

**Priority question for written answer P-002769/2024  
to the Commission**

Rule 144

**Catarina Martins (The Left)**

Subject: Évora, European Capital of Culture 2027

In January 2023, it was announced that Évora would be a European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2027. In its decision<sup>1</sup>, the expert panel stated that the candidacy had reached the high standards of an ECoC programme in terms of its artistic vision and cultural value, European dimension, outreach capacity and regional commitment.

One of the assessment criteria<sup>2</sup> was the governance and delivery structure intended for implementation of the programme. This structure was reassessed in September 2023 for the first monitoring report<sup>3</sup>. A few days ago, however, following government interference, changes were made to that structure, prompting the team heading the programme's design and promotion to quit. This state of affairs has already been criticised by representatives of seven other European Capitals of Culture.

In view of this,

1. Does the Commission believe it is unlawful for a government to have any direct involvement in an ECoC governance structure beyond appointing an observer for the meetings<sup>4</sup>.
2. Does the Commission believe that plans are still consistent with legal requirements and procedures?
3. Does it intend to take any action to rectify matters?

Submitted: 4.12.2024

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<sup>1</sup> <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-02/ecoc-2027-portugual-selection-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with Article 5(6)(b) of Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033, as amended by Decision (EU) 2017/1545 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2017.

<sup>3</sup> [https://culture.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-10/Liepaja%202027%20first%20monitoring%20report%20September%202023\\_FINAL\\_forpublication.pdf](https://culture.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-10/Liepaja%202027%20first%20monitoring%20report%20September%202023_FINAL_forpublication.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> As provided for in Article 13(2) of Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033, as amended by Decision (EU) 2017/1545 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2017.