

# CONFERENCE TOPIC

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ARCHITECTURE  
IS AN INNOCENCE  
THAT ELEVATES US  
TO BECOME  
BETTER PEOPLE.

We feel we are at the start of new dimensions of our profession. The increase in scale and the overlapping of disciplines in the fields of architecture – urbanism – landscape architecture in current practice needs to be reflected in current education.

#### TOPIC

The traces of cultural and non-cultural human activity on landscapes and cities have increasingly impressed themselves on the face of the Earth. The consequences of the past 150 years are serious, and have brought us to the start of a new era. Nature and the landscape – not only the built environment – are becoming the object of a consciously planned and regulated landscape-creation, with a balanced proportion of use, care and protection. In Europe, a wilderness is not, and never can be, a true wilderness, but “only” a deliberately planned unregulated area whose extent and regulation level have been the subject of social agreement. All of Europe is becoming a regulated and consciously shaped territory. The increasing value of carefully planned landscape and built environment will require an increasing number of experts trained to tackle these large scale hybrid tasks and projects.

With the growing capacity and intensity of our possibilities to change the world, there is an increase in the scale of our interventions and influences on the environment, accompanied by the almost limitless communication connectivity of society in the physical and virtual spheres. The Earth has grown, in relative terms, smaller- yet in contrast, the problems associated with it are growing larger. Globalisation provides a global extent and format for problems on the macro and micro scales, such as global warming, water management, sustainable development of cities and landscapes, the “development” of transportation, migration and assimilation, etc., in an ever more troubling and unignorable form. This increase in scale and the overlapping of disciplines in the fields of architecture – urbanism – landscape architecture in current practice needs to be reflected in current education.

#### QUESTIONS

- 1— Role of the architect  
How do the new dimensions of our profession – increasing scale and overlapping disciplines – impact our understanding of the role of the architect in society and in the design process?
- 2— Universality of architectural education  
How can we safeguard the principle of universality of architectural education in the context of the increasing complexity of our profession?
- 3— Overlapping disciplines  
How should architectural education prepare students for the new dimensions of our profession in the environment of increasing scale and overlapping disciplines?

Recalling the shared as well as divergent attributes and conditions for practicing architecture as a profession, as well as the process of education and training for it at the present moment, attention is turned to the reflections and questions that we have termed the "New Dimensions" – the current and the future conditions for architectural practice and education in all areas influencing the built and landscape(d) environments, thanks to our continually increasing possibilities and influences and the no less continually shrinking Earth.

At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, architects began to address not only the problems of the energy crisis, the awareness of the limits of growth and the influence of unsustainable growth on the environment, but also the gradual enlargement of the European space, the emergence of globalisation and the increasing scale of project assignments. With the expansion of the borders of the EU, there emerged a need to set standards for recognising qualifications, as well as for the harmonisation of education and professional practice in the field of architecture.

All these factors led to the initiation of a discussion that, in 1985, had the outcome of anchoring the system of requirements for recognition of architectural qualifications in Directive 85/384/EEC, outlining the setting for the university training of architects in participating European countries. The accord for the creation and contents of the directive, which in outline were assumed by the globally binding UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice and the Principles for Issuing Accreditation and Recognising Qualifications, arising from the joint efforts of professional organisations and associations such as ACE, UIA/UNESCO, and later by ACETA or associations in the academic sphere such as EAAE.

### HARMONISING THE EDUCATION

When, subsequently, the education ministers of the European Union member states in 1999 signed the Bologna Declaration with the aim of harmonising the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), these two steps meant the creation of the basic principles of the current system, content and form for architectural study programmes in Europe's countries. In preparing the directives and the subsequent discussions on the updating of requirements reflecting development in the profession and its training, and in finding the balance between the needs of practice and the academic sphere, that the essence of universality and complexity in the education of architects is the now somewhat unique idea of specialisation in generality and complexity.

In the course of later discussions on updating Directive 85/384/EEC, to match new needs and challenges such as sustainable development, computer design and realisation or sustainability, the general character of the directive and the breadth of required attributes led to architectural education receiving less attention during the restructuring of the document. Only a few words were added, and the common theme of discussions and memoranda primarily remained an aim to extend the required minimum length of study from 4 to 5 years, which was achieved by 2013.

The education of architects must continually reflect and react to the "New Dimensions" of the profession and the role of the architect in society. It must seek out recommendations and formulate principles for paying attention to current developments, with regard to the increasing interconnectedness and overlapping of the profession and training of architects, urban designers and landscape architects.

It has become necessary to pose anew the most basic questions concerning the change of the architect's role in society, the maintenance of the principle of the universality of architectural training, and the method of educating architects in an environment of increasing scale and disciplinary overlap between architecture, urbanism and landscape.

#### THE SITUATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In the Czech Republic, the practice of the profession and education in the fields of architecture and urbanism is connected in the programmes "Architecture and Urbanism" at the faculties of both technical universities and art schools. Since 2015 a programme in "Landscape Architecture" has also been offered by the Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University, thus allowing the institution to provide training in all areas of the built and unbuilt environments: architecture, urban planning, landscape and environmental design.

These programmes are based on the conception of a shared common environment in the Faculty of Architecture, involving both pedagogues and students. Our aim has been, and remains, the creation within the Faculty of a space where our graduates will be able to experience open communication between professionals for the built and the landscaped environments in actual practice. Our interest also lies in a possible further stage of educational harmonisation, not only in the area of architecture and planning, but in the inclusion of landscape architecture as well.

We have made steps to incorporate these new dimensions into our education and want to share and discuss our experiences in order to create common new horizons for the training of architects, urban designers and landscape architects that would correspond to the increase in scale and the overlapping of disciplines in the fields of architecture – urbanism – landscape architecture in the 21st century. As we term it, this is the "new dimension of our profession".



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