Architecture & Quality of Life

Architects' Council of Europe
Conseil des Architectes d'Europe

1. The architectural profession in Europe is committed to the implementation of the objectives of the **Lisbon Agenda** in achieving the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world provided that the holistic and integrated policies that are necessary to permit the achievement of effective sustainability for the living environment are adopted and implemented at the same time.

2. Given its significant impact on the prosperity of the EU Economy and on society, the construction sector, in all of its facets, deserves a high priority in the policies of the EU. Notably, more investment in **research and development** in this sector needs to be assured in order to adequately respond to the evolving demands of society, thereby underwriting the future competitiveness of the sector at EU and Global level.

3. The vitality of the design and construction sectors is underpinned by the immense contribution made by **small and medium-sized enterprises**, through which the vast majority of architects practice. The implementation of well-founded policies that take their nature into account is central to the future ability of the Sector to meet the needs of society.

4. As society at large, and citizens in particular, are both the clients and users of the results of architectural services, it is imperative that public policies, at all levels, should strive to create an ethos within society that values **quality in buildings and in public spaces**. Moreover, it is important that awareness and the capacity to understand architectural values should be instilled as early as possible in the educational process, starting in kindergarten and continuing throughout all stages of formal education.

5. It is necessary to ensure that future EU programmes for research are properly formulated so as to include issues of importance such as quality of life, urban environment, built heritage, existing buildings and innovative approaches to construction – **in short, architecture**. Furthermore, the ACE calls on the European Commission to ensure that it adequately takes into account the results of such research in all of its policy proposals that affect the living environment.

6. The sustainability of public and private buildings and the security of public spaces strongly influence the well being of citizens and thus the social structure of society. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all **aspects of sustainability** – socio-economic, cultural and environmental – are taken into account in the development of the living environment. In this respect, formal continued professional development for architects throughout their working lives becomes an essential undertaking that ensures their knowledge and skills keep up with the changing technological, social and regulatory environment.

7. The achievement of a quality result for any building project largely relies on the establishment of good working methods and relationships between all of the **participants in the project**. The integrated and adequate involvement of the architect, as well as the other actors, throughout the chain of events is necessary in order to ensure that consistency, efficiency and quality are more readily built into the process.

8. The adoption and use of key methodologies for the assessment of the impact of buildings on the environment is a matter of primary importance to the future quality of life. The ACE believes that the promotion and use of **life cycle costing and life cycle analysis** are essential to the achievement of these goals. Therefore, the ACE encourages the inclusion, in the evaluation criteria of all public procurement contracts, of principles that take into account environmental, quality and life-cycle factors so as to ensure that true value for money is achieved for society at large.

9. In the interests of ensuring a **quality-based selection** for the provision of architectural services, competition among architects should be based on pre-defined criteria, founded on competence and experience, that do not include price. Among the possible procedures, the ACE promotes **architectural (design) competitions** as a good method to enhance competition within the profession whilst contributing to enhancing quality and innovation in the procurement of architectural services.

10. The ACE acknowledges the value of devising new models for the procurement of public buildings and works, as prosperity and vitality in the community depend on quality facilities being available for public use. The objective of achieving good architectural quality in the living environment, thus contributing to its sustainability, requires that architectural services be delivered as independently as possible of economic and vested interests. Therefore, **public bodies**, when employing new models for procurement, cannot step back from their **responsibility** to ensure the incorporation of long-term architectural quality in the projects they promote.

11. The implementation of the new **EU Directives on Public Procurement** in national law in the Member States will coincide with the beginning of a new period for the Structural Funds in the enlarged EU. This offers a splendid opportunity to initiate the necessary steps in the achievement of the objective to benchmark Community funding against the actual achievement of sustainability in the living environment.

12. The mobilisation of all actors in the creation of new policies for the **urban environment** is crucial for the establishment of a viable future for all citizens. The ACE will work actively to achieve this and will, in particular, contribute to ensure that the knowledge and expertise available to European Parliamentarians, and all policy makers, on these issues is further improved.

13. In order to achieve a high quality of life in our urban areas, there is a need to ensure a high level of co-ordination and co-operation between **cities and regions**. In this respect, the further implementation of the political principles set out in the European Spatial Development Perspective is an appropriate starting point of such conjoint actions.

14. Quality architecture, incorporating the full principles of sustainability, is a pre-requisite for an attractive, viable built environment that responds to the actual needs and **legitimate aspirations of our citizens**. It must be considered to be a substantial ingredient of well thought-out urban policies, not the cherry on the cake.

15. As the impact of urban development policies is so profound, fully participatory procedures for the development of urban planning, design and management policies within the EU, must include all stakeholders in order to ensure a sense of **shared responsibility for the quality** of the urban environment, in line with the principles of well-founded Governance.

16. In order to ensure that the consumer is adequately informed of the nature and cost of the intellectual services needed to achieve the realisation of a project in the built environment, appropriate information systems should be devised and permitted by Community law. Such systems, including those based on historical information, would allow the **consumer** to make comparative judgements on the quality of services offered by different suppliers so as to ensure the proper functioning of competition in the Internal Market.

17. The architectural profession has always cherished the enrichment that is gained through the **mobility of persons** and services and it supports the objectives of free movement that is underpinned by high standards of education and training and proportionate safeguards that recognise the need to regulate such mobility. However, in terms of the quality of the service delivered to the consumer, mutual recognition can only be effective if it is based on appropriately assessed, and agreed, **levels of qualification**.

18. The ACE supports the maintenance of high quality courses of architectural education, matching the "Bologna" model and based on a minimum duration of **5 years study** at university level. Such education should ensure the acquisition of the knowledge and skills set out in Article 3 of the "Architects" Directive and should be followed by at least two years of practical experience before access to the practice of architecture. This approach is in accordance with the recommended international standards for architectural practice as unanimously agreed by the International Union of Architects.

19. The impact on society of architecture is of fundamental importance to the **quality of life**. As such it is appropriate that the tri-partite consultations on the quality of the education of architects is maintained after the incorporation of the principles of the "Architects" Directive into the proposed horizontal Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

20. Architecture is a **fundamental feature of the history, culture and fabric of life** of each of our countries; it represents an essential means of artistic expression in the daily life of citizens and it constitutes the heritage of tomorrow. A sense of belonging, of identity, is an important feature of human society and culture. Architectural expression is frequently the carrier of such cultural and social needs and it is therefore important that these influences are adequately accounted for in design.

21. The ACE firmly believes that architectural quality and the specific nature of architectural services must be taken into account in all EU policies, measures and programmes, as called for by the European Council, thus leading towards the realisation of a European Architectural Policy.

This book is dedicated to the memory of
Hervé Nourissat (1946 – 2003)

Architecture and Quality of Life

A Policy Book by the Architects' Council of Europe 2004

The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) is an Organisation, based in Brussels, whose Membership is drawn from representative national registration and professional architectural organisations of, at the time of publication of the book, all twenty-five European Union (EU) Member States and most Candidate Countries as well as Switzerland and Norway. As such, it is an Organisation that represents about 450,000 European architects. The ACE was founded in 1990 and its principal function is to monitor and influence developments at EU level highlighting those areas of EU Policy that have a direct impact on architecture, architectural practice, policy and the built environment.

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Preface

1994 – the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) sets out to prepare a White Book entitled "Architecture and Europe – Tomorrow". This reference work, which undoubtedly marked an important stage, was published at the end of 1995 in English and French and it has been translated into a dozen languages, mainly European, but including Turkish, Russian and Chinese.

Firstly, the White Book facilitated the coming together of all of the organisations represented by the ACE around this exciting project – a difficult task when you consider the different cultural backgrounds, political structures and administrative practices in each country, not to mention the traditionally strong individualistic characteristics of this intellectually driven profession. In fact, consensus around the strong analysis contained in the book, was achieved relatively easily, particularly in light of the weak policies being pursued in Europe that affect the quality of life and the quality of the living environment. At the same time, consensus was reached on the objectives to be achieved and on recommendations for the future, at all levels of responsibility.

Secondly, the ACE White Book inspired a wide-ranging debate in Europe and beyond. We have seen, in several countries of Europe, the emergence of many voluntary national policies in the field of architecture. Some countries with greatly differing cultures such as Finland and France took the initiative to set up an inter-governmental Forum on these policies. The work of this Forum is currently being intensified but it has already led, notably, to the adoption, by the European Council of Ministers in February 2001, of a resolution on architectural quality in the urban and rural environments, a political document of major relevance. It is interesting to note that it was the Ministers in charge of Culture that carried out this work, although the resolution underlines the important economic and social dimension of architecture and the clear interactions it has with urban policies, spatial development policies and the environment.

2004 – ten years have passed and we are forced to a double realisation. There have been important political developments that have impacted on national and European policies, yet there has been little real progress in the improvement of the living environment for our citizens. This is the case even though there has been a noticeable increase in awareness of these issues and future political tendencies are more encouraging. In reality it is very much the urgency and seriousness of the situation, notably in the urban environment, that, as long as a holistic approach to such problems through appropriate policies and measures remains insufficient, stimulates action.

The pursuit of the realisation of the Internal Market in Europe, the enlargement of the Union to new Member States and globalisation are major economic, social and cultural challenges. To these

should be added the depletion of resources, the regeneration and renovation of urban areas, the degradation of living standards, social segregation and the protection of the consumer.

All of these challenges necessitate active co-operation on a Europe-wide level. It calls for fresh approaches, innovative, conjoint solutions that aim to significantly improve the quality of life of all European citizens. The active involvement of civil society, especially professional organisations, must become a reality. The economic, social and political building of Europe will remain a false reality as long as this objective is not reached. The living environment is an essential component and it reflects the extent of the evolution of society. It is worth remembering that we all spend about ninety percent of our time inside buildings or within the built environment!

The principal objective of this Policy Book, entitled "Architecture and Quality of Life", is to make politicians, decision-makers and the professionals themselves aware of the pressing need to bring together major political goals that encompass economic progress and competitivity on the one hand and sustainability on the other, all relating to the quality of life. In order to achieve this we should have no doubt that the coming few years will be pivotal.

At this time of great choices for the future of Europe relating to the constitution and enlargement, it is also time to re-examine our inherited ideas and to adopt approaches that are both pragmatic and realistic in the policies and financial mechanisms which concern the quality of life. All of this needs to be achieved in the context of an engaging vision for the daily life of our 450 million citizens. The ACE, which represents 450,000 architects, intends to do its best to put resources into the adoption and full integration of European policies in this field.

This book is intended to stimulate not just debate, but also political actions at the time of the start of a new legislature of the European Parliament, the appointment of a new Commission and the enlargement of Europe.

Leopoldo Freyrie
President of the Architects' Council of Europe – 2004

Introduction

The café on the market place, the art museum, the football stadium or their own four walls – when asked about their favourite places, citizens in Europe give a wide range of different answers. They reflect people's need for protection and security, for shared experience and interaction, for beauty and joy – in other words, their personal pursuit of happiness. People often only realise how important good architecture and urban planning are for their lives, and how their daily comfort is determined by spatial design, when their positive perceptions change. It is only when the environment becomes a burden that people pose questions about its genesis.

In an increasingly well educated and knowledgeable society, people's expectations for the quality of the built environment have risen and the creative resources to meet these expectations have also increased. The planning and construction sector is characterised by highly differentiated and complex structures, and the ability to utilise its resources for the benefit of all citizens in Europe is increasingly important.

All parties involved in the future of construction in Europe, especially politicians, public authorities, civil servants, building owners, architects and other consultants as well as the industry have the task of recognising and overcoming the unavoidable discrepancy between individual perception and social necessity, between the demands of the market and the needs of the people. Engagement in a process that adequately addresses the tensions that arise from these evolving expectations is essential if the EU is to achieve a knowledge-based economy.

Photo: Rob't Hart

Housing development, Hagen Island, The Netherlands. Architects: Winy Maas, Jacob van Rijs, Nathalie de Vries, MVRDV. Award won: Special Mention European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award 2003.

The Responsibility of Construction

Fostering critical and informed consumers is a goal of the EU Commission. Such consumers, aware of the importance of the built environment, will be a stimulus for good architecture and good urban planning through the way in which their demands of the sector evolve. Every European citizen has a personal opinion about the quality of his or her built environment, but sometimes these citizens are not able to put their opinion into words. There are many reasons for this. Perhaps they have insufficient access to information about design and construction, or perhaps there is no forum in which they can express their opinion in the public domain.

For the time being it is only committed and interested citizens who are in a position to form a considered view of their built environment and to identify themselves with it. One of the most important tasks for the future will therefore be to assist and inform public and private building owners in their decisions to ensure good planning and high-quality construction.

Quality as a Shared Goal

All construction has an impact on the public, so all actors involved

in construction must not only think of their own needs but also act in the public interest. Informed building owners are therefore just as important in the achievement of successful projects as, for instance, well-trained architects who are skilled at developing the best possible solution for the respective task.

To enhance the involvement of all stakeholders in the construction process and to communicate the cultural and economic value of good architecture, many European countries have adopted or have started to develop national architectural policies[1]. These policies have tended to identify principles that would permit the holistic integration of the key aspects required for the achievement of quality in the living environment including cultural, social, economic and environmental factors.

These developments are all the more important in a situation where new models for partnerships between public and private participants must prove their effectiveness. Where resources for public sector construction activities are no longer sufficient to present a comprehensive model of good practice, new instruments for quality assurance must be developed and the existing instruments must be strengthened. Co-operative ventures of this type need principles that will still be in the public interest. Developing such principles is an important task for the future.

Photo: Nino Monastra

Young People´s Building in Rinkeby, a multicultural suburb to Stockholm, Sweden. Architects: Anders Bergcrantz, Bergcrantz Arkitekter AB. Nominated to the Kasper Salin prize 1999.

A Sustainable Living Environment for Tomorrow

Sustainable construction means, among other things, making careful use of the natural resources that are available at present so as not to jeopardise the availability of such resources for future generations. In addition to the preparation of new urban development strategies, the sustainability of building products and construction techniques will be a major political theme over the next few years. The efficient use of resources, including energy, will have to play an ever more crucial role in the daily work of architects, consultants and the European construction industry. For example, there are still no binding calculation methodologies for the energy balance in buildings, nor for their overall environmental performance. Action is also needed in the area of environmental compatibility and recycling of construction products to enhance the acceptance of reusable building materials. The important insights gained from research need to be passed on to our citizens by their adoption in the field and building owners need to be shown that sustainable construction is, in fact, economically worthwhile.

Towards a European Architectural Policy

European architectural policies must bridge the gaps that arise between existing perceptions of the built environment and the reality of present day structures. In an enlarged Europe, the need for common guidelines for the quality of the built environment will further increase. From the metropolitan conurbations around large cities such as Paris, London, Milan or Warsaw to the thinly populated countryside on its periphery, the European Union must deal with an enormous range of questions in relation to spatial development

policy. As European regions and cities are increasingly involved in development processes, the areas with a weaker structure will suffer from population decline, and many people who move to the economic centres will be concerned about preserving their roots and about the cultural heritage, including architectural heritage, of their home regions. In this future Europe, landscape, as a resource, must be taken into account alongside issues such as urban sprawl and social fragmentation.

The European Union took account of these developments in a Council Resolution on architectural quality in the urban and rural environments[2], thus adopting a common position on the design of the built environment for the first time. Notably, this resolution calls on the Commission to *"ensure that architectural quality and the specific nature of architectural services are taken into consideration in all its policies, measures and programmes."* As early as 2000, the *"European Forum for Architectural Policies"* was founded as a platform for architectural policies. It acts as a networking organisation for European governments, professional organisations and cultural institutes. Both developments are important steps towards a European Architectural Policy, and their potential must be harnessed and further developed. ■

Mardi Farm, Saaremaa Island, Estonia. Architect: Juri Okas. Award won: Estonian Cultural Endowment, architectural endowment award for the best building 2002.

Photo: Kaido Haagen

Chapter 1

Europe 2010

A Knowledge-based Competitive Economy

In the year 2000, the European Union set itself an ambitious goal, known as the Lisbon Agenda[3]. Within 10 years it aims to make the extended Europe into the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world. To achieve this goal, which has since been repeatedly reaffirmed as the main priority on the EU's political agenda, the European Commission has proposed a more developed Internal Market Strategy for Services (2003-2006)[4]. This strategy aims to enhance the competitiveness of the EU services sector, which is currently responsible for approximately 70% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Union, by removing existing barriers and improving performance and productivity within the services sector. One result of this reinforced strategy was the publication, in early 2004, of a proposal by the Commission for a Directive on "Services in the Internal Market"[5] that seeks to remove all the so-called barriers to the freedom to provide services, addressing the issues in a horizontal manner.

1. THE ARCHITECTURAL profession in Europe is committed to the implementation of the objectives of the Lisbon Agenda in achieving the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world provided that the holistic and integrated policies that are necessary to permit the achievement of effective sustainability for the living environment are adopted and implemented at the same time.

Overall Sustainability of the Living Environment

In parallel, and as a result of the adoption the Treaty of Amsterdam, which came into force in 1999, the principle of sustainable development must be implemented in all policies of the European Union. This was reaffirmed at the Gothenburg Summit in June 2001 and, most recently, in a pluri-annual Strategic Programme for the period 2004–2006[6], a unique effort that six EU Presidencies are jointly committed to achieve.

In 2002, the 6th EU Environment Action Programme "Environment 2010: Our future our choice"[7] was adopted. This programme targets the environmental dimension of sustainable development, whilst also aiming at a general improvement in the environment and quality of life in the European Union. It sets out the key environmental objectives and priorities on which progress must be made by 2010.

In particular, the Environment Action Programme aims at:

- Protecting and restoring landscape values and urban and rural cultural heritage and at ensuring a high level of protection, quality of life and social well being for citizens.
- Establishing a co-operation with enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, craft enterprises, and other organisations, including the stimulation of environmental performance.
- Promoting an integrated policy approach that will encourage the taking into account of environmental requirements throughout the lifecycle of products, and more widespread application of environmentally friendly processes and products.
- Promoting green procurement, through clear and unambiguous guidance that environmental criteria may be taken into account

in public purchasing while respecting Community competition rules and the internal market, including guidelines on best practice and the establishment of a review of green procurement in Community Institutions.

- Promoting environmentally responsible measures in building design, planning and techniques, including energy saving.

Moreover, seven Thematic Strategies are to be prepared, amongst which the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, in particular, deserves specific attention, for reasons that are set out and explained later in this book.

Another noteworthy development is the adoption at the beginning of 2004, after a long legislative debate, of new Directives for public procurement. Among the important innovations brought about by the new rules is the fact that the environmental aspects will be taken much more seriously into account in public purchasing in the future. The rules must be implemented in the Member States national law by early 2006.

These aims, which are all important in relation to the objective of improving the quality of life in Europe, are fully compatible with the main objective of the Lisbon Agenda. The full implementation of these measures is, in reality, a necessity in order to achieve sustainability for the living environment, of which architecture is a key element. This is true, in particular, as regards the new period for the Community Structural Funds after 2006, having regard to the sustainability of regional development.

Clearly everything possible must be done that can help to achieve and implement these policies whilst adopting holistic approaches. The specific recommendations contained in the following chapters are intended to make a positive contribution to this process. ■

Photo: Kaido Hagen

Assembly Hall of the Estonian Parliament (restored), Tallinn, Estonia. Architect: Ular Saar, 1997. Award won: Estonian Cultural Endowment, architectural endowment award for restoration of historic interior.

Chapter 2

The Context for a Policy and its Main Stakeholders

The wealth of architecture that has developed through the exchange of ideas and influences over the centuries continues to evolve as a result of shared cultural elements. Contemporary architecture cannot be assigned to national boundaries – design, planning and construction have become services that are shared on a global basis. Europe must promote the fruits of its diversity in an open creative environment, cultivating an appreciation of individual achievements while simultaneously engaging in an ongoing assessment process that will increase quality standards in Europe for the benefit of all.

It is of vital public interest that European policies maintain and consolidate the respect with which these standards are regarded throughout the world. The European Union is faced with stiff competition in the global market and its ambition, as set out in the Lisbon Agenda, is an appropriate cornerstone on which to build its future competitiveness. The built environment of today results from the combination of the accumulated knowledge of past generations with the incorporation of innovative and forward-looking concepts. New ideas and approaches must be tried out in practice, technological progress must be actively pursued and innovative techniques developed so as to ensure that the resulting works reflect the time and place in which they are built.

2. GIVEN ITS SIGNIFICANT impact on the prosperity of the EU Economy and on society, the construction sector, in all of its facets, deserves a high priority in the policies of the EU. Notably, more investment in research and development in this sector needs to be assured in order to adequately respond to the evolving demands of society, thereby underwriting the future competitiveness of the sector at EU and Global level.

The Construction Sector

The construction activities of society are one of the reliable indicators of change. The built environment records the mood of society more than any other form of cultural expression. Society's economic and social efficiency is made legible through the way it treats its public spaces and through the nature and extent of its construction activities. A fully functional, quality and well-managed built environment has a motivating effect on society, it sustains its identity and propels it to excellence in all of its undertakings. This is more evident today as the activities of the construction sector turn more and more towards the regeneration, restoration and renovation of the existing building stock.

The economic significance of the European Construction sector remains high: in 2002 it was the largest industrial employer with a turnover of 905 billion Euro, which corresponds to roughly 10% of the gross domestic product of the European Union[8]. There are a total of 11.8 million people directly employed in the European construction industry, with many more dependent on jobs in associated fields. In all it has been estimated that up to 18% of all employment in the EU in 2002 relied on the Construction sector. Furthermore, the Sector has a significant potential for the export of expertise and knowledge to Third Countries, whose impact cannot be accurately measured.

Innovation and sustainability are two crucial elements for the

construction sector, both separately and in combination, to create the conditions for a lasting record of our time. Because the built environment too often lacks at least one of these two elements, it is not achieving its potential to become the cherished cultural heritage of the future. To achieve this, architects, amongst others, recognise that there is a need for the Construction sector to modernise its methods and techniques, notably, if not only, in the management of the construction process.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Craftsmanship

The importance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Europe cannot be overlooked in any new policy or in any shift in the market. There were, in the year 2002, 2.3 million companies in the European construction industry[9], 93% of them with less than 10 employees – and the ratio of small companies in the design and consultancy sectors is similar. The design and consultancy sectors deliver a service throughout Europe which is highly varied and flexible and thus beneficial to the consumer. EU policies for small and medium-sized enterprises must work actively to preserve and encourage these structures in the interests of maintaining diversity and increasing consumer choice.

As a client and occupier for new and rehabilitated buildings and public spaces every public sector institution and local community sets, de facto, lasting standards and each will be judged by its decisions. In order to reach the goal of a high quality built environment, notably of architecture, the integration of independent and qualified consultants at all stages of the decision-making process and their adequate involvement in the design and planning stages is highly desirable. Moreover, the inclusion of small and medium-sized enterprises in the contract award procedures helps, not only to secure qualified craftsmanship, but also to maintain the diversity of economic and social structures that exist and to secure jobs for all.

Photo: Hélène Binet

Car park and terminus building, Hoenheim Nord, Strasbourg, France. Architect: Zaha Hadid. Award won: European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award 2003.

Independence of the Liberal Professions

Members of the liberal professions, including architects, have played a key social and economic role in Europe for many centuries. They provide knowledge-intensive services which must be made available, with comparable quality, to all citizens and which require a high degree of trust from the recipient of the service. Liberal professionals usually maintain high quality standards in education and practice and bear personal responsibility for the quality of the services they provide and for their impact. Furthermore, it is a prerequisite of their professional work that they must act independently of the economic interests of others so as to avoid conflicts of interest. This aspect is particularly important for the architectural profession as such conflicts might otherwise impair their judgement as to what is best for society.

The European Court of Justice has ruled, in a case from 1999, that the liberal professions: *"…are of a marked intellectual character, require a high-level qualification and are usually subject to clear and strict professional regulation. In the exercise of such an activity, the*

personal element is of special importance and such exercise always involves a large measure of independence in the accomplishment of the professional activities." [10]

In addition to the features described above, the liberal professions possess a high degree of concern for the general interest and their activities have a noticeable impact on society. Also, they usually display skills that are hard to quantify, such as flexibility and adaptability. Thus, the specific nature of the liberal professions, of which the aptitudes described here are only a few aspects, is a valuable resource for the knowledge-based economy that the European Union is striving for and their contribution to the achievement of that goal should be prized.

3. THE VITALITY of the design and construction sectors is underpinned by the immense contribution made by small and medium-sized enterprises, through which the vast majority of architects practice. The implementation of well-founded policies that take their nature into account is central to the future ability of the Sector to meet the needs of society.

Specific Feature of Architectural Practice

In addition to all the qualities already mentioned, architects, whose services have a direct impact on the future environment, demonstrate unique skills for innovation – each and every building deserves a specific quality approach. Moreover, they have a special capacity to engage in lateral thinking, in which all of the parameters affecting a project are taken into account in devising a solution that appropriately incorporates them. Consideration is given, not only to the technical and economic factors that are so important to the client, but also to the aesthetic, cultural and social ones that impact on society at large. ■

Photo: Annika Jansson

White Architects' office, Stockholm, Sweden. Architects: Bengt Svensson and Linda Mattsson, architects SAR/MSA, White arkitekter AB. Award won: Kasper Salin Prize 2003.

Chapter 3

Achieving Overall Sustainability of the Living Environment

Achieving sustainability implies the development of holistic approaches. For this it is essential to be aware of and to take account of the inter-relationships and interactions between various areas of policy, actions and actors. Furthermore, it is important to promote synergies whenever possible as well as to facilitate networking activities.

The Cultural Aspects of Sustainable Development

The usual understanding of the concept of sustainable development includes the three components of economy, environment and social impact. The social impact extends to include cultural aspects such as identity, lifestyle and heritage, all three of which are addressed in the realisation of projects for the built environment. Whereas the enlarged Union will benefit, economically and environmentally, from further harmonisation and standardisation, the same logic does not apply to culture. Therefore any construction project ought to adequately take into account factors such as local culture, heritage and the spatial dimension of belonging to a distinct group or location.

Appropriate Education and Awareness at all Levels

Education is a tool that should be used to increase the awareness of the importance of the built environment for all. Such generalised education should be incorporated in the curricula of all schools so as to engender a fundamental appreciation of the value of architecture and of its impact on the quality of life.

Thus, it is important that the process should be started at the earliest possible stage and that it should continue throughout the full educational cycle of all stakeholders. In parallel, awareness courses for those who are already involved in the creation of the living environment and in the decision making process, whose education did not include such elements of appreciation, should be considered. Appropriate policies and actions must be devised to ensure that this is effectively accomplished.

In relation to the education of architects, the co-operation that has taken place since 1987 between the governments, the schools of architecture and the profession, in the context of the "Architects" Directive[11], has served to ensure that the level of professional qualifications conferred across the EU has been appropriate. The maintenance of this effective co-operation, whose usefulness has been affirmed on several occasions by all parties involved, is essential to the continued maintenance of quality in the education of architects.

The Importance of New Knowledge – Innovation, Research and Continuing Professional Development

The volume and nature of activity in the Construction sector is

4. AS SOCIETY AT LARGE, and citizens in particular, are both the clients and users of the results of architectural services, it is imperative that public policies, at all levels, should strive to create an ethos within society that values quality in buildings and in public spaces. Moreover, it is important that awareness and the capacity to understand architectural values should be instilled as early as possible in the educational process, starting in kindergarten and continuing throughout all stages of formal education.

Photo: Mervi Eskelinen

A spot on a listening trail, Lastu architecture and environmental culture school, Finland.

constantly evolving as it answers to the changing needs and composition of society. EU policy developments will need to be aware of these shifts as the EU strives to bring forth equitable and well-founded research programmes that give adequate attention to the construction sector. In particular, the architectural dimension of construction deserves closer attention, as a determining element of any construction project, in such programmes.

In all industries and sectors, it is important that all stakeholders engage in research so as to maintain high levels of knowledge in their field of intervention. Such research can lead to the adoption of new practices, the use of new materials and the founding of new areas of activity. It is also important that the architect's aptitudes are exploited for the pursuit of successful research work in the construction sector. Properly conceived research work brings benefits to all involved and to society as a whole – a fact that the EU has realised through the establishment of its goal to ensure, by 2010, that 3% of the Gross Domestic Product of the EU is spent on research[12].

The Research Framework Programmes of the EU have, to date, given insufficient attention to the construction sector and more generally to the built environment. This fact acted as a stimulus to the sector, which set up the ECCREDI[13] at the end of 1995 to address this lacuna in EU Policy. Among the initiatives taken up by the sector, in which the ACE is involved, are, for instance, the EnerBuild network (Energy in Buildings), the TRA-EFCT (Targeted Research Action on Environmentally-friendly Construction Technologies), CRISP (Indicators) and, more recently, E-CORE (Strategic Research). Each of these initiatives has demonstrated the importance of cross-disciplinary participation and they have all contributed to the reinforcement of the knowledge base of the sector.

In order to ensure that continued strong participation by the various actors and strong support for research in the sector is maintained, the ECCREDI was developing, at the start of 2004, a proposal for a European Technology Platform for the built environment. The platform will, when established, bring together all the stakeholders in the built environment in order to establish a vision for the future that will permit the development of a roadmap for research that will enable the vision to be achieved. It is anticipated, at the time of writing, that this platform will have a profound effect on the future of the entire construction sector.

Although we have been building cities for thousands of years the need to develop fresh knowledge through study and research is required now, more than ever, in the urban context. Adequate and targeted research is indispensable for any sustainable policies, especially in this domain. It is the case that cities are offering a good terrain for field-research and specific pilot actions, the positive results of which can be valorised and exemplified through best practice exchanges. There is a growing interest in city networks in these actions, which should be strongly supported.

5. IT IS NECESSARY to ensure that future EU programmes for research are properly formulated so as to include issues of importance such as quality of life, urban environment, built heritage, existing buildings and innovative approaches to construction – in short, architecture. Furthermore, the ACE calls on the European Commission to ensure that it adequately takes into account the results of such research in all of its policy proposals that affect the living environment.

Piazza Navona, Rome, Italy

Sustainable Construction

The public impact of building puts a special responsibility on building

owners and clients, whether public or private. Their investments, which are generally long-term in nature, should be made in the best possible regulatory and physical environment, with partners who can implement the economic and functional goals required of the building. At the same time, it is important to take into account the long-term impact of the building on the environment.

Significant progress has been made in recent years, at the EU level, in identifying the needs in this area. Two initiatives are noteworthy: the "Agenda for Sustainable Construction"[14], adopted in November 2001 and the Communication entitled "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment"[15], issued by the European Commission in February 2004.

The Agenda was part of the Action Plan for the Competitiveness of the Construction Sector under the auspices of the Directorate-General for Enterprise and was drawn up in a tripartite exercise between the Member States, Industry and the Commission. The Agenda initially covered the subjects of materials, energy and waste and, following further work, it recommended the adoption of a European methodology for assessing the Life Cycle Costs of construction, the making of extensive collections of data and the evaluation of existing implementation processes.

The Communication on the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment set out the work then under way in relation to the future approaches that must be undertaken, at all levels, in order to ensure a sustainable and high quality environment in the urban areas of the EU. It also outlined the main strands of what the future strategy must be as the definitive version is due to be presented by the Commission in mid-2005. It already took into account some of the main findings and specific recommendations of several Working Groups that worked during 2003, including a Working Group on Sustainable Construction Methods and Techniques (SCMT)[16].

The preparation of the strategy is a positive development that is generally welcomed by the ACE and its initial orientations are encouraging. However, at the time of writing, it was not clear what the strategy would include in relation to sustainable construction. At any rate, the steps proposed will only become effective if there is a clear commitment on the part of the Member States at all levels, the individual regional and city authorities and all the stakeholders in the built environment.

Related Initiatives

An important step towards the improvement of standards for sustainable construction was taken with the adoption of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive in December 2002[17], which must be implemented in the national law of each Member State before January 2006. The energy performance certificates that are required for all new buildings and for substantially renovated buildings gives the purchaser or leaseholder of a building an instrument that enables the verification and comparison of the energy performance of different buildings. The expectation is that the market forces that will be released by the availability of this infor-

6. THE SUSTAINABILITY of public and private buildings and the security of public spaces strongly influence the well being of citizens and thus the social structure of society. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all aspects of sustainability – socio-economic, cultural and environmental – are taken into account in the development of the living environment. In this respect, formal continued professional development for architects throughout their working lives becomes an essential undertaking that ensures their knowledge and skills keep up with the changing technological, social and regulatory environment.

7. THE ACHIEVEMENT of a quality result for any building project largely relies on the establishment of good working methods and relationships between all of the participants in the project. The integrated and adequate involvement of the architect, as well as the other actors, throughout the chain of events is necessary in order to ensure that consistency, efficiency and quality are more readily built into the process.

mation will lead to a rapid improvement in the energy performance of buildings.

The Commission has further announced its intention to look beyond the scope of the Energy Performance Directive at the overall environmental performance of buildings. This is another positive step that is welcomed by the ACE as it resonates with one of the central recommendations of the SCMT Group to create "passports" for buildings, which should incorporate, along with the energy certification, other building performance parameters, such as indoor air quality (materials and systems emissions) and comfort (thermal, visual and acoustic).

Here again the key issue to achieve these goals will be the ability to devise appropriate assessment methodologies and relevant indicators. Further investment, to identify the appropriate means, is needed in this area, as the adoption of European standards is not necessarily seen to be the best answer, given that they lack the holistic approach that performance-based assessment allows for.

A further area of much needed advances is the concept of Universal Design. This refers to the appropriate design of spaces, objects and services to facilitate unlimited participation in public life for all groups of the population. The designing out of all barriers to access will play an increasing role in the future design of our environment, particularly with the changing demography of the population of the EU. As a society we shall have to learn to accommodate, in a more holistic and un-obtrusive way, the less mobile and less able members of our society.

Residential bioclimatic building, Torre Sul, Lisbon, Portugal. Architects: Tirone Nunes Lda, 2002.

Assessment Tools and Indicators

There are two valuable, related methods that can be used to assess the sustainability of a building project. They are Life Cycle Costing (LCC) and Life Cycle Analysis (LCA). The essential difference between the two is that LCA, with the exception of economic aspects, goes further than LCC to take into account the energy and materials used for the production and disposal of the products used in a project.

LCC is an important process in achieving the goal of a sustainable future for the construction industry as it provides a methodology that allows a building owner to truly know how much a building will cost across its useful lifetime. As such it includes the operation, maintenance, demolition and disposal of buildings in the overall calculations. For the LCC model to become established throughout Europe, binding indicators are needed which will permit meaningful comparison and evaluation of the various factors included.

It is during the design phase that significant influence can be brought to bear on the LCC and the LCA aspects of a project. After the event, defects can either not be corrected at all, or only at considerable additional expense. In the interest of building owners and users, the promotion and enforcement of LCC and LCA is therefore an important task for the coming years.

8. THE ADOPTION and use of key methodologies for the assessment of the impact of buildings on the environment is a matter of primary importance to the future quality of life. The ACE believes that the promotion and use of life cycle costing and life cycle analysis are essential to the achievement of these goals. Therefore, the ACE encourages the inclusion, in the evaluation criteria of all public procurement contracts, of principles that take into account environmental, quality and life-cycle factors so as to ensure that true value for money is achieved for society at large.

Need for Holistic and Integrated Approaches to Urban Spaces

The well being of its citizens, and thus the social structure of a society, depends to a high degree on a well-designed environment that is pleasant to live in. It has been demonstrated that poor residential conditions, inadequate transport and urban planning, a lack of communication and recreation space has a lasting detrimental effect on people, weakening their active participation in society, their productivity at work and their health.

Because of the large variety of different factors, EU policies, in addressing this aspect of the environment, need to take an integrated and networked approach. Even a beautifully designed construction project on the edge of an urban area will bring little benefit to the developers and owners if it is poorly located in relation to residential areas and if it is cut off from the public transport system. Good co-ordination and integration of development and transport policies is an essential requirement for a fully functional local community.

That said, the most attractively designed and landscaped public space will remain unused if the security of the users is in doubt. It is therefore essential to involve qualified professionals, notably architects, as early as possible in the planning and decision-making processes. Their skilled lateral thinking and ability to take account of all decisive factors in devising solutions, can be a tremendous asset, in a holistic approach, at all stages. ■

Night time view of lively urban square with new street furniture and high quality lighting, Grand Place, Ath, Belgium. Architects: Art & Build

Photo: Serge Brison

Chapter 4

Implementing Good Solutions

The private client who builds only once in his lifetime, the property company investing the money of its shareholders or the local authority acting on behalf of its citizens all have one thing in common – they want their project, throughout the design and construction phases, to be managed in the best possible way, respecting their requirements and taking account of any limitations imposed on the project. They are, in fact, embarking on an exciting, yet risky process, as no other sector of industry creates products that are so varied, so complex and so permanent in their effect as the design and construction sector.

Means and Procedures to Achieve Quality

Every building is a unique answer to an individual wish. This fact applies equally to single-family homes, skyscrapers, concert halls and kindergartens. In architecture, where there are only a few standardised solutions, every design is a tailor-made concept for a specific location. It is the result of a creative process that combines functional, spatial, economical, ecological, cultural and aesthetic factors into a coherent overall result. Architecture not only addresses the high cultural needs of society in the building of iconic works and large public buildings, it also concerns itself with the daily requirements of accommodating the living and work activities of society in a quality environment. By deciding to adopt the best possible design solution for a project, the client lays the groundwork for its successful implementation in functional, economical and societal terms.

The confident and informed consumer should be empowered by information to make responsible decisions which fulfil his own interests while taking into account their consequences. Selection procedures, before the award of contracts, are instruments that increase the knowledge of the client and provide him with the necessary information to make the right decision. The complex nature of architectural services and the fact that it is often only possible to judge the quality of the services after they have been delivered requires a balance of a wide range of factors. Because of the asymmetrical nature of the information available to a client contemplating the purchase of architectural services, the selection procedure is best achieved by means that are not solely based on the cost of the service to the client. The best procedures for the award of architectural services contracts are usually those that facilitate prior consultation between the architect and the client during which the previous experience and skills of the architect can be demonstrated.

The processes involved in construction deserve particular attention in that the interaction between the different actors is crucial to achieve a good result. The design and realisation of a project are two intimately bound-up steps within a holistic approach to the

9. IN THE INTERESTS of ensuring a quality-based selection for the provision of architectural services, competition among architects should be based on pre-defined criteria, founded on competence and experience, that do not include price. Among the possible procedures, the ACE promotes architectural (design) competitions as a good method to enhance competition within the profession whilst contributing to enhancing quality and innovation in the procurement of architectural services.

achievement of a quality result. The clear sequence whereby it is the architect responsible for the design of a project who is given the duty to ensure the proper execution of the project on site, is the surest way to provide for quality and to avoid the incorporation of hidden defects.

Furthermore, the increasingly generalised use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) affects working methods and, at the same time, the culture of the relationships between the actors in the chain. These evolutions in working methods are helping to streamline the processes as more and better information is exchanged between the actors.

Quality-based Selection Procedures

Among the possible options for the selection of an architect, one of the best is the use of architectural competitions (design contests). These enjoy a long tradition as an effective means of finding the best solution to the design problem posed and they very effectively recognise the particular conceptual skills that the architect possesses. This method of selection has been particularly important for the public sector in the realisation of projects of public interest, the emergence of new talent and the development of innovative solutions.

The new Directives on public procurement[18], adopted at the beginning of 2004 have consolidated the principles and conditions for the use of design contests in the public purchasing of architectural services. In particular, the new Directives allow public sector clients to make use of the negotiated procedure for the awarding of architectural services.

The awarding of contracts for architectural services must focus on the quality of the service and on the technical abilities available, not on the cost of the service. In this context one valuable method of ensuring quality of design is the architectural (design) competition. Such competitions should be framed in such a manner that the skills of the professional are emphasised and the award criteria are devised so as to ensure that architectural quality will be central to the decision of the jury. Architectural design competitions are a project orientated procedure that can be considered as part of the negotiated procedure of the Directives on Public Procurement.

New Methods of Procurement

In 2002, the construction industry was responsible for 49.6%[19] of gross fixed capital formation. An ever increasing share of these investments come from the private sector, as the public sector is forced, by a diminution in its capital resources, to withdraw more and more from direct involvement in construction. This development has led political decision-makers and the participants in the construction industry to examine new strategies for the procurement of much needed public projects. In some countries, Public Private Partnerships (PPP) have long been used in practice as a way to mobilise private capital to fund public buildings such as schools, prisons and hospitals. The change, currently underway,

is the more widespread adoption of the principles of Public Private Partnerships, especially in the new Member States of the EU.

The question of how a PPP is structured is crucial for the long-term viability of the process itself and to the quality and durability of the built environment. The process must be inclusive of all the factors that are of importance to the built environment, it must deliver an equitable advantage to each participant and it must be conceived so as to guarantee that the public interest is taken into account. In the implementation of a PPP there is a risk that the public partner may believe that it can transfer an element of its public accountability to the private partner. In reality, such transfer, in terms of the responsibility of the public body to protect and provide for the cultural and social heritage, is never transferable.

Following the publication, in March 2003, of its document entitled "Guidelines for Successful Public Private Partnerships"[20] the Commission has underlined the importance it attaches to the procedure as a viable model in an enlarged Europe. The Green Paper on the subject that the Commission was expected to release during spring 2004 will surely offer an opportunity to have a large public debate, at the European level, to supplement the debates currently underway in many countries. In the United Kingdom, for instance, some very negative assessments have been made of projects run under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), which it is claimed is an interpretation of the French approach to PPP principles. In France, recent government initiatives towards the generalisation of PPP approaches have generated fierce opposition, notably from the united architectural profession, who fear that quality and sustainability is going to be seriously affected by the directions taken. Similar fears have been voiced in a report commissioned by the Direction de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, presented at the end of 2003.

10. THE ACE ACKNOWLEDGES the value of devising new models for the procurement of public buildings and works, as prosperity and vitality in the community depend on quality facilities being available for public use. The objective of achieving good architectural quality in the living environment, thus contributing to its sustainability, requires that architectural services be delivered as independently as possible of economic and vested interests. Therefore, public bodies, when employing new models for procurement, cannot step back from their responsibility to ensure the incorporation of long-term architectural quality in the projects they promote.

Photo: Bill Hastings

Arthouse, Multimedia Centre for the Arts, Dublin, Ireland. Architect: Shay Cleary Architects, Dublin. Prize won: RIAI Regional Award 1997.

The Public Client has a Special Responsibility Vis-à-Vis Society

As we have seen earlier in this book, the public impact of buildings puts a special responsibility on owners and clients. By definition, Public Bodies should lead by example in the procurement and design of their own buildings. The Commission, like other Public Bodies, has a special duty in that respect by virtue of its central role in the EU. The recent Commission Strategy to improve the quality of its buildings and infrastructures[21] offers a good opportunity to set benchmarks for the role of Public Bodies in the future.

It has been recommended in the past that the assessment of sustainability in public procurement procedures, building regulations etc. should be a mandatory requirement across the EU, not least for projects that receive funding through the Structural and Cohesion Funds. Whilst it is argued that this is difficult to achieve due, in part, to a lack of adequate resources in the Commission to monitor the process, it should nevertheless be pursued.

The raising of the standards of quality in all aspects of the procurement and realisation of public projects will raise the expectations and demands of the public in relation to private projects. In order to achieve these goals, several countries have put administrations in place to be responsible for the achievement of architectural quality and value for money in the realisation of public works. In Ireland it is the Chief State Architect, in The Netherlands and in the Flemish Region of Belgium it is the "Bouwmeester". France has also established, many years ago, the "Inter-ministerial Mission for the Quality of Public Works" (MIQCP). These approaches represent models that could be considered by many other countries in the EU. Such stimulus to the achievement of quality should be fostered so as to become a beacon of good practice and thereby encourage the private sector to also shoulder its responsibility in respect of society. ■

11. THE IMPLEMENTATION of the new EU Directives on Public Procurement in national law in the Member States will coincide with the beginning of a new period for the Structural Funds in the enlarged EU. This offers a splendid opportunity to initiate the necessary steps in the achievement of the objective to benchmark Community funding against the actual achievement of sustainability in the living environment.

Stadsbibliotheek Roermond, The Netherlands. Architects: Architecten Aan De Maas. Awards won: Betonprijs 2001 (1st place). The International Award for Outstanding Structures 2002, Special Mention.

Chapter 5

The Key Challenge: the Quality of the Urban Environment

As already underlined in other parts of this book, there is a need to consider the physical, organisational and policy frameworks of the living environment with a more holistic and integrated approach. Clearly, it is necessary that the overall Community action in this field should be further developed and some recent encouraging steps have been taken, such as the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment already mentioned.

Whilst urban policies are not considered to be a competence of the EU, several elements of related policy are being pursued. The best examples to date are the URBAN programmes for the development of disadvantaged urban areas[22], which have been implemented largely because of pressure by Parliament. The linked programme URBACT[23], which encourages networking activities for good practice, has been well received and should produce effective results. In a more general context the Action Plan for Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union of 1998[24] and the EC Reports on Cohesion Policy[25] are further examples, though still limited in scope and dimension. Among some of the other the positive steps that the EU has taken, the Urban Audit Initiative has been a very useful exercise that the ACE is pleased to note is being pursued.

Also, work has been done, and more is under way, to define indicators at various levels. However, this work still lacks some reliable indicators to assess the actual quality of the living environment, in terms of quality of the built environment. Although this may not be easy to achieve, it is worthwhile to undertake the necessary efforts, and the European Commission is surely best placed to launch and monitor the process. On the other hand, cities are the places where the problems are usually to be observed at first hand. Thus, while the city presents the most complex problems faced by society, it is also the best place for the implementation of solutions.

Photo: Hisao Suzuki

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Architects: Sadar Vuga Arhitekti.

An Appropriate Framework for Action: Cities

Although 80% of European citizens live in towns and cities and spend 90% of their time in buildings, there does not yet – despite recent progress – exist an Urban Policy of the EU. This has historical reasons, as urban policies are still largely a national prerogative of the Member States. However, the Amsterdam Treaty has initiated some new developments, and the European Commission has a range of possibilities to effectively exert its powers for the promotion and co-ordination of such policies, while still having due regard to the principle of subsidiarity.

The recent efforts of European towns, cities and regions to improve their attractiveness for citizens and investors are leading to a new perception of architecture, which is increasingly seen as a key factor for choosing a location. A well thought out and well built urban environment improves the quality of life of its inhabitants,

creates a local identity and acts as a stimulus towards more civic involvement. Where public well being is enhanced by well designed public spaces, attractive urban districts and extensive recreation areas, it is much easier to attract new business premises. The increase in the environmental compatibility of industrial production and the decrease in the amount of space needed for such activities, will also encourage the return of business companies to towns and cities, thus contributing to the rejuvenation of previous mono-functional areas. The mixed use of urban space must be promoted and this should match the concept of "neighbourhood" understood as a human-scale area with which citizens can identify.

In this respect, times of economic slow down can be seen as an opportunity. In the future, one of the main concerns will not only be to maximise the intensity and profitability of building developments – focus will increasingly be given to achieving sustainable and high quality concepts for use. A recreational area can be economically more viable in the overall urban context than a new technology estate which remains vacant. There is a growing need for the redesign of brown-field sites and of suburban areas. There is an increasing awareness in recent years for these issues in the EU institutions and in several Member States, and specific recommendations have recently been made in the context of the preparations for the future Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment[26].

Local authorities and business promoters will have to adopt new strategies for the future. It is already the case that, in the EU-15, urban development and architectural design focus primarily on supplementing and repairing the existing urban structure (urban regeneration) and on the conversion and extension of existing buildings (renovation and rehabilitation). This evolution is taking place in parallel with the development of policies for social reintegration, which can generate new local activity and wealth. However, these new concepts are still often confronted with a "local church spire mentality" which leads local communities to pursue their strategic goals and construction projects in competition with each other rather than in co-operation. EU programmes, which promote intra-regional and cross-border co-operation at the municipal level, can therefore play an important role in preventing misdirected planning and investment.

One of the principles that has been identified in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)[27], adopted in 1999 by the EU Ministers in charge of urban policies, is the need to use a polycentric approach in the achievement of equality of opportunities for European towns, cities and regions. Such an approach would act to prevent individual regions from being cut off from the overall development of Europe.

This polycentric development can only be achieved by adopting a holistic approach, which combines economic development with social inclusion and with the preservation of regional cultural identity. The ESDP, to a large extent, also serves as a reference framework for the inter-governmental co-operation on urban policies though regrettably it seems that this has not been a high prior-

12. THE MOBILISATION of all actors in the creation of new policies for the urban environment is crucial for the establishment of a viable future for all citizens. The ACE will work actively to achieve this and will, in particular, contribute to ensure that the knowledge and expertise available to European Parliamentarians, and all policy makers, on these issues is further improved.

13. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE a high quality of life in our urban areas, there is a need to ensure a high level of co-ordination and co-operation between cities and regions. In this respect, the further implementation of the political principles set out in the European Spatial Development Perspective is an appropriate starting point of such conjoint actions.

ity on the political agenda of the EU over the past few years. There were signs, at the beginning of 2004, that the topic would receive a renewed impetus during the year, due to the specific interest of some of the upcoming EU Presidencies. The ACE would be strongly supportive of such a renewed effort.

Publicly funded projects in towns, cities and local communities almost always include architectural and urban planning activities, but the briefing documents rarely include a specific demand for high quality of design. This is impeding the evolution of an appropriate footing for the establishment of rapid improvement in the quality of urban life. Moreover, cultural policy in relation to the built environment is still usually focused exclusively on the protection of the historical cultural heritage. Cultural impact assessment during the design phase could be a tool to judge the social and cultural consequences of building developments.

A special mention must be made of the importance of the concept of beauty, which is not just a subjective appreciation of a facade or an object, but a central element of the feeling of well being that citizens can have of their living environment. In fact beauty is an element of quality that is as important as each of the others. It may be difficult to objectively describe what it is that renders an object beautiful, but it is easy to recognise when beauty is absent. The psychological benefits of being surrounded by beauty assist in the creation of a balanced and well functioning society and therefore efforts must be made to instil concepts of beauty into the projects that make up the occupied environment.

14. QUALITY ARCHITECTURE, incorporating the full principles of sustainability, is a pre-requisite for an attractive, viable built environment that responds to the actual needs and legitimate aspirations of our citizens. It must be considered to be a substantial ingredient of well thought-out urban policies, not the cherry on the cake.

An Imperative Necessity: Good Governance

The European Commission Governance White Paper of 2001[28] proposed a strategy that aims at greater transparency, involvement and coherence in EU policies by citizens, NGO's and other interest groups. This was followed by further Communications on Better Law-making[29]. Their implementation is already being tested

Photo: Werner Huthmacher

Bundeskanzleramt, Berlin, Germany. Architects: Axel Schultes, Charlotte Frank mit Christoph Witt. Award won: Deutscher Architekturpreis, 2003

through wider public consultations and proactive impact assessment of the various potential effects of new legislative proposals. More recently, the institutions of the EU have agreed on new inter-institutional procedures that put the new principles of governance into practice[30]. It remains to be seen whether or not these will be effective in achieving the aims of closer and better involvement of all in law-making. In particular, one of the most interesting features of the approach is the promotion of the principle of having more recourse to alternative approaches to regulation, namely self-regulation and co-regulation.

Self-regulation is defined as the possibility for economic operators, the social partners, non-governmental organisations and associations to adopt amongst themselves and for themselves common guidelines at European level (particularly codes of practice or sectoral agreements) and co-regulation is a mechanism whereby a Community legislative act entrusts the attainment of the objectives defined by the legislative authority to such parties.

The integration of input from professional, social and political levels into the development and implementation of EU policies is strongly welcomed by the ACE. It is all the more important that local communities, professional associations and interest groups become active partners in the political decision-making process. The principle of subsidiarity can only become a driving force in European development with their input.

The guiding principles of EU policies include the concept of strategic planning and impact assessment for all domains. The complexity of realising the European project has underlined the future necessity of networked, long-term strategies rather than isolated, short-term measures. The principles of sustainability and social cohesion demand a manner of thinking in which the interaction between different spheres of politics is fully evaluated. The new measures for impact assessment reflect this changed approach. They permit the enumeration of the potential consequences of a project at the conceptual stage so that any remedial measures can be put in place at the earliest possible moment.

There is another development that gives some hope that EU policies will, in the future, include the architectural dimension. During the last legislature, a Parliamentary Urban Policy Working Group was created in the European Parliament. It offered a "one-stop agency" for EU parliamentarians as a means of combining the existing approaches and giving an integrated overview of the urban and regional policies of the EU. As all of these issues are dealt with in different parliamentary committees, it is easy to lose sight of the holistic view. It is apparent that the need for a more holistic and co-ordinated approach to urban issues, including architecture, has been recognised in the European Parliament, and it is strongly hoped that the initiative will be pursued in the newly elected Parliament of the enlarged Europe. The start of the new legislature presents the opportunity to prepare a focused agenda that can include priority issues such as urban regeneration and renovation. ■

15. AS THE IMPACT of urban development policies is so profound, fully participatory procedures for the development of urban planning, design and management policies within the EU, must include all stakeholders in order to ensure a sense of shared responsibility for the quality of the urban environment, in line with the principles of well-founded Governance.

Langhams Building, Prague, Czech Republic
Architect: Ladislav Lábus

Chapter 6

Ensuring Consumer Protection within a Realised Internal Market

On the one hand, it is commonly accepted that over-regulation, or indeed inadequate regulation, can be burdensome and that it can constitute a significant barrier to the free movement of services and to consumer choice. On the other hand, the existence of adequate, non-discriminatory and well thought-out regulation for professional services is, undoubtedly, in the best interests of the consumer and society at large.

In the interest of a systematic implementation of the Internal Market Strategy for Services 2003-2006[31], it must be ensured that sensible existing regulations are not abolished with the objective of achieving a wrongly understood harmonisation process. The newly gained liberalisation in both intra-community and external trade must not counteract the demands of the Consumer Policy Strategy 2002-2006 of the EU[32].

Because of its significant impact on the living environment, the construction industry has a special responsibility vis-à-vis the consumer. In fact, there are many levels of responsibility that can be defined. The construction sector must ensure that the services, products or buildings it delivers meet the consumer's requirements. The owner/client must ensure that the life cycle costing of their investment is correctly balanced in economical and environmental terms. Society, through the power exercised by public authority must ensure that there is an adequate and appropriate regulatory framework in which the stakeholders can operate. Bridging each of these areas, the specifier, notably the architect, has the responsibility to come up with solutions that satisfy everybody.

Eko Park, Warsaw, Poland. Architects: APA Kuryzowicz & Associates. Award won: Union of Polish Architects Competition – Award of the Year 2002

Need for Adequate Regulation

The Better Law-making approach is a useful step in the right direction. Thus, for professional services that have a societal impact of the kind described above, issues such as registration, commercial communications, professional indemnity insurance, ethics and resources needed to guarantee a good service, deserve particular attention. This view has been emphasised by the European Parliament in its resolution on market regulations and competition rules for the liberal professions[33] when it *"Underlines the importance of rules which are necessary, in the specific context of each profession, to ensure the impartiality, competence, integrity and responsibility of the members of that profession so as to guarantee the quality of their services, to the benefit of their clients, society in general and to guarantee the public interest."*

To guarantee the client and the user a consistent level of quality, most European countries ensure that the exercise of the profession of architect is bound up with a number of quality assurance criteria that are prerequisites for their professional practice. Legal protection of the professional title, when it exists, is ensured by the achievement of agreed educational standards, proof of

16. IN ORDER TO ENSURE that the consumer is adequately informed of the nature and cost of the intellectual services needed to achieve the realisation of a project in the built environment, appropriate information systems should be devised and permitted by Community law. Such systems, including those based on historical information, would allow the consumer to make comparative judgements on the quality of services offered by different suppliers so as to ensure the proper functioning of competition in the Internal Market.

professional experience, a requirement to pursue lifelong learning and a commitment to a Code of Conduct that includes an entitlement for the professional associations to impose sanctions if it is violated. For architects, who share these features with other liberal professions, the approach to quality policies of services that the Commission has adopted in its new proposal for a horizontal Directive on Services in the Internal Market[34] is of particular interest. In the context of the living environment, such policies are even more meaningful as the quality of the service delivered has a direct impact on the quality of life of the users and of the citizens of each of our countries.

One of the characteristics of the regulated professions, already mentioned, is the question of asymmetric information. This is a feature of economic theory whereby the seller possesses more knowledge about the product or service offered than the buyer. This is true, in particular, for architects as the complexity of knowledge required to deliver architectural services is generally not possessed by the client. It is often the case that the extent and type of services required by the client only becomes apparent as the design process advances, so the client is usually not able to estimate the appropriate cost of the service at the start of the process.

17. THE ARCHITECTURAL profession has always cherished the enrichment that is gained through the mobility of persons and services and it supports the objectives of free movement that is underpinned by high standards of education and training and proportionate safeguards that recognise the need to regulate such mobility. However, in terms of the quality of the service delivered to the consumer, mutual recognition can only be effective if it is based on appropriately assessed, and agreed, levels of qualification.

Mobility and Recognition of Qualifications

Ensuring appropriate initial education and training, that delivers the requisite level of qualification, as well as the maintenance of the acquired knowledge through continuing professional development are prerequisites that the responsible professional must assure in order to be able to deliver the guarantees required by the client or consumer.

In order to improve the mobility of highly qualified professionals within the European Union, one of its goals is to simplify the cross-border recognition of professional qualifications and to create greater flexibility in the ability of such professionals to settle and work in the Member States. The positive aspects of automatic recognition and the free movement of the profession have been and must be further emphasised. The Commission proposal for a Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications[35], which was still undergoing legislative debate in 2004, brings together 15 former directives for the general and sectoral regimes, including the "Architects" Directive on the mutual recognition of qualifications in the field of architecture[36].

The new Directive will not only stipulate educational standards, but it will also set down the criteria to be followed by professionals wishing to settle and exercise their profession in Member States other than their State of origin. Here, in particular, there is the risk that deregulation may mean that quality standards which have already been achieved will be watered down. The risk arises from the possibility of the uncritical adoption of measures that see free movement of persons and services, without any restrictions whatsoever, as being good in itself. Where the services to be offered

18. THE ACE SUPPORTS the maintenance of high quality courses of architectural education, matching the "Bologna" model and based on a minimum duration of 5 years study at university level. Such education should ensure the acquisition of the knowledge and skills set out in Article 3 of the "Architects" Directive and should be followed by at least two years of practical experience before access to the practice of architecture. This approach is in accordance with the recommended international standards for architectural practice as unanimously agreed by the International Union of Architects.

by a professional have an impact on the health and safety of citizens and that professional moves to provide services, some proportional measures requiring the declaration of their presence in a Member State, other than their State of origin, must be maintained.

It is worth recalling that both the "Architects" Directive and the proposed "Qualifications" Directive contain a common recital that states: *"Architectural design, the quality of buildings, their harmonious incorporation into their surroundings, respect for natural and urban landscapes and for the public and private heritage are a matter of public interest. Mutual recognition of qualifications must therefore be based on qualitative and quantitative criteria which ensure that the holders of recognised qualifications are in a position to understand and translate the needs of individuals, social groups and authorities as regards spatial planning, the design, organisation and realisation of structures, conservation and the exploitation of the architectural heritage, and protection of natural balances."*

In order to guarantee that, in the future, architects will continue to be competent and competitive in these matters and in the global market it is essential to maintain a high level of qualification. The existing degree courses for architects usually last at least five consecutive years, followed in many cases by two obligatory years of practical work experience. This is in line with the recommended standard agreed unanimously by the International Union of Architects[37].

Cross-border mobility of students is a central goal of the "Bologna Process", which aims to create a single European Higher Education Area by 2010. The objective is to achieve easier mutual recognition of achievements and periods spent abroad so that students can be more flexible in selecting the subject focus and location of their education. From the point of view of the knowledge-intensive professions, this development is very positive, once it is assured that the first qualification giving access to the architectural profession is the qualification received after 5 years of study.

The Bologna Process proposes the conferring of a "Bachelor" degree, after three years of third-level education, on all students. This is an innovative development that will significantly aid the mobility of students and the portability of qualifications, but such a qualification cannot be regarded as a professional qualification that grants access to the exercise of the architectural profession. For architects, the knowledge that is acquired after just three years is in no way sufficient to exercise the profession as the complexity of the issues to be addressed require more extensive specific skills and training, many of which are only acquired through experience. ■

Photographer: N Danielides

Greek Refinery Headquarters, Athens, Greece. Architects: Alexandros N Tombazis and Associates Architects

19. THE IMPACT ON SOCIETY of architecture is of fundamental importance to the quality of life. As such it is appropriate that the tri-partite consultations on the quality of the education of architects is maintained after the incorporation of the principles of the "Architects" Directive into the proposed horizontal Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

Chapter 7

Towards a European Architectural Policy

As already underlined, governance is a key tool: it allows the political aspects of effective co-operation between the actors of government, the professions and networks to be taken into account in new policies and legislative proposals. Culture is an intangible asset that has measurable impacts and therefore its inclusion in all policies is an unquestionable requirement.

EUROPEAN FORUM FOR ARCHITECTURAL POLICIES
FORUM EUROPÉEN DES POLITIQUES ARCHITECTURALES

The European Forum on Architectural Policies

This Forum is the tangible result of a series of initiatives intended to facilitate exchanges between the Member States. In 1997, under the Dutch Presidency of the EU, an "International Conference for Architectural Policies" was organised in Rotterdam. This co-operation on issues of architecture was further pursued under the Finnish Presidency with the holding of the "European Meeting on Architecture" in Paris in 1999 – a meeting jointly organised by Finland and France.

The conclusions of the Paris meeting proposed a series of orientations and recommendations, one of which was the creation of a "European Forum for Architectural Policies" designed to ensure that co-operation became a permanent feature. The Forum was formally set up in Paris in July 2000 under the French Presidency and it brings together representatives of government ministries, professional organisations and cultural institutes. Its objective is to encourage exchanges of national views and experiences on the promotion of architectural and urban quality, putting in place concrete actions and common tools, developing common positions and establishing dialogue with relevant Community bodies. It continues to be an effective intergovernmental network for co-operation between the different Member States of the European Union on questions of architecture. Over the years, it has facilitated the creation of shared tools for exchange and information (such as the creation of a website at www.architecture-forum.net), the production of reference documents and the organisation of meetings and seminars in the framework of the different European Presidencies. The Forum has also facilitated the coming together, around common projects, of European cultural institutes charged with the promotion of architecture, through an accord on co-operation entitled GAUDI and funded through the Culture 2000 programme.

20. ARCHITECTURE IS a fundamental feature of the history, culture and fabric of life of each of our countries; it represents an essential means of artistic expression in the daily life of citizens and it constitutes the heritage of tomorrow. A sense of belonging, of identity, is an important feature of human society and culture. Architectural expression is frequently the carrier of such cultural and social needs and it is therefore important that these influences are adequately accounted for in design.

The actions of the Forum are a logical continuation of the White Book by the Architects' Council of Europe published in 1995 under the title "Europe and Architecture, Tomorrow"[38]. The Architects' Council of Europe is a member of the Forum in its own right and it sees the Forum as a privileged structure for consultation with a major role to play to ensure that the place of architecture in Europe becomes ever more central.

Even today, architecture is not sufficiently anchored in Urban Development Policies of the EU despite the fact that it is increasingly recognised to be an element of urban identity. However, an initial, decisive step was taken in 2001 with the adoption of the Council Resolution on Architectural Quality in the Urban and Rural Environments[39], which was, to a great extent, the fruit of the co-operative work carried out by the Forum. This resolution, among other matters, encourages Member States to: *"intensify their efforts to improve the knowledge and promotion of architecture and urban design, and to make contracting authorities and the general public more aware of and better trained in appreciation of architectural, urban and landscape culture."* The Resolution, on the initiative of France, was debated and agreed by the Ministers for Culture, thus sending a strong message to the EU Institutions and to the Member States. It should permit a closer co-operation at all levels (local, regional, national and European) on the issues that are too often treated in a fragmented way between different administrations and bodies. The Forum is ideally placed to address these challenges given that the programme of events planned for the period 2004-2006 are rich in content and promise. The ACE is optimistic that the Forum will achieve significant progress during this period.

21. THE ACE FIRMLY BELIEVES that architectural quality and the specific nature of architectural services must be taken into account in all EU policies, measures and programmes, as called for by the European Council, thus leading towards the realisation of a European Architectural Policy.

Conclusion

It is clear to the ACE that there is a need to move towards the development of an architectural policy for Europe. This book has set out the current context within which the spatial development of Europe is taking place. There are many challenges and many opportunities being presented at this time and the ACE intends to rise to both.

In the meantime, it is hoped that this book will stimulate debate and further raise awareness of the importance of architecture to the lives of all our peoples. You, the reader, are invited to contemplate and reflect on the issues raised in these pages and to assist the ACE in moving towards a Europe that enjoys the benefits of a robust and well-balanced architectural policy. If you are a decision-maker, the ACE invites you to pursue the objectives set down in the key messages, taking their content into account in your work. If you are an architect or a professional involved in the development of policies or the creation of the occupied environment, you are urged to take full cognisance of the responsibilities you shoulder.

All readers are invited to send any comments or views that they may have on the matters discussed in this text to the ACE, by e-mail to: info@ace-cae.org with the subject line "Policy Book – Remarks". ■

Kindergarten, Kematen, Austria. Architect: Erich Gutmorgeth. Award won: Tyrol Prize for Architecture 1996.

Photo: Craig Kuhner

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Footnotes

[1] Refer to bibliography at the end of the book for a listing of references to existing national policies

[2] Council resolution, reference 2001/C73/04 (OJEC)

[3] For further information consult the internet at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/lisbon_strategy/index_en.html

[4] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2003) 238 final

[5] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2004) 002

[6] Council of the European Union document entitled "Multiannual strategic programme" published on the 8th December 2003 under document reference 15896/03.

[7] Decision number 1600/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

[8] Annual report on activity in the construction sector published by the European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC) – September 2003

[9] Ibid

[10] ECJ, the "Adam" Case, reference C-267/99

[11] Council Directive of 10 June 1985 on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services (85/384/EC)

[12] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2002) 499 entitled "More Research for Europe: Towards 3% of GDP"

[13] European Council for Construction Research, Development and Innovation www.eccredi.org

[14] See the website of the Commission at www.europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/construction/index.htm

[15] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2004) 60final

[16] This group was lead by the Architects' Council of Europe on behalf of the Commission's Directorate-General Environment

[17] Directive 2002/91/EC

[18] Final reference number was not available at the time of writing

[19] "Construction in Europe – Key Figures 2002" published by FIEC, the European Construction Industry Federation

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[22] See the DG Regional Policy web site at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm

[23] See the URBACT web site at http://www.urbact.org/srt/urbact/home

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[25] Ibid and see also the DG Environment website at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/index_en.htm

[26] See the preparatory work of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/preparatory_work.htm

[27] http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/som_en.htm

[28] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2001) 428final

[29] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2002) 275(01)

[30] Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-making, document reference 2003/C 321/01

[31] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2003) 238final

[32] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2002) 208final

[33] Resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 16th December 2003, reference P5_TA-PROV(2003)0572

[34] Communication of the Commission, reference COM(2004) 002final

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[36] Directive 85/384/EEC

[37] UIA Accord on International Recommended Standards for Professional Practice in Architecture, adopted at Beijing 1999

[38] ISBN number 2.930164-00-x the book has been translated into many languages and it has been influentail in raising awareness about the importance of architecture to the EU citizen.

[39] Council resoultion, reference 2001/C73/04 (OJEC)

The Member Organisations of the Architects' Council of Europe are:
In alphabetical order based on the official language name of each country

BELGIUM	Conseil National de l'Ordre des Architectes www.ordredesarchitectes.be Fédération Royale des Sociétés d'Architectes de Belgique
CZECH REPUBLIC	Ceska Komora Architektu www.cka.cc
DENMARK	Akademisk Arkitektforening www.arkitektforeningen.dk Praktiserende Arkitekters Rad www.par.dk
GERMANY	Bundesarchitektenkammer www.bak.de Bund Deutscher Architekten www.bda-architekten.de Vereinigung Freischaffender Architekten Deutschlands www.vfa-architekten.de Bund Deutscher Baumeister www.baumeister-online.de
ESTONIA	Eesti Arhitektide Liit www.arhliit.ee
GREECE	Technical Chamber of Greece www.tee.gr Association of Greek Architects www.sadas-pea.gr
SPAIN	Consejo Superior de los Colegios de Arquitectos de España www.arquinex.es
IRELAND	Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland www.riai.ie
FRANCE	Conseil National de l'Ordre des Architectes www.architectes.org Union Nationale des Syndicats Français d'Architectes Syndicat de l'Architecture www.syndarch.com
ITALY	Consiglio Nazionale degli Architetti Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori www.archiworld.it
CYPRUS	Cyprus Architects Association
LATVIA	Latvijas Arhitektu Savieniba www.architektura.lv
LITHUANIA	Lietuvos Architektu Sajunga www.alas-architektai.lt/
LUXEMBOURG	Ordre des Architectes et Ingénieurs Conseils de Luxembourg Section Architectes www.oai.lu
HUNGARY	Magyar Epitész Kamara www.mek.hu
MALTA	Kamra tal-Periti
THE NETHERLANDS	Bond van Nederlandse Architecten www.bna.nl Stichting Bureau Architectenregister www.architectenregister.nl
NORWAY	Norske Arkitekters Landforbund www.mnal.no
AUSTRIA	Bundeskammer der Architekten und Ingenieurkonsulenten www.arching.at
POLAND	Stowarzyszenie Architektow Polskich www.sarp.org.pl Krajowa Izba Architektow www.izbaarchitektow.pl
PORTUGAL	Ordem dos Arquitectos www.oap.pt
SLOVENIA	Zbornica Za Arhitekturo In Prostor Slovenije
SLOVAKIA	Slovenskej Komory Architektov www.komarch.sk
SWITZERLAND	Conférence Suisse des Architectes www.csa-archi.ch
FINLAND	Suomen Arkkitehtiliitto Finlands Arkitektförbund www.safa.fi
SWEDEN	Sveriges Arkitekter www.arkitekt.se
UNITED KINGDOM	Architect's Registration Board www.arb.org.uk Royal Institute of British Architects www.riba.org

Observer Members

BULGARIA	Union of Architects in Bulgaria www.bulgarianarchitects.org
ROMANIA	Ordinul Arhitectilor Din Romania
TURKEY	Mimarlar Odasi
ACCEE	Architects' Council of Central & Eastern Europe