



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

Ref.: 19/14/PO

ACE Alert

January 2014

EU news

Review of the Professional Qualifications Directive: Publication of the revised Directive in the Official Journal of the European Union

Directive 2013/55/EU, which provides for the modernisation of Directive 2005/36 on the recognition of professional qualifications, was published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 28 December 2013. The revised Directive therefore came into force on 18 January and Member States will have until 18 January 2016 to transpose its provisions into national legislation. Directive 2013/55/EU is available in all EU languages on [EUR-Lex website](#). The Commission will publish a consolidated text from the Directives 2005/36/EC and 2013/55/EC in the coming weeks.

Review of the Public Procurement Directive: the European Parliament endorses in first reading the Trialogue agreement

On 15 January 2014, the European Parliament adopted in first reading the revised Public Procurement Directive, as agreed with the Commission and the Council. The introduction of new criterion in the award procedure regarding "most economically advantageous tender" (MEAT) will allow public authorities to put more emphasis on quality, environmental considerations, social aspects or innovation while still taking into account the price and life-cycle-costs of what is procured. The new rules are also expected to cut administrative burdens and help smaller companies to bid by encouraging the division of contracts into lots. "Abnormally low bids" will be closely monitored in order to avoid social dumping and make sure that workers' rights are respected in all Member States.

Following formal adoption by the Council, expected in the coming weeks, the Directive will enter into force 20 days after publication in the EU Official Journal. Member States will then have 24 months to implement into national law the provisions of the new rules. In 2014, ACE will develop guidance to assist ACE Member Organisations to influence the implementation phase. A provisional version of the text is available in English on the [European Parliament website](#).

MEPs back tool to help EU firms compete for public contracts in third countries

On 15 January 2014, the European Parliament approved plans for a tool to allow EU countries to prevent non-EU firms from bidding for public procurement contracts worth €5 million or more unless their home countries reciprocate by allowing EU firms to do likewise. The proposed tool, which could be used only with European Commission approval, should strengthen the EU's hand in trade talks with third countries. "We are not trying to shut off our market. We are trying to motivate other countries to open their procurement markets to our firms", said European Parliament rapporteur Daniel Caspary (EPP, DE). The tool could be used only for big public contracts (worth €5 million or more excluding

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

Conseil des architectes d'Europe AISBL
Rue Paul Emile Janson, 29 B-1050 Bruxelles
Tel. : +32 (0) 2 543 11 40 Fax : +32 (0) 2 543 11 41
E-mail : info@ace-cae.eu Website : www.ace-cae.eu

VAT) and those in which goods or services originating outside the EU make up more than 50% of the total value of the goods or services involved. It will apply to those countries which do not currently have an international agreement covering public procurement with the EU but exclude Least-Developed Countries. According to the Commission, 85% of EU public procurement markets are already potentially open to international bidders, compared to only 32% of public contracts in the USA and 28% in Japan. This position goes in the direction of the ACE response to a questionnaire from DG Trade regarding international procurement. A provisional version of the text is available in English on the [European Parliament website](#).

Eurostat press release: Production in construction down by 1.1% in EU28

In November 2013, seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector fell by 0.6% in the euro area (EA17) compared with October 2013, and by 1.1% in the EU28, according to first estimates released today by Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU. In November 2013, production in construction declined by 1.7% in the euro area and by 1.6% in the EU28, compared with November 2012. Among the Member States for which data are available for November 2013, production in construction fell in seven and rose in eight. The largest decreases were observed in the Czech Republic (-5.6%), Romania (-4.9%) and the United Kingdom (-4.0%), and the highest increases in Slovenia (+9.6%), Poland (+3.9%) and Hungary (+3.0%). More details for each Member State in the [Eurostat press release](#).

On-going consultation

Public consultation on a European Area of Skills and Qualifications

The objective of this consultation, run by the European Commission, is to collect the views of stakeholders on the problems faced by learners and workers with regard to the transparency and recognition of their skills and qualifications when moving within and between EU Member States, on the adequacy of related European policies and instruments and on the potential benefits of developing a "European Area of Skills and Qualifications". The consultation addresses in particular the following issues:

- How to place a stronger focus on higher and more relevant skills?
- Further strengthening links between education/training, mobility and the labour market
- Adapting to internationalisation trends
- Ensuring clarity of rules and procedures for the recognition of skills and qualifications for further learning

More information and the online questionnaire can be found on the [Commission website](#). The consultation will be open until **15 April 2014**.

EU-funded projects

iNSPiRe: Second newsletter now available

You can access the second newsletter of the iNSPiRe project on the project [website](#). iNSPiRe is a EU-funded project, in which ACE is taking part, looking to tackle the problem of high-energy consumption by producing systemic renovation packages that can be applied to existing buildings. These packages aim to reduce the primary energy consumption of a building to less than 50 kWh/m²/year.

An online interest group for public procurers of sustainable construction has been launched. The interest group provides a space for discussion on the procurement aspects of energy-efficient renovations of buildings. Specifically, the forum fosters knowledge exchange and discussion among procurers or those having some involvement in procurement matters, regarding their experiences with using public funds for innovative construction or monitoring life-cycle costs of NZEBs.

For more information on the project, visit the website of the project: <http://inspirefp7.eu>.

Horizon 2020 – First call for projects

The EU Commission published the Horizon 2020 Work Programmes 2014-2015, together with the first Horizon 2020 Calls for projects and Calls for tender. Horizon 2020 is the new EU framework programme for research and innovation. BUILD UP, the EU portal for energy efficiency in buildings, has gathered the Calls related to energy efficiency in buildings:

- Call - Energy Efficiency
- Call - Smart Cities and Communities
- Call for Energy-efficient Buildings

Detailed information is available on the [BUILD UP website](#).

Learn how to find a suitable Call for proposals or project partners and how to submit your proposal on the [Commission website](#).

A [LinkedIn Group dedicated to Horizon 2020](#) makes it possible to post "Partner search" requests and to find project partners.

Competitions

10th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards

The European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP) is organising the 10th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards with the support of the Committee of Regions, in partnership with SPECIAL project and Intelligent Energy Europe, and in collaboration with the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA). This partnership enhances the integration of sustainable energy and spatial planning. These Awards give recognition to planning strategies, schemes or developments which make an outstanding contribution to the quality of life in urban and rural regions of Europe. The Award will be open to spatial planners and municipalities from the 47 European Countries of the Council of Europe. More information on the [ECTP website](#).

Green Building Solutions Awards 2014 – European contest for innovative solutions in green building

This online contest organised by Construction21 is meant to highlight and reward exemplary buildings with innovative solutions to meet energy efficiency and environmental quality challenges. Throughout Europe, contractors and construction managers for exemplary green buildings can enter the contest and share their know-how, ideas and the new techniques they use to reach their goals. Green Building Solutions Awards is composed of 4 categories:

- Energy efficiency management,
- Building systems and materials (building structure, insulation, joinery, etc.)
- Innovative processes (in design, project or works management, users involvement, financial package, etc.)
- Efficient green buildings

Contest registration is free. Entries and case studies may be submitted until **21 February 2014**. More information on [Construction21 website](#).

Events

Cities of Tomorrow: Investing in Europe – 17-18 February, Brussels

More than two thirds of EU citizens live in cities or other urban areas – but does policy making in the EU reflect the realities of today's Europe? As calls grow for an EU Urban Agenda, the European Commission will host a cluster of events to debate how Member States and EU institutions should work together to ensure that cities play their full role in European development – and that their needs are fully

reflected in policy thinking. More information on the [website of the event](#). Deadline for registration: **3 February 2014**.

Conference "Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive: safe mobility" – 12 February 2014, Brussels

The Conference will provide participants with the opportunity to discuss the changes introduced by the modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive. The Conference will address the following issues in panel discussions:

- Facilitating mobility: The European Professional Card
- Reinforcing safeguards for citizens and patients: The Alert mechanism and knowledge of languages
- Facilitating qualifications: Recognition of traineeships and the importance of diversity in education systems
- Simplification: Points of Single Contact and Common Training Principles

Registration is possible until **29 January 2014** on the [Commission website](#). Access the [draft agenda](#).

European Nearly Zero Energy Buildings Conference – 27-28 February 2014, Wels (Austria)

The European conference to discuss high efficiency buildings supplied by renewable energy: technologies, business models, policies, financing, definitions & national action plans, best practice examples, cost optimality of energy efficiency and renewable energy in new construction and renovation. Programme and more information at: www.nzeb14.eu.

4th Canada-EU Green Building Forum - 28 February 2014

On 28 February 2014, the Canadian Embassy in Brussels will be hosting the 4th Canada-EU Green Building Forum with the collaboration of the Canadian Embassy in The Hague. The objective of the Forum is to promote the export of Canadian green build technologies and products to the Benelux and to motivate Benelux entrepreneurs to look at the green build opportunities in Canada. This year the focus will be on Green Building in general (energy efficiency & passive house standards) and topics related to wood. Participation is free – Registration until 24 February 2014. Programme and registration on: <http://2014.greenbuildingforum.eu>