

Open Letter of cities in the Federal Republic of Germany preparing to bid for “European Capital of Culture” in 2025

Dresden, November 30th November 2017

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen of the European Commission, dear Mme Reicherts,

it is with some irritation that we received the information that cities from Great Britain will not be eligible for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2023.

Both the title and the process of bidding for ECOC are an effective tool to strengthen ties between people in cities and regions in Europe at a time when we are faced with growing Euroscepticism in our country and in many countries all over Europe. In our understanding, cultural ties and the ECOC can also be a tool to create new impulses for a Europe of the citizens in the future. This is our hope connected to the bids for ECOC in Germany in 2025.

If it is true what Jean Monnet said, that, could we start European integration all over again, we should start with culture, we should not now begin European disintegration with cutting cultural ties. With this decision you are sending a message that will be heard not only in Great Britain, but all over Europe. It will be a setback for all of us who are willing to work hard towards a diverse and lively European continent and EU. It will be a burden for the bidding processes in our cities in Germany.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, we write this letter in the hope that you might reconsider and find a solution for our British friends and colleagues.

Annekatriin Klepsch, Deputy Mayor of Culture and Tourism, City of Dresden

Dr. Ingo Meyer, Mayor, City of Hildesheim

Susanne Völker, Head of Cultural Department, City of Kassel

Harald Härke, Director of Culture, City of Hannover

Melanie Botzki and Dr. Benedikt Poensgen, Heads of European Capital of Culture 2025 Office, City of Hannover

Thomas Zenker, Mayor, City of Zittau

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