



# RIBA Manifesto for European Parliament Elections 4 June 2009

The Royal Institute of British Architects  
is committed to the following objectives:

- improving the **quality** of the built environment and advocating that its procurement is quality-based
- supporting efforts across the EU to combat the effects of **climate change**
- encouraging investment in the right **skills** for tomorrow's needs.



## There are votes in architecture.

It governs the quality, safety, productivity and prosperity of our cities, as well as the well-being of their inhabitants.

Good governance is essential to ensure that the right conditions are created in which a high **quality** built environment can be achieved. It is also imperative that **procurement** of the built environment is quality-based.

The architectural profession is one of the key actors in the construction sector which, in turn, is the most important industrial sector (worth about €1,300 billion in the EU in 2007 and directly employing about 16 million workers).

This has been acknowledged in the European Economic Recovery Plan which recognises the significant role that the construction sector can play in stimulating recovery from the current economic crisis. Funds released for the urgent enhancement of the energy efficiency of buildings should serve to **reduce carbon emissions, reduce fuel poverty and create jobs.**

It is also vital to ensure investment in the right **skills** for tomorrow's needs.

The RIBA and the architectural profession across Europe (collectively represented by the Architects' Council of Europe, which brings together over 40 professional institutes and registration bodies from the 27 Member States and speaks for some 480,000 architects), intend to play a full part in addressing the foregoing challenges, and call on the candidates seeking election to the European Parliament for the 2009-2014 period for their support in furthering the recommendations contained herein.

# Quality: improving the quality of the built environment and advocating that its procurement is quality-based

## The RIBA calls on the European Parliament to:

- integrate earlier built environment declarations into all EU policies<sup>1</sup>
- ensure decision-makers and the public are aware of the positive benefits architecture can bring to their lives
- take a holistic approach to the quality/sustainability of the built environment, so that social/cultural considerations are taken into account as well as economic/technical aspects
- critically review the manner in which the regulatory environment of the architectural profession is understood by the EU, so that full account is taken, in its policies and legislation, of the specific nature of architectural services and – in the public interest – their fundamental impact on the health and welfare of society
- develop criteria for measuring the quality of the built environment and make available to those procuring the public realm
- ensure that procedures for procuring buildings (nb. publicly funded projects) permit the selection of the best proposals, having regard for sustainability, architectural quality and life-cycle costing (Quality-based selection)
- prefer the ‘economically most advantageous tender’ that includes quality criteria
- raise OJEU thresholds for tenders to help more public clients to choose designers for small works on merit or track-record
- reduce bid costs by creating a Brussels-based repository for storing non-bid- specific information e.g. company, finance, HR, health & safety and quality management systems documentation
- favour integrated teams for benefits of supply chain arrangements
- favour use of BIM (Building Information Modelling) for its whole-life performance advantages and simplification of regulatory processes;
- where PFI/PPP are used, favour Smart PFI<sup>2</sup> with client-owned brief and concept design to ensure that innovation and basic quality are achieved.

**To this end, the RIBA calls for an early revision of the Public Procurement Directives to ensure that the market for architectural services remains open, with a level playing field, especially for innovative and emerging talent.**

# Climate change: supporting efforts across the EU to combat the effects of climate change

## **The RIBA calls on the European Parliament to support:**

- work to achieve the EU's 2020 commitments for tackling climate change (30% reduction in Green House Gas emissions)
- the EU's aim to play a key role in developing an ambitious global agreement for the post-Kyoto Protocol period
- urgent measures to improve the energy efficiency of housing stock/public buildings, encouraging the Member States to reduce VAT rates on refurbishment and work related to energy efficiency, and to promote rapid take up of 'green' products (cf. Energy Performance in Buildings Directive)
- reductions in Stamp Duty and Council tax as an incentive for energy performing buildings
- the adoption of the European Commission's proposals to enhance energy efficiency in the building sector (COM(2008)755 of 13.11.08)
- the allocation of a greater percentage of Structural Funds to energy efficiency investments
- the plans of the European Commission, the EIB and national investment banks to launch a 2020 fund for energy, climate change and infrastructure to fund equity/quasi-equity projects
- the development, by the Member States and industry, of innovative financing models e.g. where refurbishments are financed through repayments, based on savings made on energy bills, over several years
- provision of resources, for the construction sector, to achieve its Strategic Research Agenda, especially for the energy efficiency of buildings
- the promotion of green technologies and development of energy efficient systems and materials for new/renovated buildings, to reduce their energy consumption/CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**To this end, the RIBA calls for the full and timely delivery of funds announced in the December 2008 European Economic Recovery Plan, in the interests of creating jobs, reducing carbon emissions and reducing fuel poverty.**

# Skills: encouraging investment in the right skills for tomorrow's needs

## **The RIBA calls on the European Parliament to support:**

- measures to ensure that those who provide architectural services acquire the skills and experience necessary to guarantee a high level of quality, understand the impact of their work on society and protect the end user
- the development of a convergent approach towards ensuring adequate levels of qualifications in the field of architecture, and the better alignment of these qualifications with prevailing international standards

**To this end, the RIBA calls for the early revision of Directive 2005/36/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, with a view to revising the minimum duration of architectural studies from four years to five (or the equivalent, on a part-time basis), supplemented by two years qualifying professional practice experience.**

**The Institute also calls for Mutual Recognition Agreements on architectural services, negotiated between the EU and third countries, within the context of existing of Free Trade Agreements, to be made legally binding, with a view to opening up new markets in a reciprocal manner.**

1 Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC – Recital 27); Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities; Council Conclusions on the Contribution of Architecture to Sustainable Development (2008/C319/05)

2 [www.architecture.com/Files/RIBAHoldings/PolicyAndInternationalRelations/Policy/SmartPFI/SmartPFIPositionPaper.pdf](http://www.architecture.com/Files/RIBAHoldings/PolicyAndInternationalRelations/Policy/SmartPFI/SmartPFIPositionPaper.pdf)

**The RIBA is one of the most influential architectural institutions in the world and has been promoting architecture and architects since receipt of its Royal Charter in 1837.**

**The 40,000 strong professional institute is committed to serving the public interest through good design.**

**It represents 85% of registered architects in the UK as well as over 4,000 international members.**

**The Institute's mission is to advance architecture by demonstrating benefit to society and promoting excellence in the profession.**

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