



## The ACE Strategy

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### ACE Multi-annual Work Programme 2006-2008

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Adopted by the General Assembly in November 2005 - Luxembourg

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Final

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## Introduction

The ACE adopted, in the special session of its General Assembly in April 2005, Strategic Objectives for the period 2006-2008. Following this the Executive Board has established a Political Agenda (ref: 176/05/AS/AJ) for the same period. The present document sets down the relevant Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP), in a detailed manner, so as to also serve as the broad terms of reference for the work in the new ACE working structure from January 2006. In essence this paper is a listing of the tasks that face the ACE in its wish to become more efficient, effective and output-orientated in its work.

In order to address the topics that are facing the profession, the ACE has decided, following approval in its General Assembly, to differentiate between the main aspects of the profession by adopting a thematic approach based on three pillars as developed in sections 1, 2 and 3 hereafter.

## 1. Access to the Practice of the Profession

### 1.1 Standards in Education and Training and Co-operation with the Schools of Architecture

#### Higher Education

The profession has a strong interest in ensuring that the education received by student architects is of the highest possible calibre. In particular, the ACE will further promote the internationally accepted standard of a minimum duration of five years full-time education supplemented by at least two years of practical training. The ACE will also seek to ensure that the quality of the full time education offered to students of architecture reaches the highest possible standards, possibly through the use of accreditation and/or validation schemes.

For these reasons the ACE believes that closer, strong co-operation with the Schools of Architecture in Europe must be pursued. The ACE Work Group on Education and the Joint Working Party between the ACE and the EAAE (European Association of Architectural Education) will be the working bodies that will mainly address the issues on this topic and thereby foster the relationship between the two organisations.

A special aspect of this question is the Bologna Process, which is having a profound effect on the way in which higher education is organised in Europe and is leading to the realisation of the European Area for Higher Education in which there is increased mobility of students through greater comparability of courses across Europe. The architectural profession and schools of architecture need to work on the topic to ensure that the changes do not undermine, in any way, the quality of education delivered in the Schools of Architecture nor the requirement to maintain the five-year duration of studies as the appropriate standard regardless of the practical experience.

#### Professional Training

As part of the curriculum offered to students of architecture there is a need to ensure that it is conceived in such a way that students are exposed to, and informed about, the realities that face

the architect in practice. A debate on what the elements of this part of the curriculum should contain, should be undertaken.

### **Practical Experience**

There is a certain disjunction between the education and training of architects and the practice of the profession. This is overcome by the pursuit of a period of practical experience. However the manner in which this period of essential training is structured varies widely across the EU. Furthermore, as there are very few countries that regulate for this period, it is necessary to study the various approaches currently in use across the EU. The ACE will seek to undertake the relevant study and, based on its results, to prepare and issue guidelines on what constitutes, in its opinion, best practice in this subject.

### **Continued Professional Development (CPD)**

In today's society, it is essential that professionals keep their knowledge and skills constantly updated in a way that can be openly demonstrated to potential clients. Such CPD can be delivered by many sources such as the Professional organisations, the Schools of Architecture and others. There is a need to work to ensure that the CPD offered to the profession is of the highest quality, that it is accessible and that it is monitored so as to be a credible demonstration of the engagement of the profession to ensure that quality delivery of services, based on up-to-date skills and knowledge, is constantly provided in order to serve the public interest. The ACE will seek to clarify the respective roles between the schools and the profession in respect of CPD Policy and programmes.

## **1.2 Regulatory Aspects of Access to Practice**

There are many regulations that affect architectural practice and there are also many ways in which the profession is regulated. With the current evolution of the approach of the European Union to regulation (Better Law-making), and in particular to the use of better, alternative regulatory approaches, the ACE will examine the existing regulatory models and seek to better understand the regulation of the profession and how it affects the performance of architects who provide architectural services to the public. In so doing, the ACE will explore the potential for new concepts to be devised.

### **Procedures for the Recognition of Qualifications**

With the recent adoption of a new European Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC) that leads to the abolition of the Architects Directive, there is a need for the ACE, in co-operation with the European Commission and others, to study and understand the new methods for the recognition and listing of new or modified qualifications provided by the schools of architecture that will follow. Given that the new procedures are to be undertaken by comitology, assisted by an expert group in which the profession will be associated, there is urgency in this task, which must be undertaken in a short timeframe, to ensure that there is no hiatus in the procedures that would allow "sub-standard" qualifications to be recognised. Beyond this watching function, opportunities will arise to report on concerns of the profession and to promote recommendations to be brought to the attention of the Member States.

### **Licensing Procedures (Including Registration)**

As the awareness of the immense impact of architecture on society, in cultural, social and economic terms grows, there are increasing concerns about how a consumer can be certain that he or she is engaging a competent architect. One approach, already much used in many parts of Europe, and in other parts of the world, is the licensing of architects. The ACE will continue to study the various approaches to licensing (which will include the simple registration of those holding a recognised qualification) and it will draw conclusions that will permit it to make recommendations on how the profession and its representative organisations should approach this critical topic. Its deliberations will be framed by the principle that, when providing services in countries outside of their country of establishment, architects will only perform those services for which they are qualified by education, training and/or experience.

### **Portability of Credentials**

In the context of the new Qualifications Directive, which brings about the concept of the single point of contact, there appears to be scope for stronger involvement of the professional

organisations, particularly the regulatory ones, in the administrative clearance of any recognition issues, in a reinforced co-operation between the profession and the competent authorities. The same goes for the proposed Directive on Services in the Internal Market, whereby the latter sets out the strong principle of reinforced administrative co-operation to which the Member States will be committed, based on adequate procedures and systems, including databases.

In the context of international trade and, in particular, bi-lateral agreements on mutual recognition, there will be a need to put in place adequate, effective and straightforward procedures through which it will be possible to evidence and "certify" that persons wishing to benefit from such agreements have acquired the actual level of qualification that is required, including practical experience, towards Third Countries.

To this end the ACE undertakes to thoroughly research the issue with a view to devise a model for a "Clearing House" concept to be put in place under the auspices of the ACE, in co-operation with the competent authorities as appropriate.

### **1.3 Profile of the Profession**

The definition and understanding of the profile of the profession underlies a great deal of the work of the ACE. In addressing this question the ACE has derived great value from its co-operation and exchanges with other regulated professions in which the commonalities faced have become evident (see below). Considering the specific features of the architectural profession, the ACE is faced with a number of elements that directly relate to the question of access to the profession.

#### **Definition of the Professional Profile**

With the changes that the Bologna Process brings, the pressures of the market and the demands of society, there is a need to reflect, in a structured manner, on the professional profile of those qualified in the field of architecture. This reflection will extend to cover the new approach to higher education being promoted by the Bologna Process and to the pressures that an ever more knowledgeable society places on the profession.

#### **Use of the Title "Architect"**

Ever since the adoption of the Architects Directive, indeed since the creation of the ACE, there has been significant debate on the issue of the protection of the title versus the protection of the function. It has been shown that, even in Member States where the protection of the title is guaranteed by law, the evolution of the market and the increasing liberalisation of services brings about situations where notable frictions arise about the definition of who is able to design and what they can design. This phenomenon is further reinforced by the confusion created by the implementation of the Bologna Process (see above).

There is an urgent need to clarify the issues, particularly for the purpose of offering adequate guarantees to clients and consumers. There is a need for the ACE, at this point in time, to seriously address this topic.

#### **Function – The Missions of the Architect**

As already illustrated above there is an active debate about what are the missions of the architect. Beyond the issue of the use of the title, there is a need to take account of evolving situations whereby other professionals increasingly provide building design services and whereby architects increasingly work in multidisciplinary teams and/or partnerships. In doing so, it will be necessary to better define the conditions for the intervention of the architect and to set out the functions that an architect needs to fulfil to meet the requirements of clients and society.

The ACE carried out several studies into these matters over the last 12 years and it will build on the conclusions of that earlier work in taking a fresh approach to this sensitive topic.

### **1.4 Research**

#### **Applied Research**

The European Union promotes the concept that research and innovation is essential to the competitiveness of Europe and, given that the construction sector, of which the architectural profession is part, is the most important industrial sector, it is clear that there is a role for the profession to play in the field of research. In particular, it is important that the profession defines what part of its day-to-day work can be improved through research with an emphasis on practice-orientated research (applied research). Moreover, it should highlight those aspects of the

architects creativity, as used in the detailed design of buildings, that is innovative and can be exploited as useful contributions to improve the quality of the built environment and the processes employed in the sector.

The ACE will closely examine the current thinking, in the profession, on the importance of such research and on how it is pursued, if at all. It will then draw on this information to ensure that the role of the profession in applied research is expanded so that its involvement reflects its importance in the sector.

#### **Policy-Orientated Research**

In conjunction with defining applied research as it impacts on the profession, the ACE will also need to address the question of policy-orientated research. In an increasingly knowledge-based society, there is a growing awareness, in all fields, of the need for proper, evidence-based policies to be formulated. This demands that research into the subject matter of the proposed policies is undertaken before the formulation of the relevant policy, and this is of particular relevance to the ACE and its Member Organisations as one of its principal aims is to promote the adoption at EU, national and local levels, coherent, holistic policies in matters that affect the living environment.

The ACE will seek to define the areas open for such research and will seek to continue to stimulate, both within and external to the profession, interest in the undertaking of such research. In particular it will seek to ensure that funding for this type of research is available in the EU Programmes.

#### **Academic Research**

The schools of architecture have been, for some time, the centres of research into the more fundamental topics that form the core of the architectural profession. This is a desirable pursuit, particularly when it enriches the knowledge base of the profession and when it forms the basis of post-graduate studies, such as Doctorates. Despite this fact, the area of academic research is ill-defined and the ACE believes that the opportunity presented by the co-operation with the EAEE in the Joint Working Party, should be used to develop in-depth and well-considered guidance in this area with, as one objective, to narrow the perceived gap between academic research and applied research in the field of architecture and related topics.

### **ACCESS TO THE PROFESSION**

#### **Summary of expected outputs:**

- I.1. The ACE will further promote the highest standards of education and training for architects.
- I.2. The ACE will strive to ensure that the CPD offered to the profession is of the highest quality and will devise a European label for CPD in dialogue with the Schools of Architecture.
- I.3. The ACE will prepare and issue guidelines on what constitutes best practice for the post third-level professional training for architects.
- I.4. The ACE will study the new methods for the recognition of qualifications and portability thereof.
- I.5. The ACE will make recommendations on how the profession and its representative organisations should approach licensing procedures.
- I.6. The ACE will thoroughly research the opportunity and benefits of devising a model for a "Clearing House" on exchange of information and recognition of qualifications in the profession.
- I.7. The ACE will further reflect on the professional profile of those qualified in the field of architecture in order to better specify who is able to design and what they can design.
- I.8. The ACE will clarify the issues related to the use of the title architect, particularly for the purpose of offering adequate guarantees to clients and consumers.
- I.9. The ACE will better define the conditions for the intervention of the architect and to set out the functions that an architect needs to fulfil to meet the requirements of clients and society.

- I.10. The ACE will further highlight the contribution of the architects creativity to innovation.
- I.11. The ACE will seek to ensure that the role of the profession in applied research is expanded.
- I.12. The ACE will seek to define the areas open for policy-orientated (socio-economic issues) research and it will seek to continue to stimulate, both within and external to the profession, interest in the undertaking of such research.
- I.13. The ACE will develop guidance in this area of academic (fundamental) research.

## **2. Practice of Architecture and Trade in Architectural Services**

### **2.1 The Legal and Regulatory Environment of Architectural Practice**

#### **Competition Policy and Law**

In creating the Internal Market for goods and services, the EU has relied heavily on competition policy and law in order to ensure fair practices across the EU. In this matter the regulated professions, of which the architectural profession is one, has not escaped the attention of the legislators. In early 2004, the Commission published a Communication on Competition in Professional Services that placed special emphasis on matters such as advertising, tariffs, access to the profession, multi-disciplinarity, ownership of practices etc. Then, in May 2004, a new legal framework came into force, which provides that the Commission and the National Competition Authorities share the responsibility for the implementation of competition law in the EU. A follow-up report, based on wide-ranging consultation with both the affected professions and the National Competition Authorities is expected to be released during the summer 2005.

The ACE, like other professional bodies, has been persistently critical of both the basis and content of this work on professional services, and hence of its conclusions, because it is founded on an inadequate methodology as it fails to recognise the particular nature of these services. This is particularly true for architectural services, which have a profound impact on the public interest, society and the quality of the living environment. The ACE, building on earlier work will steadily demonstrate that the prevailing approach to competition issues, based merely on economic theory, does not suffice when considering the field of architecture, and that it must take account of other correcting factors, such as societal impact.

#### **Regulatory Rules**

In parallel with the more general examination of regulation covered below, the ACE will examine in detail the regulatory rules, set down by statutory authorities, that apply to the profession across the EU. These rules extend to cover a diverse range of matters from buildings codes through planning codes to deontological rules. It will be necessary for the ACE to undertake work in each group of rules, also of a comparative nature, so as to deepen its understanding of their modalities and impacts on the profession.

In so doing the ACE will seek to identify the common strands in those rules, including the justification for them and their impact on the practice of architecture. From this the ACE will draw lessons on best practice in this area so as to propagate the use of better regulation for architectural services in the overall context of the construction sector.

#### **Forms of Practice**

There is renewed attention being given to the forms of practice through which professional services are provided, particularly by the liberal professions. Aspects that characterise the liberal professions, such as independence, personal liability and trust of the client, impact on the choice of the form of practice and on competition in the market. The ACE is conscious that these are matters of importance on which, to a certain extent, the reputation of the profession rests. It is therefore important to develop a detailed knowledge of these questions so as to establish and



promote what are the most appropriate forms of practice that should be applied, for the architectural profession, across the EU, in order to achieve better quality.

### **Deontological Rules**

In contrast to the regulatory rules referred to above, deontological rules are those that the profession has imposed on itself, such as codes of ethics, codes of conduct and rules on professionalism in architecture. The main motivation for the writing of such rules has always been the public interest and it is important that the profession remains in tune with what constitutes the public interest over time. In line with the evolution towards having more recourse to alternative regulatory approaches such as self- and co-regulation, the architectural profession will seek to reinforce its deontological framework so as to better respond to the expectations of clients and society.

The ACE intends to examine, in detail, the question of ethics and its implementation across the Member States of the EU with a view to possibly setting out a set of European Ethical Standards for the profession. In particular, the ACE will set out a European Deontological Code in which, among other matters, the underlying principles of ethical behaviour will be set down.

### **Codes of Conduct**

A crucial element of any set of deontological rules is a code of conduct. This has long been recognised by the Member Organisation of the ACE and all of them have, in one form or another, established such codes. As stated above, the principle motivation for a well-founded code of conduct is to ensure that the public interest is served by those to whom the code applies. This logic is becoming more and more relevant as consumer interests and public interest grows in political importance in the EU and the ACE is currently addressing this evolving reality.

In particular, in the context of the Commission proposal for a directive to open up the internal market for services, the ACE is examining the possibility of introducing, at European level, a code of conduct whose principles can be incorporated into all existing codes at national or regional level. In this process, the ACE has undertaken an in-depth survey and analysis of the actual situations in the Member States in respect of the responsibilities for the definition and control of such codes. Building on this work and following through with its Member Organisations on the national implementation measures to be taken will be an important task in the short-term.

### **Dispute Settlement**

Another aspect of growing importance in the provision of architectural services is the whole question of dispute settlement and redress. In all contractual relationships there is the possibility that a dispute may arise between the parties to the contract and in the complex field of construction it is desirable that there are agreed, reasonably quick and effective means to resolve disputes. The ACE will incorporate best approaches to dispute resolution in its work, examining the various options open to the profession, having in mind the protection of the consumer as its main concern. It is expected that this will lead to the development of recommendations on a graded, hierarchical approach (from mediation to an appeals process) to dispute resolution between architects and their clients.

### **Self- and Co-regulation**

In the implementation process of the new EU Action Plan on Better Law-making and in a further effort to simplify legislation, the three main institutions involved in EU law-making (Commission, Parliament and Council) signed, in December 2003, an Inter-institutional Agreement (IIA) on Better Law-making. This agreement promotes alternative regulatory approaches, in particular self- and co-regulation, of which it gives a definition. Following this six successive Presidencies of the EU are committed to achieving effective better Law-making. The follow up to the IIA is currently under way, notably by work undertaken by the Commission to present a report on the present state of play on the actual use of self- and co-regulation. At the same time, the Commission is currently significantly strengthening its internal procedures for the impact assessment of new legislation and a manual is in preparation for the Commission services. In particular, every explanatory memorandum of each new proposal will need to identify the areas in which self- and/or co-regulation can be applied and to what extent. This is a significant move towards a more bottom-up approach to European Law-making.

As this new approach provides significant opportunities for the Members of the ACE to re-position themselves as suitable bodies for the achievement of certain tasks and functions, the ACE will, in

addition to promoting the establishment and implementation of a European deontological code, work to stimulate knowledge and interest in this topic.

## **2.2 Procurement of Architectural Services**

Linked in many ways to access to the market, the ways in which architectural services are being procured is evolving rapidly at the present time. There is great interest, among several stakeholders, in new approaches that it is believed can deliver better value for money for clients, whether they are public or private. In this process the architectural profession is concerned that it can be guaranteed that overall quality and sustainability is achieved at the same time. Another concern of the profession is that, no matter what form of procurement is used, the role of the architect is properly framed to allow the best result to emerge. Clients must be in a position to better apprehend the parameters that come into consideration when seeking to increase the quality and sustainability of their investment, in order to be able to better qualify their demands of the architect. Therefore the ACE, following the recent adoption of terms of reference for work in this area, will examine all such models with particular emphasis on:

- Public Procurement and its rules
- Architectural Competitions
- Design and Build
- Public Private Partnerships
- Project Team Partnership

### **Demarcation of Roles in the Project Team**

In relation to both access to the profession and, more importantly, in relation to the procurement topics above, there is an urgent need to further examine how it might be possible to work out, as objectively as possible, a conceptualised scheme outlining the different roles of the different partners in the construction sector whilst re-affirming the capacity of the architect to synthesise the various elements. Having completed this task it will be desirable to engage in structured dialogues with relevant branches and groups in the sector (see below).

## **2.3 Quality of Architectural Services**

### **Quality Management of Architectural Practice**

With the increased attention being given to the need to deliver, in the public interest, a high quality of service, the ACE will continue its work on the development of a Quality Charter for the profession. This links to the work on CPD mentioned earlier together with necessary work on labelling systems and management systems for the practice of architecture. The ACE will also seek, possibly through its Member Organisations, to develop stronger ties to consumer organisations across the EU.

### **Certification**

In the process of adopting a reference framework for the quality management of architectural practice the ACE has identified that both a potential and a need to devise a specific system for the certification of architects when offering their services to clients exists. The proposal of the Commission for a Directive on Services in the Internal Market contains provisions, of a voluntary nature, to encourage service providers to develop such systems. The fact that the Commission insistently sees consumer organisations as adequate bodies to judge the adequacy of certification schemes, and, having regard to the special situation of architectural services whereby, for a large proportion of contracts, the client is not the actual "consumer", the ACE will undertake to develop a convincing argumentation in support of the development of a certification system at European level, for architects.

### **Quality of Services**

Whilst this topic also covers the quality management mentioned above, it goes much further to encompass the actual assessment of the overall quality of the service delivered to clients and, beyond, the actual quality of the result. This calls for the development of adequate, evaluation methods that architectural practices and individual architects could use as part of their marketing strategy. Given that benchmarking, as a concept, tends to be more fashionable nowadays, and given also that architectural services, by nature, can hardly be put in grids, there is a need for the

profession to identify and define relevant indicators for the measurement of the specific features that characterise the quality of architectural services.

## **2.4 Trade in Architectural Services**

### **Provision of Architectural Services in the Internal Market of the EU**

Beyond the elements already identified in earlier sections of this document relating to the internal market, there is a need to effectively address the reality of an increasingly liberalised internal market whereby this will have consequences in several areas such as mobility, competition between architects, competition with other professionals and administrative procedures. There is also a clear need to further raise the profile of architectural services, as such, by adopting a more aggressive attitude towards the corporate promotion of the values of these services. The ACE has a special responsibility to devise policies and measures in that respect.

### **Provision of Architectural Services in Third Countries (non-EU)**

In addition to the aspects relating to mutual recognition, standards, quality of services, clearing house etc. discussed above, the increasing globalisation of architectural services calls for the establishment of an agreed framework of principles and rules designed to create more favourable conditions for European architects, including younger generations, to be able to export their services more towards Third Countries and other markets. The work of the ACE in entering into bilateral negotiations for mutual recognition agreements, based on equivalence and reciprocity, is the first step to achieve real market access. In this process, the ACE will continue to develop the concept of "European architect", which encompasses all aspects of qualifications and competence.

The ACE, and through it the profession, has created a situation whereby architectural services have become, on the official political agenda, a spearhead project of the EU in the context of bilateral and regional agreements. This implies that adequate consideration should be given to the opportunity to increase the responsibilities of the ACE as the representative organisation of the profession in the EU and to motivate it to explore the ways and means to ensure that its action in this field leads to rectifying any imbalances and to effectively facilitating trade in architectural services.

## **2.5 Sectoral Relationships and Co-operation**

As already alluded to in this document, the evolution of the market and the changing expectations of society, calls for a change in attitudes, both for the profession in its relationship with other actors in the construction sector and, more generally, in the wider environment.

### **Other Design Professions in the Construction Sector**

The ACE is aware that, in order to better respond to client expectations, there is a need to establish better relationships with, and understanding of, other design professions in the construction sector. To this end, the ACE has undertaken to enhance its contacts and dialogue with urban planners, landscape architects, interior architects and consulting engineers and will continue to do so.

### **Construction Industry**

For the same reasons, and also because of the new approaches to the procurement of buildings and the search for sustainability in the sector, the ACE is striving to enhance the co-operation with other branches of the construction sector, particularly those directly linked to the architectural service such as building contractors, services contractors, material producers etc. This enhanced co-operation will serve to re-affirm the role of the architect in the industry and to improve teamwork in the construction process to the benefit of the industry, its clients and society at large.

### **Other Co-operations**

The ACE has, for some time, been able to develop good relationships with other sectors, notably other regulated professions. The exchanges of experiences with these professions in relation to market issues, qualifications, regulatory issues etc. has consistently proven to be very valuable in echoing concerns and identifying possible solutions to matters affecting practice, that are similar in



nature, in the regulated professions. The ACE will continue to foster these relationships and create synergies if and where appropriate.

## **PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND TRADE IN ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES**

### **Summary of expected outputs:**

- II.1. The ACE will steadily demonstrate that the traditional approach to competition issues, based merely on economic theory, does not suffice when considering the field of architecture
- II.2. The ACE will examine, in detail, the regulatory rules, set down by statutory authorities and those set down by professional regulatory bodies, that apply to the profession across the EU. It will draw lessons on best practice so as to propagate the use of better regulation for and in the profession.
- II.3. The ACE will develop a detailed knowledge of what are the most appropriate forms of practice that should be applied, for the architectural profession, across the EU and promote them.
- II.4. The ACE will seek to reinforce its deontological framework so as to better respond to the expectations of clients and society and it will set out a European Deontological Code (EDC) in which the underlying principles of ethical behaviour will be set down. It will monitor the uptake by its Member organisations of the EDC.
- II.5. The ACE will incorporate best approaches to dispute resolution in its work, examining the various options open to the profession and it will make recommendations to its Members in this respect.
- II.6. The ACE will work to stimulate knowledge and interest, within its Membership, in the topic of self- and co-regulation as a means to re-position the professional bodies.
- II.7. The ACE will examine all models for the procurement of architectural services, both public and private and will produce further, specific recommendations in this important area.
- II.8. The ACE will devise a conceptualised scheme outlining the different roles of the different partners in the construction sector whilst re-affirming the capacity of the architect to synthesise the various elements.
- II.9. The ACE will seek to develop a convincing argumentation towards the clients on the benefits of calling on high quality when procuring architectural services.
- II.10. The ACE will seek to adopt a Quality Charter for the profession to address the need for increased quality, reinforced consumer (client) satisfaction and enhanced credibility.
- II.11. The ACE will seek to stimulate benchmarking approaches on the basis of objective indicators for the measurement of the specific features that characterise the quality of architectural services.
- II.12. The ACE will raise the profile of architectural services in the context of trade in the Internal Market and at the global level devising policies and measures to assist its Members in this respect.
- II.13. The ACE will continue to develop the concept of "European architect", which encompasses all aspects of qualifications and competence notably to facilitate trade in architectural services.
- II.14. The ACE will enhance its contacts and dialogue with other design professions and its co-operation with other branches of the construction sector, re-affirming the role of the architect in the industry whilst improving teamwork in the construction process.

### **3. The Role of Architecture in Society**

### 3.1 Actions Towards Institutions

Beyond the main thrust of the mission of the ACE, which is to influence policies through direct lobbying activities, propositions and recommendations, there is a need to raise, more generally, the profile of architecture in all policies at EU, national and local levels. Through such actions the ACE has the possibility to create favourable conditions for the profession and to raise its profile.

#### Promotion of Architectural Policies

Although it is a fact that, over the past decade, there have been significant developments in many of the EU Member States towards the adoption of architectural policies, this is far from being generalised. Moreover, when such policies have been adopted, experience shows that there is no guarantee whatsoever that the policies are pursued as they depend on fluctuations in both political priorities and economic situations. Furthermore, too often architecture is seen as a sophisticated, expensive, additional element. Thus this does not, by far, recognise the added value of architecture in all of its social, cultural and economic dimensions. Good architecture should apply to every building, from the simplest house to major "monuments".

Therefore the promotion of architectural policies has become, over the years, one of the most important priorities of the ACE with the ultimate goal of achieving the adoption of a European Architectural Policy. This has been illustrated in two important reference documents of the ACE – the White Book, published in 1995, entitled "Europe and Architecture: Tomorrow" and the ACE Policy Book, published in 2004, entitled "Architecture & Quality of Life". The main focus of the efforts of the ACE are now concentrated on the network of the European Forum for Architectural Policies in which it must continue to play a crucial role, and further enhance its involvement. These activities are directly monitored in the Secretariat under the supervision of the Executive Board.

#### Integration of Architecture in Other EU Policies

It is widely recognised, at least in the profession and among the Members of the ACE, that architecture is typically a cross-sectoral topic, with relevance in many of the policies adopted at European level and implemented in the Member States. This has been very well illustrated in the Council Resolution of 12 February 2001, on architectural quality in the urban and rural environments. However, the call made by the Council on the Commission and on the Member States to take account of the architectural dimension in all EU Policies is far from having been heard, yet alone actioned, as evidenced in most, if not all, of the policy developments that have taken place since the adoption of the resolution, as a recent survey<sup>1</sup> has also demonstrated.

Therefore the ACE will continue, consistently, to strive for the integration of architecture in the main policy areas that affect the quality of the living environment of European citizens. In particular, specific efforts will be devoted to ensuring that this integration occurs in policies such as Public Procurement, Environment, Urban and Territorial Issues, Regional Development and well as in the Structural Funds and other EU Programmes. Among the tools that the ACE will employ to achieve this integration are its involvement in the European Forum for Architectural Policies, work with the European Parliament Intergroup Urban:Logement, promoting the implementation of the expected future EU strategy on the urban environment and engagement with other relevant stakeholders, notably cities and city networks.

#### Lobbying of, and Interaction with, EU Institutions

This is one of the central activities of the ACE, principally carried out by the Secretariat from the headquarters of the ACE in Brussels. This work involves the creation and maintenance of good working relationships with the main EU Institutions (Commission, Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee etc.). It also entails a significant amount of day-to-day activities in exchanges, contacts, meetings and correspondence in order to adequately ensure the necessary watching function to identify issues of relevance to the profession. This permits the ACE to be able to be informed, at the earliest possible moment, of developments in EU Policy making as they happen, and to anticipate them.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey can be accessed on the website of the European Forum for Architectural Policies: [www.architecture-forum.net](http://www.architecture-forum.net)

In order to be able to capitalise on these efforts, the ACE relies on the meaningful input and support of its Members and its working structure to substantiate and feed these actions. Thus in the years to come and in order to be consistent with its strategic objectives, there is a real urgency for the ACE to further improve the adequacy of its input vis-à-vis actual needs in policy developments affecting the profession while, at the same time, harnessing expertise, stimulating debate and encouraging propositions on relevant issues.

The main thrust of the efforts of the ACE in the coming years will be put into contributions to the work of the Parliamentary Intergroup Urban:Logement and through any other relevant channels such as the Forum for Construction in the European Parliament (FOCOPE).

### **3.2 Networking and Interactions with Other Actors**

It has already been proven, on many occasions, that it is more efficient to search for synergies in the defence of singular interests. The ACE, for its part, has found that concerted, specific joint actions with other professions and sectors has allowed it, through the multiplier effect gained, to achieve more than it could have hoped to achieve on its own, with a more powerful impact. This does not detract from the possibility for the ACE to act alone when it is most appropriate, but such joint actions pre-empt the situations where the ACE might otherwise be seen to be acting in a self-interested way.

#### **Construction Sector**

Through the collaborations discussed earlier in this document and through its further involvement in a number of networks of the construction sector such as the European Council or Construction Research, Development and Innovation (ECCREDI) and the European Construction Forum (ECF), the ACE can contribute to improving the image of the sector as a whole and, at the same time, it can influence the way in which the views of the architectural profession are effectively taken into account in the sector.

#### **Other Services Sectors and Professions**

The Services Sector is drawing increased and particular attention from policy-makers at this time as it is the sector that is perceived as the main economic driver of the EU. The ACE has been, for many years, involved in a number of networks in the services sector and with other professions. It will further foster these interactions and involvement and will identify further opportunities for joint actions with these networks, while safeguarding and emphasising the specific features of the architectural profession. The most relevant examples of such joint actions are the European Services Forum (ESF) and Club Profile (regulated professions).

#### **Cities and Local Authorities**

There is a growing recognition, by EU policy-makers, of the important role that cities and local authorities can play in putting into practice EU policies, notably those that relate to the creation of growth and jobs, which includes activities in the built environment. The ACE has identified, some time ago, the potential for reinforced co-operation with networks of cities and/or local authorities as a means to implement at local level, and in a concrete manner, the policy recommendations that it formulates. Indeed cities are, arguably, the places best suited to the uptake of new approaches, as they are the places where the most construction activity takes place and where problems are most acutely felt. Moreover cities have means at their disposal, as procurement authorities, to directly demonstrate the benefits of these approaches in public works. Therefore the ACE will seek to identify opportunities to use these networks to launch joint actions including, if and where possible, pilot projects. In particular, the greater emphasis being put on urban issues in the Structural Funds of the EU will offer fresh opportunities.

### **3.3 Public Action**

Whilst it is principally the task of the Member Organisations of the ACE, who are the representative and regulatory bodies of the profession at National level, there is an acknowledged need for a European level action in the raising of awareness in the public mind of the importance of architecture. Therefore the objective of promoting architecture is enshrined in the Statutes of the ACE and so it is legitimate for the ACE to undertake work in this area, to the extent that its resources allow. A detailed proposal for a communication policy for the ACE will be set out in a separate document.

### **General Information**

In the meantime it is worth recalling that the ACE currently utilises three channels for the delivery of information on its activities and positions, directly monitored by the ACE Secretariat under the supervision of the Executive Board. These are the ACE website, ACE Info and Press Releases for which the communication policy will propose improvements.

### **Awareness Campaigns**

The ACE recognises the need to raise awareness of the members of the general public to the topic of architecture and to sensitise them to the impact that architecture has on their daily lives. It will seek to identify opportunities and measures to address this need.

### **Events**

When seeking to raise awareness of both targeted audiences and the general public, the ACE may wish to organise public events. One example of this was the colloquium that was held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris at the end of 1999 with as a theme "Architecture: A Mediator of Urban Tensions". In an attempt to considerably reinforce its public impact, the ACE will explore the possibility to launch a series of regular high-level events that could take the form of European Summits, whose main focus would be to address architectural quality in the built environment. This particular project will be developed in a separate note.

## **THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN SOCIETY**

### **Summary of expected outputs:**

- III.1. To strengthen and monitor the input of the ACE in the European Forum for Architectural Policies.
- III.2. To strive to obtain that the architectural dimension is integrated in the main relevant EU policies such as Public Procurement, Environment, Urban and Territorial Issues, Regional Development and well as in the Structural Funds and other EU Programmes.
- III.3. To improve the adequacy and quality of the ACE input into EU policy developments and to strengthen the co-operation with the EU Institutions.
- III.4. The ACE will develop and reinforce its specific co-operation with the relevant bodies in the European Parliament.
- III.5. The ACE will foster interactions with other stakeholders and will identify opportunities for joint actions, while safeguarding and emphasising the specific features of the architectural profession
- III.6. The ACE will seek to identify opportunities to use the networks of cities and local authorities to promote its policies and to launch joint actions including, if and where possible, pilot projects.
- III.7. The ACE will seek to identify opportunities and measures to address the need for a more public presence.

## **4. Prioritisation and Resources**

The Multi-annual Work Programme outlined in this document is based on the analysis of the "desirable". However, having regard to the structure of the ACE, which, on the one hand, largely relies on voluntary input, and on the other hand has scarce resources available to it, notably in the secretariat and having regard to the timeframe available for the implementation of the Programme, it is unrealistic to expect that all of the matters set out can be achieved with the existing conditions. Therefore there is a need to prioritise, both in respect of the topics addressed and the actions to be carried out.

Moreover, it implies that the resources of the ACE should be aligned with the strategic objectives to be pursued, which have been approved by the General Assembly at a Special Session in the spring of 2005.

#### 4.1 Priorities

Recalling that the ACE has adopted a new thematic approach to its work, set out in three thematic pillars, the priorities set out below have been established following a consideration of the urgency and political importance for the profession of the issues identified and largely debated during the Special Session already referred to and in follow-up work in the Executive Board. In undertaking these detailed debates on the various issues that need to be addressed it has been realised that the proposed pillars are adequate to cover the topics and that they follow a logical sequence from the education of the architect through to the actual impact of architecture on society.

The various topics addressed in the Programme have been clustered under the three pillars having regard to their relevance to the identified issues resulting in the emergence of a number of main strands within which the topics to be addressed have been framed. From this it has been possible to set the proposed main priorities as follows:

- Reinforcing standards in qualifications of architects
- Monitoring regulatory aspects in relation to credentials
- Re-positioning the architect among the other actors in the construction sector
- Enhancing the profile of architecture in research
- Monitoring the legal and regulatory environment of architectural practice
- Promoting best practice in the procurement of architectural services
- Promoting quality in the construction sector
- Re-affirming the public interest nature of architecture in the political arena
- Promoting architectural policies
- Raising the profile of the ACE in the public

It should be noted that the sequence of the priorities set out above follows the structure of the thematic pillars and that it is up to the Executive Board of the ACE to set the actual order of priority that it wishes to propose to the General Assembly.

#### 4.2 Resources

The implementation of the new ACE structure and of the proposed Programme to achieve the agreed Strategic Objectives has obvious implications when it comes to resources, both in terms of human and financial resources that necessarily will need to be increased.

Whilst there are several ways to achieve this, whatever way is chosen, it will draw on the resources of the ACE Members. A first analysis shows that probably the most efficient way is to seek to reinforce the Secretariat in Brussels, as this would allow to:

- Increase co-ordination and liaison work, which is required by the implementation of both the new structure and the Multi-annual Work Programme, to guarantee a better output
- Support for the development and implementation of a communication and information plan as well as for enhanced internal communications and related IT aspects
- Generally, and more importantly, to significantly increase the visibility of the work of the ACE and its notoriety, and to enhance its influence on EU and national policies.

At this early stage it is difficult to give precise indications of the actual costs. However, a very rough estimate suggests that the annual budgetary increase of costs would range between about 130,000 and 150,000 Euro.

End of Document