



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,

Sue Owen, Permanent Secretary  
Department for Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport  
100 Parliament Street  
London SW1A 2BQ  
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Dear Permanent Secretary,

In December 2016, the UK authorities published a call for submission of applications with the view to selecting a British city to become European Capital of Culture in 2023. On its website, your Department stated that “bidding cities should be aware that the ECOG title may be subject to the outcome of exit negotiations which could have a bearing on the UK’s participation.”

After consulting relevant services of the Commission, I would like to inform you that following its withdrawal from the European Union, the participation of the United Kingdom in the European Capital of Culture Union action will not be possible. Indeed, according to the rules adopted by the European Parliament and the Council (Decision 445/2014/EU), this Action is not open to third countries, except for candidate countries and EFTA/EEA countries under strictly defined conditions (see Article 3 “Access to the action”).

As a consequence of the above, and also on grounds of sound and responsible management of human and financial resources, the Commission considers that the selection process should immediately be discontinued.

Yours sincerely,

Martine Reicherts