

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003937/25
to the Commission
Kristoffer Storm (ECR)
(8 October 2025)**

Subject: Creative Europe is a total waste of money

The very concept of the European Capitals of Culture scheme is problematic. Every year, Creative Europe is sold as a driver of growth, development and jobs, but there is absolutely no evidence of this. On the contrary, experience shows that the benefits are failing to materialise, while the costs are being passed on to the public.

1. Why does the Commission maintain the scheme when no previous Capitals of Culture can demonstrate any real economic or social benefits?
2. What possibilities do we have to put an end to this scheme so that taxpayers are not forced to finance worthless prestige projects?
3. How much EU funding will the city selected as the Capital of Culture receive?

Submitted: 8.10.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(17 November 2025)**

In response to the Honourable Member's remarks regarding the perceived limited impact of the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC), the Commission would like to draw attention to its recently adopted report on the first interim evaluation of the ECoC Action 2020-2033 ⁽¹⁾.

The report reviews the multifaceted impact of the action on cities that held the ECoC title between 2013 and 2022. Among its many findings, it highlights that, during this period, the action has mobilised around EUR 900 million in funding for cultural activities across the EU, taking into consideration all the funding spent from EU, national, regional, local and private sources.

This was achieved with limited impact on the EU budget, as the Commission's direct contribution is restricted to the Melina Mercouri Prize (EUR 1.5 million per city).

The action has also fostered urban regeneration, civic engagement and a stronger appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity, while strengthening local and regional cultural sectors and their European connections.

In 2026, the Commission intends to submit a proposal to the European Parliament and Council for a new legal instrument, which will allow the action to continue after 2033, as the current one does not foresee a continuation of the initiative beyond 2033.

⁽¹⁾ COM/2025/587 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0587&qid=1761498178145>.