable to extend the action for European capitals of culture to the 'microstates' of Europe.