



ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

The Architectural Policy of Slovenia / August 2017



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ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION_ 7

1 GOOD ARCHITECTURE_ 15

1.1 Definition of quality_ 15

1.1.1 Safety, health and the quality of technical implementation (strength)_ 15

1.1.2 Usability (functionality)_ 16

1.1.3 Aesthetics (beauty)_ 16

1.2 Architecture for the people_ 17

1.3 A fully preserved architectural heritage for the cultural identity of a community_ 17

1.4 Connecting power of architecture_ 18

1.5 The State, as the investor, should provide a quality benchmark_ 18

2 SMART GROWTH_ 21

2.1 Efficient systemic legislation in the fields of culture, space and construction_ 21

2.2 Institutional regulation of the profession and activity_ 22

2.3 Public procurements_ 27

2.3.1 Public procurement of architectural services_ 27

2.3.2 Criteria for, and guidelines on, the procurement of architectural services _ 27

2.3.3 Architectural and urban planning competitions_ 29

2.4 Architecture as a research and development activity_ 30

3	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT_	33
3.1	Contribution of architecture to sustainable development_	33
3.2	Sustainable development of cities and communities_	34
3.3	Renovation and adaptation_	37
4	INCLUSIVE ARCHITECTURE_	39
4.1	Architecture in education processes_	39
4.1.1	Education_	39
4.1.2	Lifelong learning_	40
4.1.3	Civil society and non-governmental organisations_	41
4.2	Promotion of architecture_	41
4.2.1	International acceptance and exchange of experience_	41
4.2.2	Use of digital technologies_	43



INTRODUCTION



In its documents¹, the European Union has defined architecture as a basic element of culture and life in European countries. Architecture was recognised as a typical example of the horizontal character of culture, which is included not only in cultural policy, but in most public policies. Countries must take architecture, its cultural dimension and special features into account in all relevant policies, particularly in policies concerning economic and social cohesion, sustainable development and education. Most European countries deem architecture a national priority, as it affects all aspects of our lives, from art to the economy, and the profession of architect is defined as one of seven most strictly regulated professions concerned with public goods.

A look at space in Slovenia reveals numerous irrational developments which facilitate widely dispersed construction and suburbanisation, the erosion of cultural heritage, alarming environmental pollution, the entanglement of infrastructure systems and, consequently, poor urban architectural solutions which lacks a crucial long-term vision. With visual, energy-related and ecological pollution, these poor solutions drastically diminish spatial planning and recognisability and visual culture, weaken the national economy and quickly reduce the actual value of space, thus negatively affecting the quality of life and the living environment.

Approximately 2,000 architects work in Slovenia, 850 of whom are registered at the Ministry of Culture as self-employed. In the past twenty years, the activity of architects has depended on the market, without suitable regulation, and an additional blow was dealt to the field by the construction crisis which, resulted in architectural activities being reduced by almost half. In 2007, 5,900 building permits were issued for the construction or renovation of buildings, with an investment value of EUR 1.5 billion, while in 2012, only 3,200 building permits were issued, with an investment value of EUR 800 million. Due to the drastic decline in work and the absence of suitable regulation, market prices fell below the lower limit, which affected the quality, professionalism and social reputation of architecture; the profession also lost the legitimacy to represent the public interest.

As a result of the aforementioned, architecture was recognised as an autonomous field of culture with the Resolution on the 2014–2017 National Programme for Culture². Current Slovenian cultural policy addressed architecture within the scope of fine arts, which, given the nature of, and problems in, this field, is too limiting. The public interest in fine or visual arts is mainly focused on the creativity that boosts the meaning of everyday life and the living environment. It is increasingly clearer that common space in Slovenia is a limited asset, so public interest in architecture may not be limited to mere boosters, but is crucial for enhancing spatial culture in general. To attain this objective, individual creators, i.e. architects, need suitable regulatory measures more than direct financial incentive.

1 Council Resolution on architectural quality in urban and rural environments (2001/C 73/04)

2 Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [Uradni list RS], No. 99/13; NPC 2014–2017

Public interest in architecture comprises a higher quality of life and the living environment, and the introduction of sustainable development, social cohesion and cultural identity. It is facilitated by architectural, landscape architecture-related, urban and spatial planning, and the creation of interiors by considering space as a limited asset, including the conservation of the environment and cultural heritage.

To change the current state of affairs, active inter-ministerial mechanisms will have to be established to enable current challenges of space in Slovenia to be addressed with sustainable urban and rural development, i.e. an integrated and creative approach whereby culture, the economy, the social aspect and the environment play equal roles. Only active and comprehensive architectural policies will enable us in a few years to recognise success not only in the artistic, cultural or aesthetic dimensions of space, but also in economic effects.

A new architectural policy to improve the social responsibility of developments and for a higher quality of life.

The strategic document “Architectural Policy. Architecture for the people” will allow us to introduce a European cultural policy for architecture and at the same time, establish a framework for an extensive discussion on the national architectural policy.

The objectives of the Architectural Policy comply with European development policies in the 2014–2020 period³ and the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

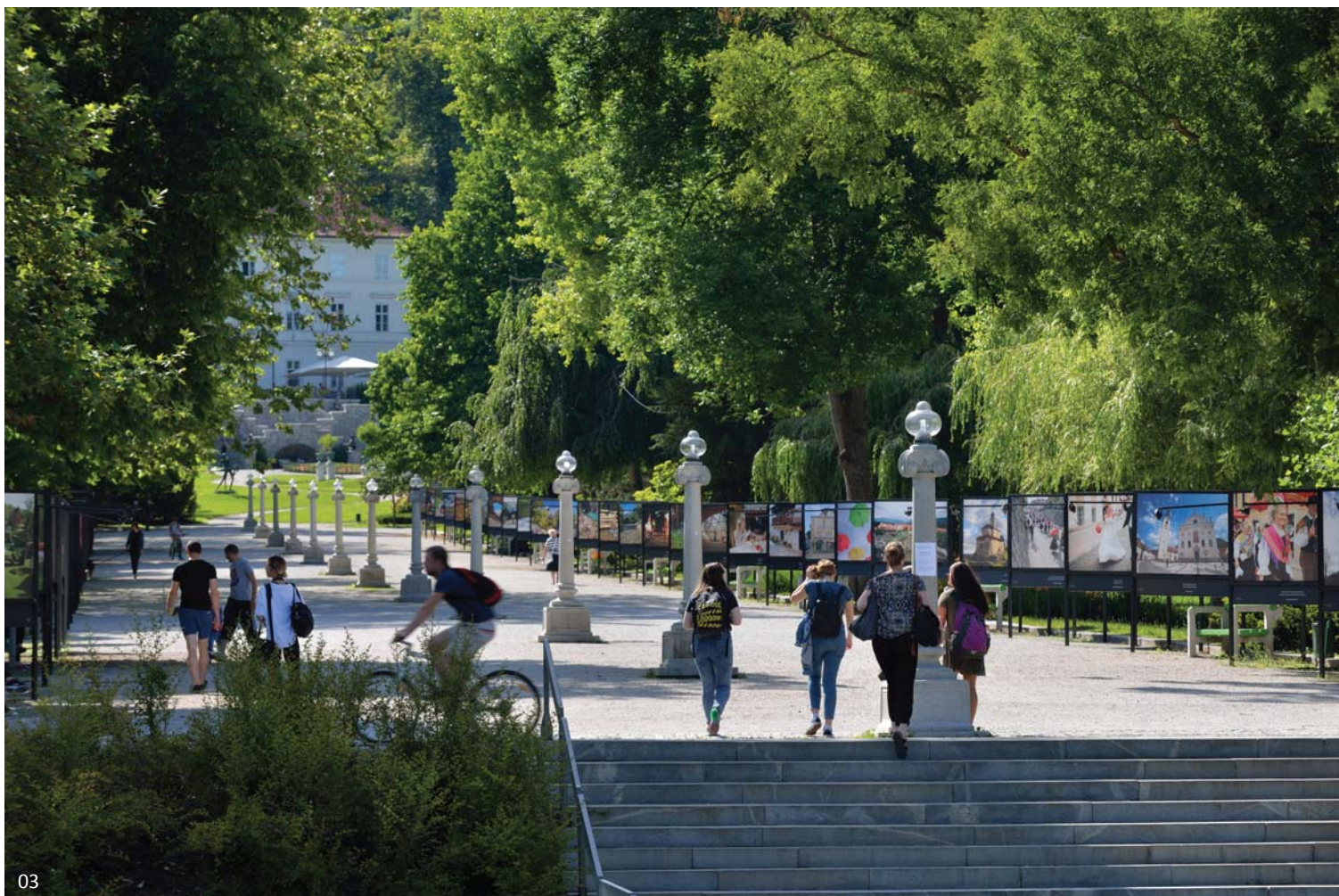
The content of the Architectural Policy, particularly development measures, follow the guidelines of the new EU financial perspective which Slovenia is entering, and address the following development challenges:

- good architecture that is functional, aesthetic, healthy, safe and pleasant to live in, environmentally friendly and economical;
- innovative architecture stimulates economic growth and the general welfare;
- regulated architecture is a condition for its creative and connecting power to be realised;
- cultural heritage is a vital element of current development challenges, as it is the core of sustainable society and national cultural identity;
- the architecture of public buildings and spaces is a role model and stimulus for public and private investments;
- for architecture, international space is an important field of development and opportunities.

The Architectural Policy has four basic objectives:

- **good architecture**
- **smart growth**
- **sustainable development**
- **inclusive architecture**

³ Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and the European Commission for the 2014–2020 Period, Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in the 2014–2020 Period.



The Architectural Policy will be followed by the preparation of an action plan which defines measures, operators and the financial effects of measures in more detail. Financial effects are largely foreseen in the fields of renovation, education and the use of digital technologies.

Architecture is defined as:

- **a service:** professional, cultural and economic activity;
- **a procedure and the result** of planning, designing and making buildings and other elements of the built environment including open space between buildings.

Its characteristic is that it connects and organises specialised knowledge into a whole, and is therefore an interdisciplinary and general discipline.



Objectives

Good architecture

Good architecture is sustainable quality, which means that it is useful, safe, healthy, environmentally friendly, well-designed, inclusive and economical. Such architecture facilitates the quality of life⁴ for residents, and it results in well-being and motivation. Architecture and space significantly affect the shaping of a person's identity and creativity in society. The quality of the built environment has a key influence on the process of a person's identification with the society they belong to, whereby other architectural aspects – functional aspects, design, requirements for comfort and health, and the inclusion of cultural heritage – also play an important role in addition to urban and landscape integration in space. Due to the aforementioned, good architecture is in the public interest.

The social and cultural, functional and aesthetic properties of architecture have great significance and are assessed by users and the whole society. Comprehensive by nature, they may be divided into four main properties:

- functionality
- provision of safety, health and comfort
- provision of safety, health and comfort
- high-quality technical implementation

Architectural quality may be partially evaluated according to analytical criteria. These are determined with the establishment of objective professional criteria on the one hand, and by interviewing and creating user requirements on the other. The aesthetic experience of architecture also depends on the observer's subjective feelings.

Smart growth⁵

Architectural activity as part of the creative economy promotes the healthy economic growth of society, the development of construction and other types of business, and investments.

Through history, the discipline has shaped knowledge and methods to connect the achievements of specialist scientific and technical disciplines with the findings of humanistic disciplines, and upgrade them into a functional, meaningful and aesthetic compositional synthesis. It affects all levels of life in society and politics. To achieve the creative and connecting power of architecture, a further expansion and strengthening of interdisciplinary cooperation in spatial planning and construction needs to be accompanied by the sensible and more coher-

4 The Architectural Policy defines the quality of living according to the OECD methodology with the following indicators: available housing, suitable income, available jobs, integration in the local community, availability of education, clean environment, operative civil society, health, satisfaction with life, safety, work–life balance.

5 Evropska komisija, Evropa 2020, Strategija za pametno, trajnostno in vključujočo rast.

ent functioning of the state, from legislation to interaction and cooperation between various sectors. Systemic measures must be adopted for planning and construction to reduce the risk of corruption and economic crime.

The basis for good architecture is the regulation of the profession and activity. Architecture must operate in the interests of clients and users as well as in the public interest. The profession and activity must be harmonised according to the principles of the liberal professions and international standards, following the example of countries with a developed architectural culture.

Since the public sector is the biggest client of construction and architectural services, it sets the standards for the whole society. The state acts as a role model, so special attention must be paid to the public procurement of architectural services. The main principle for the selection of architectural planning experts must be the best ideas and designs, and recommendations of manufacturers.

Research in architecture and promoting innovation must be actively included in interdisciplinary projects such as the efficient use of resources and energy, energy efficiency of buildings, socially sustainable communities and buildings, sustainable mobility, the active restoration of cultural heritage, and all other fields related to sustainable forms of life and the culture of the built environment.

Sustainable development

The quality of spatial planning may significantly accelerate the transition to a sustainable society with the development of smart solutions and the promotion of a sustainable lifestyle, reducing the use of natural resources and energy.

Sustainable construction, the efficient use of energy, prudent spatial management and the promotion of high-quality restoration and construction are options for development in Slovenia. The preservation and planning of quality in architecture requires intelligent and innovative designs. Their development will be the key task of architecture. With suitable planning and a long-term vision, dense settlement patterns with mixed use may facilitate a sustainable green economy, which may actually reduce negative environmental impacts and pressures on natural resources, and enhance energy efficiency.

Inclusive architecture

Raising awareness of the significance of our built environment and the responsibility of each person for it may be used to raise awareness and the need for the high-quality construction of the built environment.

The development of spatial literacy guides and increases the sensitivity of public opinion to good architecture. The Architectural Policy is intended to promote the development of live, critical and innovative spatial culture.

Teaching about the built environment must be systematically integrated into all segments of education. All generations must be aware of the values of a high-quality environment and the built environment, and their decisive effect on the quality of life in all aspects – housing, education, work and public space.



Guidelines for activities

- The Government of the Republic of Slovenia will appoint a coordinating body to implement the Architectural Policy.
- The coordinating body will prepare an action plan with measures to implement the Architectural Policy.
- Integrate the objectives of the Architectural Policy in all relevant sectoral policies and legislation.
- Promote a more active role in international organisations in the field of architecture.



1. GOOD ARCHITECTURE

Having a high-quality natural environment is comparative advantage for Slovenia, and should be upgraded with high-quality construction of the built environment. The cities, villages and buildings where we live and work, move around and spend free time affect the quality of our lives from the social, economic, environmental and cultural aspect, and not only in everyday life, but in important, crucial social aspects.

Good architecture comes to light with the creative, responsible and open cooperation of various policies and professionals involved in spatial planning and construction. People must cooperate in decision-making processes according to the principle of inclusion.

The conditions for high-quality planning of the built environment are high-quality education, suitable legislation, the responsible management of investments and inclusion of experts from the initial decision-making stages to the designing of buildings and spatial planning, as well as the organised and transparent ordering of architectural services through public procurement and competitions.

The environment and construction are closely related to social crises: economic, ecological and social, management crises, the inefficiency of policies, the deterioration of the public sector, the crisis of values and other crises that Slovenia and the world have been facing. Good architecture may efficiently respond to certain issues related to the following values: Do we live in a healthy and supportive environment? How and where do we live? How and where are we educated, work, are treated, are reaffirmed as a community? What is a public space? How do we meet climate change challenges? What are buildings like; are they safe in the event of natural phenomena such as floods, earthquakes and storms which have become more and more frequent recently? How are we prepared for the future?

1.1 Definition of quality

Regarding the properties of good architecture⁶, they have remained basically the same since ancient times. In accordance with values adapted to modernity, the Architectural Policy defines them as follows:

1.1.1 Safety, health and the quality of technical implementation (*strength*)

The essential properties every building must provide are safety, health and comfort. In new constructions, these are realised by meeting construction and technical standards, while in developments in existing buildings, we try to come as close to the norms as possible. Regarding health and safety, great emphasis is put on the selection of building materials, suitable air-conditioning and ventilation of rooms, and technical measures to provide safety. A suitably planned room significantly contributes to the subjective perception of safety,

6 In his influential study *On Architecture (De Architectura Libri Decem, 30–15 BC)*, the Roman engineer and architect Vitruvius wrote that architecture should be designed according to three principles – firmness, commodity and delight (*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*).

which also results in greater comfort. The feeling of comfort is fostered by thermal, acoustic and visual conditions in a place. Other factors which cannot be directly measured, such as the tactile sensation, odours etc., also affect our well-being in a place.

When selecting technical solutions, simplicity of operation and maintenance are essential in the provision of the basic purpose. Decisions which greatly affect the feasibility and costs of realisation are made in the terms of reference and design planning. Therefore, high-quality planning is a crucial prerequisite which affects the final implementation and operating costs. The expertise and experience of contractors, the quality of construction monitored by architects and other designers, and the supervision of construction affect the quality of technical implementation.

1.1.2 Usability (*functionality*)

This term is used to denote the elements of a building which enable it to have certain functions which depend on use. A building is usable when the design, location, layout and intended purpose of rooms, technical solutions, accessibility and infrastructural equipment are in harmony and according to the purpose of the building.

Changing the purpose and optimising use are two principles of sustainable land use, which also prioritises the renovation of existing buildings over the construction of new ones.

Another important aspect of good architecture is its adaptation to vulnerable groups of users, particularly construction without architectural barriers. Architecture that is accessible to people with reduced visual, hearing or motor skills becomes usable for them, raises their comfort level, and at the same time responds to demographic changes in society in which the share of active elderly and functionally-impaired persons is rising.

1.1.3 Aesthetics (*beauty*)

The usability of a building does not provide high-quality living conditions in itself. Crucial in the comprehensiveness of architecture is its design, which provides architecture with identity, harmony and explicit power, which are reflected in, and upgrade, the cultural values of the society in which they arise.

The artistic properties of architecture can only partially be rationally explained and measured; they depend partly on education, sensitivity and experiences of individuals and communities. They reflect the level and values of owners, users and the wider society, and directly affect their well-being, creativity and vitality. Therefore, it is not enough for architecture to respond only to prevailing social values; its designers face the challenge of co-creating them for the future. A special role in this is played by public buildings, which affect the most people; with their appearance, character and expression, they significantly affect the feeling and shaping of awareness of the quality of the built environment, its value and social cohesion.

Good architecture is not autonomous, transferable or reproducible, but it is always a reflection of the space in which it is located, making it difficult to standardise and prescribe it in advance. It is produced with creative planning and an understanding of the space where it is to be located.

The meaning of quality may not be described as an attitude to architecture but as a mindset and approach, or as Norman Foster put it: “It is never about cost – always about attitude of mind.”

1.2 Architecture for the people

Narrow-mindedness and partisan approaches regarding developments have had numerous undesired effects, such as social exclusion, spatial segregation, unsuitable accessibility to basic public services (schools, kindergartens, health-care centres etc.), lack of suitable housing, pollution of natural resources etc., and the economic crisis, which made matters even worse.

People, their needs and a better living environment must be in the forefront of sustainable development again, and conditions for sustainable society must be created through the objectives of a healthy, safe, inclusive, environmentally-sensitive, infrastructure-equipped and well-designed built environment. The concept of the mixed use of space, which is based on the recognised needs of communities, must be used to give priority to the balanced planning of private and social programmes. Mechanisms of participation or inclusion of residents and other users of space must be promoted, and desires and needs of these users must be suitably included in development plans.

1.3 A fully preserved architectural heritage for the cultural identity of a community

Preserved architectural heritage is a ‘brand’ of numerous European cities and rural areas. It is the living symbol of a rich cultural past and diversity, which is shown in cultural identity and the need to preserve it.

Preserved architectural heritage is an important element of the designing of a high-quality living environment. It is one of the objectives of sustainable development, which recognises the condition for the preservation and development of identity, cultural diversity and the quality of life in fully preserved cultural heritage in fully preserved cultural heritage. Today, cultural heritage is a value which is formally protected by a wide range of international and national conventions, but its actual value depends on its being successfully included in

development needs and becomes an equivalent element of the living environment. With adaptation and creative solutions, the renovation of buildings and cultural heritage, including industrial heritage, should facilitate reuse and the greater energy efficiency of buildings. For this, the principles of preserving the integrity and originality of architecture as much as possible, and seeking a suitable balance between the preservation of protected values and adaptation to present needs in each development must be followed.

1.4 Connecting power of architecture

In recent decades, towns all around the world have been growing. A quarter of all residents of Slovenia live in seven cities, and the tendency for cities to become dense is continuing. Therefore, in relation to the renovation of cities, energy renovation must not remain an isolated action; it should be integrated into comprehensive urban renovation, which should also include social, economic, environmental and cultural aspects to create connecting and inclusive cities. Development into compact cities may be guided with the connecting power of architectural creation, mixed social and functional structure, better accessibility and mobility, greater use of renewable sources, innovative approaches of spatial planning, and higher participation of local users.

Due to its general manner of creation in the core of the discipline, architecture manages the knowledge and methods for connecting specialist scientific and technical disciplines with humanistic ones. The key skill in this is the ability to coordinate a huge quantity of input data into a sensible, cohesive and co-dependent whole, which is then reflected in usable, proportionally designed, safe, healthy, comfortable and rational architecture.

In its operation, it encompasses social, economic, health-care, environmental, technical and artistic fields, and should therefore be included in numerous policies and fields of various sectors.

1.5 The State, as the investor, should provide a quality benchmark

The construction of public buildings and arrangements is public by nature, so it must enable everyone to have a positive spatial experience: accessibility, usability, energy efficiency, safety, firmness, comfort and delight. The state, local communities and other entities governed by public law must be role models for the provision of high-quality criteria and procedures in the arrangement and planning of built public space.

Procurement procedures must be public and transparent. Public architectural and urban competitions are the most appropriate procedures for acquiring solutions for the construction of buildings and spatial planning. Only in this way is it possible to select the optimal solution and make the most suitable decision as the basis for high-quality planning and construction, and economical investment management.

Since the public sector is the greatest investor in society, it must provide for prudent and innovative planning, set priorities and promote best practice. Construction paid for from public funds sets general and special quality criteria for all involved.



Guidelines for activities

- Assume a more active role in spatial planning, construction and public investment management, with an emphasis on greater responsibility and higher quality.
- Support for the establishment of competences and responsibilities of architecture to attain the objectives of the Architectural Policy, common values and public interest, and the protection of people who use the planned buildings and space.



2. SMART GROWTH

Architectural activity accelerates economic development, thus enhancing the general well-being. It is part of the creative economy, which promotes healthy economic growth with investments, and the development of construction and other economic sectors. It plays an important role in the establishment of a competitive knowledge-based economy. It creates development potential which, within construction, has one of the greatest multiplier effects on gross domestic product growth. The examples of certain European countries show that suitable institutional support and a clear architectural policy may foster strong export activity.

High professional criteria must be established, ensuring respect for the public interest, international success and the development of architecture, and promoting employment and economic growth. In addition to landscape and location, other comparative advantages in today's world of competitiveness are educated and informed people. The new development cycle provides opportunities for the employment and self-employment of young people who are sufficiently capable and educated to be successful globally, connections between disciplines, creativity and innovation.

Space in Slovenia is recognised for its diverse cultural landscape and heritage, and diverse and extensive natural systems. Forest cover, the high volume of water, the preservation of watercourses and biodiversity are important. Exceptional architectural heritage is found in numerous communities surrounded by the cultural and natural landscape, while on the other hand, Slovenia is also attractive for its integration into international space with infrastructural axes. These features should be included in development measures to promote economic growth and sustainable development. At the same time, we must be aware of the fact that space is limited, so we should manage it in a way that preserves it and protects it from irrational developments with short-term effects.

2.1 Efficient systemic legislation in the fields of culture, space and construction

The creation of a high-quality built environment and the preservation of cultural identity are the objectives of economic policies and measures to promote economic growth, enhance the competitiveness of the economy and strengthen the sustainable development of society.

To attain these objectives, an institutional framework must be established which comprises high-quality and harmonised legislative solutions in the fields of culture, the environment, space, construction, the economy, finance and education. Solutions must be based on in-depth analyses of the reasons for the current situation, greater responsiveness, connections, and persistent, target-oriented and continuous operations.

Applicable sectoral normative regulations must be analysed, evaluated, supplemented with suitable expert groundwork and substantive guidelines (for example, substantive guidelines for the high-quality planning and construction of public buildings of general importance to society in individual fields of public activities, such as, for example, for public libraries, nursery schools, schools, hospitals etc.), and reconnected into a coherent, sensible and functional system. In addition, policies, approaches and organisation at the local and regional level in all fields must be reformed. Greater public participation in democratic decision-making procedures, and greater professionalism in suitable public sector services and service providers in the market must be provided. The role and tasks of the city architect and municipal urban planner must be defined and implemented. At the municipal (regional) level, public urban planning institutions, as well as spatial and urban planning as a public service and the leading social tool for planning the use of space and new development strategies should be reintroduced. A different mindset, which understands space and architecture as key development and economic categories, will enable us to take advantage of potential by developing sustainable activities at the local level, promoting economic growth, increasing self-sufficiency and accelerating the renovation of cultural heritage. Special attention must be paid to the systemic prevention of developments in buildings which do not comply with the original plan and are carried out within the scope of renovations, extensions or investment maintenance. Rules for the uniform maintenance of buildings with multiple owners must be established, and best practice regarding the copyright protection of architectural works must be promoted.

2.2 Institutional regulation of the profession and activity

In Slovenia, architectural activity is frequently understood as a service which translates an investor's requirements into architectural and technical plans, and specialises in aesthetics. This role in society must be reformed in accordance with the spirit of a responsible and competitive society, particularly in terms of greater competences and responsibilities for attaining the objectives of the Architectural Policy, common values and public interest, and the protection of people who use space and buildings. The knowledge and competences which correspond to the aforementioned responsibility must be wide and specialised at the same time. Therefore, architecture should be included in every project or development, no matter how small.

High-quality planning is the basis for good architecture. The conditions for the high-quality planning of buildings and spatial planning are stable legislation, the inclusion of experts in all phases of building design and spatial planning, and good organisation and transparency of public procurement of architectural services in the form of public competitions which determine quality criteria in planning.

To realise the creative and connecting role of architecture, and related good architecture, the profession of architect must be institutionally regulated by a suitable act which defines the public interest in architecture and the conditions of architectural activity.

Architectural creation is an intellectual activity characterised by activities in the public interest, and also by the protection of the interests of clients and future users.

It is one of the professions to which the term liberal profession is applied in countries with a developed architectural culture. The general characteristics of, and requirements for, the pursuit of activities of liberal professions are as follows⁷:

- pursuing an activity which is in the public interest;
- trust of consumers in the qualifications and professionalism of providers of regulated services;
- independent provision of services and personal responsibility for implementation;
- professional and economic independence when carrying out tasks;
- asymmetry of information management between the client and service provider;
- non-profit activity.

The basic principles of architects – professionalism, independence and responsibility – nurture clients’ trust and the realisation of the mission of the discipline.

It is not an ordinary economic activity, but an “intellectual, cultural, artistic and professional activity. An architectural service is a professional service which is cultural and economic at the same time⁸”

The generally established definition of a professional architect is someone who is “responsible for the design-related, technical, economic, financial, environmental and social planning of arrangements and construction”. Therefore, the professionalism, competence and independence of architects must be provided. In accordance with the international principles of liberal professions and following the example of countries with a developed architectural culture, particularly the Central European professional tradition shared also by Slovenia, the safety and trust of clients can be ensured only by regulating the profession and activity.

Consideration of both the private and public interest in the performance of tasks, responsibility to future users (which are not necessarily clients) and the image of public space are complex requirements which cannot be met by contractors with inadequate competences to perform a regulated profession and activity. The consequences of unsuitable regulation and marketing competition between qualified and unqualified contractors are frequently poor service, unsatisfactory results of spatial planning and construction, the low quality of the built environment, irrationally managed investments and the dissatisfaction of users with unfulfilled expectations. Therefore, this market segment is regulated in developed economies with high added value.

Since clients and users of services must be provided with credible and transparent information on services or the partner who can harmonise the special interests of a client with the public interest,⁹ the following mechanisms for protecting the public interest and consumer protection are established in architectural activity:

- the definition of knowledge and competences based on the accreditation of education programmes pursuant to Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (Article 46);
- the regulation of the profession on the basis of acquired professional competences, which may contain additional regulation measures;
- the provision of services by accredited experts according to acquired competences and their role in the planning and construction process;
- the regulation of the activity of business entities, which guarantees clients the successful fulfilment of services ordered at a certain professional level and the responsibility of contractors, with guarantees for the quality of the service provided.

7 Council Resolution on architectural quality in urban and rural environments (2001/C 73/04).

8 German “Musterarchitektengesetz”

9 Primeri rešitev: avstrijski Ziviltechnikergesetz, francoski Loi sur l'architecture, nemški Musterarchitektengesetz itd.

To achieve better results in spatial planning and construction, and a higher quality of the built environment, a system which will eliminate unqualified contractors without suitable competences, require greater responsibility of the discipline and provide greater authority, broader responsibilities and representation in the public sector¹⁰. Ethical professional behaviour, independence and avoiding conflicts of interest are principles¹¹ which should bind not only architects, but also business entities, by imposing a formal legal responsibility for their professional behaviour through professional authorisation.

Guidelines for activities

- **More coherent functioning of the state, closer cooperation between state authorities and institutions (inter-ministerial operation) and vertical coordination of different governance levels (state – local communities).**
- **he objectives of the Architectural Policy must be reasonably taken into account in each change of spatial and construction legislation, and in legislation that directly affects architectural quality (protection of cultural heritage, environmental protection, energy efficiency etc.).**
- **Define architecture as a field of public interest, and introduce the principles of independence, professionalism and responsibility of service provision.**
- **Urban planning must become the leading social tool for spatial planning and new development strategies. Therefore, public urban planning institutions, and spatial and urban planning as a public service should be reintroduced at the municipal level.**
- **Rules on the uniform maintenance of buildings with multiple owners must be established, and best practice of the copyright protection of architectural works must be promoted.**
- **In spatial planning and construction, the public sector should promote the employment of suitably educated people, and define in more detail the tasks, competences and responsibilities of the city architect–urban planner, the urban planning commission and municipal spatial services, which must be interdisciplinary and include experts from various disciplines (architects, landscape architects, civil engineers, communal engineers, geographers etc.).**
- **Introduce a uniform glossary for all regulations in the field of architecture and urban planning.**
- **Amendments to the Spatial Order of Slovenia with standard contents and instructions on the preparation of spatial acts, with an emphasis on clarity, unambiguity, graphic content and usability regarding locations and designs.**
- **Promote the optimisation of administrative procedures and content of project documents.**

10 The ACE – Architects Council of Europe Sector Study shows that Slovenia ranks at the bottom of architects in the public sector.

11 Code of professional ethics of architects, landscape architects and spatial planners, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [Uradni list RS], No. 6/2005, 21 January 2005, <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/objava.jsp?urlurid=2005153>.





2.3 Public procurements

2.3.1 Public procurement of architectural services

The general concept of public procurement with requirements for the assessments of bids with simple criteria is frequently not applicable in the procurement of architectural services. The essential task of an architectural service is to seek various solutions and options not known in advance and measurable. To manage investments sensibly and preserve spatial values, spatial inspections, comparisons of alternative designs and the selection of the most suitable solutions are indispensable, and should, therefore, be included in decision-making and procurement processes. High-quality project documents are a prerequisite for projects to be successfully and rationally implemented. The latter cannot be provided with the until recently prevailing practice of procurement on the basis of the lowest price criterion, which promotes negative selection among bidders, market anomalies and corruption. It has transpired the benefits of the lowest price of project documents are insignificant in comparison with the economic damage arising from poor solutions and poor construction.

The main objective that the public procurement system should pursue should be the highest possible quality for an appropriate price. The notion of quality comprises several aspects, from general (sustainable, environmental and economic) to specific (the quality of solutions, technical quality of documents and services), which should add up to the better quality of the built living and working environment and public space, and accelerate the search for locations for buildings and other developments.

The most suitable way to procure architectural and engineering services is the selection of the economically most favourable bid through assessments on the basis of a combination of suitable criteria.

The public procurement system must contain principles and solutions which guarantee quality, and connect it with sectors and content which enable and operationalise quality¹².

2.3.2 Criteria for, and guidelines on, the procurement of architectural services

To establish suitable institutional and legal frameworks which facilitate the successful implementation of investment projects and legal protection of clients, the content of architectural services which a phase must achieve and quality criteria according to adopted European commitments to attain the objectives of sustainable development must be defined in more detail.

In procedures to acquire building and other permits, solutions must be prepared which ensure that the state and public administration will deal only with content in the public interest that is proportionate to a certain phase of the procedure and the provisions of those comprehensive professional services that are indispensable for attaining the required standards and quality.

The harmonisation of the content of services with internationally established norms will facilitate greater transparency and security for foreign investors, and promote the international competitiveness of national architecture. Accurately defined content and criteria of professional services may significantly contribute to smoother and high-quality public procurement.

12 Competition rules and guidelines for the procurement of architectural services (the first edition of the Guidelines on the procurement of engineering and architectural services was published in June 2016).



A system which eliminates extremes in the market and suitably assess individual aspects of quality provision must be established.

High-quality criteria in the field of architectural services include a wide range of aspects, from environmental and economic aspects, which take into account numerous factors, and the impact and costs of the whole life cycle to social, functional, spatial, technical and aesthetic aspects. Therefore, whenever a service is not defined in advance, the procedure should include the verification and selection of the most suitable professional solutions on the basis of an open competition (except for infrastructure projects).

2.3.3 Architectural and urban planning competitions

Historically, architectural and urban planning competitions have proven to be the most appropriate procedure for selecting the most suitable architectural and urban planning solutions, which provides clients with suitable expert groundwork for decision making and facilitates selection from among different options.

Open competitions make the selection of projects transparent, professional and public, as the procedure includes clients, experts and the public. At the same time, a competition is a tool which makes the general public think about, and co-create, public space, promotes and informs the general public, and enables contracting authorities to efficiently manage investments, since it ensures a transparent selection of the solution.

Competition is a traditional process whereby the best solutions are sought, and is based on qualitative criteria, and is, therefore, included in the Directive on public procurement¹³.

Unlike procurement on the basis of the lowest price, which promotes negative selection from among bidders, and the degradation and depletion of public space and low quality of construction, a competition is a mechanism which ensures positive selection, project orders to proposers of the most suitable solutions, and the construction of high-quality buildings and arrangements.

On the basis of modernised foundations and clear starting points, open competition must be reintroduced for public buildings and developments, and arrangements and construction at important and sensitive locations. In infrastructure projects, this refers only to individual buildings such as portals, bridges etc. Modernisation will follow European models and will be adapted to clients' needs and possibilities, and to the principles of rationality and public involvement.

Guidelines for activities

- **Procure architectural services on the basis of quality criteria and the selection of the most suitable solutions**
- **Foresee options for systemic measures to prevent anomalies in the market such as corruption, dumping and unfair competition, and promote best practice.**
- **Train investment project promoters and ensuring comprehensive processes in public administration.**
- **Amend and monitor guidelines on the procurement of architectural services: rules of procedure and examples for the implementation of competitions and the acquisition of variant solutions.**

¹³ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC, and Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC.

- **Introduce a regulation to determine the norms for services of certified architects and other designers, with information on the reference value of services for public procurements and courts.**
- **Promote the implementation of architectural and urban planning competitions as the most suitable tool for selecting spatial planning solutions.**
- **Revise rules that regulate the field of open competitions.**

2.4 Architecture as a research and development activity

A comparison of shares of architectural services in the entire gross domestic product of the building sector between the average in EU Member States and Slovenia shows that Slovenia only reaches 55 per cent of the average.

Scientific, artistic and technical research decisively contributes to the successful development of society, as they are the bases for the creative economy in modern societies. Research in architecture comprises historical studies of architecture, studies of methods for planning future of cities, and studies of techniques for transferring findings into life by researching shapes, patterns, colours and materials. Every planning and construction process is unique and peculiar. Therefore, architectural approaches to detecting problems and finding their solutions are distinctly innovative and comprehensive, which contributes the highest added value to the finished product.

For construction to develop into a high-technology sector which will be able to compete equally in the European and global markets and particularly to provide people with high standards of high-quality living, creativity and innovation, which are part of the foundations of the architectural profession, must be actively included in research and development.

Conditions will have to be created for architecture to be actively included in interdisciplinary research projects of technological, social, humanistic and medical science, such as the recording and restoration of cultural heritage, the construction and arrangement of a database on architecture in Slovenian cultural space, better energy efficiency of buildings, the assessment of buildings from the health and social integration perspective, the development of social sustainability and the sustainability of communities and buildings, the organisation of sustainable mobility and other research related to sustainable forms of life. The implementation of the Architectural Policy will allow for systematic monitoring and evaluation of the results of research and their transfer into practice with the preparation of regulations, manuals, monographs, methodologies on planning processes, standards, catalogues of new materials and systems of alternative energy sources, guidelines on the development of industry, construction etc. Harmonisation of the classification of sciences with the internationally applicable European classification of professional competences is also required, which will enable the multidisciplinary status to be recognised for the technological and humanist aspects of architectural and urban planning and related adaptation of the criteria system for evaluating scientific, development and artistic performance for specific interdisciplinary competences of the profession. This will facilitate promotion for those people who achieve comprehensive and the best results in architectural and urban planning research and development, and artistic creation.



Guidelines for activities

- Adapt the national system of the classification of scientific disciplines and evaluation criteria of the performance of research and development to the multidisciplinary characters of architectural creation in order to utilise the specific connecting abilities of the profession in the implementation of multidisciplinary research projects.
- Amend the established criteria for establishing scientific performance with quality indicators and evaluation methods for research and development.
- Promote platforms for connecting content in architecture/design, the economy and research.



3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Spatial planning and construction are constantly developing sectors. Together with the development of public awareness of the significance of sustainable development for survival, new findings arise in this field – from issues of energy efficiency to new technologies and materials – which may reduce negative impacts on the one hand, and assist with responding to the new situation on the other. How are we prepared? What can we do? What is the role of architecture in a sustainable future?

3.1 Contribution of architecture to sustainable development

The design of buildings significantly affects the efficiency of the results of construction. Space and materials provide users with the most direct experience of comfort, safety, usability and energy efficiency of the building. To obtain a favourable living environment, each project must include passive and active measures to harmonise or plan structural, technical and spatial solutions, and a selection of materials. The manner in which a building can satisfy the user's needs requires a comprehensive approach and advance preparation. Sociological and technological analyse and planning take into account various types of living patterns, use, and demographic and climate conditions, and contribute to the fact that buildings may improve the quality of users' lives.

The role of architecture supported by progressive legislation and investments exceeds the limits of individual construction and has become an important tool for transformation into sustainable societies.

- 1. Therefore, it is important for the significance of architecture to be included in all relevant documents, legislation, standards and support funds for it to be able to contribute to the gradual transformation of buildings into environmentally- and people- friendly architecture with renewable sources and the efficient use of energy.**
- 2. Comprehensive renovations must be promoted by connecting financial instruments for energy efficiency, as better architectural solutions may significantly increase interest in energy efficiency measures**
- 3. Critical research in construction must be promoted to bring together experts in interdisciplinary groups.**

The energy potential of buildings is decisively affected by the architectural solutions produced during planning. The consideration of local circumstances and users' needs, design, the selection of materials and the ability to adapt have as great an effect on energy consumption as the implementation and technical properties of materials used.

'Smart houses' cannot be planned as a universal solution for reducing the carbon footprint of the built environment. Smart houses need high technology to function, and high costs are also the result of their maintenance. Therefore, greater emphasis should be put on the development of a building throughout its life cycle, i.e. include more architectural solutions for the wise use of energy

such as the formation of the architectural mass, orientation, position, usability, layout of rooms, flexibility and other properties. The observance of these architectural principles of construction contributes more to lower operating costs than automated cooling and heating systems.

Therefore, lower energy consumption in the long term must not be the only objective of sustainable development. Instead, the planning and construction of cities must include particularly a discussion about economic, social, environmental, socially-political and cultural effects. Architecture can respond to all these issues with comprehensive solutions and enable people to live in a safe, healthy and humane environmental, and also contribute to mitigating climate change or to the adaptation of society to its effects.

In recent years, measures to improve efficiency have been directed at renovating the housing stock, but architecture and urban planning have been excluded from them.

Today, modern technical solutions produce important results in the reduction of costs, environmental protection and the reduction of our influence on climate change. However, energy renovation should include other aspects, since adding thermal insulation and replacing doors and windows in buildings achieve a completely new appearance.

Therefore, innovative combinations of various financial measures should be used to ensure that incentives for the efficient use of energy include architectural design and comprehensive renovation. By connecting the efficient use of energy with the preservation of buildings of cultural heritage, restoration after earthquakes and other reasons for comprehensive renovation and public investments, these programmes will boost the development of technical solutions and construction in general.

3.2 Sustainable development of cities and communities

Cities and communities have an important role in sustainable, as well as smart and inclusive development¹⁴.

Cities are centres where social, economic and environmental challenges are met, and places which provide opportunities for the most sustainable ways of life. Cities are also centres of connections, innovation, creativity and services. With their institutions and activities, they co-create relationships between people, and co-shape lifestyles and options for liaisons in various communities. Over 70 per cent of Slovenians are expected to live in cities by 2020¹⁵. The concentration of opportunities and jobs leads to extensive commutes, which puts space and environmental resources in urban centres under great pressure. The principal development challenges of urban centres include particularly air pollution, poor accessibility to public transport and bottlenecks, brownfield areas and poorly utilised urban areas as new areas for economic development. At the same time, cities are characterised by the problem of social exclusion in various forms and the adaptation to ageing processes of people.

Sustainable management of cities and communities, which actually reduces pressure on natural resources and increases energy efficiency, may be achieved with professional planning and a long-term vision regarding the construction of

14 Smart cities and communities, <http://ec.europa.eu/eip/smartcities/>

15 Sustainable urban development, smart cities and green growth, http://www.mop.gov.si/fileadmin/mop.gov.si/pageuploads/publikacije/trajnostni_razvoj_mest_2016.pdf



the parts of cities with medium to high density with mixed uses, where people live more closely together. In the event of higher density, it is particularly important to employ innovation in the construction of buildings, energy efficiency, and in waste and traffic management. Together with technical solutions, a high-quality living environment and supportive business environment as well as efficient and smart management must be developed. The key fields in the sustainable development of smart cities which supports the green economy¹⁶ in Slovenia are the challenges of energy efficiency in relation to sustainable construction and sustainable mobility¹⁷.

To plan the sustainable development of cities successfully, traditional tools such as a regulation plan and urban planning must be introduced.

3.3 Renovation and adaptation

The renovation of buildings instead of new construction is a form of sustainable construction which best preserves natural resources, revives the centres of cities and villages, preserves the population and strengthens the cultural identity. It is not only a question of preserving resources, space, culture etc. but particularly of creatively forming the future. We need to develop forms and options for sustainable living, and political, economic, social and cultural development. The key task of architecture in the near future is to preserve good architecture, which requires smart and innovative designs. The housing stock in Slovenia has depreciated and is unsuitable in terms of energy. Current merely energy renovation must become the comprehensive restoration of all buildings in terms of energy and ecology, economy, technology, architecture and urban planning. Renovation is also the primary task in the development of construction.

High-quality architectural renovation preserves and modernises the environment, space, culture and heritage, improves the living and working environment, and relationships, and promotes the development of society as a whole, but particularly of construction, tourism and culture.

In the selection of modern materials, renovation should reflect an understanding and recognition of the quality of the original architecture and its identity, and the sincerity of design. Renovation must include the reuse of high-quality materials of demolished buildings which are not worn out, such as brick, wood and ceramics, which are rendered sustainable by their recyclability.

Guidelines for activities

- **Introduce comprehensive renovation as the leading strategy for the development of cities, communities and buildings (culture, energy, functionality, accessibility, protection against natural disasters, health).**
- **Prepare and introduce standards for the sustainable construction of buildings and cities.**
- **Introduce urban planning and traditional technical and design tools to plan the development of cities (regulation plan etc.).**
- **Ensure the presence of architects in those maintenance works which affect the transformation of buildings (energy renovation etc.).**

¹⁶ The transition to a green economy and sustainable urban development, Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

¹⁷ Sustainable urban development, smart cities and green growth, 2016.



- **Support for planning projects for comprehensive renovations, which will enhance the effect of projects and improve the drawing of European funds.**
- **Amend housing legislation to promote efficient cooperation among owners in the renovation of buildings with multiple owners.**
- **Promote the comprehensive renovation of abandoned urban areas, and public and residential buildings at the state, regional and local levels.**
- **Promote the reconstruction of technology and commercial zones into circular economy areas.**
- **Ensure public transport access to all constructed and expanded residential areas, and improve access to existing communities with sustainable means of transport.**



4 . I N C L U S I V E A R C H I T E C T U R E

Modern societies are aware of the meaning of good architecture and the expertise on the basis of which it is created. Architectural knowledge must develop constantly, arise from existing and real needs, and take into account developed and achieved quality solutions from the history of architecture and specifically the space in question.

An important objective of the Architectural Policy is to create the environment for inclusive architecture, which is one of the basic prerequisites for an inclusive society to develop. People encounter architecture all the time, meaning that architecture significantly affects safety, health, the accessibility of public assets and the meaning of living in all social groups. The realisation of inclusive architecture requires the planning of various, accessible and safe housing, the arrangement of a safe, healthy and accessible public space, equal access to public services and jobs, accessible and efficient public transport, and the development of new building typologies for new programmes, the need for which is constantly growing in our ageing society. Inclusive architecture is a tool for democratic development, stimulates the general public to live more actively and be more socially interactive, and, as such, is a powerful tool for the presentation and balancing of culture.

Inclusive architecture will be achieved by:

- **including the potential of civil society and raising public awareness;**
- **improving the current education system; and**
- **planning the development and promotion of architecture as an important tool for improving the quality of life.**

4 . 1 A r c h i t e c t u r e i n e d u c a t i o n p r o c e s s e s a

4 . 1 . 1 E d u c a t i o n

Architecture is the only art form which concerns everyone and is in the public interest. Therefore, awareness of spatial values and ethical developments must be raised, and well-developed space for generations to come must be ensured. Education on architecture and the built environment contributes to this significantly, and should be included in the education system as early as possible. The systemic inclusion of architectural education must be ensured in order for us to be able to raise conscious, creative and active citizens¹⁸.

An important objective of architectural education is observation and distinguishing lower quality from higher quality space, and awareness of its meaning in everyday life. The emphasis is not on the education of future architects, but on the raising of conscious users and the development of various professions related to architecture, spatial planning, construction and design, and also on the raising of future conscious investors.

¹⁸ Playful Architecture, manual on built environment education), Ljubljana 2013.

To create an innovative society, introduce spatial literacy, awareness raising and learning for sustainable development as widely as possible, and facilitate the development of creative potential in the entire school population, architectural content and learning for sustainable development must be systematically included in curricula and according to the cross-curricular principle, in the curricula or programmes of educational institutions and organisations at all levels. Architectural education must be modernised according to new requirements and the role of the profession.

In higher education, a wider selection of subject in this field must be promoted, and the study process must be systemically linked with practice. To eliminate the duplication of competences and strengthen the smart specialisation of research topics, the content of doctoral study programmes must be harmonised. At the state level, the number of enrolments in study programmes related to the planning and design of developments must be, from the aspect of public interest, researched and optimised.

4.1.2 Lifelong learning

The main topic of lifelong learning on spatial culture and architecture is understanding and solving housing problems. We learn to understand space and architecture in various ways: at all levels in mainstream education, in informal adult education, leisure activities, in participation in local community management, and last but not least, in living itself.

It is in the interests of all of us to be architecturally and spatially literate, and for everyone making decisions on the built environment (in planning and design, construction, maintenance etc.) to be suitably qualified. Various educational and professional institutions for comprehensive lifelong learning must be connected in order to achieve comprehensive lifelong learning on spatial culture and architecture.

We will promote the voluntary participation of the discipline in the education of the general public with various forms of education, such as online learning, combined learning, distance learning etc.

Lifelong learning also includes the permanent, regular and mandatory education of architects in practice, which may be organised and carried out by chambers and other professional associations with the support of higher education institutions, according to the policy of ensuring a high quality of services¹⁹.

According to European legislation, an architect as a professional is defined as a professional with public responsibility. Therefore, mandatory traineeship and professional examinations are justified, as are proportionate measures to ensure the public interest²⁰ and consumer protection²¹. To facilitate a speedy and smooth influx of qualified young architects into the labour and service market, mandatory traineeship will be organised as part of the regular education process following five-year studies in architecture companies and under the expert leadership of higher education institutions.

19 Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market, Article 26.

20 Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, Article 46.

21 Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market, Introduction, 40, 56, Article 4, 8, see note above.

An important part of lifelong learning is regular vocational training. The need to constantly upgrade basic knowledge arises from:

- increasingly rapid technological developments in construction, particularly in the field of sustainable construction and efficient use of energy;
- greater normative regulation of the field (acts, standards, guidelines etc.);
- the increasing number of new and atypical tasks in the profession;
- the adaptation of challenges to the free movement of labour in the labour market;
- roles and inclusion of architects in the challenges of social changes;
- increased need for specialist knowledge, such as conservation, building information modelling etc.;
- the need for good communication skills to communicate with clients, investors, the interested public.

All this knowledge must be constantly maintained and upgraded.

4.1.3 Civil society and non-governmental organisations

One of the basic objectives of the construction of residential buildings is to draw the line between, and connect, the public and private space. According to the definition, the interests and energies of members of civil society and non-governmental organisations that liaise and work here are also part of the public space to fill the gaps in the operation of the public sector for overall prosperity²². Since architecture is in essence a field in which civil society and non-governmental organisations operate, the discipline and its mindset must be used to promote incentives of informal organisations to improve the culture of construction and spatial culture, which will also reduce poverty and social exclusion, and create new jobs.

4.2 Promotion of architecture

4.2.1 International acceptance and exchange of experience

International acceptance of good architecture contributes to the positive image of modern, developed society, and assists in the acquisition of foreign investments and investors.

Architecture is a global profession with a dual effect. The promotion of Slovenian architecture abroad may contribute to the export of architectural and engineering knowledge, as well as to exports of industrial products and services. Therefore, export-oriented architecture (participation in, and organisation of, symposiums and conferences, participation in international project groups, organisation of exhibitions, development of international web platforms, connections with industries and priorities, translation of specialised literature) must be promoted and strengthened.

²² Social entrepreneurship, <http://www.socialni-inovatorji.si/knjiga/socialno-podjetnistvo/22-socialna-ekonomija-nevladne-organizacije>

4.2.2 Use of digital technologies

The digital age has led to changes in society and architecture. The digitalisation of the profession facilitates more flexible adaptation of architecture to the latest achievements in humanist, natural and technical sciences. Digital media are decisive and indispensable for the values and objectives of the Architectural policy to spread. This particularly applies to young people, who are skilled in the use of digital tools. New technologies have modernised the ways architecture is created, represented and popularised. Organised state support for the development of digitalisation in the discipline facilitates better management of complex projects and also communication with other disciplines by means of generally comprehensible visualisations, which stimulates innovation on the basis of synergies of knowledge from various scientific and artistic disciplines. Measures in the Architectural Policy in research and development will provide a systematic transfer of innovation into development of various information and communications technologies, which also fosters more direct democracy and active participation in the creation and design of the built environment.

To preserve the characteristic connecting feature of the discipline in the development of comprehensive construction, suitable education and lifelong learning will be employed to train architects in the use of new digital technologies regarding the supervision of costs and environmental impacts. For the general public to be involved in decision making regarding planning and developments, the systematic implementation of digital literacy projects for people to use various interfaces is crucial.

Guidelines for activities

- **Promote the systematic inclusion of architectural contents and learning for sustainable development in applicable curricula and according to the cross-curricular principle, in the curricula or programmes of educational institutions and organisations at all levels in order to develop basic spatial literacy and stimulate the creative potential of architectural design in the entire school population.**
- **Provide basic/additional vocational education and training of professionals in education to deliver educational topics and carry out educational activities on the topic of spatial literacy and sustainable development.**
- **Promote the harmonisation of higher education and doctoral study programmes in this field in a way that eliminates the duplication of competences and strengthens the smart specialisation of research topics within doctoral studies, and at the state level, optimises the number of enrolments to study programmes related to planning and designing developments.**
- **Merge networks of various educational, professional and civil society institutions for comprehensive lifelong learning of spatial culture and architecture (online learning, combined learning, distance learning etc.).**



List of photographs

- cover_ Ljubljana, Climbing Center, Elea iC, 2012
01_ Ljubljana, Central Market, Jože Plečnik, 1942
02_ Srednja vas in Bohinj, Planina Zajamniki
03_ Ljubljana, Tivoli Park - Jakopič promenade, Jože Plečnik, 1933
04_ Piran, Tartini Square
05_ Ljubljana, Republic Square, TR3, Edvard Ravnikar, 1976
06_ Ljubljana, The Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sadar+Vuga d. o. o., 1999
07_ Izola, Housing for the elderly and activities center Izola, Gužič Trplan arhitekti, 2017
08_ Planica, Planica skijumping centre, Abiro, 2011
09_ Bled, Forestfairies, Glamping Bled, Marjeta Fendre in Peter Ličen, 2012
10_ Ljubljana, Balconyapartments 1, Multiplan arhitekti, 2014
11_ Poljčane, Kindergarten, Modular arhitekti, 2014
12_ Ljubljana, Bridge Mali graben, 3biro, 2015
13_ Koper, The observing platform in nature resort Škocjanski zatok, Ravnikar Potokar arhitekturni biro, 2016
14_ Izola, Enota, 2015
15_ Koper, Church of St. Francis, Elea iC, 2014
16_ Brežice, Kindergarten Mavrica, Breda Bizjak (BB arhitekti), Lidija Dragišić (Studio 360), Katja Florjanc, Emir Jelkič, Ajda Vogelink Saje, 2014
17_ Brdo near Kranj, National Football Centre, Arhitektura Krušec, 2016

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