



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Paphos to be the European Capital of Culture in Cyprus in 2017

The Cypriot city of Paphos was recommended today for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2017 by an independent selection panel. The other Cypriot city in contention was Nicosia. On 24 August, the independent panel proposed Aarhus (Denmark) to be the other European Capital of Culture for 2017 ([IP/12/913](#)). The formal nomination of both winning cities by the EU's Council of Ministers will take place in May 2013.

Androulla Vassiliou, the European Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, stated: *"I warmly congratulate Paphos for its selection to be the European Capital of culture in 2017. I am very proud that for the first time a city in my home country will be European Capital of Culture. I am confident that Paphos will make the most of this unique opportunity to develop a cultural programme with a rich European dimension and to support the socio-economic development of the city. I wish Paphos much success."*

Background

Cyprus and Denmark are the two Member States hosting a European Capital of Culture in 2017. The list of countries hosting the title until 2019 was laid down in a [decision](#) of the European Parliament and Council of Ministers in 2006. The Commission recently proposed countries to host European Capitals of Culture after 2019 ([IP/12/815](#)).

Bidding cities are assessed on the basis of criteria laid down by the European Parliament and Council of Ministers. These criteria state that the cities should prepare a cultural programme with a strong European dimension and foster the participation of citizens living in the city, in its surroundings and abroad.

The European dimension is reflected in the chosen themes and the way in which the events in the programme are organised. Cooperation between cultural operators in different EU countries is encouraged. The programme must also have a lasting impact and contribute to the long-term cultural and social development of the city.

The independent selection panel which makes the recommendation consists of 13 members, seven appointed by the European institutions and six by the Member State concerned (see list of European members below).

The process for selecting a European Capital of Culture begins with a pre-selection phase after which an initial shortlist of cities is drawn up. A final selection takes place nine months later. The two cities chosen (one per country) are then officially designated by the EU's Council of Ministers.

The members of the panel appointed by the European institutions are:

- Appointed by the European Commission: **Sir Jeremy Isaacs** (United Kingdom) a television executive and a former Director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; **Manfred Gaulhofer** (Austria), Director-General of Graz 2003, who has managed many European projects.
- Appointed by the Council: **Erna Hennicot-Schoepges** (Luxembourg), former Member of the European Parliament, of the Council of Europe Assembly and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), currently heads various national and international cultural organisations; **Constantin Chiriac** (Romania), Vice President of Sibiu 2007 and currently director of national theatre Radu Stanca.
- Appointed by the European Parliament: **Jordi Pardo** (Spain), responsible for cultural projects in the field of international culture; **Steve Green** (United Kingdom), researcher in cultural policy.
- Appointed by the Committee of the Regions: **Elisabeth Vitouch** (Austria), represents the Commission for Culture and Education of the Committee of the Regions and is a member of the Vienna City government.

Following Guimarães (Portugal) and Maribor (Slovenia) this year; Marseille (France) and Košice (Slovakia) will be European Capitals of Culture in 2013; Umeå (Sweden) and Riga (Latvia) in 2014, Mons (Belgium) and Plzen (Czech Republic) in 2015 and Wrocław (Poland) and Donostia-San Sebastián (Spain) in 2016.

For more information

European Commission: [European Capitals of Culture website](#)

[Androulla Vassiliou's website](#)

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