

"Time to act now for high-quality architecture and living environment for all"

ACE President, Ruth Schagemann meets with EP President Roberta Metsola

3 May 2024

On Friday 3 May 2024, in Valetta, Malta, the President of the Architects' Council of Europe, Ruth Schagemann and André Pizzuto, President of the Kamra tal-Periti (Malta Chamber of Architects) and ACE Executive Board Member, met with the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola to discuss political priorities for the next term of the European Parliament and solutions offered by high-quality architecture to take on the challenges of our time.

On this occasion, Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, declared that Architect professionals share a common drive to improve their processes and they share common values. She also added that the European Parliament remains committed to accompanying them on that path: *"The exportation of EU high-quality services is key for the future of the European bloc's economic growth and its standing in the global economy. That is why the growing internationalisation of European architectural practices is relevant in our drive for a more sustainable future. I am glad that architects across Europe are at the forefront in terms of expertise in combatting the effects of climate change and hence playing an unprecedented political role."*

Ruth Schagemann, President of the Architects' Council of Europe emphasised the important role of architects in creating high quality living environment. *"To achieve this, good public procurement procedures and architectural competitions are essential"*. Ruth Schagemann noted that, unfortunately, this is not currently the case in many EU Member States. *"The support of the EU Parliament for the improvement of the Public Procurement Directive is crucial. Such improvements should provide better access for small- and micro-enterprises and new entrants, favour quality and innovative approaches including architectural design competitions, and provide a new chapter for intellectual services"*.

The ACE President also thanked Roberta Metsola for her video message on the occasion of the recent ACE conference on the internationalisation of the architectural profession, in which she highlighted the role of the architectural profession in building a more sustainable future.

The meeting was an opportunity for ACE to advocate for its political priorities for the next term of the European Parliament, as described in its Manifesto entitled "Time to act now: for high-quality architecture and living environment for all", namely: to advance the highest standards in education and ensure the up-skilling of professionals; to establish a SME-friendly regulatory framework and support innovation in the sector; and to favour architectural and planning solutions in the built environment.

The European regulatory frameworks discussed included:

- Energy Performance Building Directive;
- Nature Restoration Law;
- Public Procurement;
- Professional Qualifications Directive;
- Intellectual Property Directive.

The ACE President underscored that architects have the necessary skills set to drive radical transformation of our built environment to make it less energy and resource-intensive, more resilient to climate change and more inclusive. She reiterated the ACE's support for the New European Bauhaus and the Davos Baukultur process as key political initiatives to support the transition to more beautiful, sustainable and inclusive living environments.

EP President Roberta Metsola welcomed ACE's proposals and undertook to facilitate better communication between MEPs and European architects.