

**November 2006**

 <small>ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE</small>	<b>ACE</b> <b>Architects' Council of Europe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sector/field of competence:</b> Architecture</li> <li>• <b># National members:</b> 31 countries, 44 associations, 450,000 professionals</li> <li>• <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.ace-cae.org">http://www.ace-cae.org</a></li> </ul>
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Alain Sagne was asked about the challenges being faced in trying to implement the Directive and how he feels cooperation with the EPBD Platform is helping the Architects' Council of Europe members.

***In your opinion, what are the main challenges of the Directive? (for the environment, for Kyoto objectives, for Europe, for Member States, for citizens, for professionals)***

For professionals, getting the necessary, specific training suited to the national or local methodologies for the implementation of the EPBD. This training is a challenge not just for the professionals but also for industry as a whole.

More generally we welcome the emphasis within the newly adopted Action Plan on Energy Efficiency and the strengthening and widening of the scope of the EPBD, having strongly advocated this.

Repeatedly over the last decade the architectural profession, along with other stakeholders (in particular the other partners in the construction sector) lobbied for more challenging measures.

ACE was also involved in various activities ahead of the adoption of the EPBD, such as, the EU Working Group on Energy Demand Management of the Climate Change Programme, and its is currently an observer on the EPBD Energy Demand Management Committee.

***What are the specific challenges for professionals in your field?***

For architects it is particularly important that tools are made available, which are sensitive to the requirements of the design process, particularly at the early stages, while also effectively addressing the demands of the EPBD.

***Is the Directive (and the new regulations related to the EPBD in each country) something restrictive or, on the contrary, an opportunity to encourage innovation?***

As can be judged at this time it is probably rather the second proposition. After all architects are somewhat biased on the issue given that, by nature, architecture particularly values innovation.

***What are the services provided by your organisation to help your members to prepare for EPBD implementation? (publications, Education Committee, Technical Committee, ...)***

From the early stages we have taken action to bring the attention of our Member Organisations, and on several occasions over the past years. We have also sought to stimulate an active and targeted engagement of the architectural profession in the implementation of this important new Directive.

The ACE Work Group Environment & Sustainable Architecture, which has in its remit energy issues, is advising the Members of the ACE on an on-going basis.

Moreover, the ACE is a Partner in the EU-supported project DISPLAY Towards Class A (SAVE Programme) about the energy efficiency of Municipal Buildings.

***In which manner is the EPBD Buildings Platform an interesting initiative for your organisation? (to help your members, to establish more contacts, to be the relay to discuss practical/technical questions, ...)***

In one way, the EPBD clearly offers an opportunity to the those with the skills set of the architects, to take a strategic and holistic perspective on the prioritisation of measures to improve energy efficiency while at the same time ensuring the necessary certification of performance.

# ACE

## Architects' Council of Europe



The Strategic Objectives of the ACE, adopted in April 2005, are:

- To ensure that Architecture becomes an essential, integral element of sustainable urban and spatial policies in Europe
- To reaffirm the position of the Architect as a key actor in the shaping of the living environment
- To strengthen the cultural and social dimension of Architecture

While these objectives are valid as long-term objectives the ACE is striving to bring concrete support to the fact that, especially in the case of architectural services, the approach of the European Commission is missing the target and it is also developing a strong argumentation in support of this affirmation.

Whilst the ACE accepts that it is perfectly reasonable and acceptable to seek to further improve overall competitiveness and productivity – also for the sector of professional services – this goal can simply not be achieved if the policies proposed are based on a blind, bureaucratic logic and a universal liberal economic philosophy applied across the board. This is an objective the ACE is already committed to, with, as an affirmed goal, to create more sustainable development while ensuring more choice for the consumer at the same time.

During the recent past the situation regarding the foreseeable conditions in which the architectural profession must consider its future has dramatically evolved. Notably, there is an increase and acceleration of the activities of the European Commission with the liberal professions as a specific target.

Therefore, the ACE is seeking to move away from what has been a rather technical debate so far – which has shown its limits – to seek to **give the debate its truly political dimension**, and hence the ACE is becoming more politicised in its approach in order to respond to the real challenges facing the profession. The ACE is working to convince the Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States, that there is a need to adopt a new, meaningful approach in order to analyse the architectural services sector as one of the important regulated professions of the European Union. Furthermore, the ACE intends to advise the Commission that future policy proposals, affecting the conditions of practice of the architectural profession and hence the quality and sustainability of the living environment, must be based on effective, reliable data and on sound analysis and reasoning.

Not only must impact assessment, both ex-ante and ex-post, be generalised, but this must contain a genuine assessment of what are the actual, long-term benefits for society of the policies being pursued in order to ensure that short-term, economic visions motivated by political pressure do not prevail. If this happens, it could clearly be said that the Commission has failed in its duty to European Society.

**The ACE as the representative Organisation of an important sector with a significant impact on society, notably future generations, calls for the opening of a structured dialogue, at the highest level of the EU Institutions.** At the same time, the ACE, through its Member Organisations and in close co-operation with them will also address the national governments.

The work priorities of the ACE for the period 2006-2008 are:

### **Reinforcing the Political action of the ACE**

Delivering more effectively the political message of the ACE to the EU Institutions...

Whilst maintaining and further developing its co-operation with the Directorates-General (DG) of the Commission that are its main interlocutors for the issues it considers (notably DG Internal Market, DG Competition, DG Education and Culture, DG Environment, DG Regional Policy) Particular emphasis is to be put on developing a close co-operation with the Parliamentary Inter-group Urban:Logement.

...And to the market

The ACE will work to more systematically and forcefully make its views known to the main actors in the market, in particular to industry, banks/financiers and developers. It will actively bring to their attention its specific recommendations on how best to use architectural services to meet their requirements and to respect the legitimate expectations of society.

## **Securing the adequate knowledge base for action**

In order to better comprehend the interaction between the market and the regulatory aspects that affect the practice of architecture, the ACE will develop, maintain and increase the knowledge and evidence-based understanding of the exact nature of the profession in terms of its organisation and operation across all Member States.

The ACE has set in motion a comprehensive Sector Study that will provide an in-depth knowledge of the characteristics of this sector of activity and that will lead to the creation of a rich source of information on the impact of the profession on the market, of its varied profile in the Member States of the EU and of its regulation.

Building on the results of the Sector Study, the ACE will seek to establish a permanent European Observatory for design professions in the built environment that will continue, on a regular basis, to update, collate and disseminate the information gathered through the Sector Study and, beyond this, to develop indicators of the quality of the built environment.

## **Intensifying networking activities, notably with cities**

The impact of architecture on society is widely recognised, but the full spectrum of its impact is not adequately taken into account in EU Policies and in policies at national, regional and local level. Thus there is a need to examine the impact of architecture on the cultural and social life of the EU.

The ACE will pursue and enhance its work and actions in the field of urban policies, notably in the framework of the European Forum for Architectural Policies. It will also seek to enhance its co-operation with relevant networks of Cities and Local Authorities, as these are the place where policies are actually implemented and developed.

## **Strengthening collaborative approaches**

With the changing nature of procurement of construction projects in Europe, the ACE recognises the value of building partnerships with the other actors in the design and construction sectors that play a role in shaping the living environment. Defining and building the relationships with these actors so that architectural matters, as opposed to purely economic ones, remain central to the future of the built environment is an opportunity for the architectural profession that the ACE will pursue.

## **Significantly enhancing the cooperation with schools and universities.**

The ACE will further develop the co-operation already started with the European Association for Architectural Education (EAAE). It will also launch, in close co-operation with its Members, specific, targeted awareness-raising actions towards National governments on what changes are needed to ensure adequacy in the future financing of

education with the objective of ensuring the highest possible standards of education for architects, on a lifelong basis.

### **Promoting the architectural profession's point of view in Research and Development activities**

The ACE will capitalise on its many years of investment in promoting architecture and the involvement of architects in Research & Development activities to ensure, among other things, that policies affecting the built environment are founded on balanced, evidence-based research.

### **Partnerships with important organizations in our field:**

See description above

### **Administration**

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