



Conference

How to Achieve Quality in the Built Environment: Quality assurance tools and systems

Saturday 4 May from 9h00 to 16h00

Fakultät für Architektur, Innsbruck (Austria), Technikerstrasse 21

Last year, European Ministers of Culture, along with other institutions and NGOs, highlighted in the *Davos Declaration*¹ “a trend towards a loss of quality in ... the built environment ... all over Europe”, characterized by “the trivialization of construction, the lack of design values, ... the growth of faceless urban sprawl and irresponsible land use, the deterioration of historic fabric, and the loss of regional traditions and identities”.

Yet, as stated in the Declaration, a high-quality built environment makes a “*crucial contribution ... to achieving a sustainable society, characterized by a high quality of life, cultural diversity, individual and collective well-being, social justice and cohesion, and economic efficiency*”.

The Council of the EU decided in November 2018 to create under the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 an expert group on *High-quality Architecture and Built Environment for Everyone*². Experts designated by EU Member States will exchange on best practices with respect to “*multi-disciplinary and participatory governance models contributing to social inclusion and sustainable development of neighborhoods*”, putting focus on “*architecture as a discipline that encompasses the right balance between cultural, social, economic, environmental and technical aspects for the common good*”.

We are happy to read such a quote from an official European institution. We want to build on this.

The creation of this expert group represents a huge step forward for the architectural profession in Europe. The OMC group shall start its work 2020, this year should be used to define topics for its work. The Innsbruck conference aims to put one topic on the table.

While there is a broad consensus on the fact that *high-quality* built environments have positive impacts on people’s everyday lives, the characteristics of a *high-quality architecture* need discussion and possible specification.

The conference will aim to bring together architects, academics and experts from local public authorities, national governments and the EU institutions in order to discuss existing tools, policies and good practices that enable to ensure that *high-quality architecture* is actually achieved in the built environment. In particular, the following questions will be discussed:

- What does *high-quality* architecture mean? How can it be defined? What are its main features?
- What tools and policies at local/ regional/ national levels to assess and guarantee high-quality in the built environment?

Ultimately, this conference is designed to be a first opportunity to think about the key questions that the Council’s expert group will have to investigate and to place the topic of *quality* and *quality assessment* as an important topic for discussion.

The event will be web-streamed from the ACE website

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¹ <https://davosdeclaration2018.ch>

² https://www.ace-cae.eu/services/news/?tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1794&cHash=1dd6795bb058ac3b54731feb982289ac

PROGRAMME

- 9h00** **REGISTRATION**
- 9h20** **OPENING**
- Greeting words by **Dr. Tilmann MÄRK**, Rector of the University of Innsbruck
 - Welcoming word by **Georg PENDL**, ACE President
 - Keynote Speech by **Bart LOOTSMA**, Chair for Architectural Theory at the Leopold-Franzens University of Innsbruck
- 10h00** **SESSION 1: European policies and approaches**
- **Joao Ferreira BENTO**, Researcher, Bartlett School of Planning, University College London (UCL)
 - **Anne SCHMEDDING**, Deputy Director of the Bundesstiftung Baukultur
 - **Leo VAN BROECK**, Flanders Region Bouwmeester
- Moderator: **Bart LOOTSMA**
- 11h15** *Coffee Break*
- 11h40** **SESSION 2: From village to city – Urban and rural *Baukultur* in Austria**
- **Josef MATHIS**, former Mayor of Zwischenwasser, Board member of Landluft
 - **Ernst BENEDER**, Architect and chair in many Gestaltungsbeiräten (Design advisory committees)
 - **Gerhard FRITZ**, former city councilor at the City of Innsbruck
- Moderator: **Wojtech CZAJA**, author and architectural journalist
- 13h00** *Lunch Break*
- 14h00** **SESSION 3: From Romania via Switzerland and France to Denmark – A trip through Europe - Ways to architectural quality**
- **Stefan BALICI**, Director of the Romanian National Institute of Heritage
 - **Joël BAUD-GRASSET**, President of the French *Fédération Nationale des Conseils d'Architecture, d'Urbanisme et de l'Environnement* (FNCAUE)
 - **Beat AEBERHARD**, Head of the Architecture and Planning Department at City of Basel
 - **Henrik STJERNHOLM**, former City Architect of Vejle
- Moderator: **Georg PENDL**, ACE President
- 15h30** **Presentation of the Conference Statement**
- 15h40** **Conclusion**
- **Tamas SZUCS**, DG Culture, Director "Culture and Creativity" (invited)
- 16h00** **End of the conference**

