

Selection of a
European Capital of Culture
2014 in Sweden
Selection panel

Final selection report
September 2009

In accordance with decision no. 1622/2006/CE of the European Parliament and the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action to further the “European Capitals of Culture” scheme for the years 2007-2019, and decision no. Ku2007/3264/KR of the Swedish Government of 22 November 2007, a competition has been established to designate the Swedish city responsible for organising the event entitled “European Capital of Culture” for the year 2014. The procedure for implementing this decision in Sweden was set out in decision no. Ku2007/3264/KR and the notice published on 28 November 2007.

The selection panel established by the orders of 6 November was given the task of recommending a city for designation as European Capital of Culture 2014. The members of the panel are listed in an appendix.

In accordance with article 7 of the decision of 24 October 2006, the preselection meeting was held in Stockholm on 8 and 9 December 2008.

At this meeting, in accordance with article 6 of the decision of 24 October 2006, the panel agreed Sir Robert Scott chaired the meetings for the entire procedure; it also appointed Philip Johnsson as Vice-Chair. The secretariat from the Swedish Arts Council functioned as Recorder.

Application files had been received from Gävle, Lund, Umeå and Uppsala.

Following the preselection procedure, the panel proposed to shortlist the two cities of Lund and Umeå whose applications in their view best met the objectives of the event and the criteria of the "European dimension" and "cities and citizens".

The selection procedure

At the request of the panel, the final selection meeting was preceded by a one-day visit from a delegation from the panel to each of the two short-listed cities, taking place between 23 and 25 August 2009. The delegation comprised Sir Robert Scott, Mr Philip Johnsson, Mary McCarthy and Birgitta Englin.

The application files had been submitted by the cities by 30 June and were sent to the panel members by the Swedish Arts Council prior to these visits.

The Swedish Arts Council called the final selection meeting at Filmhuset, Stockholm, on 7 and 8 September 2009.

The final selection meeting began with a presentation of the city visits by the panel delegation that had made them. The following day the two short-listed cities each made a presentation of their project lasting no longer than 30 minutes, followed by a 60 minutes long discussion with the panel. The panel then discussed in private its choice of the city to be designated European Capital of Culture.

Both cities were represented by their Mayors, the project managers, representatives for the local and regional councils as well as representatives for the local cultural institutions, universities and private enterprises. The composition of these delegations demonstrates the degree to which the bid to become European Capital of Culture is a unifying project for the

two cities concerned. Umeå's presentation was supported by audiovisual material. The members of the delegations are listed in an appendix.

The panel's assessment

Both cities had responded to the report from the preselection panel and done a great deal of work. The cultural projects had been developed and more outlined, management had been consolidated and funding proposals were more detailed. The desire of each city to stage the event, already keen at the preselection stage, was felt even more strongly and it was evident that both cities regard this event as an important opportunity to develop their cultural lives, to integrate culture as a catalyst in the local development and to get stronger connection with Europe.

Both cities had made efforts to establish their bid in the local population, and launched a number of activities to strengthen this connection.

Although the panel found both bids were interesting, they also found that the two cities had chosen very different approach. Umeå had a very clear ambition to make the city and the North of Sweden more visible in Europe. Umeå had also shown good ambition for using culture as a major element in regional development. Lund's vision was to connect art and science and create closer synergies between university and the society

In making its final selection the panel paid close attention to the conditions in which the programmes of the shortlisted cities met the objectives of the event, as set out in article 3 of the decision of 24 October 2006 and to the two categories of criteria established in article 4: "the European dimension" and "cities and citizens". It also examined the degree to which the programmes took account of the recommendations drawn up at the preselection meeting and in the preselection report concerning the project content, project governance and respect for the criteria.

The project of Umeå was judged to respond best to the objectives of the event based on the criteria set out in the European decision. It was also the project that seemed to the panel to present:

- strong political engagement on part of the mayor of the city and all local authorities involved regardless of political allegiance;
- solid governance with all management structures related to each other
- a high quality programme in comparison with the requirements for a European Capital of culture
- solid financial support from local authorities

In the panel's view, the project presented by Umeå, on which a great deal of work had been done since the pre-selection meeting, seemed well constructed and well prepared. The panel was sympathetic to its underlying deeply felt urge to make Umeå and the Northern part of Sweden more connected with and known by other parts of Europe.

For this reason, it is the panel's unanimous recommendation that Umeå should be designated as European Capital of Culture 2014.

Following its deliberations, the panel communicated its recommendation to the Swedish Minister of Culture.

The panel would like to underline that Lund can benefit from the work done during the competition to boost its development through culture: this competition is a unique opportunity to reflect about the cultural development of the city and it is worth building on this experience to go further.

The panel's recommendations:

In accordance with article 8-4 of the decision of 24 October 2006, the panel has set out the following recommendations to Umeå regarding progress to be made and works to be carried out in advance of 2014:

a) the Panel will wish to see more detail and more substance developed to meet the key criterion of "the European dimension". The Panel will expect 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 will be interested to see further details of the full inclusion of the Sami people and Sami culture in the plans for the year.

c) the Panel was impressed with the commitment of political leaders in both the City and the Region, 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.

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 will be particularly keen to hear how the organisers will deal with this problem.

e) the Panel welcomes the involvement of the wider region but it will be keen to see that the City of Umeå stays at the centre of the planning and programme for the Year. The Panel will be 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 will want to be reassured throughout the monitoring process that this will not change.

g) the Panel will wish 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.

The monitoring phase

In accordance with Decision 1622/2006/EC, the 2014 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 will be carried out by the seven members designated by the European Institutions. The first monitoring meeting will take place by late 2011 and the final one by 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 be awarded in full at the latest three months before the start of the relevant year. It will be financed from the European Union's Culture Programme.

The panel stresses that a lot of work is still to be achieved by Umeå (if the city is designated by the Council as European Capital of culture 2014) to make the event a success, notably in terms of European dimension. The panel expects the city to follow the recommendations mentioned above. Indeed, getting the title is not a guarantee of success, the impact of the event will depend on the preparations regarding the governance, the funding, the communication strategy, the cultural programme etc.

The support of the local authorities to the event needs to be ensured throughout the preparatory process as well as during the Year itself, including in terms of funding.

The panel encourages Umeå to read carefully any guidance document provided by the European Commission regarding the preparation of such an event (notably the *Guide to applicant cities*, available on line: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc629_en.htm).

The panel also encourages Umeå to take advantage of the experience of other cities which hosted the event in the coming years (the Commission will organise a meeting for the sharing of good practices on 23-24 March 2010). The city is also invited to follow the recommendations that the panel will issue during the monitoring phase. It may talk to the Chairman as soon as this report is published to better understand the progress to be achieved before the beginning of the monitoring phase.

The Panel also reminds Umeå that the Melina Mercouri Prize is not automatic, and that further to its formal designation, the city would still need to deserve the prize, namely to meet the criteria laid down in the legal base and follow the recommendations of the monitoring panel in order to be entitled to it.

Sir Robert SCOTT, chairman

Philip JOHNSON, vice-chairman

Cissi ELWIN

Birgitta ENGLIN

Manfred GAULHOFER

Danuta GLONDYS

Majlis GRANSTRÖM

Mary MAC CARTHY

Maria MICHAILIDOU

Jyrki MYLLYVIRTA

David NEUMAN

Per-Magnus NILSSON

Andreas WIESAND

Appendix: Delegations from Lund and Umeå

Lund

Mats Helmfrid, Mayor, Chairman of the Executive Committee

Claes Göran Jönsson, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee

Caroline Runéus, Head of Communication at the University of Lund

Chris Marschall, Director of Cultural Affairs, Region Skåne

Johan Wester, Artist

Anna Kaminska. Project Coordinator, Stir It Up

Hans-Martin Hansen, Process Director

Albin Balthasar, Project Director

Richard Willford, Project Director

Debora Voges, Cultural Incubator

Umeå

Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor, President of 2014 Steering Committee

Fredrik Lindegren, Project Manager

Sven-Olof Edvinsson, Vice President of 2014 Steering Committee

Anna-Karin Sjöstrand, Steering Committee 2014

Jan Björinge, City Manager,

Göran Sandberg, Vice-Chancellor, Umeå University

Ellacarin Blind, Culture Coordinator Swedish Sami Association

Kjell Englund, Manager and Artistic Director, Norrlandsoperan

Eva Nygren, President of Sweco Sweden and Sweco International

Lena Thomasson, Culture Analyst and producer

