



Designation of the European Capital of Culture 2016

Selection Panel

Report on Pre-selection

Warsaw, 12th-13th of October 2010



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 has 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 constitutes 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 is responsible for organisation of a national competition, appointment of national experts, appointment of the entire composition of the Selection Panel, organisation of pre-selection and final selection meetings as well as coordination of visits of the representatives of Selection Panel to the cities.

The applications submitted by the cities are assessed by the Selection Panel set up by Decision No 20 of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland of the 8th October 2010. According to the provisions of Article 7 of the Decision regulating the first selection stage, i.e. the pre-selection, the objective of the Panel is to assess applications, short-list the cities that will enter the second stage and to draw up a report. The assessment of the applications is conducted on the basis of the criteria set forth in Article 4 of the Decision.

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 application by the 30th August 2010:

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

The Minister of Culture and National Heritage invited members of the Panel to participate in the pre-selection meeting held on the 12th-13th October 2010 in Teatr Wielki-National Opera in Warsaw. The meeting was attended by all members of the Selection Panel (6 national experts and 7 experts appointed by European institutions).

Following Article 6 of the Decision, the Panel appointed its Chair - Mr Manfred Gaulhofer and Deputy Chair - Mrs Monika Smoleń. Mrs Joanna Kiliszek was appointed as the rapporteur for the meeting.

The pre-selection meeting was attended by candidate cities represented by local authorities at the level of a mayor or their deputy, 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 meeting of each candidate city with the Selection Panel was comprised of a 30 minute presentation and a 30 minute question and answer session. The Panel carried out a thorough assessment of the applications by the candidate cities, their presentations and answers provided to the experts' questions. The Panel recognised and commended the cities' efforts invested in preparing their bid for the title.

The Panel also believes that even in the case of the cities which were not pre-selected, the proposed cultural projects will be beneficial to those cities, in particular by strengthening the role of culture in the city's development strategy and stimulating and enriching local cultural life.

In deciding on the short-list of cities which would go through to the final selection stage, the Panel:

- has thoroughly assessed the degree of compliance of the applications by the cities with the objectives of the 'European Capital of Culture' event, as set forth in provisions of Article 3 of the Decision and criteria defined in Article 4 of the Decision: 'European dimension' and 'City and Citizens;'
- assessed the accuracy and quality of the responses provided by the cities to the questions included in the application form;
- assessed the potential impact of each of the programmes of the European Capital of Culture at the national and European levels;
- carefully assessed the presentations prepared by the cities and discussed their applications with them in order to gain a better insight into their proposals;
- considered that the cities which are pre-selected should be those which best satisfied the requirements and were capable of ensuring the realisation of the designed programme of the event in practice.

I. Presentations delivered by the cities

BIAŁYSTOK

The presentation of the delegation consisted primarily in showing the city's multicultural tradition and the new potential connected with young people's activities. The delegates highlighted the progressing development of the region, collaboration with cultural minorities, especially the Roma, traditions related to the development of the Esperanto language created by Ludwik Zamenhoff born in Białystok, the rich countryside surrounding the city, architecture for which Białystok was dubbed 'Versailles of Eastern Europe', the richness of many cultures and the dialogue emerging at the social level. The young representatives of the City argued that Białystok should be perceived as a place where young people can realise their plans and ambitions. The delegation asserted that the city's culture was one of



genuine co-existence of diverse communities and constituted a sort of gateway to the East of Europe. The presentation also included films and a break-dance show.

BYDGOSZCZ

The delegation from Bydgoszcz presented several centuries of the city's history and its regional role. It highlighted firmly rooted cultural traditions connected with classical music and education in that field. Representatives of the city stressed the need for profound changes in Bydgoszcz's inhabitants' involvement in culture. Simultaneously, they stressed the potential of Bydgoszcz wishing to tap into the cultural sphere as a factor changing the city's image and transforming itself. The catchword accompanying the cultural projects – 'Culture under construction' – was also illustrated literally through a satellite broadcast from the city showing the enthusiasm of young people, who were live participants in the building of 'A pyramid of cultural needs' and an artistic installation in the foyer of Teatr Wielki.

GDAŃSK

The presentation was based on Gdańsk's freedom and solidarity tradition, which for many years has brought together communities of workers, intellectuals and artists. The slogan Gdańsk wishes to ascribe to the European Capital of Culture - 'Freedom of culture –culture of freedom' –portrays the specific ambiance of the region. The delegation presented concrete projects founded on the conviction that art should be engaged in current social issues, some of which included: the ALTERNATIVA Festival in the former Shipyard, the 'All about Freedom' and 'Space of Freedom' festivals, the 'My district -My Capital' and 'Wikipolis'. The delegation emphasized the unique and, simultaneously, universal character of Gdańsk as a city combining the concepts of 'freedom' and 'solidarity.' It stated that the basis for the implementation of the programme would be the city's existing infrastructural opportunities and the full involvement of local communities, including the Kashubian community, as part of the multicultural dimension.

KATOWICE

The delegation of the city explained the concept of 'The City of Gardens' used in the application, which reflects the desire to transform the industrial, mining city into a post-industrial metropolis, whose green spaces and ecology are an important factor of social and cultural transformation. The bipolar logo of the city as a candidate for the title of the 'European Capital of Culture' symbolises Katowice and the Region of Silesia as a friendly space immersed in creative atmosphere –opposing a consumption-oriented approach. The delegation also demonstrated that this post-industrial city should now be driven by culture and its own unique magic - 'the mysticism of the people standing firm on the ground.' One of the presented programme proposals – as part of innovation – regards a responsible design industry and staging of the Design Biennale in 2016.



LUBLIN

The Delegation presented Lublin as centre of dialogue for many cultures, a city of theatre, strong local initiatives, but also investments envisaged for the upcoming years, some of which include: Centre for the Encounter of Cultures (opening in 2012), the Workshops of Cultures (2011) and the Teatr Stary (2011). The delegation confirmed the commitment of the city to the development of transport infrastructure, announcing progress in construction works related to the airport. The delegation also emphasised the real engagement of artistic and NGO communities in the preparation of the city's candidature, among other things by way of the SPOKO initiative. The city is aware of its potential and importance for the region and the dimension of Eastern Partnership for Europe.

ŁÓDŹ

As part of the '(R)evolution in imagination 2016' concept, the delegation presented intended ambitious and dynamic infrastructure changes, including development of a new EC1 city centre and revitalisation of the surroundings of Herbst Palace. The presentation put a strong emphasis on the city's European character and cooperation with other centres in Poland and abroad. It stressed the unique character of the city, its industrial heritage, the avant-garde tradition, and presented a vision regarding the use of its creative potential in the future. The entire presentation was principally based on involvement of the local community and NGOs, who had greatly contributed to the creation of the programme and, through a number of events and actions, expressed their support for the idea of Łódź as the ECOC 2016, as clearly present in the films displayed.

POZNAŃ

The delegation presented a vision of city's transformation through culture, according to which culture should be considered as an element of daily life, a component of a city's prosperity, created through the development of creative industries and the psychological transformation of society. This presentation stressed the significance of the city's social capital, which should be enriched through 'Poznań cultural storm' – a launch of a dialogue platform for civic society, communication between generations and strong engagement of young people. An important aspect of the programme included mobilization of PPP (public-private partnership) for culture, among other things, to bring the worlds of art and business together.

SZCZECIN

The delegation stressed the fact that the idea of the city bidding for the ECOC title was initiated by a student who managed to persuade 22 NGOs, which in turn, convinced the city to run for the title in question. This delegation discussed the need to redefine the city due to many years of negligence and the fact that it is treated as a foreign city in the so-called 'Reclaimed Lands'. The solutions presented by the delegation included the concept for a common cultural space, running debates on migration and



exclusion, development of research as part of the Observatory of Culture project. The presented programme was founded on strong cooperation with German partners.

TORUŃ

The form of the presentation delivered under the 'Universe of Culture' slogan was based on pillars connoting Toruń - Nicolaus Copernicus, Hanseatic league and Gothic tradition, to name just a few elements. The presented concept was based on the ideas of innovation, diversity, partnership and the European tradition of Toruń. The innovative presentation aimed to show the modern character of Toruń as a European centre which is attractive in cultural and touristic terms and often seen only through the prism of its rich history.

WARSAW

The presentation entitled 'New Warsaw for a Renewed Europe' was based on the polemic with the image of Warsaw – a capital, the city of business and politics. The major ideas of the presentation included statements by artists and curators stressing the need to build a new identity for the city and its citizens. The delegation showed the social dimension of the project consisting in consistent and permanent inclusion of NGOs into the development and implementation of cultural strategy of the city. It also stressed the commitment to the development of Warsaw's cultural infrastructure, manifesting itself in the development of new centres, including the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Copernicus Science Centre, the Museum of Modern Art.

WROCLAW

The expressive presentation entitled 'Space for beauty' demonstrated a very broad understanding of the definition of culture and the roles of culture and beauty in the life of the city. The presentation aimed to show the city's multicultural character and the aspect of co-existence of culturally and economically diversified communities. An example of the co-existence of representatives of various religious denominations was the establishment of the so-called Mutual Respect District, inhabited by Catholics, Jews, Protestants and members of the Orthodox churches who live, pray and work together. The spirit of tolerance rooted in Wrocław was juxtaposed against the big-city problem of exclusion, citizens' passiveness and minority problems. Moreover, delegates presented the combination of aesthetics and ethics in a unique manner. The programme also touched upon issues of ecology and animal rights.



II. Conclusions and recommendations

The Panel unanimously agreed that the cultural programmes of the following 5 cities best reflected the objectives and criteria of the European Capital of Culture, and that they provided the highest possibility for the successful implementation of the event, and would therefore be pre-selected to go through to the final selection stage:

Gdańsk, Katowice, Lublin, Warszawa, Wrocław.

The Panel communicates its decision to the Minister of Culture and National Heritage by way of the present report. The list of the cities recommended for the final selection were announced for the first time by the Chair of the Panel, Mr Manfred Gaulhofer, during the press conference on the 13th October 2010, immediately following the pre-selection meeting.

Having considered the cities' bidding documents, their presentations and the exchange of information in the question and answer session, the Selection Panel makes the following conclusions and recommendations for the cities, both to those which did not make the final selection and those which were recommended to final selection stage:

BIAŁYSTOK

The Panel recognised Białystok's ambitious programme, as well as being open towards the region in the context of multicultural heritage, a value also important at the European level. The fact that the city has touched upon the issue of the Roma community shows that it is paying proper attention to the role of the minorities as part of the discourse on the identity of contemporary Europeans.

It is also worth recognising the project's reference to the natural diversity of the region, the potential of which was not, however, reflected in specific cultural and touristic projects.

The Panel also observed that the application did not envisage large enough a number of significant events of European outreach that would create a bright brand enabling identification of the ECOC 2016, at least not ones that would be created especially for the occasion of the ECOC. The application and presentation did not show sufficient evidence of adequate development of the city's cultural and transportation infrastructure and the panel also had concerns about the financial credibility of the planned ECOC events.

The panel had the impression that the non-governmental community was not invited to contribute to development of the application, which could be inferred from the application, in spite of the fact that it was the representatives of this community who initiated the city's running for the title of the ECOC 2016. It considered the programme for engaging Białystok's citizens in the city's cultural policy as insufficient taking into consideration the importance of the ECOC year for the citizens.

The Panel recommends further engagement of the third sector in development of the city's cultural strategy, intensification of activities for development of appropriate cultural infrastructure and highlighting of exceptional assets of the region such as nature and ecology.

BYDGOSZCZ

The Panel recognised the commitment and enthusiasm on the part of both municipal authorities and various communities active in the field of culture to the creation of an innovative attitude to the city's development through culture.

The Panel felt that the concept of the European and civic dimension of the ECOC was quite unclear in the proposal. It had also the impression that most of the proposed projects were only declarative in character and could not be translated into real future projects.

The Panel also felt uncomfortable with the lack of a clear definition of the target groups to be reached by the ECOC year and was not convinced by the quite vague organisational structure proposed for the entities responsible for the implementation of the programme of the ECOC 2016 event.

The Panel recommends the city to go ahead with the further assessment of the city's identity and to pursue the public opinion research. It also advises the city of Bydgoszcz to run more extensive social consultations while shaping culture-related programmes, linked with a readiness to expose challenges and problems and the will to resolve them. With regard to the development of regions' cultural capacity, the Panel recommends the establishment of closer cooperation with neighbouring cities, especially Toruń.

ŁÓDŹ

The Panel recognised the broad and enthusiastic involvement of the city's inhabitants, NGOs, cultural institutions and organisations and the academic community in development of the application based on an understanding of the exceptional character of the city, its industrial heritage and a long-term vision regarding the use of the process as an element that may transform the city.

While recognising the grand scale of infrastructural and artistic projects planned by the city, the Panel also had the impression that the assumptions of the ECOC celebrations were provided with inadequate financial, organisational and structural guarantees, which might pose a risk to full implementation of the programme. These concerns were strengthened during the question and answer session, when the panel felt it did not receive sufficiently credible answers to its questions concerning the funds of the city dedicated to culture.

The Panel expressed its regret that the last year in the field of culture in Łódź was marked by misunderstandings and renouncement of flagship projects.

The Panel recommends the city to continue with the extensively planned process aiming to engage citizens in development of the city's cultural strategy and with the creation of unconventional activities



concentrating on diverse urban communities. The Panel also welcomed the idea to develop further the image of the city as a centre of creative industries, as presented in city's application.

POZNAŃ

The Panel recognised the city's will to undertake consistent efforts to reinforce the role of culture in the city and the increased involvement of citizens, cultural organisations and individual artists in the life of Poznan.

The Panel also observed a high involvement of the business sector in cultural projects related to the ECOC. While this commitment was basically viewed as positive by the panel, the jury at the same time expressed its concerns about the impression it had of an overemphasis on market-oriented attitudes of some of the projects, which might limit artists' creative freedom.

Moreover the panel assessed the concept of the ECOC celebrations as insufficiently developed: it regretted the lack of detailed descriptions and the somewhat vague and incomplete presentation of the planned programme. The city did not show sufficient evidence of the link between the programme and the city's specificity, since the jury felt the programme was rather founded on general slogans that would fit any city applying for being ECOC. The projects constituting the application seemed not to make up a new quality, lacking a coherent vision and innovative features, particularly in terms of the 'European Dimension' of the event. The panel also deemed that the project did not fully comply with the 'City and Citizens' criterion.

The Panel fully supports the idea of the city to redefine its image – a need that was strongly manifested in the extensive workshops commented on in the application.

SZCZECIN

The Panel recognised the grassroots initiative of the inhabitants, the immense number of consultations conducted, as well as the participation of citizens, cultural institutions, universities and local politicians in the consultations.

The Panel congratulated the city on its innovative communication strategy and the long-term approach to the 'City and Citizens' dimension.

The Panel did not find sufficient evidence in the proposal of the feasibility of the proposed projects. The presentation of the programme was assessed as too vague, lacking concrete elements which would underpin the concepts put forward.

Szczecin's transnational cooperation with German partners constitutes a clear asset to the city. However a more diversified, multi-sector look on a broader international cooperation would be seen by the jury as a contribution to the European character of the ECOC.



The Panel suggests that the city should consider the development of a long-term cultural strategy, which, in the mid-term, could lead to outstanding cultural projects and an extension of the spectrum of contacts to other communities and regions beyond the German - Polish contacts.

TORUŃ

The Panel recognised the comprehensive and consistent approach to the programme of the ECOC 2016 based on the metaphor of cosmos as a vision to expand the boundaries of cognition and development. It is also worth pointing out that the idea of the ECOC programme proposed by the city alludes to universal European values such as humanism, rationalism and receptiveness to the problems of the disabled.

The Panel had some concerns about the financial credibility of the planned celebration with regard to the extensive investment plans and the rather low level of funding for the implementation of the event in 2015 and 2016. The Panel found that the European dimension was not reflected strongly enough in the proposal. The replies provided to some of its questions raised during the debate did not fully convince the jury.

While recognising the city's perseverance and determination in preparation of the application and the foundation of the application on Toruń's European dimension, the Panel recommends the city to continue to develop further the city's cultural infrastructure and to enhance broad cooperation with non-governmental organisations and young people.

General remarks:

Moreover, the Panel pointed to certain shortcomings in the applications and presentations of the cities which were not included in the above short list and which could be presented as general conclusions:

- The applications frequently lacked detailed descriptions and coherent concepts of the 'European Dimension';
- The lack of a specified permanent organisational structure of ECOC preparations which would guarantee independence in selecting the projects and their implementation;
- Inaccuracies in spending budgets for 2011-2015 and beyond this period based on unrealistic calculations which impacted on the credibility of the projects;
- In some cases - the lack of a clear and long-term concept of the city's strategic development in the cultural area that could ensure long-lasting effect of the initiatives undertaken;
- In some cases – independent communities have been engaged in the process of application-related consultations to an inadequate extent.



The cities of Gdańsk, Katowice, Lublin, Warszawa, Wrocław are expected to complete their applications further on the basis of the criteria and objectives required for the event, and in particular to consider the panel's assessment and recommendations mentioned below.

The panel expects to receive applications of a reasonable length, and recommends limiting the bidding document to 120 pages of written text.

The panel would like to stress that it expects the delegations to consist not only of political representatives but also of representatives of the structure preparing the bid and the cultural sector involved in the proposal. It shall also expect clear and relevant replies to the questions raised during the question and answer session.

Guided by Article 7 of the Decision, the Panel presented the following conclusions regarding the shortlisted cities:

GDAŃSK

The Panel recognised:

- Careful incorporation of the idea of the city running for the title of ECOC 2016 into its development strategy (a special operational programme under the banner of ECOC);
- Development of a special model of engagement of local communities through a well-thought-out volunteering campaign, addressing projects to specific groups with an emphasis on integration, education, diversity and understanding of tolerance;
- Declaration of a launch of an evaluation model developed for Gdańsk 2016 as a standard procedure to monitor cultural projects in institutions and the City Hall;
- Good description of plans to collaborate with Spain in 2016 as a partner ECOC (among others: talks on airway connections).

At the same time, the Panel recommends:

- To increase the number of projects selected through a competitive process and through public consultations;
- To precisely plan distribution of funds throughout the years 2010 – 2015, in 2016 and the years following the ECOC;
- To more precisely specify the organisational structure of the ECOC, the rules of selection of people being competent and independent of political structures.



KATOWICE

The Panel approved of:

- A well-thought-out and original concept of the 'City of Gardens' and the logo alluding to the history of the city and social expectations related to its development;
- Incorporation of the industrial character of the city into the contemporary vision of the role and place of culture in the urban agglomeration, an interesting combination of tradition and modernity;
- The relevant involvement of the Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia;
- The use of the works on the ECOC 2016 programme as an opportunity to develop a long-term culture funding mechanism.

The Panel recommends:

- To keep the independence of the structure of the ECOC office and to appoint an artistic director and, possibly, advisory bodies that would take over the intellectual reflections;
- To more precisely specify a budget for the years 2011-2015, 2016 and the period following the ECOC;
- To engage citizens and NGOs in the preparation of the ECOC programme to a greater extent;
- To further specify the 'City and Citizens' dimension in terms of the concept of broader engagement of the participants from Europe into the ECOC events;
- To present a concept of cooperation with Spain as part of ECOC 2016.

LUBLIN

The Panel was pleased to recognise:

- The idea of the programme profoundly bound with the spirit of the city, i.e. the focus on collaboration with the East, reflecting the character of the city and trends in contemporary EU politics of cultural cooperation (Agenda for Culture and the Eastern Partnership);
- An ideal balance between tradition and multiculturalism and between institutional and civic bases;
- The concept of the European College of Culture as an interesting way to realise the "European Dimension" – Lublin as being open to the world, the education backed by robust partnership with academic centres;
- Consistent plans for the city's institutional development;
- Recognition of important themes and current problems of Europe, which, thanks to culture, may develop new values;



- Good depiction of the “European Dimension” – portrayal of Lublin’s place in Europe with reference to the history and an emphasis on Lublin’s potential and its role as an ambassador of the idea of Eastern Partnership;
- Broad presentation of the ‘City and Citizens’ dimension through significant local involvement, participation of NGOs, e.g. the SPOKO artistic initiative.

The Panel recommends:

- To further develop the vision of promoting Polish culture at the European forum as part of the ECOC programme;
- To complete information on project funding;
- To appoint an artistic director of the project;
- To further develop the vision of collaboration with Spain within ECOC 2016;
- To specify projects and examples in the description of ‘European Dimension’ and the ‘City and Citizens’ criterion.

WARSAW

The Panel recognised:

- Concentration of programme activities within the ECOC event on development of the city’s identity and projects engaging citizens;
- The attempt to reformulate the city’s image in Europe through development of a new promotional strategy;
- The fact that the programme of the event took account of the multicultural character of the city and inter-generational aspects;
- The fact that the budget of the ECOC 2016 was presented in a reliable and credible way and that the organisational structure of the bodies responsible for management of the celebration was clearly delineated;
- Incorporation of the activities related to Warsaw’s candidature for the title of the ECOC 2016 into the city’s strategic documents.

The Panel recommends:

- To immediately engage citizens in the development of the programme, especially representatives of NGOs and cultural institutions;
- To develop a concept of collaboration with Spain as part of celebration of the ECOC 2016;
- To develop a concept of the event by describing concrete examples of future projects;



- To become acquainted with present EU activities in the cultural area, the themes discussed at the EU forum, and to integrate them with the city's programme;
- To make the programme more broadly embrace integration of both parts of the city geographically divided by Vistula River;
- To complement the description of specific initiatives as part of the 'European' and 'City and Citizens' dimensions.

WROCLAW

The Panel recognised:

- Well-thought-out description of implementation of the 'European' and 'City and Citizens' criteria (realisation of criteria by individual programmes of the application);
- Comprehensiveness of the themes and the most important projects engaging various social groups, in particular the excluded ones;
- The unique approach to the city's application emphasising the intellectual aspect stemming from the fact of being the ECOC, establishment of a debate on the quality of life at the interstices of ethics and aesthetics;
- An innovative approach to ecology.

The Panel recommends:

- To re-estimate the budget and provide specification of amounts also in EUR;
- To describe involvement of citizens and NGO representatives in creation of the application and further specification of the role of Wroclaw's Shareholding of Culture;
- To further specify the procedure of selection of projects making up the ECOC's programme.

To gain more information needed for final selection, the Panel will pay visits to the pre-selected cities. The visits will be held in the first half of June 2011 after cities have forwarded their completed applications. The exact deadline for submissions will be specified in a separate invitation to participate in the final selection stage. During the visits, Members of the Panel will be accompanied by representatives of the European Commission and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

Manfred Gaulhofer – Chair

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