



Bundesministerium
für Verkehr, Bau-
und Wohnungswesen

STATUS REPORT ON

Building Culture in Germany

Initial Situation
and Recommendations

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Initiative ■ ■ ■ ■
Architektur ■ ■ ■ ■
und Baukultur ■ ■ ■ ■



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Editor: Prof. Dr. Gert Kähler

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Kurt Bodewig,
German Minister for Transport,
Building and Housing

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As Europe grows together, markets and requirements are changing. Germany has the largest construction output on the continent, a high density of architects and a highly developed infrastructure. In the building industry, structural change is of the essence. Competent service, innovative products and sustainable quality on all levels – including aesthetic appeal – are not just key factors for cities and residents, they are also issues vital to Germany's future as an attractive place to do business.

The German Ministry for Transport, Building and Housing launched the "Architecture and Building Culture Initiative" to establish a focus in public debate on the quality of planning and building in Germany and the role played by the services of architects, urban planners and engineers. In this way, the federal government is accepting suggestions from the experts and coordinating them with corresponding proposals by the German parliament.

The initiative sees itself as an impetus and platform for dialogue that requires the active involvement of its participants. This stock-taking report reflects their contributions to that dialogue. I would like to thank everyone for their contribution, in particular the report's author, Prof. Dr. Kähler.

It takes the active cooperation and individual contribution of all protagonists in the planning and building process to create building culture – small and major private sector clients, investors and financiers, companies and contractors, planners and finally city and local governments. There is as much necessity to encourage cooperation between planners, clients and builders as there is the need to foster public awareness about the value of a well-built environment. It will be decisive to continue the dialogue that has been started here and systematically promote involvement on the state and community level as well as among citizens and clients. That is why I am especially pleased that state governments are increasingly addressing the issue through their own initiatives.

The report documents the achievements but also consciously highlights the shortcomings in Germany's building culture. It also looks at the way our neighbours are dealing with these challenges. We need to adopt a critical stance on where we stand and how well we actually apply our own standards, because we are dealing with important goals:

- We want to enhance our global competitiveness and be prepared to meet new requirements
- We want to establish broad public appreciation of a well-built environment, thereby generating support for good planning and building
- We want to preserve our cultural heritage and make use of the resources in our building stock
- We want to safeguard high and future-oriented standards in the planning and building industries and exploit potential for innovation

I would also like to see consumers' daily needs prioritised and greater dialogue between experts and owner-developers on good planning and building.

Apart from its role as client, it is the federal government's job to create appropriate terms and conditions. I refer to the existing Federal Building Code and Regional Planning Act, and the substantial federal subsidies extended to the states for, among other things, urban renewal.

The Ministry for Transport, Building and Housing is not ending its commitment to architecture and building culture with the publication of this report. The analyses and recommendations it contains, which I view as developable rather than definitive, will be reviewed to see how far they can be realised. I also intend to present the findings to the German parliament.

I consider everything that has been achieved so far as an incentive for continuing this joint effort by all of the stakeholders in building culture, which seeks to deepen public discussion on quality and firmly establish the means for close cooperation between all of the parties responsible for planning and building.

Kurt Bodewig

German Minister for Transport,
Building and Housing

The Architecture and Building Culture Initiative

Building culture concerns everyone, because the built environment affects and changes every individual. While the experience of traditional culture – the visual arts, literature, theatre, music – is only achieved by conscious exposure, the experience of building culture is inescapable because it is quite simply everywhere.

Building culture always manifests itself locally. In this way, it is globalisation's opposite number, providing (or failing to provide) people with a place to lay roots and create a sense of home. A place and the people in it make up a society – the "citoyen" as a term for the "involved citizen" derives from "cité", the city!

The "citoyen" is the citizen of the "European city", whose future in a global economy is a crucial question that is of concern to politicians and citizens alike. For our society, it's virtually a matter of life and death.

These are the main tenets that emerged from the discussion led by the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative and from the process of compiling this report. There was a feeling that until now, issues concerning architecture and building culture have not been adequately discussed in the public domain.

The Ministry for Transport, Building and Housing launched the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative in October 2000 to improve public discussion on building culture. More than two dozen organisations committed to the cause of building culture joined as partners.

The chambers of architects and engineers inevitably take a leading role because as statutory bodies, fostering building culture is as much their legal obligation as providing professional representation.

The steering group brought in the additional involvement of representatives from state building committees, local governments, the building trade as well as the housing and credit sectors. This is the first time in the history of the Federal Republic that all branches involved in building in the widest sense have come together as partners with the common aim of raising the standard of building culture in the country. It reflects concerns that Germany could fall behind its European partners, but at the same time testifies to a sense of joint responsibility for creating a livable built environment for all.

The initiative set out to take stock of building culture in Germany. This report contains a summary: it shows the scope of the evaluation. The aim is to illustrate the point of departure, significant development trends and future requirements, so as to gauge the need for action on the part of the federal government and other protagonists.

The report sees itself as a fact-based analysis that provides information on the problems and future challenges facing the protagonists in the planning and building trades with regard to architecture and building culture in Germany. In formulating an evaluation and recommendations, the author in his role as independent consultant has been at liberty to emphasise certain features, placing greater emphasis on future tasks rather than on the current situation. The ultimate goal of drafting a joint action plan that's sanctioned by all of the protagonists was, however, never forgotten.

The report is based on statements from institutions, interviews with experts from different building-related sectors, publication analyses, theme-related events over the past year, in particular those staged in cooperation with the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative, as well as standardised surveys of experts and the public.

The emphasis of this report lies in ascertaining the status quo as we take stock of our building culture, with the objective of familiarising the public with the issues. It concludes with recommendations and measures that show politicians, experts and the public what needs to be done and makes an urgent appeal to start.



Summary and Opinions

Building culture is not just an issue for architects, engineers and urban planners, it also concerns clients and citizens. Its quality results from the combination of usability, commercial efficiency and design, from environmental, social and economic sustainability as well as the equity of the processes that create it.

Social developments over the coming years will affect building culture. Demographic changes (an aging population, shrinking households, an increasing proportion of foreigners and migration within Germany) and economic developments (globalisation, tertiarisation, growing pressure to maximise economic yield), as well as the continuing processes of individual isolation and social polarisation in our society all pose new challenges for those involved in the building and planning process. The challenges posed by the need to rebuild cities in the former East Germany is one example.

In the cities, working with the building stock will continue to assume greater importance: basically, the city for the coming decades is already built. At the same time building culture is threatened by the increasing privatisation of public space, suburban development, neglected inner-city neighbourhoods and a general belief that low building costs are best value for money.

The protagonists developing the built environment must be committed to safeguarding public interests. Private sector clients, property owners and project developers need to assume responsibility during the planning and building phase to ensure a high standard of building culture. Planners must pursue a middle road while balancing the justified interests of the client and the public.

Planning and building remain major economic factors: more than ten percent of the gross national product is generated by the building sector, every 14th person in employment works in the industry, more than half of all fixed asset investments are funnelled into the building sector. For planners this means that the number of competitions, viewed as a fair method of winning contracts, could be increased by extending the procedure to both the private sector and areas beyond building design and construction. There are also opportunities to significantly increase services exports in the international marketplace, which in turn would stimulate construction services exports. But that also will require improved standards of education for builders and planners. After all, the term "building culture" comprises "culture", which can only be guaranteed by a broad and general education.

Building culture is not something that needs to be reinvented. But we must be more aware of the fact that the planning and building trades involve processes and produce results that directly affect building culture. This heightened awareness is necessary to ensure that the quality of building culture is not inadvertently impacted. Germany not only has Europe's largest construction output and a reputation for high quality construction technology, it also has sophisticated planning legislation and a highly developed competitions system, plus effective programmes to support heritage conservation and urban planning. As a result, the states and communities within the federation pull their own weight. Chambers and associations also make significant contributions. Nevertheless, the interest of citizens, as those "affected" by building, and the commitment of developers are also crucial. It is the government's job to foster that commitment and allow room for innovation. Which is not to say that building culture can be measured by the mere quantity of projects or by the volume of state subsidies. It rather must be anchored in public awareness through a continuous dialogue between experts and citizens, communities and owner-developers.

Other European countries have been quicker to recognise the value of public discussion. In some, building culture is consciously promoted as an integral part of national identity. Many countries have formulated a national "architecture policy", with corresponding budgets and institutions, which fosters public interest and appreciation, counsels school leavers in their career choices, advises communities and clients and conducts a dialogue on quality. Over the past few years, Germany has been lagging behind on this front.

Despite the existence of numerous individual measures, there is no focused perception of the issue on the national level. The fact that the federal Architecture and Building Culture Initiative has led to similar initiatives on the state level can be credited as a major success. But there is still no permanent national platform for communication and representation that brings together all of those involved and interested in the planning and building process. The question of how this can be continued is an open one, the answer to which must also consider a current need for re-orientation in the planning professions and building trade.

One of the most vital recommendations, therefore, is the call on the federal government to set up a viable way of continuing the dialogue on building culture together with the states, communities, chambers and associations as well as industry, interested sponsors and dedicated professionals. The move would spotlight the measures being taken in this area. There are examples in neighbouring countries that we can learn from.

There are concrete recommendations on action for all of the protagonists shaping our built environment. They aim to create an appreciation of quality in building culture. This above all affects planning professions, which require commitment to quality and to specialisation, competence in the area of service, an international orientation, interdisciplinary cooperation and greater consideration of users' needs.

There are also recommendations for clients and investors. Above all, they are directed at public sector owner-developers, who function as role models. But private sector clients and property owners must also be won over for building culture objectives. Engineering and architecture competitions on major projects can make an important contribution to this end.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of an involved community – one that is committed to "inner development" in cities, that seeks to protect and create attractive public spaces and ensure landscape-sensitive development on the fringe. Communities are also advised to set up building culture counseling services.

Proposals that call for joint action to safeguard and improve building culture quality and to attract public interest are of particular importance. These include public campaigns and research, model projects that can be conveyed to the public and integrated nationwide, appropriate praise for good examples, a more widespread inclusion of citizens in building and planning processes, the incorporation of building culture issues in consumer counseling, and plaques on buildings detailing the people and firms who built them.

Particularly important are the recommendations to add building culture topics to school and vocational training curricula. Dialogue and an appreciation of quality in the built environment can only be built on a previously laid foundation of knowledge.

Finally there are proposals for federal policy – for example a review of tax regulations to boost support for inner-city development, or support for engineering and architectural services exports. Urgently needed jobs in the building trade depend on such measures being taken.

Implementation of these measures would make Germany's architecture and building policy more visible, and that in turn would promote an awareness of building culture as a topic that affects everyone. The questions that need to be asked in the public domain are simple precisely because there is so little general awareness about the issue, despite its huge significance for every individual.

1 What is building culture?

The term building culture describes the process of developing the built environment and our approach to it. It includes planning, building, refurbishment and maintenance. Building culture is indivisible. Not limited to architecture, it embraces construction engineering, urban and regional planning, landscape architecture as well as public art. The quality of building culture results from the degree to which all of society feels responsible for the built environment and its maintenance.

2 How can building culture be measured?

Building culture is defined by the qualities displayed

- in the design of buildings and the built environment and their integration into public space
- by their use
- in environmental, social and economic sustainability and
- in the procedures and regulations involving commissioning and production.

Building culture is achieved by integrating and striking a balance between these different qualities, not by optimising just one of one of them.

3 Why is building culture important?

Building culture concerns everyone who voluntarily or involuntarily comes into contact with the built environment. In a densely populated country like Germany the built environment inevitably affects all people, in a positive or negative sense. Which is why the quality of the built environment, from the individual housing unit to public space, contributes to the physical and psychological health of an entire population. If one accepts that culture is an indispensable part of society that needs adequate financial support, then building culture, with its direct affect on each individual, must be viewed as equally important and worth preserving.

It is precisely because we cannot escape from the built environment like we can a bad play or painting that makes the conscientious effort to maintain it so important. Both the public and private sectors need to strive to create a well-built environment.

4 When is building culture achieved?

Building culture does not describe a goal that can be achieved in a single sweep. It is a continuous process of assimilation with the built environment. It encompasses the most stunning feats of architecture and construction engineering, the achievements of urban and open space planning as well as the more mundane requirements of daily life and the approach to our cultural heritage.

5 What aesthetic is associated with building culture?

It's a mark of a democratic, pluralist society to embrace different aesthetic values. That is not to say they should be random, but calls for a procedure by which aesthetic decisions are grounded. The aim is not one new style or the revival of old conventions. It is rather to create a new diversity. The standard of building culture benefits from the international dialogue within the European Union and beyond and this dialogue does not, as some may fear, lead to a uniform aesthetic. Rather, it helps inform regional decision-making processes.

6 What are the effects of building culture?

Building and planning professions, which share professional responsibility for the built environment, make up an important segment of the economy:

- A large portion of the **national economy's fixed capital investment** lies in structures of all types, from the facilities of the transportation network to the single family home, from the town park to the town hall. It is the national economy's responsibility to maintain them.
- The quality of building culture ultimately generates demand for well-planned and well-built cities, squares, bridges and buildings. Ultimately it affects the number of **jobs** in this sector. Quality is also a decisive factor in the chances to export planning services as well as related capital goods and construction services.
- **Work on the building stock** involves a high number of contractors and sub-contractors and secures jobs and ensures the survival of mid-sized businesses at home.
- The quality of building culture in cities and villages affects the well-being of a community, the readiness to invest in it as well as visitors' interest (**tourism**).

7 What does building culture cost?

In the system of creating our built environment, building culture is not a factor that can be measured by its cost. Spending more money on a particular building measure does not necessarily guarantee a better result. The cumulative combination of aesthetics, use, sustainability and a regulated commissioning procedure ultimately contributes more to the quality of the built environment than the initial investment sum. In this respect building culture is not a matter of cost, while sticking to its rules can be (eg. fee schedules). Building culture and profitability are not diametrically opposed, they complement one another. In many cases, building culture adds value that improves economic efficiency.

8 How does building culture provide for the future?

Building culture always manifests itself locally, in a city, a village or cultural landscape. The standard of a state's building culture makes an important contribution to its future in two ways:

- a community is not an abstract assemblage of people and economic resources, it is tied to a **place with which a society identifies**. It is what enables a society to elevate individuals and consumers to citizens.
- providing for the future also requires a careful approach to finite resources and a model for **sustainable building**.

9 Why should we start paying attention to building culture?

Building culture is always topical. But at the present moment it is of particular importance because it is at a crossroads where various developments are posing new questions and demanding new answers. In our complex world, simple answers no longer suffice. What we need is cooperation between the various stakeholders and a synopsis of all of their concerns and interests to achieve good results.

- The question of the **European city's future** in a global economy is a challenge for government and citizens, one to which the standard of building culture in Germany must rise. In its role as client and legislator, which sets the terms and conditions, government – on the federal, state and local level – is a partner in this debate and must contribute its share to the discussion.
- **Agglomeration** on defunct industrial sites, railway facilities, conversion sites or former harbours, as well as the safeguarding and improvement of **public space** – with its roads, squares and parks – are just two areas that demand greater attention when dealing with the concerns of building culture.
- The upcoming enlargement of the European Union is placing new demands on cities and generating **creative competition** between business centres.
- Many EU countries already have the promotion of architecture and building culture written into law, or concrete development programmes. Germany can

profit from their experiences but first has to formulate its own objectives on the federal, state and local levels. Because building culture, the general built environment, **concerns all citizens and therefore is of interest to most** – a representative survey conducted by the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative showed the figure to be almost 3/4 of the population! The state needs to help ensure that everyone involved acts in a responsible manner.

10 What is needed to foster building culture?

Building culture is not something that can be achieved or botched by the implementation of an individual measure. Its standard is defined by the quality of cooperation between the federal, state and community levels, private sector clients and citizens. But different measures are needed to focus awareness on the necessity for a high standard of building culture. They must be applied to the general public, public authorities and those who deal with planning and building on a professional basis. The recommendations and measures outlined here concern all of these groups. The scope of the recommendations will help create a new awareness of the necessity and quality of building culture – after all, more than 80 percent of the population wants building culture to assume a central role in the social life of the country.



Analyses of the Initial Situation

1 Defining Building Culture

Building culture is the creation of and interaction with the built environment. In this sense it is not the sole domain of architects, planners or building trade professionals, it is equally the concern of clients and all citizens. It is not just a matter of architecture, but of everything built. By singling out architecture one overlooks the fact that the built environment is made up not only of buildings but also streets, squares, parks bridges and rubbish containers. The way a country approaches all of the elements in the built environment is the yard stick by which to measure its building culture. Building culture is the built shape of human experience!

The quality of building culture is determined by the degree to which all of society feels responsible for the built environment and its maintenance. A building culture's standard is defined by the quality of its design, use and functionality, its environmental, social and economic sustainability as well as by the procedures and processes that lead to its creation. Quality does not depend on optimising one of these elements, but rather on the balanced interplay of all components. In this way, building culture does not describe a goal that can be achieved in one effort, but rather a continuous process of assimilation and interaction with the built environment.

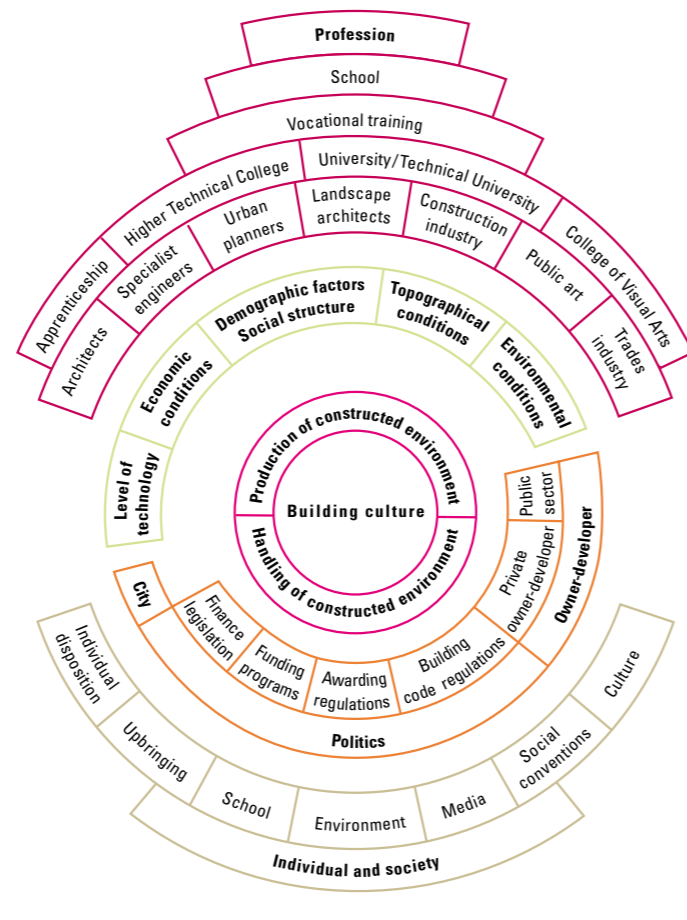
Other countries in the European Union have been promoting building culture for years now with different emphases: The French Ministère de l'Équipement et du Logement ordered a ban on certain building methods as early as 1971 because they had proved inefficient. This amounted to massive state intervention in the built environment's production process. Major public projects like the Centre Pompidou were attentively watched and backed by incumbent presidents. These projects launched a new era of tourism in Paris. Despite their huge budgets they were extremely successful, boosting both the national economy and the city's attractiveness.

The Austrian government's cultural department introduced an extensive programme to promote architecture in 1992. Sweden sponsored a Year of Architecture in 2001 that included a national architecture exhibition.

In Britain the Prince of Wales has lobbied to change the country's architectural direction, building a "model" village and setting up an institute of architecture. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) is a government agency actively supported by the British prime minister. And in Finland the "right to a well-built environment" has even been written into the constitution.

In Germany we find diverse activities on various levels that seek to promote building culture, but they are mostly confined to specific regions. The spectrum ranges from attractive exhibitions and "architecture and monument awareness days" to awards and competitions. While these events enjoy success there has been no forum over the past years for an extensive, nationwide debate. And yet the questions are simple

Conditions influencing building culture



and of interest to everyone: in what kind of city, in what kind of environment, in what type of houses will we want to be living in ten, twenty or thirty years time? What effects do certain built environments have on the people in them? Which society builds its own town? What impact will future building and urban planning have on the environment? Until now, only heritage conservation, an important aspect of building culture, has set an appropriate example.

Nevertheless, the enthusiastic response to building culture-related activities in Germany confirms that there is keen interest among experts and the public. It shows a general willingness to play an active role. To ensure a larger degree of success, however, individual activities have to be tied into a more focused drive. The federal government could play the part of mediator and thereby help put building culture on a national and international agenda.

2 Social Tendencies

Changes in our society, economy, technology and government policies have direct consequences for planning and building.

Germany's population is shrinking, whereby immigration will determine the degree to which that trend continues. Estimates predict a population of between 56.8 and 74.9 million in the year 2050, depending on whether no immigrants or an annual 300,000 foreigners enter the country.

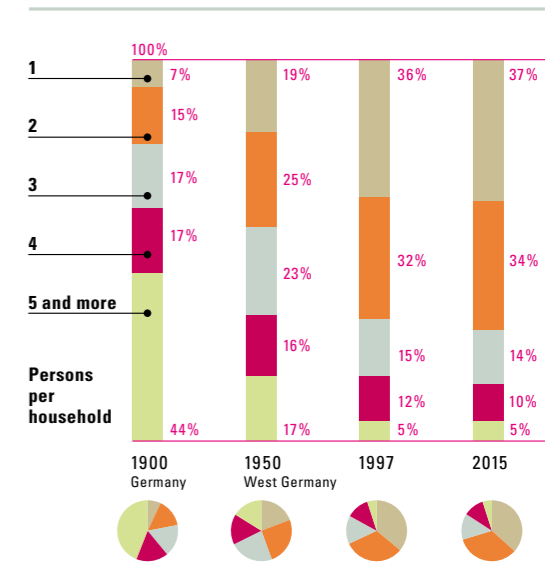
What's certain is that the share of people moving here from abroad – presently about 10 percent of the population – will increase; it remains to be seen how this will affect the social situation in cities, schools, kindergartens and work environments. Will cultural diversity bring enrichment or social tension?

Germany has long been grappling with the problem of an increasingly ageing population. The percentage of people over 60 will continue to grow during the first half of this century. The number of elderly and persons needing care will also increase dramatically unless new drugs are found to halt the ageing process. Meanwhile a low fertility rate means fewer young people will be living here. Evidently there will be more demand for old age facilities and less for kindergartens, schools and youth centres, which may prompt decisions to convert the use of existing facilities.

At the same time the trend towards smaller families and households continues. The number of

single households, particularly in densely populated regions, has been on the rise for years. New types of apartments and homes will have to be devised to cater to changing lifestyles. The increasing number of single households and partnerships that may or may not include children, as well as the number of people working from home or telecommuting, all create new requirements for the design of living spaces.

Households-Forecast



There are marked differences in demographic development between eastern and western Germany. While population figures in the western part of the country remain stable and in some regions are even growing, the states of the former East Germany are suffering a population decline. That poses entirely new questions on the future of eastern German cities, questions that in the midterm will also affect western cities. At the same time the process of bringing the infrastructure in the east up to western standards will continue.

There is a growing trend towards individualisation in our society. Professional standing and income are no longer the sole factors in determining living standards, the emphasis is on the pursuit of individual happiness rather than the well-being of society as a whole. The majority of the population has numerous opportunities at its disposal to secure a specific type of lifestyle – a "generation of heirs" has provided many people with wealth they haven't earned themselves. The amount of time devoted to adventure-seeking, shopping and recreation is affecting the shape of the built environment, as one can see from the surge in adventure parks, urban entertainment centres and recreation facilities.

The continuing trend towards ever bigger units in trade, manufacturing and financial markets is creating

an increasingly internationally oriented society and at the same time eliminating people's identification with a specific country, a place and its people. **Globalisation** will continue and is not without consequences for social and cultural relations. The free movement of investment capital is leading to a sense of detachment from the place to which people themselves for the most part remain tied. Regional differences in building culture will become increasingly hard to detect. It remains to be seen whether this can be countered by the current demand for regionalism.

Parallel to individualisation and globalisation, we see an increase in the number of socially disadvantaged. The gap is growing between rich and poor, between the employed and the jobless, between the well and poorly trained, between the computer literate and those who have no experience of the necessary technology. **Social polarisation** is increasing. A polarised job market puts positions for the highly qualified on one end of the scale and low-income jobs for those with little or no training on the other – and little in between. The widening social rifts are also reflected in our cities in the form of disadvantaged neighbourhoods; the differences that can already be determined between certain neighbourhoods will become more marked and lead to "reverse ghettoisation" in the form of gated communities.

The economy and employment sector also face considerable changes. Traditional industries and trades have declined or died out altogether. The employment sector on the other hand has long been seeing a process of **tertiarisation**; the importance of the service industry continues to grow. At the same time the total number of people in employment is falling. These changes affect companies' location requirements as well as their needs with regard to technical fittings, building design and infrastructure. The changes create a demand for more flexible building designs, while abandoned facilities and spaces invite the consideration of new corporate building models inside the city instead of outside its limits.

There have also been changes in recent years in social control mechanisms. **New policy models** that balance ideas of neo-liberal capitalism and welfare state intervention are on the one hand forging closer cooperation between political and business leaders (public-private partnership), and on the other giving rise to new, often informal ways for the public to articulate its concerns (eg. citizens action committees).

Our natural resources are threatened by the continued conversion of open or agricultural space for residential, industrial, business and transportation uses,

as well as the resulting increase in pollution. Greater human **mobility** also has far-reaching consequences for the economy and people's lifestyles. Political agendas are already being influenced by a heightened public awareness of the **environmental problems** created by an industrial society. There is a strong trend towards inner-city development and maximising use of the building stock.

The German government's transportation report in 2000 predicted a 20 percent increase in passenger traffic and a 64 percent increase in freight traffic over the next few years. It's a scenario that not only calls for more environmental protection measures but also for a high level of investment in the structures of the **transportation network**. Greater emphasis must be placed on their contribution to building culture, if one works on the premise that transportation structures are as much a part of building culture as city buildings.

The high cost of building in Germany and downturn in the construction market also demand a **rethink on the part of the construction industry**. Demand will grow for new, innovative and environmentally-friendly products and production methods. The industry's survival will depend on its ability to deliver.

Cost pressure is another challenge for planning professions and the construction industry – a result on the one hand of markets opening up to Europe and beyond, and on the other of consumers' value-for-money attitude which defines quality only in terms of lowest cost. But what applies to the food industry, namely that good and healthy products come at a price, also applies to other sectors.

While this list of social and economic developments is by no means complete, it clearly demonstrates that much must change if things are to remain the same. People have a basic desire for stability in their environment. The task for architects, engineers, urban planners, landscape planners and the construction industry lies in balancing the necessary changes with the desire for stability and identity.

3 Urban Developments

Over the years there's been talk of the possible "dissolution" of our cities. Until now the German city was seen as a self-contained and mixed-use entity with a clearly defined centre and a periphery geared to that centre. Recently, however, we've seen inner-cities lose their preeminence as economic and cultural centres. A new division of labour has evolved between the centre and periphery as well as between individual city districts. Even though centres continue to exist and still serve as the identities of their regions, urban development today is marked by the emergence of more than one central region.

Growing Relevance of the Building Stock

The **building stock** is of major relevance to the future of urban development. More than 90 percent of the city of 2010 has already been built, primarily in concentrated development, which makes more environmental sense than sprawl. This stock largely makes up a city's identity, which is not defined by its biggest suburb or shopping mall, but rather by the attractiveness of its city centre, its buildings and monuments.

In this light, continued use of the building stock makes both environmental and economic sense. Protection of historic structures falls under the jurisdiction of heritage conservation, for individual structures as well as entire ensembles. But it's not just a question of which structures are of "historic value," it's also a matter of offering residents as much permanence as possible, so that they can feel "at home".

Urban centres are boosted by the development of their stock. This particularly applies to the states of the former East Germany, where many town centres are fighting for their lives, unable to compete with malls and

discount retailers that have sprung up on former farmlands around them. But the preeminence of urban centres in western states is also at risk. Residential use there can no longer be guaranteed due to high property prices and rental rates. The situation is compounded by the strain of increasing traffic. Many urban centres have suffered a loss of appeal in recent years. Specialty consumer chains are difficult to integrate in central areas. In many cases this creates widespread vacancies and a general drop in the standard of shops and services.

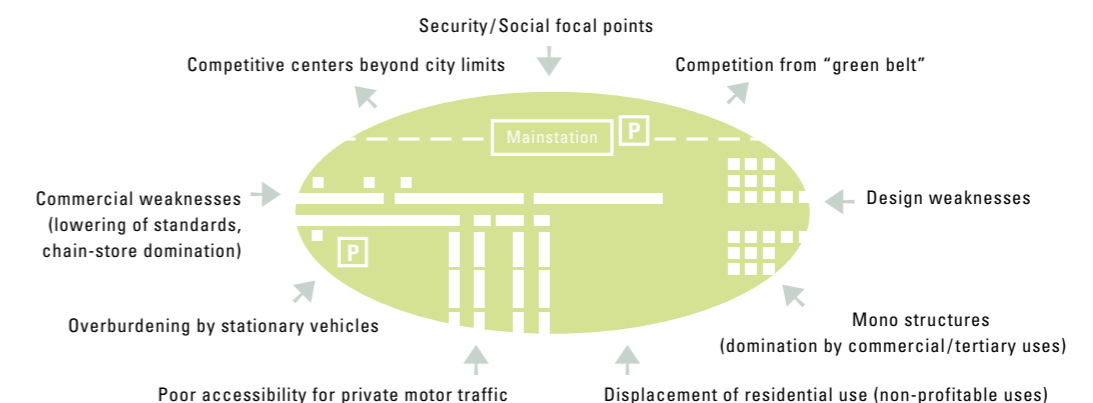
Changes in Public Space

It is vital to keep a close watch on the changes taking place in public space. While the state has a constitutional obligation to provide equal living conditions for all its citizens, there is an apparent demand among the affluent for "semi-public" urban spaces. If nothing is done to curb this, a social divide could emerge whereby two-thirds of society reside in the centre and as home-owners in the suburbs, while a disadvantaged third is relegated to the dormitory communities of the 1960s and '70s or the run-down urban quarters of the late 19th century. Investing more in public spaces can be far better value for money than remedying the effects of a growing social divide at a later date.

Naturally new malls, amusement, recreation and shopping centres don't just spring up by themselves, they come in response to an altered society, satisfying demands that have long been present.

But traditional public space can hardly compete against these new private-public spaces, no matter how well designed or maintained it is, because of an inherent contradiction: a space is public because no one can be excluded from it. That is exactly what lessens its appeal.

Inner city problems in the mid-nineties

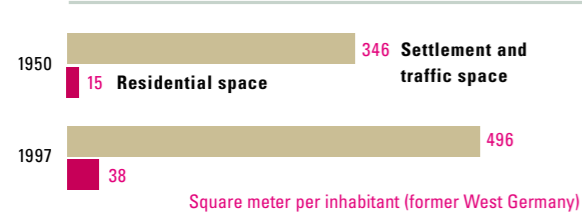


Splintered Growth

There have long been complaints about the amount of space being claimed by commercial and residential zones on the periphery. Urban expansion can lead to land use segregation, creating an increasing number of units defined by single-use occupancy (“non-integrated locations”).

Sprawl and land use segregation all too often make a private vehicle indispensable. Changing lifestyles and consumer habits, transformed production models and above all relatively low energy costs have all led to an increase in traffic on the periphery, with all the detrimental consequences. More choices in transportation and cheaper mobility give rise to new regional hubs of activity. The orientation towards a single urban centre diminishes. A once clearly definable, urban fabric becomes diffuse; often a motorway exit turns into an orientation point. The periphery is marked by a loss of its sense of locality and by increasing conformity which in turn make it inter-changeable.

Development of land use types



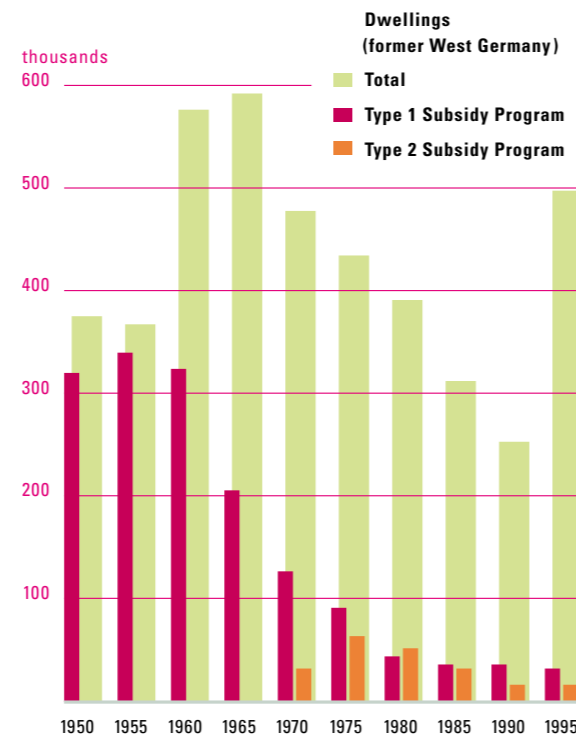
Further addition of residential and commercial zones on the periphery is neither environmentally sound nor necessary as long as cities and towns have unused spaces (conversion sites, abandoned industrial facilities, harbours or railway facilities) that can be developed. One sensible way of encouraging this is by offering financial assistance in the form of tax benefits (depreciation allowances) for inner-city redevelopment projects. But one will only be able to keep economically active households in the city if

- financial incentives are devised to offset higher inner-city property prices
- an environment is created that is as comfortable for families as the suburbs
- the buildings and properties offered for sale are as attractive as the terraced house in the suburbs, and finally
- comprehensive plans are conceived together with neighbouring districts to prevent competition and poaching through special offers – such as low property prices and tax incentives.

Aspects of Future-Oriented Planning

Evidence of cities’ dissolution can also be found in the area of the social safety net, with a steady drop in the availability of cheap accommodation. Fewer flats are tied in to the welfare system and there are virtually no new council housing projects.

Housing construction-public housing construction



The increasing polarisation of our society is also reflected in the division of space in cities. It is being referred to as a development towards a “tripartite city”, with:

1. the neighbourhoods inhabited by an integrated and affluent social group living in the type of comfort that can be found in other affluent district in cities across the world
2. the neighbourhoods for the German middle class and
3. the neighbourhoods for the long-term unemployed, foreigners and the poor, ie. the new urban lower class.

Residents of neighbourhoods plagued by social ills face isolation and exclusion from participation in social life. Drug abuse, violent crime and vandalism cast their shadow on the community. Public spaces fall into neglect, entire districts feel inhospitable. These neighbourhoods are then stigmatised by their negative image.

Government policy has begun to tackle this challenge to stave off social disintegration. Several states introduced special programmes in the early 1990s, and the federal government launched its own in 1999 aimed at assisting urban neighbourhoods with a particular need for development. The programme takes an integrative approach that at once aims to achieve building, economic and social improvements.

City districts with particular need for renewal



Commercial Parks

On the outskirts, commercial parks present a special problem because they seldom adhere to any standards of good design or building culture. But communities need the corporate tax income, citizens the jobs and shopping facilities. There is massive inter-community competition to secure developments for new industrial or commercial estates. Since building culture is indivisible, this too is part of the equation.

To solve the problem it would be helpful if local governments agreed location and design standards for such developments. That would improve the quality of the buildings’ appearance as well as halt inter-community competition on this front. One can also hope that the corporate world will slowly grow more aware of the

fact that lowest cost is not the only value factor when building, that the quality of the work environment and energy conservation in construction, operation and waste disposal are all equally important. It remains to be seen whether this hope is realistic. But perhaps local governments can make a start by serving as models, also for commercial projects in the town center, with the buildings they put up and rent out. All three measures require a readiness to re-think standard practices.

Situation in Eastern German Cities

The situation in eastern German cities must be viewed separately. Some one million flats there are vacant.

Since German unification the combination of a labour drain, a dramatic drop in the fertility rate and insufficient land use policies has created urban centres – with their historic building stock and communist-era housing complexes – which feel empty. Here too there is no single solution. Western German cities will also face this dilemma in the mid-term. The magnitude of the task ahead – creating cities that function despite a shrinking population – calls for a fundamental re-think of planning strategies.

The German government is seeking solutions to the problem by promoting urban development plans within a competitive framework. These will then be used as a basis to foster urban redevelopment through substantial state subsidies.

The problem lies in the fact that our society, our economy, our entire way of thinking has for the past 50 years been geared to exponential growth. Eastern Germany’s big chance lies in transcending this norm and finding an exemplary way of using what it has inherited while adapting to a drop in demand.

4 Planning and the Building Process

The German constitution guarantees the right to property and the freedom to build on it as one wishes to the extent that plans are compatible with the responsibility towards society that comes with the ownership of property. The physical shape of the built environment in Germany is the result of a play of forces between the political and administrative levels, associations and parties, citizens and private business. In Germany's federal system, the different levels of government pay their respective contributions.

Legal Terms and Conditions

The process of shaping the built environment follows legal rules addressing both public and private sector interests. On the national level the Federal Building Code sets the terms and conditions for regulated urban development in cities and towns. Building on the state level is regulated by state by laws. On the local government level, shaping the built environment in all of some 14,000 communities in Germany is ultimately carried out individually, with institutionalised citizen participation. In particular it is zoning and building laws that regulate and direct the spatial and structural development of a town, neighbourhood or specific project site.

In some cases local authorities are able to assert their own development objectives over those of the owner-developer during the process of reviewing building code compliance for building permission. This means there is some scope for authorities to influence the respective buildings' design.

Since the early 1970s, a special instrument has been in place to aid urban restoration. Existing, historic buildings are preserved and maintained and not torn down to make room for new developments, as used to be the case. The approach is more residence use oriented and pays heed to the urban synergy that has developed over the course of time. Special federal and state investment aid programmes are set aside for the rejuvenation and development of cities and local communities.

Apart from these direct ways of shaping the urban matrix through spatial planning, the state also influences the quality of building culture through its tax laws and opportunities for tax write-offs. Capital flow is guided in an indirect way, strongly influencing construction – as investments in the eastern German states have shown. Excess capacity in new housing developments, sprawling commercial parks and shopping centres in non-integrated locations could have been at least partly prevented through different legislative measures.

The investments of the federal, state and local governments will continue to be of major importance in the future. Another significant contribution to improving Germany's building culture could be made in the area of the transportation infrastructure.

Interest Groups in the Organisation of the Built Environment

Within the framework of the law, the organisation of the built environment involves businesses, local, state and federal governments and the public. These groups all pursue different interests. Businesses seek a return on their investments, local governments strive to secure the welfare of their communities (whereby there is a significant difference between politicians and administrative authorities: political figures are geared to their voters, while administrative authorities follow their own course of logic.) Citizens seek to satisfy their own needs, though again one must differentiate between citizen action groups pursuing goals for the common good and individuals aiming to make the most of their property rights.

Businesses and citizens must be integrated into local governments' plans for urban development. This is secured by a two-step process in the Federal Building Code. It is common practice for local governments to invite citizens to respond to their plans without making use of possibilities for more constructive public participation. Often, public in-put is sought only after plans are completed. As the public becomes more confident in asserting its views, initiatives are formed by individual interest groups, resulting in long, drawn-out legal proceedings and delays. The public should therefore be drawn into the planning process at an early date. It is not consensus on a measure contained in an already completed plan that is important, but rather the development and presentation of alternatives that take address the public's concerns. It is easier to awaken interest in the built environment if the public has contributed to the decision-making process and is not just asked to respond to a done deal.

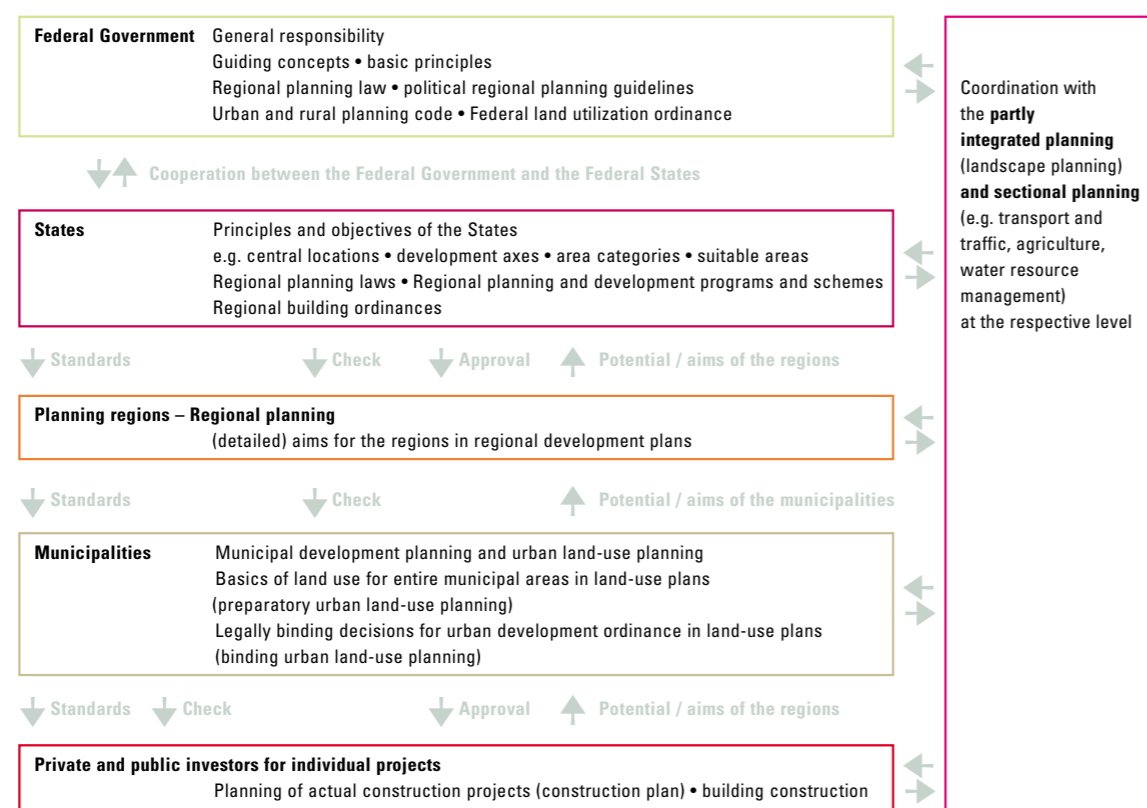
The interaction between local administrative authorities and policy-makers, owner-developers and citizens has changed in recent years. Creation of the built environment follows numerous complicated negotiations between financiers and the parties representing the interests of the public in Germany. There is now a new interaction between owner-developers, property owners, project developers, local authorities and politicians, and state and federal administrative authorities.

Local governments, however, want to maintain their say in the shaping of the built environment. No one should be allowed to build where ever they want. Protection of open spaces, integration into public transport facilities and good design are among the public concerns that cities and local governments want to address in the planning process. On the other hand, the success of private sector projects depends on a high degree of flexibility and the ability to quickly respond to changing market requirements. This calls for solid urban planning strategies.

Local owner-developers are increasingly being replaced by anonymous developers or investors and their capital investment interests. Because of their financial muscle, they have a big say in the community and the prescribed process of addressing its concerns. This has become particularly evident in recent years in the eastern states. Property owners based outside the region of their project identify less with its location. The built environment doesn't concern them if it doesn't interfere with their rental returns. These investors differ in this regard with other major owner-developers, such as large public housing associations, who see their property as a long-term capital investment. To maintain the property's value, considerations such as building quality, users' long-term satisfaction with their environment and social stability in the neighbourhood all play an important role. Property owners who live in the neighbourhood themselves have an even greater stake in their environment and are more ready to commit themselves to mid or long term investments in the neighbourhood.

There have also been changes in the relationship between owner-developers and architects in recent years. Space is put on the market even before a building's completion. This is a disastrous development for building culture, because there is a difference between planning for an owner-developer who intends to use the site once it's finished and indifferent investors and their unknown end-users.

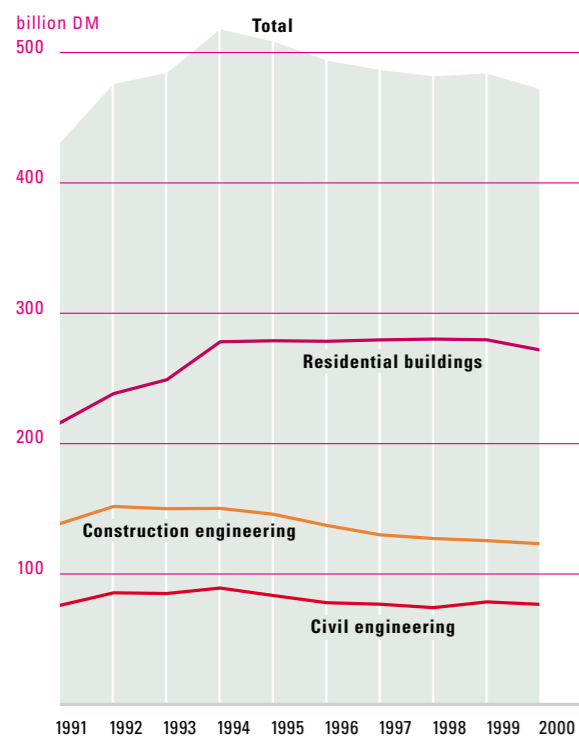
Planning levels in Germany



5 Owner-Developers and the Building Trade

The production of the built environment is a significant factor in the economy, employment sector and in the creation of value. More than 10 percent of the gross national product is generated by building-related industries. About one in 14 workers is employed in the building sector, more than half of all fixed investments are funnelled into building measures. While building culture is judged by the quality of building and not the sums invested in it, this quantitative evaluation is a clear indication of the influence owner-developers and building companies have and the high degree of responsibility this bestows on them.

Gross fixed investments in prices from 1995



Private Sector Owner-Developers

About eight times as much money is invested by the private sector as by the public sector in construction. In this light, private owner-developers contribute significantly in both a positive and negative sense to the production of the built environment.

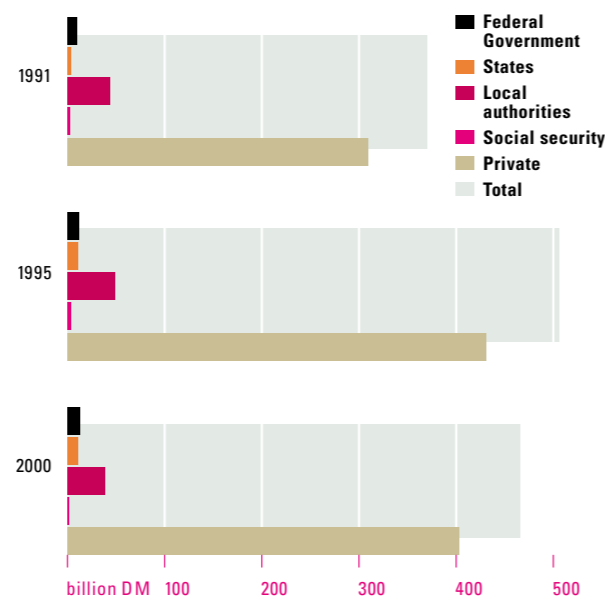
While private owner-developers have the freedom to build as they like, they hold a social responsibility with regard to building culture. But one can not speak of "the" owner-developer per se. Against this back-

ground it is in the public interest to make sure that private projects are developed in adherence to general, binding regulations and in transparent procedures that the public can follow. After all, privately developed projects affect the people around them as much as any other, and are therefore of interest to the public.

Hence it is in the interest of private sector owner-developers themselves to conduct competitions for the planning of major projects according to German competitions regulations. Apart from generating a higher standard of planning, this will also improve social acceptance, the economic viability and long-term usability of building measures.

In any case, more attention must be paid to the potential for synergy between building quality and cost effectiveness. It is wrong to take a short-term view and value initial capital cost as more important than whole-life cost. What's needed is a view of the larger picture that includes the whole-life costs and performance of a building.

Investment total of private and public owner-developers



Public Sector Owner-Developers

The lion's share of public sector expenditure on building is claimed by local governments. That means most public projects are developed in people's direct, daily realm of experience. Federal and state projects, on the other hand, (eg. the buildings to house parliament and government in Berlin) do more to grab national and international attention. Thus the decisions of public owner-developers at all levels are of great importance.

In the interest of promoting building culture, federal, state and local authorities are called on to set an example and act as role models. It is their duty to perform in the best public interest. That is why public owner-developers are obliged to pursue cost and energy effectiveness at the same time as they work to ensure good design, efficient procedures, use and sustainability of the built environment.

This responsibility has always rested in the hands of the public sector – the "town hall" or "parliament" have always been part of a country's or community's identity. Berlin's new government buildings have been largely received with national and international acclaim. The federal government furthermore has sought to lead by example in pledging to carry out competitions for all appropriate developments, and by defining standards for its own projects in a "Guide to Sustainable Building".

Nevertheless, the public sector faces new complexities. For one, commitment to a comprehensive approach to building culture maintenance must be demonstrated across the board, not just in the application of measures in the public eye. In addition, budget cuts mean public clients must ensure efficient planning by their building authorities. They must safeguard public interests and act as a contact point for private developers and planners. The role of owner-developer, particularly in the public sector, comes with a high degree of responsibility.

No. of people employed by construction authorities

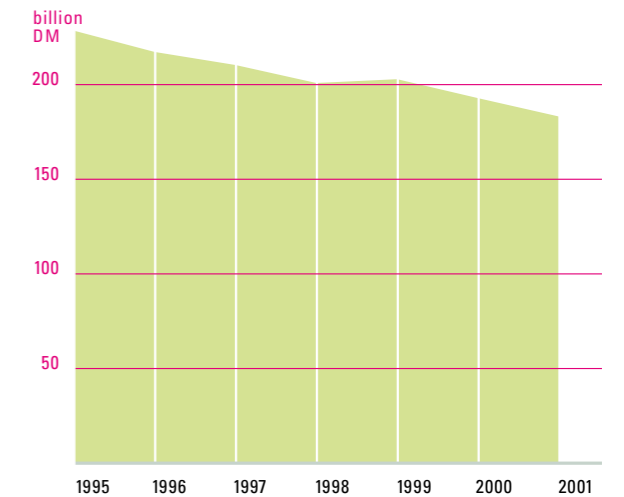


If the public sector fails to express itself in the shape of buildings it loses a key feature of its image as a state that looks after its citizens. In a democracy, a state that commissions a building is not indulging an absolutism; it is fulfilling a duty to its citizens, who are the state!

Economic Slowdown: A Chance for the Building Sector

The building boom that came in the wake of German unification has steadily declined. This development is reflected in the construction industry's sales slump. In view of the unfavourable demographic conditions it is unlikely that building will ever regain its former position in the national economy.

Construction trade turnover in main construction industry



The slowdown in the building sector does, however, present the chance to give greater thought to the quality of building products and procedures. Higher quality standards are the way out of the crisis. This at the same time will foster the building sector's awareness of its responsibility towards building culture.

Today more than half of all expenditure on building is funnelled into the stock. This share can and will be increased. Work on the stock is employment-intensive and contributes to the preservation and maintenance of the built environment. The building trade generates large amounts of waste, consumes a lot of energy and emits carbon dioxide. There is considerable potential for saving and recycling measures that would provide the chance to make sustainability an integral feature of the building sector. A new energy conservation ordinance makes allowance for this.

The spectrum of the building sector's contribution to higher quality standards stretches from the development, production and implementation of environmentally sound materials and designs to innovative construction methods and improvements in trade workers' skills all the way to closer cooperation.

In the triangle made up of owner-developer, construction industry and planner, each group is dependent on the other. And each should see that it can achieve more as part of an integrated team. The object is not to reduce individual accountability or encourage nepotism, it is to coordinate specific areas of expertise in the interest of a product that satisfies everyone, including the general public.

6 Planning-Related Professions

Contrary to other European countries, the job descriptions "architect", "interior designer", "garden and landscape architect", "urban architect/town planner" as well as "consulting engineer" are protected by state laws governing the activities of architects and engineers and can only be used by professionals registered in the respective state chambers. Proof of a degree in the fields of architecture, interior design, landscaping, regional planning or civil engineer from a German university or polytechnic is a requirement. Two to three years practical experience are also necessary. Under European Union guidelines that provide for the mutual recognition of architecture degrees from universities in the EU, architects from any EU country can register in a state chamber in Germany under the same conditions as their German colleagues.

State laws describe the architect's job as "design, technical, economic, social and environmental planning". Engineers are aiming to adopt an "engineers' oath" modeled on the Hippocratic oath taken by students receiving a medical degree that sets forth an ethical code for the profession.

In all building and planning-related disciplines, professionals see themselves as trustees of the client who guarantee the greatest possible degree of expertise and technical, economic and sustainable quality in construction – be it a building, a work of engineering, a transport facility, an interior design, a planning measure or open space plan.

This role remains viable today even if problems crop up in some areas for various reasons: the image of a profession which has an obligation both to the general public and the client is mirrored in the end result of a building, a plan, a piece of landscape architecture, a work of civil engineering. All of these have an impact on the individual's immediate environment.

Because their work has an impact on society, planners' fees are legally laid down in a fee schedule for architects and engineers (HOAI). It aims to ensure payment for independent consultations and is thus also a way of ensuring quality.

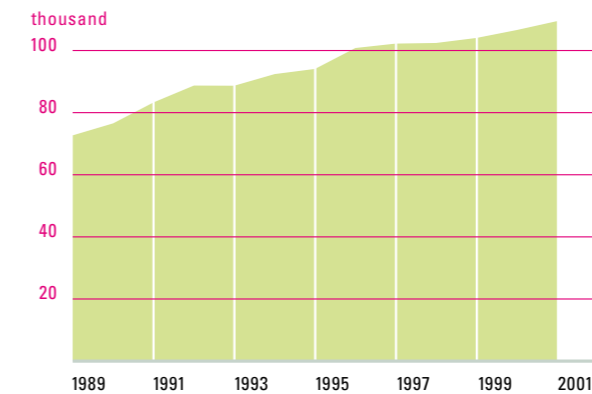
Architects, Interior Designers, Town and Regional Planners, Landscape Architects

In early 2001, there were 109,461 architects, interior designers, landscape architects and town

planners registered in Germany's chambers. That marks a record. Almost two thirds of the architects and planners starting out are university graduates. Compared to other freelance professions women make up a relatively small proportion, with 19.6 percent. But the number of women working as architects and town planners is steadily rising; today women make up almost half the total number of students and graduates.

On the other hand some 8,000 architects, landscapers, interior designers and urban and regional planners are registered as unemployed. This too is a record. There will be no relief on the job market as long as the slowdown in the building trade continues.

Membership of the Federal Chamber of Architects



The difficult economic situation has compounded the problems faced by architecture practices. A steady and at times even growing number of architects are competing for fewer projects while building prices drop. The relatively high density of architects compared to other EU countries makes the situation more acute. At the same time the pressure on the entire sector is mounting because European regulations for architectural work are not uniform. As Europe unites there is increasing pressure to devise a state-regulated fee table.

Architecture remains a popular subject despite the poor career outlook. The number of graduates reached a highpoint in 1999. There are twice as many recent architecture graduates looking for work as the job market can absorb.

The career perspectives are mostly the same for the disciplines of interior design, landscape architecture and urban planning. Despite the key role these professions play in the process of evaluating bids and awarding contracts, the fall in construction output – compounded by a drop in public sector demand – means that a sufficient number of jobs can only be made available if new fields of specialisation are developed.

The public has the sense that the increasing number of architects is contributing to rising costs and planning delays because architects are "seeking to build monuments", and major companies and investors maintain that architects understand too little about construction and facility management, cost and time scheduling. Investors and major developers who complain about architects' alleged lack of competence tend to buy the services of a general contractor because they often don't trust architects to get the work done. This affects architects' image. But generally the assessment improves after individual parties actually work with architects.

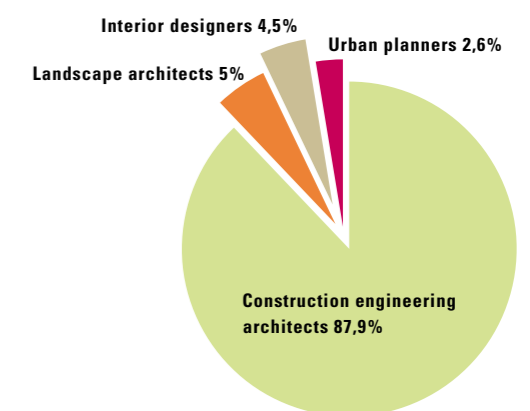
The need for review and innovation is frequently voiced in the discussion about the quality of planning and its services. Currently the problems lie in the inability of small practices to compete in a greater regional and international arena, in insufficient marketing and in university courses that are too geared to producing "artistic architects".

It is likely that further specialisations will emerge from the all-inclusive professional profile of "architect" – general planners, project managers, consultants for investors, project developers, general contractors and owner-occupants, energy consultants, heritage facility consultants, web designers or business consultants.

Civil engineers and architects need to widen their skills to keep up with technological developments. Complex technical master plans for buildings require facility management tasks which can also be carried out by architects.

Beyond technical specialisation it would also be conceivable and desirable to introduce positions that reflect the public nature of the built environment; the federal, state and local governments could appoint

Professions within the Federal Chamber of Architects





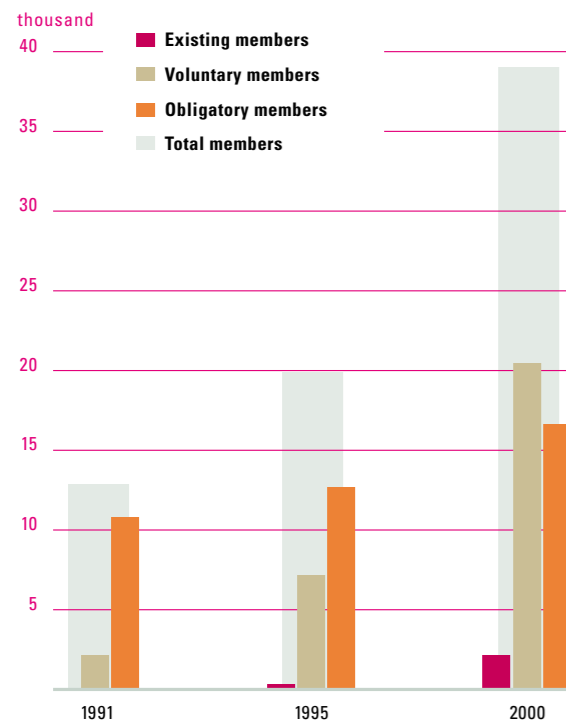
commissioners for building culture whose job it would be to review all decisions pertaining to the built environment. Experienced architects could also work in the realm of consumer protection and thus contribute to an improvement in overall quality, particularly with regard to small commercial and housing projects.

But the question as to whether architects will still be able to view themselves as generalists or whether the profession will be divided up into specialists will not be clearly answered in the future either, because it's the best "generalist" who makes the best "specialist".

Civil Engineers

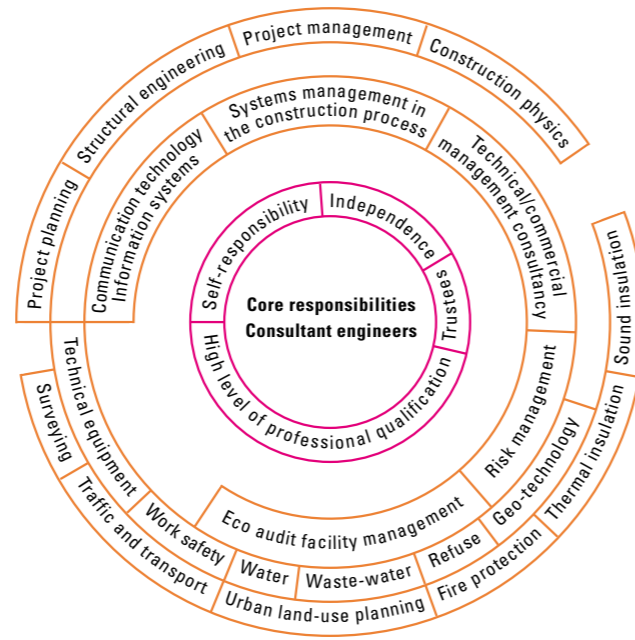
Civil engineers today operate in a wide professional spectrum ranging from the construction industry to consulting engineering firms; the job description is extremely complex and versatile. It goes far beyond the still widely held view of a mere partner to the architect. Thus the number of people registered with the chamber of engineers represents just a portion of those actually working in the field.

Membership of Federal Chambers of Engineers



Both the professional situation and the difficulties with regard to building culture are different for engineers than the situation faced by architects and associated disciplines. For one, engineering graduates don't just have any problems finding a job, it's quite the opposite – professional organisations and consulting engineers are actually concerned about a lack of fresh talent.

Areas of responsibility for consultant engineers



The number of students enrolling in the subject is dropping. Civil engineering lacks the appeal of architecture – despite excellent career and income opportunities. University entrants are put off by the widely held view that the field dull and involves "too much maths". But these are unjustified biases. To be attractive to the youth of today, a practical career has to have one of two qualities – it needs to be either creative or high-tech-oriented. Civil engineering offers what few professions can, namely both. The creative powers required of an architect are no less than those needed by an engineer drawing on a background of natural science and technology. Knowledge and intuition are equally required in civil engineering.

Until now the profession's creative potential has not been fully recognised, and yet is exactly what makes it relevant to building culture. Civil engineers will be unable to view themselves as part of the building culture equation as long as the jobs they perform are dismissed as merely "calculating measurements" etc. Clients – particularly in the public sector, which commissions nearly all transportation network structures – share the responsibility of ensuring that engineers' work is understood as part of the built environment and a valued component of building culture.

Works of engineering make up a much bigger part of our built environment than the public normally realises, spanning the entire transportation network, including bridges, but also to a large extent the technical structures of industry, and utility and waste management facilities. Civil engineers are alone and

entirely responsible for these facilities, including their design aspects. So it is not a division of responsibilities between design and statics that differentiates architects and engineers: building is an indivisible art and both sides are fully responsible for ensuring holistic quality.

It is this holistic approach to building culture that is lacking – particularly in the awareness of those involved in creating it. It is not a failure to recognise the enormous effort on the part of the federal, state and local governments – from the construction of new roads and facilities in the former East German states to the preservation of the historic stock – or that with their proposed "engineers' oath" they are committing themselves in a very special way. The challenge for them lies in finding a creative way of using the major innovations in materials and constructions.

The German Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing and the consulting engineers' associations want their technical projects to contribute to an improvement in building culture. For proof of their significant contribution to building culture one need only look to the major road work undertaken in the eastern states to find a series of good examples; from good design of road space and related structures and facilities, to the successful integration of the transportation network into the human environment and landscape (unfortunately the same largely does not apply to the new rail routes). Integrated project team work between road planners, town planners, landscape architects, construction engineers, soil experts and architects is par for the course. This can only be further improved on by fostering creative competition. That can be done by increasing competitive tendering or similar procedures on all levels of government, though naturally purely cost-driven competition should be avoided.

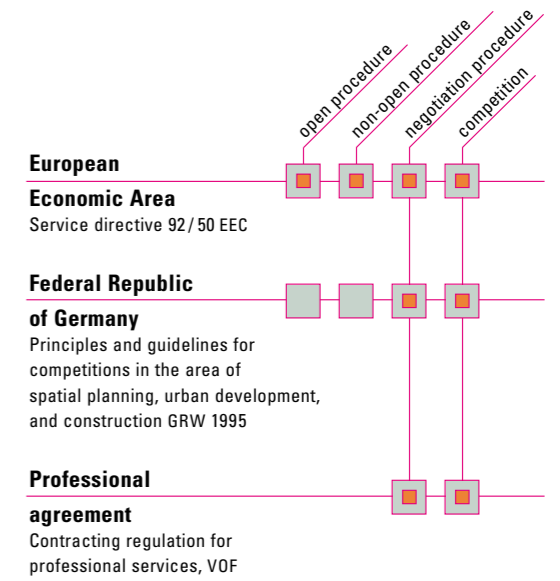
Construction engineers exert a considerable influence on technical developments, because they are the ones who plan and construct buildings, civil engineering works and transport facilities and conduct quality and safety controls.

Since most of the major infrastructure work in Germany will soon be completed, infrastructure maintenance will become increasingly important in the future. The approach to old buildings and stock maintenance contribute significantly to building culture and testifies to the desire to shape the urban environment. Public sector owner-developers have a particularly important role to play here, though devising a careful way of dealing with the stock is as difficult and complex as the construction of new buildings on empty land.

Competitions System

The competitions system as a means of selecting the most suitable plan for a building measure has proved effective in Germany for many years; for architects it has been standard procedure since the first competition rules were devised (and subsequently criticised) in 1867. The system has changed since 1993 to be brought into compliance with EU regulations.

Contract awarding procedures

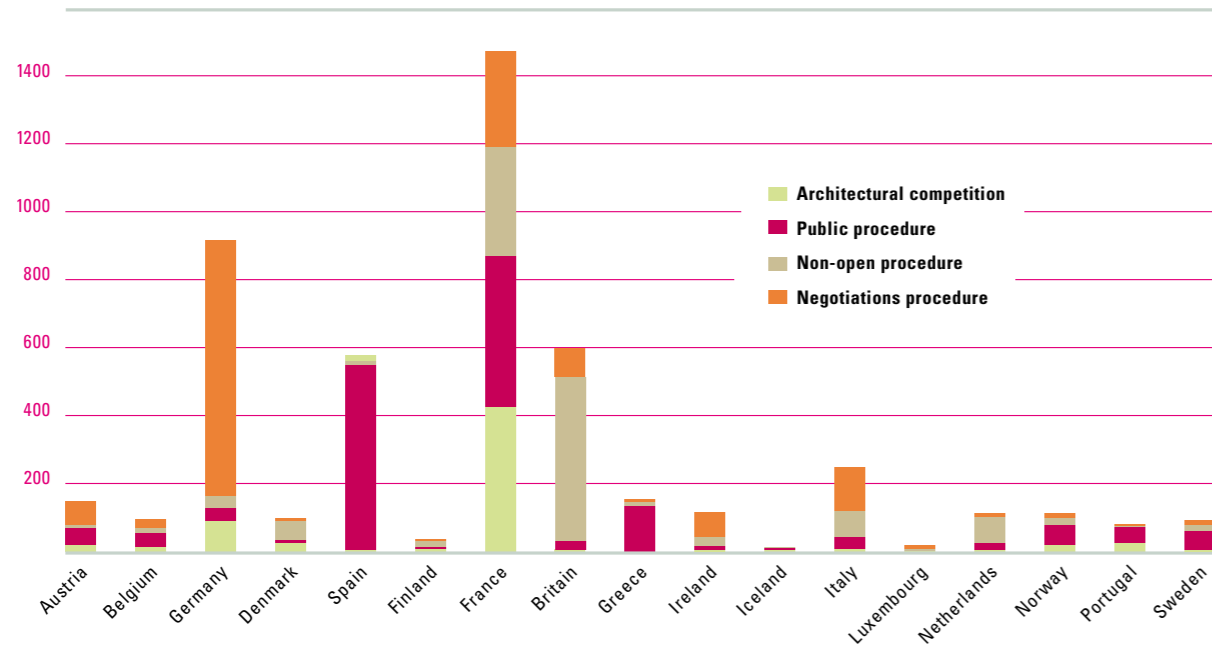


Despite all the problems resulting from the new European-wide guidelines and regulations, competitive tendering is still the fairest procedure for awarding a planning or construction contract because it is based on a comparison of qualitative solutions, not costs. It's the product that is chosen, not the person behind it.

One cannot however generalise and say that this procedure is better because it guarantees architectural quality. Examples from abroad and the entire private sector in Germany, which largely avoids the system, show that the quality of architecture is not contingent on the bidding procedure. The highly praised Netherlands, for example, only seldom carries out competitions, and while far more are held in France than in Germany, there is nothing to indicate that they lead to a better standard of architecture.

In Germany the procedure is regulated by the contracting rules for freelance services (VOF). In addition, the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing has committed itself to public bidding for the execution of all of its building projects.

Europe-wide calls for tenders according to awarding procedure



It would be worth investigating whether the sector incorporating road, railway and bridge construction should also be made to submit to comparable criteria. It is an open question whether "open" competition is the most suitable procedure for every project or whether there are other appropriate competitive procedures. A comprehensive understanding of building culture calls for the highest possible standard of planning on all public sector projects and the appropriate procedure.

Competitions are still the way most planners win their contracts. But the fairness of competitions has been affected by two related developments. First of all, opening them up to European-wide competition often results in a huge number of participants which makes it impossible to give adequate consideration to each entry. In some cases the practice of lot-drawing is used to reduce the number of candidates to a manageable size. Either way, a jury's decision often cannot do justice to the creativity of the plans submitted.

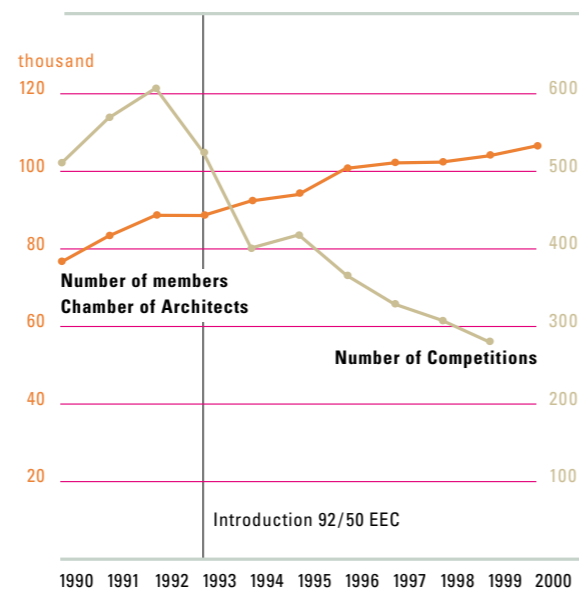
The spectacular triumphs over the subtle. We should at least discuss whether European-wide bidding does not contravene the motivation for a united Europe because it inevitably promotes architecture's internationalisation instead of regionalism. We're not seeking nationalisation, but European regionalism.

A second problem lies in the fact that while the number of architects increases, the number of competitions they can enter is dropping. The number of applicants can be so large as to be "unwieldy"

and therefore also unfair, counteracting the whole intention in the first place.

The general question should also be asked whether the private sector should make more use of the competitions system, until now merely a voluntary option. An owner-developer's right to the architect of his or her choice is in line with the public interest to be presented with a choice of solutions for buildings in the public realm. Even investors reject the frequently voiced concern that competitions delay the procedure and are expensive. A more detailed study on this and maybe even the development of new competitive procedures for private investors would be useful.

Competitions in relation to number of chamber members

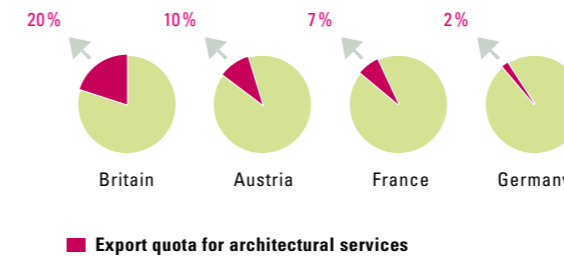


Services Exports

There is no question that those European Union members pursuing an active policy on architecture are seeking to promote exports and boost their economic power. A comparative study by the German Chamber of Architects shows that they are evidently enjoying success.

Export of architectural services in the year 2000*

* Federal Chamber of Architects estimate



Given the predictions for future construction output and the current difficulties German architects face in procuring contracts, it is only understandable that large practices in particular are looking to the international market. Two areas can be distinguished here, the European domestic market and the markets of large, expanding countries, above all in South and East Asia.

On the European level, international offers for planning and building contracts are published in the EU Official Journal according to contract-awarding guidelines. But only between 0.68 and 2 percent go to non-German companies. That appears minimal, but it's relativised by the weight of such deals: when the design for the German parliament (Reichstag) was won by a British architect in competition, the value in terms of its public impact was far greater than percentages can express.

German architects' complaints about the export market pertain primarily to Europe and a perceived discrimination in favour of national competitors. That is by nature difficult to verify. In any case one must keep in mind that there are big differences in the methods of competitions preferred by individual nations: something is not necessarily discrimination just because it's different.

With regard to services exports outside Europe, German architects and planners complain of a lack of government support. The economic importance of services exports in this sector should not be ignored. Planning and building contracts normally generate follow-up

orders in the building and fixtures industry, which greatly exceed the initial planner's fee and secure jobs in the construction and equipment industries. That is why there is great interest in this issue in Germany's building sector, whose share in construction services in the European market doubled between 1990 and 2000 to 4.8 billion marks (2.4 billion euros). These companies are seeking to use their subsidiaries to expand in southern and eastern Europe and beyond, so that similar interests apply there.

Because German technical standards are acknowledged as high, German companies have good chances in the expanding markets of East and Southeast Asia, such as China, where huge turnover is expected for the construction industry in the coming years. If a given country is unable to procure a particular product or service at home, it almost always turns to the country from which it commissioned the planner of the respective project.

It's the same principal that moves the German government to promote and subsidise projects like the high-speed Transrapid magnetic railway abroad, or spend several hundred million marks on research in the German automobile industry – in both cases the goal is to secure investments and jobs at home. Only when the construction industry re-thinks its strategies will there be some chance of expanding the exports of services brought by architects, planners and engineers.

Arguments in favour of political support apart from subsidies or study contracts could be backed by an analysis of foreign building and planning contracts which determined the percentage of investment that falls to German contractors.

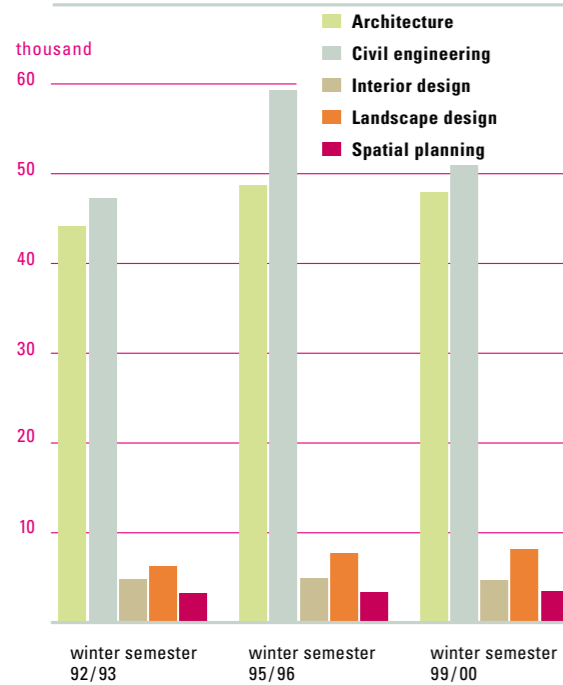
Germany can learn from the examples set by Britain and the Netherlands. By promoting itself as a country whose creativity and competence are reflected in excellent planning and construction services, it is contributing to an image that benefits far more than just the building sector.

Education

All planning professions require a degree in architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, urban planning or civil engineering from a university, polytechnic or academy of arts. Normally students are expected to gain practical work experience before or during their studies.

The number of students enrolled in planning-related disciplines remains high, as an overview of five-year periods shows.

Students according to subject



The key complaints, particularly from architects, that have been voiced for years with regard to university studies are:

- the courses take too long
- the courses do not adequately qualify students for the practical aspects of the job
- the balance between “generalists” and “specialists” is not right.

There is no definitive answer to the questions these points raise. But generally it is clear that a change is required in the method here, to move beyond the cultivation of “artists” working by and for themselves. The ability to work within a team is essential in the professional world and could be trained far more during university than is currently the case. That in turn would also foster respect for other professions and diminish architects’ sense of superiority. Integrated team projects and the introduction of professorial chairs for specific specialised fields, such as construction management, would also help.

Another area is further education for established architects and civil engineers. Because only few universities offer such programmes, the chambers have stepped in to provide them. A research project commissioned by the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing on “Education and further education for architects, engineers and urban planners on economic and environmentally-friendly building” also points out that many findings which could lead

to a better qualification of architects are only superficially taught at the country’s universities, if at all. A specification linked to an occupational title, as is the practice of physicians, is another suggestion. With view to the increasing importance of building in the stock, this could include specialisations pertinent to heritage conservation.

7 Building Culture and the Public

The previous chapters have repeatedly pointed out the necessity of boosting public interest in building culture to fulfill society’s demand for a well-built environment. This task is partly carried out by the chambers and associations. The public sector also plays a role, both as builder as well as legislator responsible for the rules (see chapter 9). A third partner are the institutions who mediate between the public and the experts.

Museums and Institutions

A number of different institutions are involved in improving and raising awareness of building culture. But unlike other European neighbours, Germany has no umbrella institution on the federal level.

The following institutes are devoted to 20th century architecture.

- the German Museum of Architecture in Frankfurt/Main
- the Bauhaus Archive Museum of Design in Berlin (limited to the historical significance of work created in the Bauhaus workshop)
- the Foundation Bauhaus in Dessau (not a museum per se, but an exhibition of the buildings themselves)
- the Hohenhof, Museum of the Hagen Impulse, also limited in focus to the historical context
- the Museum of Architecture at Munich’s Technical University with the Schwaben Architecture Museum in Augsburg

In addition there are several local architecture centres, most of them set up on the initiative of architects’ associations, which see themselves as centres for discussion of architecture-related questions:

- the German Architecture Centre (DAZ) in Berlin,
- the Architecture Centre in Kassel’s KulturBahnhof
- the Architektur Centrum (AC) in Hamburg.

These are all places for discussion and show small competitions or other exhibitions but do not have their own collections and do not define themselves as museums.

The German **Museum of Architecture** (DAM) in Frankfurt was established in 1984 and is the best known institution in Germany, even though from a financing

point of view it is a Frankfurt museum, not a “German” one. While the city pays for its 23 employees, exhibitions must be financed entirely by outside resources. The standard implied by the museum’s name cannot be met under these circumstances, even though the current directors are serious about their responsibilities, particularly with regard to awakening the interest of children and young people.

Nor does the Bauhaus Foundation in Dessau fulfill the function of a national “collection, exhibition and information centre”. The Danish Institute of Architecture, supported by three ministries, is a good example of what a federal agency can achieve. It incorporates:

- the National Centre for Building Documentation
- the National Collection of Architectural Drawings
- the Danish Centre for Architecture
- the Danish Town Planning Institute
- Danish architecture magazines

It’s not the details that are important in this example, which are partly based on other preconditions (central government). It is the integrated, complex approach. Germany’s chance – reflected in the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative – lies in incorporating the engineering sector to span the entire sphere of the built environment.

Media

Professional architectural criticism mediates between the public and the built environment and determines the extent to which issues of building culture are covered by the press, radio and television. All national dailies and weeklies have devoted space to architecture topics in the past decades, a few regional papers also cover the issue. The difficulty in trying to generate a conscious approach to dealing with the built environment lies in the fact that few of the protagonists are interested in a critical public debate – neither owner-developers nor planning authorities, architects or engineers like to be targets of criticism. Furthermore, it is a reciprocal process; regular, qualified criticism that is a respected element of the cultural establishment fuels its demand. But only demand will anchor it into the cultural establishment.

Generally one can say that the institutions’ meagre budgets and minimal media coverage testify to building culture’s low standing in our society. This situation can only be improved by an integrated, comprehensive approach on all levels.

Building Culture and Education

Individual interests, family upbringing, the built environment encountered during childhood and adolescence and social surroundings are all factors that determine how far an individual approaches the built environment in a conscious way. A built environment that is perceived as pleasant and harmonious can be as determining as one that has fallen into neglect.

Children in kindergartens and schools can be educated in a direct way. Aspects of building culture can be communicated in two ways – via the actual school buildings, and through the curriculum. The effects cannot be directly measured. All of those interviewed in a representative survey supported incorporating the topic into education, while just a quarter of those questioned said they had encountered the topic in the course of their own education.

Art lessons are the most obvious place to incorporate discussions of design and the built environment and further an education on the value of the built environment. But geography, sociology and maybe even German are also subjects that could be considered. Building culture is also relevant to environment-related subjects, because it is not just about aesthetic concerns but also about the quality of the built environment, our approach and contribution to its organisation.

An incomplete survey conducted by the federal states notably showed that all – particularly sixth form (12th grade US) – syllabuses include topics related to architecture and the built environment. School teachers must be directly addressed, their lack of knowledge on the subject, their insecurities and maybe even reluctance must be overcome if the topic of building culture is to be made a permanent fixture of education. This goal appears to be of particular importance if one considers that there are people who work as owner-builders in companies or within autonomous local authorities who, while lacking the knowledge of architects, nonetheless have the power to make decisions about buildings. The things they learned in school would be invaluable in their later professional life.

8 Heritage Conservation

Heritage conservation is certainly the one aspect of building culture that is most recognised by the public. Historic buildings are the pride of every community. It is not just the part they play in creating an emotional sense of “home” that makes them so important – they are increasingly regarded as stable factors in an ever-changing and uncertain world. Historic structures are a unique and essential part of a community’s identity and attractiveness. Diverse measures are in place to ensure they are adequately protected.

Heritage conservation and maintenance are a state responsibility regulated by state laws. Protecting and maintaining Germany’s cultural heritage has always been a focal point of federal cultural policy. From 1991 to 2000, various federal programmes funnelled about 3.2 billion marks (3 billion marks for the eastern states) into the preservation of heritage facilities. In the programme “Nationale wertvolle Kulturdenkmäler” (“Nationally Valuable Heritage Facilities”) between 1950 and 2000, for example, 438 heritage facilities were subsidised to the tune of 374 million marks. Under the special programme “Dach und Fach” for facilities of local or regional significance, a total of 855 facilities were safeguarded with investments worth some 53.6 million marks between 1996 and 2000.

Another programme that seeks to maintain and develop historic city centres is entitled “Städtebaulicher Denkmalschutz”. It is particularly directed at the eastern states, where some 30 towns are listed as having medieval centres of international importance and 200 towns contain facilities deemed to be national heritage facilities. The federal government has invested some 2.2 billion marks for urban heritage conservation since 1991. Together with the subsidies provided by states and local governments, the total investment since 1991 comes to about 5.5 billion marks, benefitting one in four eastern German towns.

In view of the fact that the tasks associated with heritage conservation will grow increasingly difficult, the question must be addressed as to how, in addition to state means, other private foundations and organisations can contribute to maintaining the building culture heritage in a sustainable way. There are already numerous events helping to make professionals more aware of the tasks at hand: these include designated “architecture awareness” and “open-air monument” days, as well as the European Trade Fair for Heritage Conservationists “Denkmal” in Leipzig, which has introduced a day that caters to children and young people.

It is becoming increasingly important to back up state measures with private initiatives that involve the public and various associations.

While both the population and capacity for public investment is shrinking, the size of the building stock is growing – and with it, so too are the tasks involved in maintenance. It is therefore no coincidence that there is debate on which facilities should be protected and listed as heritage sites.

In the interest of maintaining public support for heritage conservation, the quality of a facility must be repeatedly reviewed. It’s about inner-city development and striking a balance between the old and the new, between conservation and rejuvenation. This too is an important feature of building culture.

9 Supporting Building Culture

Building culture is not something that was invented by the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative in the year 2000. The architects’ chambers, for example, have its promotion enshrined in their statutes. But one should not view “support” as it is defined here in terms solely of subsidies, prizes or public events: the quality of a country’s building culture is the combined result of the production of the built environment and the approach taken towards it. There are today a number of groups contributing to heightened public awareness and an improvement in the building process, from private foundations and individual citizens, professional organisations and voluntary trade associations, to local, state and the federal governments. But there are shortcomings, and it is this report’s job to point them out.

A mere list of the factors making up “support for building culture” would be of little use because building culture it is hard to measure – it includes a competition prize, a journalistic criticism, a rule of procedure, a citizens’ action group to save a building, a competition or a law. The following points seek to highlight the singular efforts being made to promote building culture in the public awareness.

One thing worth noting first: through its Federal Building Code and Regional Planning Act, town planning assistance programmes and assistance in the field of heritage conservation, the federal government has set the terms and conditions by which – in combination with state regulations and assistance programmes, concrete local planning measures and private initiative (eg. by foundations) – Germany has achieved a comparatively high standard of planning and construction. The quality of construction, urban design, works of engineering and design and execution of individual buildings should not be belittled. But the spectrum of national support is not evident to the public. This becomes particularly clear through international comparisons. This may be why complaints are arising from many quarters. Greater coordination in this area is needed to define the goals, promote cooperation and define international aims (such as expanding exports). There is no equivalent post for the area of building culture to that of the federal commissioner for cultural and media affairs.

The Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing has recognised this shortcoming. Which is why, and this appears to be the most important measure with regard to the promotion of building culture,

it launched the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative. The initiative has encouraged a nationwide public debate on the quality of architecture and building culture, it has conducted studies, expert and public opinion surveys, some 90 in-depth interviews, as well as more than 30 professional trade events to take the pulse of the current situation. The federal initiative, however, can only serve as an impetus for further action on the **state and community** levels. It is up to them to implement local, concrete measures.

Although the initiative has yet to make concrete recommendations and implement specific measures, it has already achieved two significant accomplishments. For one, its partners are not limited to a circle of architects. From the beginning the initiative has embraced the important contributions of engineers, artists and industry. Secondly, the mere existence of the initiative has stimulated action on other public sector levels. Most noteworthy here is the constructive dialogue between the federal, state and local levels of government. Working together in pursuit of a common objective is also a part of “building culture”. Some examples:

- The premier of the state of Saxony-Anhalt has assumed the patronage of a state-wide initiative that was launched in 2001 to highlight the state’s tasks regarding building culture. The aim is to heighten the awareness of the public, politicians and business leaders through meetings with parliamentary committees, events, exhibitions, and media coverage. State ministries, associations and regional corporations are partners in the project. Its themes include architecture in schools, architecture as an economic factor, public commissioning procedures and clients, heritage conservation, housing developments and architecture as a tourist attraction.

- A “Round Table on Building Culture” was set up in the state of Rhineland-Pfalz as part of a coalition agreement. It aims to facilitate a broad discussion between representatives from the fields of politics, industry, science and administration and develop a programme for building culture based on holistic and sustainable construction in the state.

- The state construction minister in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has presented an evaluation of architecture and building culture to the state government, the chamber of architects, all parliamentary parties and trade organisation leaders. His white paper aims to fuel a wide-reaching public discussion on building culture and raise awareness on the importance of architecture and building culture to a location’s ability to attract investment. There is also discussion about whether the “right to a well-built environment” should be adopted as state goal.

- North Rhine Westphalia has introduced a state programme “StadtBauKultur NRW”. It seeks to crystallise the aims of projects and subsidies in the area of urban planning, housing and culture and is set to run for several years. It includes events, seminars and symposiums, excursions, individual and pilot projects, competitions, lecture series and subsidy programmes. The spectrum of topics encompasses solar architecture, design advisory groups, ways of boosting competition, art and construction, legal terms and conditions, public relations, the built environment in schools, international exchange, own-home construction, urban planning subsidies, a programme for public spaces, lighting designs, sports facilities, heritage conservation, town marketing, and discussion of proposals for a “European House for Urban Culture”.

- In Bavaria, the Bavarian Chamber of Architects is calling on the state to adopt an official architecture policy which among other things would determine that “recognition of architecture, interior design, urban planning and landscape architecture are decisive elements in the design of a healthy and intact environment”.

On the local level, where most state subsidised construction takes place, there are also a large number of focused measures that aim to improve the quality of the built environment. It is impossible to list them all, especially because no one is keeping track of all the activities.

In any case, the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative cannot issue any binding recommendations, let alone regulations – not just because there would be serious legal misgivings but also because it would simply be wrong in the interest of a well thought-out strategy for building culture. On the federal level the initiative only works if corresponding steps are taken on all of the other levels. The right to make independent decisions and implement specific measures must be inherent in any policy on building culture, because regional self-determination is a defining aspect of building culture.

10 Building Culture Policies in Europe

The Council of Europe passed a resolution on February 12, 2001 on architectural quality in the urban and rural environment (2001/C73104). It underlines its importance to the environment and culture and urges member states to boost efforts to raise awareness among owner-developers and the public, acknowledge the special value of architectural services (as economic and cultural services), promote good architecture through exemplary measures in public projects, and intensify discussions where experiences can be swapped. It also calls on the EU Commission to find ways to place more emphasis on architectural quality within the framework of structural aid.

The “European Forum for Architectural Policy” has been in place for several years now. It’s an informal group of cultural institutions, trade organisations and government representatives who come together at the invitation of the country that holds the rotating EU presidency to discuss and exchange experiences.

Since the beginning of the 1990s a number of European countries have formulated a national policy on architecture.

Austria

There are about 2,100 practicing architects, a chamber of architects, and six university level training facilities, as well as several polytechnics that are being set up. The federal government has devised an internationally acclaimed policy on architecture which has the backing of a network of dedicated professionals.

In 1992 the government installed a department for architecture and design in its “Kunstsektion”, comparable to Germany’s Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs (created in 1998). It has an advisory board consisting of three respected architects.

Austria’s architecture budget currently stands at 1.6 million euros a year, that’s about 20 cents per capita which the department spends on modern (!) architecture. If Germany were to do likewise, it would cost 16 million euros. Most of the budget goes to institutions which inform the public about architecture. Its funds are also used to sponsor individual architect’s projects, as well as exhibitions, catalogues and architects’ work trips abroad.

There are also so-called “Tische” with grants to place young architects in internationally renowned

practices. The state sees it as its responsibility to foster an international orientation among young architects, and judging from its services exports and the good reputation of its architects abroad, this is proving a success. The foreign ministry publicises this in lecture series and exhibitions abroad.

Austria has an architecture foundation which is supported by regional forums and institutions as well as the federal association of architects. It too cooperates internationally.

Switzerland

Swiss architecture currently enjoys an exceptional reputation, which can largely be attributed to the achievements of Herzog & de Meuron or Peter Zumthor. The modern tradition was alive throughout the 20th century and made the country, particularly in the eyes of German architects, a guarantor of quality. That view is not necessarily shared by Swiss critics – something that perhaps can be attributed to the fact that these architects see their work as an attempt to destroy the clichés of architecture.

The second aspect of interest in Switzerland is the cantons’ ability to put winning entries or the public funding needed for their construction to vote. This kind of direct democracy is not feasible in Germany, but it is worth noting as an extreme case of public involvement. Because contrary to what one might expect in a country with such a strong sense of tradition, the results of such referenda often come out in support for the type of unusual architecture we have come to associate with Switzerland. Evidently there is a tendency to underestimate the public.

Switzerland’s decentralised system makes it difficult to implement any type of federal policy on architecture; there is no institution comparable to the German Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing, though there is a federal office of culture which in some ways corresponds to the job description for Germany’s commissioner of cultural and media affairs. But this does not promote policies on architectural or building culture the way Austria does. The fact that the above mentioned architects and many others have achieved international recognition is therefore not a result of encouragement by the state, but rather of the standard of architects’ education in Switzerland, which still enjoys an excellent reputation.

Sweden

In Sweden, where the building sector is dominated by large construction companies and architecture

practices, a policy on architecture has been formulated to counteract the building methods of the 1960s and 1970s.

Clauses have been added to the building code and to legislation on planning, road and railway construction that make respect for aesthetic considerations mandatory in all building measures. The all-inclusiveness of this approach appears to be key, because by incorporating roads, bridges and railways, it establishes the “right to beauty” in the built environment.

In 1998 the government approved a 6 million crown budget until 2001 for the Swedish Museum of Architecture, enabling it to organise a “Year of Architecture” and an architecture exhibition in Malmö in 2001, with all the necessary publicity.

So by integrating a multitude of institutions – including schools and universities – into a sweeping campaign (an easier undertaking in a centralised state), Sweden has managed to anchor the issue of “quality in the built environment” into public awareness without excessive expenditure. The differences between the two states notwithstanding, Germany could adopt several basic measures: promoting awareness through legislation and a nationwide architecture exhibition (or similar events). Another special measure is a competition to choose the top national monuments of the last 50 years.

The Netherlands

In Germany, Dutch architecture is associated with an almost unending stream of young, creative, new trends and names.

For several years now the government has issued so-called “notas”, memoranda which address the main problems in the fields of architecture and regional planning. These lay down policy principals. The “Rijksbouwmeester”, the honorary position of Chief Government Architect, acts as a supervisor of development across the country.

As the world’s biggest museum of architecture, the NAI in Rotterdam provides the cultural context for government policies. It is set up as a private foundation, but is dependent on state funding (it has about 170 employees, as opposed to a staff of 23 at the German equivalent!). It features archives, major exhibitions, educational tours for some 1,500 children and teenagers a month (a new wing is being built to cater exclusively to children) and acts as a forum for discussions. It is at the museum director’s discretion where to place the emphasis.

The “Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur” is a state-financed agency that deals with the entire area of architecture and architecture subsidies. It is complemented by the “Fonds voor Beeldende Kunst, Bouwkunst en Vormgeving”, which aims to support young architects in particular through study grants, scholarships or subsidies for presentations and publications.

On the local level there are the “Architectuur Lokaal” centres for architecture (35 nationwide) which, apart from presenting local architecture, also seek to interact with developers.

The “Weltstandtoezicht” has replaced the traditional “Commission for Beauty” but remains a body concerned with the aesthetics of architecture. The National Housing Act specifies that every project must be reviewed for its aesthetic quality. In addition, communities have their own design advisory boards (“welstand commissies”).

The sum of all of these measures is the highly acclaimed standard of building culture in the Netherlands, which places a large amount of trust in the individuality and creativity of young architects, and maintains control through strict regulations, particularly in the fields of construction and procedure. Realising the importance of public acceptance of planning measures, the Netherlands are seeking to spend about 1 euro per capita on promoting architecture and regional planning. Another point is worth noting: only few anonymous competitions are carried out in the Netherlands. Workshops or non-anonymous commissions of several architects, who often cooperate with the building sector, are the normal modes of procedure. So this too is a viable method.

France

“Architecture is an expression of culture. Architectural creativity, the quality of buildings, their harmonious integration into the environment, their respect for the natural and urban landscape as well as the architectural legacy are all in the public interest”. So says the French law on architecture passed in 1977. The motivation to draft such a bill (among the first in Europe) arose partly from criticism of post-war urban planning and architecture, and partly from the desire of presidents Georges Pompidou, Giscard d’Estaing and François Mitterand in particular to erect buildings that pay tribute to the state’s “grandeur”. A third motivating factor was the bid to export architecture as an expression of French culture and thereby stimulate the economy.

Today France has comprehensive legislation on competition and quality for public buildings, as well as a highly developed network of institutions promoting sophisticated architectural objectives. But the private sector has remained largely unaffected by this and the tendency of government leaders to take up the architecture cause has lent certain architects a star status that has a detrimental effect on regular building.

Nevertheless there are several exemplary institutions and procedures that Germany can learn from. For a start, an inter-ministerial work group was set up that can exert considerable influence on legislation as it seeks to promote an improvement in architectural quality. It serves not only as an advisory board but also organises exhibitions.

Ever since the introduction of the law in 1977 the “Centres d’Architecture, d’Urbanisme et de l’Environnement” (CAUE) have acted as de-centralised architecture centres. They provide information and advice on the regional and local levels and are thus a link to the general public. Consultations for local governments and private owner-developers are free. These centres – and this is a particularly interesting point – are financed through a percentage of the fee paid to obtain a building permit. The “Architects et Maître d’Ouvrage” (AMO) follows similar objectives.

German architects who build abroad have much praise for the support their French colleagues receive through the “Architects français à l’export” (AFEX). This is an association of all building professionals (including the construction industry!) which provides support and advice in all areas for members abroad. French diplomatic representation abroad also does much in this respect.

Finally, work is underway to build a “City of Architecture” (“Cité de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine”) in a wing of the Palais de Chaillot in Paris on a space of 23,000 square metres. The special feature of this mixture of museum and archive, public library and documentation centre will be its juxtaposition of historic and modern architecture, which can help to contradict a notion that the French public also holds, namely that historic architecture is beautiful while modern is ugly.

Finland

A 24-point state policy on architecture has been in place in Finland since 1998.

As can be seen from the fact that the education ministry is a co-initiator, Finland has several unique characteristics; for one, the “right to a well-built

environment” is enshrined in the constitution as a state goal. Secondly, much value is placed on public involvement. Finally and perhaps most importantly, citizens do not just have the right to a well-built environment, they have a duty to take part in its creation and maintenance. But they can only do that if they are informed on the topic!

The programme focuses on this point; Resolution 12 puts architecture on the general school curriculum, Resolution 13 says,

“The Education Ministry reviews ways of developing education on architecture within the framework of adult further education to improve citizens’ ability to take part in the decision-making processes that affect their environment”.

And Resolution 14 states,

“Legislators and elected representatives of local governments will be offered further education on architecture and environment topics”.

Finland’s resolutions are therefore not far-reaching because they take special measures, but because they systematically think through what must be done to achieve the objective.

Conclusion

Three common denominators emerge from this brief country-by-country analysis:

Firstly, all national architecture policies arise from a sense of dissatisfaction with the state of the built environment. In particular it is the housing complexes of the 1960s and 1970s, once hailed as a social triumph, that are criticised and used to justify demands for different architecture.

Secondly, the traditional role of the architect as artist and creator who holds responsibility for all aspects of the building process is in a state of flux, threatened by various developments that are undermining the architect’s authority.

Thirdly, with the exception of Finland, all of the examined countries have made it a political goal to increase public awareness about architecture and improve architectural quality. And except for Finland, which explicitly talks about the “built environment”, most countries’ policies do not take into account the activities of local and regional planning, landscape planning and engineering. This provides Germany with a unique chance to develop an independent, integrated policy on building culture that embraces all of the planning professions and the entire infrastructure.



Recommendations and Measures

The analysis presented by this report shows numerous positive factors in Germany's building sector and the general approach to it, but also highlights a series of threats and shortcomings. Generally speaking there is a need to increase public awareness on the quality and importance of the built environment.

The parties involved in the Architecture and Built Environment Initiative are committed to creating a built environment that can be more directly experienced by each citizen everywhere, an environment with which the public can identify. The initiative partners believe the best way to do this is by addressing the issue on a national level, where public attention can best be drawn to the issues at hand.

Much can also be done on the levels of the individual participants. The following recommendations have been developed to that end, with an aim to placing all participants in a better position to improve the situation in their respective disciplines. But the discussion must be continued!

What the state should do

Europe

On the European level, the German government should actively support the EU's resolution on architectural quality of the urban and rural environment, passed on February 12, 2001. It should intensify efforts to promote trade and foster a dialogue in which international experiences can be shared. By inviting the trade associations of architects, engineers and the building trade to take part, the federal government can highlight new features and illustrate the importance of European policies.

Germany should not only continue but increase its participation in various European forums (European Architecture Forum, Biennial of Towns and Town Planners in Europe, Venice Biennale, EUROPAN competitions etc). By implementing the measures proposed here for a building culture policy, Germany will be able to present itself with new confidence and ideas. It is especially important on the European level to counteract tendencies to base judgements of design competitions on costs.

Export

Since the export of planning services has a considerable bearing on the domestic job market, the German government should increase efforts to promote these services in the international marketplace. To this end, the involvement should be sought of German diplomatic representations and chambers of commerce abroad, as well as the network of Goethe Institutes, Germany's agency for cultural representation abroad. The aim here is not to export building culture, but to transfer Germany's high environmental and service sector standards to other countries. Cooperation between the ministries concerned is crucial. Portraying Germany as a nation whose

creativity and competence is reflected in its outstanding planning and construction trades is an image that has a positive impact on far more than just the building sector.

Support

The German government should only grant tax breaks for construction projects if their quality can be guaranteed.

In addition, it should review a revenue neutral taxation programme which encourages longer-term investment by private owner-developers, and support measures for heritage conservation and the maintenance of the aging building stock.

It should also check whether, in the shape of modified depreciation allowances, it can promote inner-city development and thus halt the expansion of housing settlements.

Research

Future social changes will have far-reaching effects on the building sector. It is not possible to make precise predictions about the impact, which is why it is the state's responsibility to monitor trends and sponsor research into the relationship between the social and spatial sciences.

Research projects in such fields as experimental housing and urban planning should be more directly geared to questions concerning the future of building culture.

The Ministry for Education and Research is advised to adopt "building culture" as one of its focal points.

Young Talent

Generally the aim should be to directly sponsor research projects for young architects, engineers, planners and artists. The resulting work should be presented to the public (support for publications or presentations).

Support for young architects and planners should be increased to harness their creative potential for shaping the built environment. Early moves by young planners to start up their own businesses create jobs for others. Support does not just come in the shape of already established prizes, but also through travel and work experience grants, the awarding of which must aim to achieve certain, previously specified results. EUROPAN competitions should also be used in this context.

A certain percentage of the federal government's investments in building should be set aside specifically for young architect and engineering practices, commissioned through restricted public competitions.

Publicity

A series of postal stamps featuring award-winning achievements in the fields of building and planning should be issued each year in cooperation with the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing, the Department for Cultural and Media Affairs, the Finance Ministry and the German postal service (Deutsche Post).

The government is urged to present to parliament the findings and recommendations contained in this Status Report on Building Culture in Germany so that it can examine and discuss the issues.

If there is then consensus that the shape of the built environment and the quality of building culture is of primary importance to every individual, then consideration should be given as to whether and how far the right to a well-built environment should be formulated as a national policy objective.

What public sector owner-developers should do

Role Model

The public sector – federal, state and local governments – have a special obligation to set an example and act as role models in their approach to building culture. It is their duty to act in the best public interest. That is why public owner-developers are obliged to pursue cost and energy effectiveness at the same time as ensuring good design, efficient procedures, use and sustainability of the built environment.

Building culture is as much a concern of the states and local authorities as the federal government. In view of their different approaches to a common goal, the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing should deepen cooperation with the state and local levels.

Rights and Responsibilities

Public sector building authorities must maintain their right to make independent, efficient plans both with regard to new projects and stock maintenance. It is not about securing the jobs of bureaucrats, but about fulfilling the state's duties as a builder for the benefit of its citizens. Private sector developers, investors and planners need partners in the public sector who can mediate between private interests and the interests of the community. When major private investors work together with local communities, the latter must demand that the requirements of building culture be respected.

It is particularly critical to safeguard the public owner-developer's duty to the community and building culture when it awards contracts to private investors that include subsequent leasing or rental rights. Projects involving public-private partnership should not only be measured by the total costs incurred during building, they should also be assessed for a possible impact on public space or financial resources that could pose a burden to future generations.

Competitions

The federal government has formulated guidelines for the bidding process together with the states, chambers and trade associations (GRW 95). The federal government is obligated to put work for building design and construction out to tender. States and communities should follow this example if they haven't already. There should also be a review of whether and to what degree citizens, as those affected by building measures, should be involved in competition decisions.

In general, inter-disciplinary competitions or similar competitive procedures should be chosen for all of the public sector planning and building measures in which this is possible – building design and construction, civil engineering and landscaping. Decisions must not be based on cost-effectiveness alone, they must also weigh the planning, engineering, environmental and design aspects.

Plaques

Developers' and planners' sense of responsibility for the quality of the built environment needs to be increased and made more visible. To this end, plaques could be installed that list a project's owner-developer, designer, construction company and year of completion.

Art

A former regulation that obligated owner-developers to spend 2 percent of total building costs on public art was highly successful. This 2 percent regulation should be re-introduced, but applied to the federal government's total expenditure on construction. A review would be necessary to see how this approach could be adapted to meet current requirements, for example by staging temporary art shows in public space. An art advisory board should be consulted on how to include the visual arts. Here too competitions would be the preferred commissioning method.

What local governments should do

Design

Independent of the size or population of a city or town, the community remains the place to debate the res publica. That includes its design, which reflects the way a community sees and experiences itself. In today's society, which is increasingly marked by particularist interests, it is vital to conduct a debate about the aesthetic shape of a community and its design as an expression of building culture.

Public space

It is vital to keep a close watch on the changes taking place in public space. While the state has a constitutional obligation to provide equal living conditions for all its citizens, there is an apparent demand among the affluent for "semi-public" urban spaces. A spatial separation between the affluent and the poor must be avoided, as must any attempts to restrict access to public spaces.

Inner-city development

In the interest of the environment, development of the last remaining free spaces must be avoided. Communities are called on to team up with owners and potential investors to find new use for abandoned inner-city facilities (military, industrial, harbour, railway etc).

Commercial parks

On the outskirts, commercial parks present a special problem because they seldom adhere to any standards of good design or building culture. But building culture is a holistic issue that must also be applied to commercial developments. Communities therefore should review which regulations to apply to these and whether a large number of commercial users couldn't be better accommodated in converted inner-city facilities, where their presence would promote mixed use.

Public involvement

The autonomy of local government is anchored in the constitution. But in a society where private interests are playing an increasingly important role, the scope for public participation in planning decisions needs to be reviewed. To this end, planners, politicians and administrators are called on present their ideas in a language everyone can understand and be prepared to contribute to a discussion.

All important planning and building projects should be opened up to public debate and presented in a way that is understandable for all interested parties.

Public opinion surveys on planning projects should be broadened to include citizens' views on the objectives. Scientific model experiments are the most suitable way of finding the best solution.

Planning projects that seek to find broad public acceptance need to involve all of the concerned parties in the community, and require the will to reach a consensus. Process-oriented forms of cooperation, however, are only successful if they are open to suggestions.

Advice

Local governments are advised to set up an independent committee of architects, engineers, heritage conservationists, town planners and landscape architects working in an honorary capacity. At the very least, communities should appoint a chief town or regional architect to act as a consultant and review plans for every larger-scale building or landscaping measure.

An architecture counselling service, comparable to consumer counselling services, should be established for citizens and private owner-developers. The same could be done for the areas of engineering, town and open space planning and heritage conservation.

An internet portal should be set up on which all community or regional institutions concerned with building can be accessed and provide a forum for a broad public discussion.

What private-sector owner-developers should do

Responsibility

Private investment is vital to local economies and in many cases testifies to a private developer's links to his or her city. The importance of creative freedom in building is not to be underestimated. But private developers should always keep in mind that their investments also affect public interests, particularly when it comes to design and use.

That is why private developers are generally advised to get detailed information and expert counselling on all of the options open to them. Greater sensitivity for the built environment is particularly required of those working with existing buildings and historic structures.

Private developers of smaller projects (eg. single family homes) also have a responsibility towards building culture – their buildings too are part of public space. Anyone who admires the harmonious blend of historic city districts should strive to meet the same standards.

Competitions

Private developers should use competitive procedures (competitions) as often as possible – particularly for projects that will impact the urban landscape and for those in high-visibility locations. Developers should realise that competitions normally neither delay nor increase the costs of their projects. Quite the contrary, competitions can help ensure that what ultimately gets built is both of a high standard and cost-effective. The selection procedure itself can enhance the public's readiness to accept new buildings.

Sustainability

Good building culture and economic efficiency go hand in hand. Value for money is not measured by the initial capital cost of a building, but rather by its whole-life cost. Private developers should use whole-life costing in the value-for-money assessment of buildings in the same way that the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing has made it a public sector goal to base its decisions on the whole-life impact and performance of a project.

Plaques

Like the public sector, private owner-developers should acknowledge their sense of responsibility for the quality of the built environment by installing plaques on their buildings that list the project's owner-developer, designer, construction company and year of completion. If necessary this should be made an official requirement.

What planners and their associations should do

Professional image

The German chambers' professional conduct code, a legally set table of fees, as well as the planners' role as mediator between the developer and building trade have all proved their worth. However, the conduct code makes no mention of standards for building culture in a state, the quality of planning, or the reputation of planners abroad.

A building culture oath modeled on the Hippocratic oath taken by medical students is viewed as a good way to make sure all planners live up to their responsibilities to society. Professional organisations are advised to form working groups to formulate the wording and procedure of such an ethical code.

Planners should increasingly view themselves as members of the service sector, ie. experts who can explain things to the layman in clear terms. There's much room to expand planners' consultative capacities, the solution to a problem is not always a house!

The ability to consider oneself an equal in integrated project teams is vital, particularly for architects, and must be learned. The image of the architect as a lonely artist that is often still propagated by universities is passé. Much can be learned from the Netherlands in this respect.

The Federal Chamber of Architects and the Federal Chamber of Engineers should work together not only to boost the competitions system per se, the participation in which creates substantial outlays for planners. They should also encourage more inter-disciplinary and design competitions for projects involving roads, bridges and other works of engineering, because a responsible approach to these types of structures also benefits building culture. In the search for energy, material and cost-effective solutions, competitors often come up with technical innovations.

While the chambers and associations offer a range of further education programmes, these should be reviewed regularly to adapt to current requirements, for example with regard to building in the stock. Special qualifications should be understandable to the layman, for example through certification.

Export

Planners are justified to expect political help to improve their position on the international market. But they also need to show initiative and develop clear acquisition strategies. That includes:

- a better understanding of qualification and experience requirements abroad
- the formation of integrated project teams to present themselves as all-round providers
- the formation of an agency similar to France's AFEX which includes the construction industry as a partner.

The Public

Because the effort to foster citizens' appreciation of the built environment through the education system is a long-term undertaking, additional measures should be adopted to promote public awareness. An annual "Building Culture Awareness Day" jointly organised by professional organisations could highlight building culture's diversity and drive home the importance of good design, procedure, use and sustainability.

An effort should be made to consolidate the numerous prizes handed out by various associations and organisations. They could be awarded at a special ceremony (along the lines of the Oscars) designed to generate media attention. The goal is not to limit the scope of the honours, it's to conduct a sophisticated event that does more to awaken public interest.

This event should introduce new categories, such as "Building/Plan/Engineering Achievement of the Year" (which could then be incorporated in the postal stamp series mentioned earlier).

The associations should jointly establish a valuable media prize or upgrade existing ones to encourage coverage of building culture in the media. An independent workgroup could be set up to raise building culture's profile in the media and advise journalists. The chambers and associations can offer ways of helping journalists specialise in the field.

The associations could take a first step in the direction of garnering media attention by introducing a nationwide competition (modelled on a similar event in Sweden) to select the top ten buildings of the past 50 years.

What the construction industry should do

The construction industry is currently experiencing shrinking pains. It is unlikely that building will ever reach its former output. The only way out of the dilemma is to improve quality that is distinguished by

Innovation

- the development, production and implementation of environmentally friendly materials and designs
- innovation in construction methods
- a willingness to undergo further education in one's own field to maintain awareness of building culture

- the specialisation and further education in advanced technologies and special skills (especially in the area of heritage conservation and building in the stock)
- closer cooperation in integrated teams of planners, builders and developers to maximise design quality by developing effective cost and technical solutions.

The chambers and associations should collaborate with a workgroup to promote the export of services and construction services.

What schools and education facilities should do

Integration

A high standard of building culture, which is open to the new and unexpected, requires better public understanding of the opportunities and problems presented by the built environment. Building culture should be viewed as an integral part of life – just like a common language. And so it has as much right to a place in the education system as language. But before any thought can be given to specific changes, there needs to be more awareness on all levels – from politicians, planners and developers to the public – that the built environment affects everyone in it.

A subject entitled "the built environment" or "environmental design" should be introduced in the education system. This would enable questions about the built environment to be addressed at an early stage, giving people a foundation on which to base their opinions later on in life.

Architecture is already on the curriculum in many German states. But experience has shown that little substance is actually conveyed during lessons. That is why it is important to ensure that teachers have adequate knowledge themselves. In addition it is necessary to underline that the topic is not limited to architectural design, it is a comprehensive subject on the shape of the built environment. Professional organisations could actively contribute to the promotion of building culture as a subject in schools and other education facilities.

Adult education is another area where courses could be offered to explain the complexities of planning and decision-making processes in urban development and create understanding for the built environment. Planners' empirical knowledge could be put to much use here.

What all parties should do

After the initial phase of discussion on building culture, the next step will be to find ways of continuing the dialogue, implementing the various recommendations and measures and initiating further activities.

A Building Culture Study Group

Building culture is a multi-faceted cultural field that has ramifications for different disciplines. For this reason, there is a recommendation for

an inter-ministerial study group to implement and follow through on the federal government's measures. It would comprise the Ministry for Transportation, Building and Housing; the Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs; the Ministry of Economics and Technology; the Ministry for Education and Research; the Finance Ministry and the Foreign Office.

The institutions participating in the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative are called on to continue meeting at regular intervals and discuss the problems facing building culture in a study group. This "Building Culture Study Group" should also be open to other social groups. Among its various objectives, the study group should promote public discussion on building culture, follow the measures through and make further recommendations.

A National Foundation for Building Culture

In addition, a National Foundation for Building Culture should be set up by the federal government, trade associations, partners in industry and private individuals. The foundation's primary task would be to promote an awareness of building culture in the public. The foundation should:

- assume a communicative function to help increase public awareness of the relevance of the built environment
- serve as a partner to the existing collections, museums and architecture centres, who coordinates various efforts and represents their common goals. Together they form a "transmission belt" to mediate between planning, building and the public.
- generally play the part of an informative agency. It should be a contact point that relays the significance of the topic to the outside world. This should help to anchor the issue of building culture into public awareness.

Editor's Closing Remarks

It was a sense of discomfort about the condition of the built environment that gave rise to the Architecture and Building Culture Initiative. And yet after a year-long period of analysis it is clear that very many people are committed to improving it. It would be nice if it were this easy: in a communal effort, all graffiti is erased, all ugly buildings given new facades (if not torn down altogether), and all public spaces brought "in order". The project isn't impossible because there's no money to fund it, it's impossible because this "community" doesn't exist and as a result, there's no way to reach consensus on what makes a building "ugly".

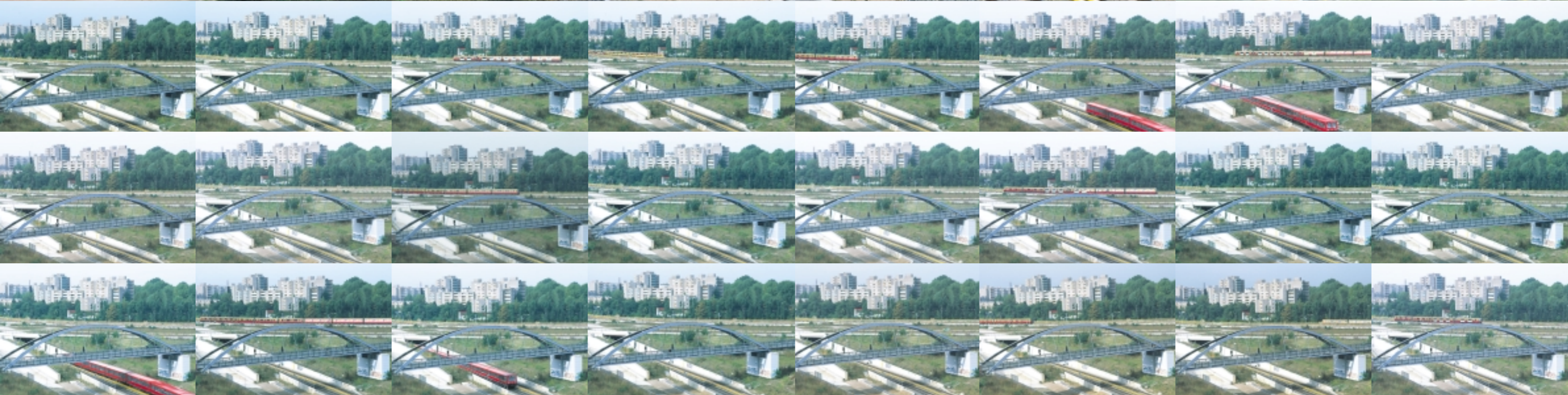
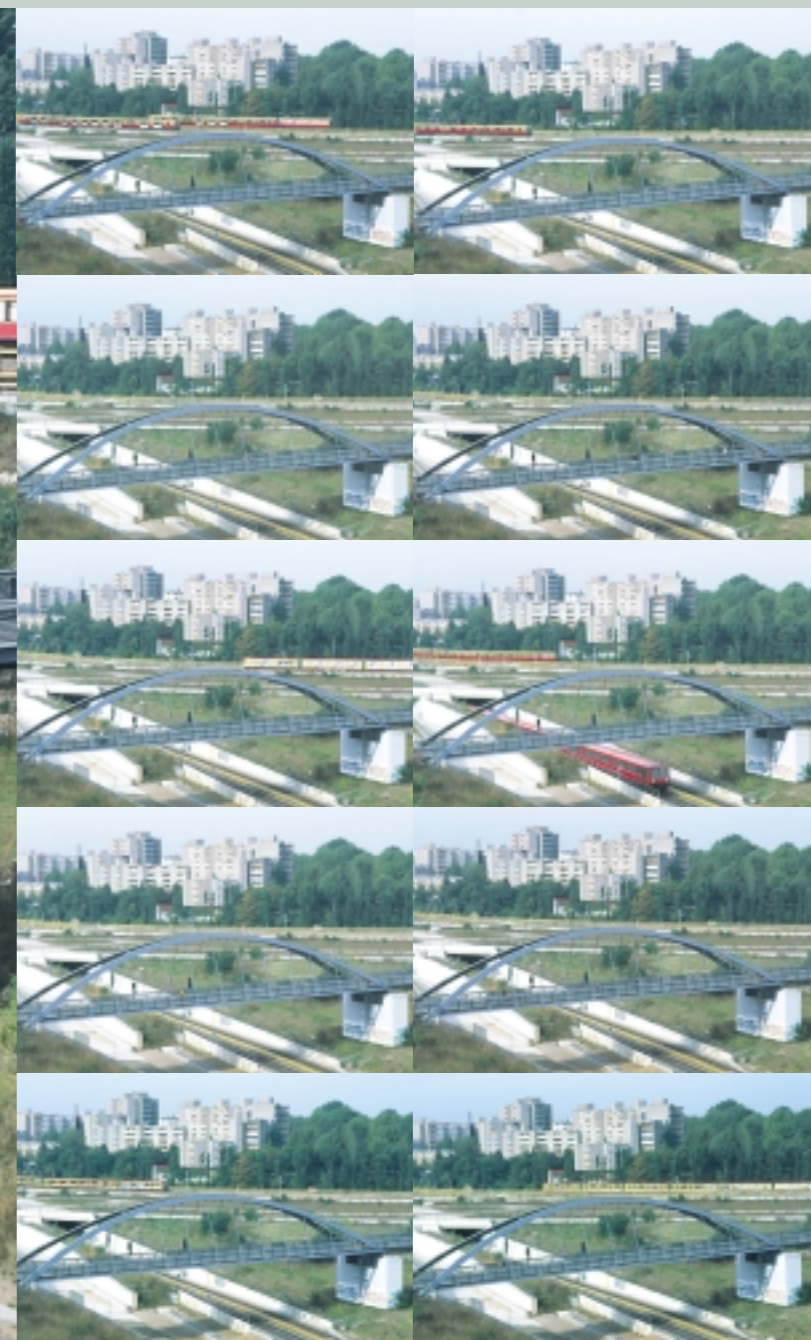
That is the strenuous nature of democracy: one must constantly debate an issue knowing that one's partner in the discussion is neither right nor wrong, just of a different opinion. But that is the essence of building culture: it's not about defining the one right approach for all time, it's a continuous process of identifying what the right approach can be.

And that's what makes the issue so difficult. When dealing with building culture, there is no one measure that could solve the problem. Building culture has nothing to do with legislative periods and votes – at least not on the surface. But one should keep in mind that Germany's only revolution, in the autumn of 1989, was sparked not least by a lack of building culture: the deterioration of Leipzig's city centre had been one

of demonstrators' complaints since early in 1989. That shows that "building culture" does indeed have a political dimension – it just can't be dealt with by a single measure. But what would happen if the residents of dormitory communities built in the 1960s and 1970s took to the streets in angry protests because they felt neglected – as they did in France and Britain? This is neither a warning nor a prediction – but it clearly illustrates the significance of the built environment for everyone!

We began by asking simple questions: In what kind of city, in what kind of environment, in what type of houses will we want to be living in ten, twenty or thirty years time? What effects do certain built environments have on the people in them? Which society builds its own town? What impact will future building and urban planning have on the environment? And the very topical question as to whether the dangerous decline of the building industry, which is taking the architecture sector along with it, can be halted by improving the production and sustainability of buildings and building products through higher technical and design quality. This could achieve two goals at once: it could stop the decline through focused support – also of services exports. And create a built environment that satisfies more people.

The questions are very simple. The answers are not. They can only be found through a joint effort.



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