



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

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PRESS RELEASE
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The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE)¹ stresses the importance, especially in times of deep crisis, of using quality-based selection procedures for projects affecting the built environment

At its General Assembly meeting held in Helsinki on 24th April 2009 the Member Organisations of the ACE, reported on the situation that is being faced in each country as a result of the global financial and economic crisis.

The ACE is deeply convinced that the economic re-launch now underway cannot seek to achieve the same objectives, nor follow the same logic as was the case in the last decades. The demands of sustainable development, centred on environmental and social concerns, require new approaches and new solutions in the domain of territorial planning, urban development, architecture, construction and infrastructure.

The ACE considers it important to alert politicians to the essential need, especially in times of deep crisis, to ensure that all institutions and governments, at all levels, will retain their full social responsibility towards society in respect of the quality and sustainability of the built environment in which European citizens live, work and play. In this context, conscious of the profound impact that the architects' involvement has in the process, it is important, in particular, to ensure that the selection and awarding of service contracts to architects, by public bodies, will take place on the basis of quality-based criteria while also ensuring that any attempts to speed up the procurement procedures will not have perverse effects on the principle of achieving architectural quality in the public interest.

The ACE calls on policy makers at all levels to take the unique opportunity presented by the regeneration of the global economy to actively plan for the future in critical areas such as direct investment in the energy efficiency of existing buildings, the development of large scale alternative energy projects, the refurbishment and renewal of social and collective housing and in infrastructure. The ACE believes that this will create large employment opportunities and, at the same time, assure the development of a better quality and sustainable built environment. It is precisely in such times of crisis that investing in socially-oriented (large scale) projects can be extremely beneficial for ensuring a sustainable development while stimulating innovation.

The architectural profession stands ready to assist in this vital objective and is well placed to substantially contribute to the delivery of these methods and approaches.

Furthermore, the ACE calls on all candidates to the European Elections in 2009 to have these principles in mind when developing their programmes and campaigns and, if they are elected, to seek to implement them. In this context the ACE has adopted a number of Policy Recommendations that will be transmitted to all the candidates in the coming weeks in close coordination with the Member Organisations of the ACE.

¹ The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) is the representative organisation for the architectural profession at European level: it aspires to speak with a single voice on its behalf in order to achieve its aims. Its growing membership currently consists of 46 Member Organisations, which are the regulatory and professional representative bodies in all European Union (EU) Member States, Accession Countries, Switzerland and Norway. Through them, the ACE represents the interests of over 480,000 architects from 33 countries in Europe.