



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

PRESS RELEASE – 11/2013

## **The ACE welcomes final agreement of the modernised Professional Qualifications Directive and confirms commitment to its implementation**

**Following the positive vote by the Council of Ministers, the ACE welcomes the improvements introduced in the modernised Directive.**

Following the adoption of the modernised Professional Qualifications Directive (PQD) by the European Parliament on 9 October, the PQD was adopted by the Council of Ministers of the EU on 15 November 2013. This vote at first reading concluded the modernising process that started with the Commission's proposal in December 2011 and which relates to the Single Market Act – the European Commission's action plan to improve the functioning of the single market.

The 2005 Directive set a minimum training standard for architects of four years full time study at University level (or equivalent). This never reflected the reality of training requirements across Europe OR the standards required in practice. Raising the minimum standard to a realistic level has been a long-term goal of the ACE and significant progress has been made. According to the modernised Directive architectural training should now comprise either five years of university level training ("5+0") or not less than four years of study supplemented by a supervised professional traineeship of a minimum of two years ("4+2"). While the ACE continues to advocate a minimum of five-years academic training complemented by 2 years of traineeship ("5+2") in order to gain automatic recognition between Member States, the modernised Directive is a significant improvement on the old 4+0 minimum.

From the beginning of the consultative and legislative procedure, the Architects Council of Europe has sought to ensure that the interests of architecture, clients and the profession itself are taken into account by the European policy-makers. Regarding the main innovation of the Commission's proposal, the ACE supported the amendment of the European Professional Card proposal to provide for an e-certificate format. However the ACE remains unconvinced that the professional card would prove beneficial to the process for recognising architects who are subject to automatic recognition provisions.

In addition, the ACE has secured exclusion of the architectural profession from partial access measures, and has supported flexibility to permit recognition of different approaches to traineeship under the amended Directive.

The new Directive will become law twenty days after it is published in the Official Journal of the EU, and Member States will have two years to transpose it into national law. The ACE remains committed to making the voice of European architects heard during this implementation phase and to working towards further revisions, by 2017, that will align the EU position more closely with prevailing national and international standards.

The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) is the representative organisation for the architectural profession at European level: it aspires to speak with a single voice on its behalf in order to achieve its aims. Its growing membership currently consists of 46 Member Organisations, which are the regulatory and professional representative bodies in all European Union (EU) Member States, Accession Countries, Switzerland and Norway. Through them, the ACE represents the interests of over 545.000 architects from 33 countries in Europe.

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