

**REPORT  
FOR THE FIRST MONITORING AND  
ADVISORY MEETING  
FOR THE EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF  
CULTURE 2014**

**Issued by  
The Monitoring and Advisory Panel for the European  
Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2014**

**November 2011**

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This is the report of the first monitoring and advisory meeting of the European Capital of Culture Panel. The meeting concerned the 2014 European Capitals of Culture, namely Umeå (Sweden) and Riga (Latvia). It took place on 8 November 2011.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. The European Capital of Culture designation and monitoring**

The European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) initiative, a major European Union cultural activity, is aimed at highlighting the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as promoting greater mutual knowledge and understanding among Europe's citizens.

The Capitals as of 2014 are selected by the procedure laid down in European Parliament Council Decision establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture for the years 2007 to 2019 (Decision 1622/2006/EC). Further to the selection phase, this Decision lays down a monitoring phase between the designation and the beginning of the event to follow the preparations of the event.

The monitoring is carried out under the responsibility of 7 members designated by the European Institutions. This panel is called the Monitoring and Advisory Panel. It is 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 the cities develop a high quality programme with a strong European dimension. For the 2014 title, the first monitoring meeting took place on 8 November 2011, the second one will take place in spring 2013.

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 by the selection as well as the monitoring and advisory panels. The prize shall be monetary and shall, in principle, be awarded three months before the start of the relevant year if the necessary conditions are met. It will be financed by the Culture Programme. The requirements for the award of the prize are mentioned in section 5 below.

In addition to the formal monitoring meetings specified above, the European Commission invited the 2014 European Capitals of Culture to meet with the Monitoring and Advisory Panel on an informal and voluntary basis six months after their formal designation. This "post-designation" meeting was organised for the first time for the 2013 ECOC. The European Commission decided to introduce this additional phase in response to feedback from previous Capitals that, due to the scale and complexity of the event, they would have benefited from advice at an early stage after the designation, and much earlier than the first formal monitoring.

The aim of this "post designation" meeting was to assist the organising teams and provide them with constructive advice in order to help them make the most of the preparation time ahead of them and to benefit from the experience of past Capitals. The Panel did not issue formal recommendations but rather gave guidance and advice.

At the first monitoring meeting the cities were invited to present the progress achieved so far in the preparation of the event and to respond to questions from the panel members.

## **1.2. Umeå and Riga as 2014 European Capitals of Culture**

Sweden and Latvia were the two Member States entitled to host the European Capital of Culture event in 2014.

The Ministry of Culture in Sweden and in Latvia respectively managed the competition in each of the Member States. According to Decision 1622/2006/EC, the competition is organised into two stages (pre-selection and final selection).

At pre-selection stage (approximately 5 years before the year) a panel of independent experts in the cultural field (the "Selection Panel") meets to assess the initial proposals against the criteria and to issue a short-list of cities. The short-listed cities are invited to submit more detailed applications. At final selection stage (approximately 9 months after the pre-selection meeting), the selection panel meets to assess the final proposals against the criteria and to recommend one city per Member State for the title. The pre-selection and final selection reports are available at the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/future-capitals\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/future-capitals_en.htm).

The final selection meetings in Stockholm and Riga took place in September 2009 and the panel recommended respectively Umeå and Riga for the 2014 title. Consequently, Sweden and Latvia nominated Umeå and Riga respectively and notified the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions by autumn 2009.

The Commission then submitted to the Council a recommendation for the official designation of these two cities. Consequently, the EU Council of Ministers of 10 and 11 May 2010 designated Umeå and Riga as the 2014 European Capitals of Culture.

## **1.3. European Capitals of Culture 2014: Remarks made by the selection panel**

This section specifies the recommendations issued by the Selection Panel in September 2009<sup>1</sup> regarding progress to be made and work to be carried out in advance of 2014 by both the European Capitals of Culture for that year.

### *1.3.1. Umeå*

The panel had set out the following recommendations to Umeå regarding progress to be made and work to be carried out in advance of 2014:

a) the Panel wishes to see more detail and more substance developed to meet the key criterion of "the European dimension". The Panel expects Umeå to set out in 2014 to offer Europe in general and cities and regions in other European countries in particular a new European cultural perspective from its position in the far North of the continent.

b) the Panel is interested to see further details of the full inclusion of the Sami people and Sami culture in the plans for the year.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/future-capitals\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/future-capitals_en.htm)

c) the Panel was impressed with the commitment of political leaders in both the City and the Region, but they expect to see this commitment and involvement spread through the whole population. The participation of citizens as more than audience members must be strengthened.

d) the Panel believes that Umeå, due to its remoteness and size, will have particular problems in communicating and marketing their Year to the rest of Europe. The Panel is particularly keen to hear how the organisers will deal with this problem.

e) the Panel welcomes the involvement of the wider region but it is keen to see that the City of Umeå stays at the centre of the planning and programme for the Year. The Panel is particularly keen to know that the national Government of Sweden is involved and supportive of the programme.

f) the Panel welcomes the fact that they were told that culture is at the heart of the development of the city and region and wants to be reassured throughout the monitoring process that this will not change.

g) the Panel wishes to see that the events of 2014 should be made accessible to young people from other European countries. The organizers should undertake efforts to enable students and backpackers to participate in the cultural events and help with encouraging the main operators to provide cheap train tickets, cheap flights, budget accommodation etc.

### *1.3.2. Riga*

The panel had set out the following recommendations to Riga regarding progress to be made and works to be carried out in advance of 2014:

a) The Panel wishes to see more detail and more substance developed to meet the key criterion of "the European dimension". The Panel expects Riga to set out in 2014 to offer European citizens a new European cultural perspective from its position as the largest city in the three Baltic countries.

b) The Panel is interested to see details of the 2014 programme being developed during the build-up years. Riga cannot simply sit back and present its usual annual cultural programme. The Panel is particularly keen to see how the financial targets are being met to drive the special 2014 programme.

c) The Panel is impressed with the commitment of political leaders in the City, but they will expect to see this commitment and involvement spread through the whole population. The participation of the citizens as more than audience members must be strengthened. The Panel hopes that politicians will endorse the work of the artistic team.

d) The Panel believes that Riga will face an important challenge in communicating and marketing their Year to the rest of Europe. The Panel is particularly keen to hear how the organisers will deal with this issue.

e) The Panel welcomes the involvement of the wider region but it will be keen to see that the City of Riga stays at the centre of the planning and programme for the Year. The

Panel is particularly keen to know that the national Government of Latvia is involved in and supportive of the programme.

f) The Panel encourages the City of Riga to consider the possibility of involving in the project Cesis and Liepaja as partners who have submitted excellent applications for the competition as well. Several ideas proposed by these cities might enrich the programme of Riga.

g) The Panel welcomes the fact that they were told that culture is at the heart of the city and region and will want to be reassured throughout the monitoring process that this will not change.

h) The Panel wishes to see that the events of 2014 should be made accessible to young people from other European countries. The organizers should undertake efforts to enable students and backpackers to participate in the cultural events and help with encouraging the main operators with cheap train tickets, cheap flights, budget accommodation etc.

i) The Panel is informed that one private sponsor – the airline airBaltic – has already been attracted to the project. The panel wishes to see that by 2014 the private sector is more widely involved in the support.

#### **1.4. The Monitoring and Advisory Panel**

The Monitoring and Advisory Panel for the meeting was composed of the following members:

- Mr Manfred Gaulhofer and Sir Jeremy Isaacs, appointed by the Commission for the 2011-2013 period;
- Mr Andreas Wiesand and Ms Danuta Glondys, appointed by the European Parliament for the 2009-2011 period (Decision of EP Conference of Presidents of 13 November 2008);
- Ms Erna Hennicot-Schoepges and Mr Constantin Chiriac, appointed by the Culture Council for the 2010-2012 period;
- Ms Elizabeth Vitouch, appointed by the Committee of the Regions for the 2010-2012 period.

The panel was chaired by Mr Manfred Gaulhofer.

## **2. FIRST MEETING OF THE MONITORING AND ADVISORY PANEL IN BRUSSELS, 8 NOVEMBER 2011**

### **2.1. Organisation of the meeting**

The 2014 European Capitals of Culture had been invited to answer some questions listed in a "monitoring questionnaire" and to return it to the Commission in autumn 2011. The Commission forwarded the completed forms to the panel immediately upon their reception. The panel members were invited by the Commission to a meeting on 8 November 2011 in Brussels. The cities were invited to present the progress achieved so far in the preparation of the event and to answer questions from the panel members.

The meeting was organised as follows:

- Presentation by representatives of Umeå 2014 and question/answer session

- Presentation by representatives of Riga 2014 and question/answer session
- Closed panel discussion regarding outlines of the report and conclusion (restricted to Panel members and the Commission as observer)

The delegations of the 2014 European Capitals of Culture were composed as follows:

#### *2.1.1. The Umeå 2014 delegation*

- Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, President Umeå 2014
- Mr Sven-Olov Edvinsson, Vice President Umeå 2014
- Mr Fredrik Lindgren, Artistic Director Umeå 2014
- Ms Helene Brewer, Head of administration
- Mr Jan Björinge, Enterprise director Umeå 2014
- Mr Benny Marcel, Deputy Director General of the Swedish Arts Council : observer to the meeting, in accordance with Article 10.2 of Decision 1622/2006/EC.

#### *2.1.2. The Riga 2014 delegation*

- Mr.Nils Ushakovs, Mayor of Riga
- Ms Inga Barisa, Riga representative in Brussels, liaison of the Mayor at this occasion
- Ms.Iveta Strautina, Head of Mayor's office
- Ms Diana Civle, Director of the Foundation RIGA 2014
- Ms Dace Vilsons, Representative of the Ministry of Culture at the Supervision committee of RIGA 2014
- Ms Aiva Rozenberga, Head of Programme of the Foundation RIGA 2014
- Ms Anna Muhka, Head of Marketing and Communications of the Foundation RIGA 2014

Ms Solvita Krese, Curator of the RIGA 2014 Artistic Council, Director of the Contemporary Arts Centre of Latvia

### **3. SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2014 ECOC AND QUESTION/ANSWER SESSIONS**

#### **3.1. Umeå 2014**

The delegation stressed the importance of the long-term framework of a new cultural programme in Umeå established by the pre-selection and final selection bids. These two documents were to provide a sustainable working basis up until 2020. With culture being understood as a driving force in society, much of the programme of Umeå 2014 was built on participation. In this context, the open source idea played a key role in the programme to the cultural sector as well as citizens' participation. However, the delegation acknowledged that handling the open source code was challenging.

The **programme** for 2014 was based on the eight seasons of the Sami calendar, which vary in length. Unfolding like a story, the year would see eight corresponding highlights with clusters of projects. Each season would follow the same structure comprising an

opening, a main project, cluster projects, festivals or other sponsor arrangements as well as a financed and an unfinanced open source programme. A project management team was to evaluate the proposals together with the artistic director for funding potential but generally applicants would be invited to continue their projects.

As an example, the delegation presented the outline for the first season ("Season of Caring") with the Sune Jonsson Center as a main event with a European dimension due to the photographer's activities across Europe. The envisaged surrealist exhibition would focus solely on female artists in collaboration with prominent European museums and private collections. The "Season of Growing", for instance, taking place in early summer, would coincide with the YMCA World Festival hosted by Umeå for which around 10,000 participants were expected. As part of the long-term development of the city programme, the cultural weave as new venue in Umeå was to be finished in 2013.

The team aimed at completing the layout of three seasons by March 2012 so as to present the clusters to the tourist industry well ahead of the actual event. Moreover, it particularly pointed to the close cooperation with Riga with whom it would sign a bilateral agreement in late November regarding communication, marketing, tourism and involvement of public institutions and the NGO sector. The festival of light was an example of cooperation where Sami and Livonians work together.

With regard to **communication**, the delegation made clear that it recognised its critical role, evident in its good relationship with Swedish television SVT as partner, which would begin to include coverage already in 2012. SVT would orient its programme along the lines of the ECOC programme. Key elements of Umeå 2014 communication were the glass house and the Ice Tour 2013-2014. The first was to be transformed into a European living room and open office of Umeå 2014 once a month, hosting open meetings and art exhibitions. The latter, organised in cooperation with Ice Hotel, Visit Sweden and embassies, foresaw a preliminary list of eight stops in Europe and a seminar on the mission of ECOC. These cities would then pay a return visit to Umeå in 2014. With a view to increasing their visibility in the Swedish capital, a Stockholm office had been set up. Meanwhile, the team of Umeå 2014 was cooperating with the representation of North Sweden in Brussels.

While sponsors were still being identified for the Ice Tour, **sponsorship** formed a core component of the Umeå 2014 strategy. Sponsors could either become seasonal partners or support one specific aspect of a season, with the latter being particularly popular with potential/actual sponsors. A specially developed website called "Invest in Culture" aimed at informing companies about the possibilities of supporting different open source projects. In addition, the idea of in-house cultural investment was pursued, i.e. drawing on the spatial resources of big companies. Regarding the aforementioned potential support from AirBaltic, the delegation outlined its efforts to obtain support from transport operators such as airlines, train and bus operators.

The operating budget of Umeå 2014 amounted to € 41 million. In a symbolic act, the city had taken its decision on **financial** support (€ 10 million) very early in the process so as to show its serious commitment to the ECOC event in Umeå. Since 2009, several meetings with different government ministers had taken place and this dialogue would continue concerning the use of the future funds on top of those allocated already. The delegation pointed to the letter of intent which, although containing no figures, contained clear directions for national authorities and institutions to support Umeå 2014.



The delegation specified that the figures of the ECOC budget included culture funding directly linked to ECOC projects only. Umeå had an additional sum of € 20 million of annual funding for culture. With the ECOC event falling into the long-term city development plan, the Cultural Weave was not included in the ECOC budget. Additional funds would be allocated for spin-off projects for the year 2015.

Other sources of funding included the government's "cultural plan for regions" which was just finalised. The financial time schedule of Umeå 2014 followed the new structure of regional funding. Co-funding from the regions would be decided on in November 2011 to be confirmed by the national level at the end of January 2012. In addition, Umeå 2014 was working with a well-established company specialised in attracting private funding, for instance for the marketing campaign for the Ice Tour. Marketing and sponsoring cooperation were currently being negotiated with companies of the Umeå region and national ones such as Ikea.

The city was discussing with several government departments, including culture, social affairs, enterprise and finance. The observer to the meeting confirmed that Umeå 2014 was clearly on the national political agenda, it was the subject of an interesting discussion between national, local and regional levels, and Umeå had been mentioned in a recent government bill. The government would shortly give further direction to the Swedish Arts Council and other cultural institutions concerning 2012 funding in a letter of intent. Umeå had also been the subject of a recent parliamentary debate focussed on the opportunities and ambitions of Umeå 2014, but financial matters would be dealt with by the Culture Minister at a later stage in line with Swedish procedures.

Concerning **governance**, the national advisory board and the regional advisory board were currently set up in addition to an Artistic Advisory Board in charge of managing the artistic venues in the city. The publicly owned ECOC enterprise was set up to deal with cooperation agreements with private companies for funding.

Regarding the European dimension, sample projects with Central Europe were presented and cooperation with the 2010 Hungarian ECOC Pécs and the 2012 Portuguese ECOC Guimarães. Moreover, the Fair City project had official partners from Rome and Porto. However, the delegation recognised the need to further develop its cooperation with Southern Europe.

Concerning long term impacts, Umeå wanted the city, its citizens, cultural sector, and region to have a new sense of empowerment and confidence in itself.

### **3.2. Riga 2014**

The delegation of Riga 2014 presented the recent achievements since the official designation of Riga as 2014 ECoC, confirming that they had been working step by step in line with their original plans. Progress included establishing the Riga 2014 Foundation as well as the Business Club 20:14 for securing sponsors. Both the Artistic Council and the Supervision Council had started working. The latter was chaired by the Riga City Mayor and included representatives of Riga City Council, the Chancery of the President of Latvia, the State Chancery by the Cabinet of Ministers, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Culture as well as non-governmental organisations. Moreover, Riga 2014 was working with some external experts with specialist knowledge of the ECOC.

As strong points, the delegation put forward the enthusiasm of the public and of cultural operators and the respect for independence by political forces, cooperation with the ECOC network, and new forms of interaction between cultural professionals and other sectors in anticipation of the event.

Regarding challenges and risks, the team highlighted the continuing difficult economic situation in Latvia, the change of government, human resources, the challenge of raising private capital, the economic crisis and the challenge of completing cultural infrastructure.

Regarding the change of government, parliamentary elections had been held in October 2011 and there had been many changes to the political landscape, in particular a new Latvian Parliament and new Ministers of Culture and Foreign Affairs. However, positively, the team had been assured of their clear support and willingness to actively collaborate as demonstrated by the fact that the city and state adopted resolutions on funding Riga 2014. Relations with the municipality were very good and sustained by the Supervision Committee which provided both a link and a communication platform.

Regarding funding, the contribution of the State to the Riga 2014 budget was already confirmed and amounted to € 8.5 million for the next three years (2012-2014). The Mayor confirmed that the city was giving € 10 million directly for the ECOC programme, as well as renovating infrastructure, including the national arts museum. The overall operating budget expenditure planned was € 24,4 million. According to the plans, 33% of the total operating costs would be funded by the state, 40% by the city and 10% (€ 2,4 million) could be raised from sponsorship. The delegation specified that Riga 2014 would follow the indicative budget given in the selection phase.

In terms of sponsorship, the main idea was to find six sponsors willing to support each of the six thematic programme lines. The recently founded Business Club 20:14, of which the Latvian President was the patron, would provide an informal forum for those involved in the programme.

Concerning human resources, the team was stable. The number of full-time positions was planned to triple from 5 in 2011 to 15 in 2012 and more than 30 posts in 2014. In addition, during the meeting the Mayor confirmed that the necessary funds for reinforcing the team up to 20-30 people in the coming years would be provided.

Concerning the content of the programme "Force Majeure", the Riga 2014 team was trying to strike a balance between artistic excellence and grassroots activities, public participation and high European excellence standards.

Six thematic lines ran through the whole programme with different projects for each line: "Thirst for the Ocean" in reference to the geographic situation; "Freedom Street"; "Survival Kit"; "Road Map"; "Amber Vein"; "Riga Carnival". The delegation listed 14 top events which would be published in February 2012 and would include Wagner's Nibelungen cycle in 2013.

With regard to the number of projects submitted so far (140), the Riga team explained that they had organised a workshop for cultural operators prior to the calls for proposals

so as to explain the main ideas of "Force Majeure" then inviting them to submit concrete projects. As a result, 140 projects had been selected out of 340.

As of 2012, calls for proposals would also be open for Riga neighbourhoods, thus allowing for grassroots elements, particularly along the thematic lines of "Road Map" and "Survival Kit". The underlying idea was to invite people to reflect on their preferences for long-term cultural activities.

Until 2014 the following work and investments in culture infrastructure were intended from Riga City: a new annex of the Latvian National Art Museum, the renovation of "Ziemeļblāzma" Culture centre, the renovation of VEF Culture centre, the reconstruction of the congress hall into a concert hall.

Via a website, citizens were invited to volunteer and participate actively in the event. With reference to the criterion European dimension, the Riga team highlighted their bid to host the World Choir Games in 2014 and the "Amber Vein" thematic line, as well as cooperation with Umeå.

Concerning tourism, the team had been assured of the continued support from the Riga City structures, the Riga Office of Tourism Development and the State Tourism Agency. Riga would be present at several tourism fairs in priority market countries such as Germany, the UK, Russia, Finland, Estonia and Lithuania in 2012. A direct flight connection had been opened with Umeå. Regarding the support of Riga 2014 by AirBaltic in the light of the company's financial problems, the team was confident to continue to be supported by AirBaltic since the problems seem to have been sorted out.

A sponsorship and communication strategy had been implemented, involving social media and a volunteers' programme. 2012 would see the start of the ambassadors' programme which would be further developed in the run-up to Riga 2014. The strategy was to gradually raise awareness among citizens in Riga and Latvia as a whole.

#### **4. THE PANEL'S ASSESSMENT**

In accordance with article 10 of Decision 1622/2006/EC the role of the Monitoring and Advisory Panel consists in monitoring the implementation of the objectives and criteria of the action and to provide the European Capitals of Culture with support and guidance. In this context, the assessments and recommendations of the panel are as follows:

##### **4.1. Umeå 2014**

The panel acknowledges the excellent programme and preparations presented by the Umeå 2014 delegation and commends the quality and stability of the team.

In the light of the requirement concerning the "city and citizens' dimension", the panel is pleased with the role of open source to increase citizen participation. The panel also highly appreciates the involvement of Sami people and projects.

Regarding the "European dimension", the panel recommends developing stronger links with Southern and Central Europe. It particularly stresses the importance of finding simple messages capable of tempting visitors to northern Europe and the event in Umeå, and recommends reinforcing and speeding up its media activities.

The panel also highlights some of the weaknesses in the preparations which need to be addressed. The panel had some concerns about funding. It would like to be updated on the outcome of the negotiations on regional and national funding in spring 2012. The panel also urges the 2014 team to strengthen the marketing strategy of the city so as to convince non-local visitors to come. The panel considers it necessary to develop the vision of the sustainability of the event, and would like to be updated on this aspect of the project at the second monitoring meeting.

The panel also recalls the importance of employing the ECOC logo in a highly visible manner on any communication material regarding the event.

#### **4.2. Riga 2014**

The panel is impressed by the efficient work of the team and its achievements in a context of very limited staff resources and a comparatively small budget. It acknowledges the progress achieved so far by the Riga team in relying on its step-by-step approach. Regarding the budget, the panel is pleased to see that part of the co-funding of the State is already confirmed and urges the authorities to make the remaining part and co-financing by the city available step by step up to 2014. However, the panel voices its concern regarding the relatively low budget and the uncertainties of securing funding from the private sector including AirBaltic. The panel expects to see updated and consistent figures regarding the income and expenditure for the operating and capital budgets by end March 2012 and in the progress report for the final monitoring meeting.

The panel is particularly concerned by the evident gap between the ambitious programme on the one hand and the ability to implement it with a team comprised of only five full-time employees. Whilst acknowledging the indications made by Riga that it would be increasing the size of the team, it stresses the urgency of improving the human resources situation quickly, in early 2012 rather than later in the year and welcomes the Mayor's confirmation of this in the meeting. The panel would also welcome to be updated about that by end March 2012.

Acknowledging that Riga's commitment went beyond the statements made in the written report, the panel would like to see more precise and detailed information on ongoing projects in the next report. In particular, it is interested in content, organisation, the state of implementation and contracting artists. The panel recommends developing the "European dimension" (useful explanations and examples about this concept could be found in the Guide to candidate cities available on line : [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/guide-to-candidate-cities\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/guide-to-candidate-cities_en.htm)), asking for more details to be provided in the progress report for the final monitoring meeting. Should there be any changes in the programme, they are to be included in the next report.

The panel would like also to know more about the view of the team and its strategy for the sustainability of the event beyond 2014 during the next meeting.

With a view to Riga's communication strategy, the panel points to the need to explain to the city inhabitants how great an opportunity Riga 2014 provides. In case Riga becomes host to major international events in 2014, such as the World Choir Games or the European Film Award, these should be used as calling card for the ECOC year. Promoting the Latvian capital and its potential for organising a successful ECOC year is of utmost importance.

The panel also stresses the importance of employing the ECOC logo in a highly visible manner on any communication material regarding the event. Furthermore, the name of the town of Sigulda should not be used in a misleading way which could generate confusion about the fact that there are only two European Capitals of Culture in 2014, Riga and Umeå.

## **5. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARDING THE MELINA MERCOURI PRIZE**

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, on the condition that they meet the criteria laid down in article 4 of Decision 1622/2006/EC (see below), have fulfilled their commitments and have implemented the recommendations made by the selection as well as the monitoring and advisory panels. The prize consists of a payment of € 1.5 million and shall be awarded, in principle, three months before the start of the relevant year. It is financed by the European Union's Culture Programme.

Article 4 of Decision 1622/2006/EC specifies the criteria that the cultural programme shall fulfil. They are subdivided into 2 categories (the "European dimension" and the "City and citizens").

As regards the "European Dimension", the programme shall:

- a) foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from the relevant Member States and other Member States in any cultural sector;
- b) highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe;
- c) bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore.

As regards the "City and citizens", the programme shall:

- a) foster the participation of the citizens living in the city and its surroundings and raise their interest as well as the interest of citizens from abroad;
- b) be sustainable and be an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city.

The panel will pay the utmost attention to the way both cities will fulfil their commitments made at selection stage and comply with the panel's recommendations.

The Commission would like that the EU ECOC logo is clearly displayed on any communication material about the event prior to and during the year.

The panel	
Manfred Gaulhofer (Commission designation)	signed
Sir Jeremy Isaacs (Commission designation)	signed
Danuta Glondys (Parliament nomination)	signed
Constantin Chiriac (Council designation)	signed
Erna Hennicot Schoepges	signed

(Council designation)	
Elizabeth Vitouch	signed
(Committee of the Regions nomination)	
Andreas Wiesand	signed
(Parliament nomination)	