Development of the *Architectural Policies* document

Wishing to bring closer to the general public what *Architectural policies* are and what they mean in a European context, the Working group for the development of the *Architectural policies* document proposal decided to provide short information based on the *Survey on Architectural Policies in Europe*, which was published by *EFAP*[1] in December 2011. The data treated in the *Survey*[2] were obtained through a Questionnaire which during 2010 was filled in by all EU Member States, and Switzerland and Norway, as well as countries which are in various stages of accession to the EU.

European Architectural policies
Synthesis from EFAP

Summary

   A) Policies on architecture and culture

When considering the broad definition, architecture constitutes a vital part of public policies, like housing and building, urban policy, environmental and landscape policy. Architecture is increasingly perceived as an important cultural expression, representing and confirming current lifestyles. The Norwegian *Architectural policy*, the French *Act* [*art. 1. "architecture, expression de la culture"*]*,* the Irish and Dutch policy begin with a text reflected by the following sentence:
„Architecture is a cultural and artistic form of expression and a social element of culture" (Turkish Architectural policy 2007)

   B) Architectural policies in Europe, a brief historical survey

Already since the 1980's, and more expressedly since the 1990's, there has been an increasing number of EU Member States which have adopted architectural policies in order to improve the quality of their architectural activities. After the *„Architecture Act",* adopted in France in 1977, the Netherlands were among the first in 1991 to publish the *Architectural policies* document. In 1995 the *Architects' Council of Europe (ACE)* published the text *„Europe and Architecture tomorrow"*, addressed to national and local EU levels, with conclusions containing proposals for future promotion of architecture in Europe. Wishing to initiate action and to get involved in addressing this set of issues, in 2001 the Council of the EU adopted *„A Resolution for architectural quality",* encouraging Member States to promote architecture and, in general terms, awareness of architecture. In more recent time, the EU Parliament adopted in 2008 a Resolution on the follow-up of the *Territorial Agenda* and *Leipzig Charter* on sustainable European cities, calling on the Member States to pay greater attention to creating a culture of high quality of life. In December 2008, the *Council of the EU* adopted the *Conclusions on Architecture and Sustainable Development*, calling on the *Commission of the EU* and *Member States* to make allowance for architecture and its specific features, in its

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[1] *The European Forum for Architectural Policies* (*EFAP-FEPA a.i.s.b.l.*) is the comprehensive an international network designated to foster and promote architecture and architectural policies in Europe, by connecting the public, the profession, culture and education.

[2] www.efap-fepa.eu

particular cultural aspects, in all relevant public policies, especially in research, economic and social cohesion, and education policy.

C) Existence of a specific architectural policy, main features:

16 out of the 27 EU Member States + Norway + Turkey have some form of architectural policy or rules in place: Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Turkey, while in the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and Portugal the respective adoption process is still underway. Among those countries which have an architectural policy in place, such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway, significant progress in economic development, including all its aspects, is observed under engagement of several ministries (as many as 14 in Norway), and it can be said that architectural policy is a major *„export topic of discussion"*, and thereby also an additional value added for each state. (The Netherlands have already carried out 3 reviews of their architectural policy, Ireland two, and France, the Netherlands and Denmark have offices abroad promoting the document and the guidelines given in it).

The most prominent features of architectural policies are:
- *„Quality"* does not only imply the aesthetic impression but needs to be interpreted through its function and interaction in a predetermined context. All the parties concerned, from investors to contractors, share responsibility for the achievement of architectural quality.
- Architecture is regarded to be an industry with a high export potential, a reflection of the country (*„architecture is among the most creative industries"*, Latvia).
- Central executive authority fosters construction of high-quality buildings in order to be the main example for potential investors (*„leading by example",* Ireland).
- The relationship between architecture and environment / landscape is generally established by regulations.
- Promotion of young architects, new architecture (Denmark, Norway, France).
- Information and education (in all countries, in Ireland and Finland architecture is included in the programme of compulsory education, in the Netherlands special guidelines for investors are in place).
- Public involvement on future investments at specific sites should not be left to professionals and well informed persons only, but there should also be communication with the public.
- Intercultural dialogue, by establishing a standard, common vocabulary, and definitely not communicating by using technical vocabulary.
- The objective of architectural policies shall be to reduce barriers between state administration and the population, and to mediate a well-informed public.

Within information relating to Croatia a number of elements is pointed out which have been implemented to date both in our regulations and in the activity of the Physical Planning Council of the State, various ministries, the Croatian Chamber of Architects, and the Croatian Architects' Association, whereby we can be compared with states which are on the way to adopting the *Architectural policies* document.

On behalf of the Working Group
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