

Aligning with the International Standard of Training (5+2)

Challenge: How to increase the mobility of architects in the EU and support the export of their services?

Solution: Incorporate, in the Professional Qualifications Directive, the international training norm made up of full-time education at university level and professional practice experience (or equivalent) totalling 7 years.



Manifesto for the EU institutions

Time to Act: for high-quality architecture and living environment for all

A crucial base for trade in (architectural) services are mutual recognition agreements. Internationally, the minimum basis regarded as adequate for architectural training is seven years. According to the “UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education” (Updated July 2023), the balanced acquisition of this diverse knowledge and capabilities requires a period of not less than five (5) years of full-time studies (or part-time equivalent) undertaken at a university or comparable teaching institution plus a two year traineeship, offering graduates the opportunity to apply their knowledge, further develop their skills and transition into employment.

This means that the current European minimum requirement for architectural training with 5 years +0 or 4 years +2 is below the level that is expected internationally. This fact makes MRA negotiations more difficult and leads to complex requirements of compensation measures for European Architects and thus a decrease of their competitiveness.

Architectural education that is appropriate to secure the competitiveness of European Architects in a world-wide context must equip students to conceptualise, design and construct spaces that address both societal and individual needs. It requires an integrated knowledge, drawing from the humanities, the social and the physical sciences, technology, environmental sciences, and arts. Beyond the technical, financial, and aesthetic concerns, architectural education must instil a social commitment, fostering sustainable human settlements and improving quality of life. Moreover, education must prepare students to tackle global challenges while actively engaging with local communities.

In view to the fact that architects play a crucial role in the success of all political initiatives focused on the a fair and fast green transition that ensures inclusive and sustainable high-quality “Baukultur” in Europe and beyond and that Architecture is a complex discipline that requires a combination of technical skills, creative thinking, problem-solving abilities and a deep understanding of societal needs, it is a prerequisite for competitiveness to advance the highest standards in education and ensure the upskilling of professionals.

Introducing a minimum duration of architectural studies of 5 years plus 2 years of traineeship/professional practise in the Professional Qualifications Directive is therefore crucial for simplifying MRA negotiations and international recognition of EU Architects, for enhancing their competitiveness beyond Europe and for the success of many European and worldwide political initiatives.



ACE key policy priorities for the EU institutions

Promoting high-quality architecture and living environment for all

- Recognising the value of architecture as a key lever for high-quality living spaces
- Embedding the values of the New European Bauhaus in EU legislation
- Developing a proposal for a Planning Services Directive

Advancing the highest standards in education and ensuring the upskilling of professionals

- **Aligning with the International Standard of Training (5+2)**
- Resolving the problem of mixed qualifications
- Ensuring the up-skilling of professionals

Establishing a SME-friendly regulatory framework

- Ensuring strict reciprocal application of the Government Procurement Agreement and International Procurement Instrument
- Revising the Public Procurement Directive

Favouring architectural and planning solutions in the built environment

- Tackling whole-life impact of the built environment and apply circular economy principles in the construction sector
- Promoting renovation, transformation and re-use of existing buildings over demolition and new builds
- Adapting living spaces to the effect of climate change through architectural and planning solutions

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“A quality education in architecture must prepare architects to formulate new solutions for the present and the future, as new eras will bring with them grave and complex challenges with respect to the social and functional degradation of many human settlements.”

Source: UIA-UNESCO Charter for Architectural Education.



Jonas' Residential Building, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Architectural office / Bureau d'architecture: Orange Architects
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