

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 12 February 2001

on architectural quality in urban and rural environments

(2001/C 73/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Desirous of improving the quality of the day-to-day environment in the life of European citizens,

I.

1. RECALLING the objectives assigned to the European Community under Article 151 of the Treaty;
2. RECALLING Directive 85/384/EEC⁽¹⁾, which states in particular that 'architecture, the quality of buildings, the way in which they blend in with their surroundings, respect for the natural and urban environment and the collective and individual cultural heritage are matters of public concern';
3. RECALLING the Council Conclusions of 10 November 1994 on the Commission communication concerning European Community action to promote culture⁽²⁾;
4. RECALLING the Council Conclusions of 21 June 1994 on the cultural and artistic aspects of education⁽³⁾;
5. RECALLING the Council Resolution of 4 April 1995 on culture and the multimedia⁽⁴⁾;
6. RECALLING the Council Conclusions of 17 December 1999 on the culture industries and employment in Europe⁽⁵⁾;
7. TAKING NOTE of the Presidency conclusions of the informal meeting of Environment Ministers in Oporto on 15 and 16 April 2000, which emphasise the importance of the quality of built-up areas;
8. NOTING the holding on 10 and 11 July 2000 of a European Architectural Policies Forum which brought together representatives of the professions and authorities in charge of architectural matters in the fifteen Member States;
9. WELCOMING the Community and intergovernmental discussions which have taken place for a number of years on architectural heritage and the built, spatial and social environment, and more especially:
 - (a) the fifth research and development framework programme (RDFP) which, for the first time, incorporates a 'key action' on the theme of 'the city of tomorrow and cultural heritage' and addresses the issue of establishing a good-quality building environment;
 - (b) the 'Framework for action: sustainable urban development in the European Union' submitted by the Commission, which includes the preservation and improvement of building quality as an objective of the European Union;
 - (c) the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), which evokes the concept of 'creative management of the architectural heritage', including contemporary architecture, in an approach to preserving the cultural and architectural heritage.

HEREBY AFFIRMS THAT:

- (a) architecture is a fundamental feature of the history, culture and fabric of life of each of our countries; that it represents an essential means of artistic expression in the daily life of citizens and that it constitutes the heritage of tomorrow;
- (b) architectural quality is a constituent part of both the rural and urban environment;
- (c) the cultural dimension and the quality of the physical treatment of space should be taken into account in Community regional and cohesion policies;

⁽¹⁾ Council Directive 85/384/EEC of 10 June 1985 on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal requirements in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services (OJ L 223, 21.8.1985, p. 15).

⁽²⁾ OJ C 348, 9.12.1994, p. 4.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 229, 18.8.1994, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 247, 23.9.1995, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 8, 12.1.2000, p. 10.

(d) architecture is an intellectual, cultural, artistic and professional activity. Architectural service therefore is a professional service which is both cultural and economic.

HEREBY EXPRESSES ITS ATTACHMENT TO:

(a) the common characteristics shared by European towns and cities, such as the importance of historical continuity, the quality of public areas, the social mix and the richness of urban diversity;

(b) the fact that good quality architecture, by improving the living context and the relationship between citizens and their environment, whether rural or urban, can contribute effectively towards social cohesion and job creation, the promotion of cultural tourism and regional economic development.

II.

HEREBY ENCOURAGES THE MEMBER STATES TO:

(a) intensify their efforts to improve the knowledge and promotion of architecture and urban design, and to make contracting authorities and the general public more aware of and better trained in appreciation of architectural, urban and landscape culture;

(b) take into account the specific nature of architectural service in the decisions and measures which require it;

(c) promote architectural quality by means of exemplary public building policies;

(d) foster the exchange of information and experience in the field of architecture.

III.

CALLS ON THE COMMISSION TO:

(a) ensure that architectural quality and the specific nature of architectural service are taken into consideration in all its policies, measures and programmes;

(b) seek, in consultation with the Member States and in accordance with the rules governing the Structural Funds, ways and means of ensuring in the application of those funds a wider consideration of architectural quality and the conservation of cultural heritage;

(c) in the context of existing programmes:

— foster measures to promote, disseminate and raise awareness of architectural and urban cultures with due respect for cultural diversity,

— facilitate cooperation and networking between institutions devoted to upgrading cultural heritage and architecture, and support incipient European-scale events,

— encourage, in particular, the training and mobility of students and professionals and thus promote the dissemination of good practice;

(d) keep the Council informed of the implementation of such measures.