

## Final Recommendations

### European Forum for Architectural Policies Hamburg, 27 April 2007

#### Preamble

Integrated urban development is one of the key issues of the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2007. The European Forum for Architectural Policies (EFAP) is taking this an opportunity to draw attention to *Baukultur* (building culture)<sup>1</sup> as a component of integrated urban policy and, in particular, as a contribution to sustainable urban development, thereby forging a link to the Council resolution of 12 February 2001 on architectural quality in urban and rural environments [OJ C 73, 6.3.2001, p. 6].

Based on the results and recommendations set out in the study entitled “*Baukultur* as an Impetus for Growth – Examples of Good Practice for Europe”, which was presented in Hamburg, the European Forum for Architectural Policies wishes to **emphasize**

1. that *Baukultur* is to be understood in the broadest sense of the term, as the sum of all the cultural, economic, technological, social and ecological aspects influencing the quality of planning and construction. The term *Baukultur* describes how society deals with the built environment, its planning and use, its preservation and evolution. *Baukultur* links aspects such as urban and landscape planning, urban development, architecture, civil engineering, infrastructure planning, heritage conservation, design, the construction industry and planning processes to form a whole. It covers the results of building activity as well as the processes that lead to these results;
2. that the quality and diversity of *Baukultur* contributes to the identity of European towns and cities and hence to development in Europe. *Baukultur* preserves, respects and develops the architectural heritage. There is a direct link between the quality of *Baukultur* and the development of towns and cities, given that it can make an effective contribution to social cohesion, to defining identity and to the cultural and economic development of a town or city;
3. that *Baukultur* is an integral component of a sustainable urban development policy. Sustainable urban development is characterized not only by an appropriate balance between economic, social and ecological development, but also by the quality of its buildings and spaces. This quality can be a locational factor for businesses and act as a magnet for knowledge workers, for families, citizens and visitors from a wide variety of backgrounds. Likewise, the processes that lead to these qualities make a contribution to integration, peaceful coexistence and to a positive economic, cultural and social development of European society;
4. that *Baukultur* is both a factor of economic policy and a tool for promoting social cohesion. A high quality of *Baukultur* encourages people to identify with their town or

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<sup>1</sup> The term *Baukultur* ("building culture") describes the process of developing the built environment and our approach to it. It includes planning, building, refurbishment and maintenance. *Baukultur* is indivisible. Not limited to architecture, it embraces construction, engineering, urban and regional planning, landscape architecture as well as public art. The quality of *Baukultur* results from the degree to which all of society feels responsible for the built environment and its maintenance (Building culture in Germany, BMVBS 2001).

city and increases its functionality and development prospects. In particular, the quality of infrastructure, public buildings and public spaces are important factors in creating new neighbourhoods, preserving existing neighbourhoods and improving the situation in deprived areas. In this context, comprehensive consultation procedures, in particular, help residents and users to identify positively with their town or city.

5. that strengthening *Baukultur* will make a contribution not only to implementing the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy [Decision of the European Council of 15/16 June 2006, No 10117/06, Presidency Conclusions], but also to implementing the revitalized Lisbon Strategy [Presidency Conclusions (Council Meeting in Lisbon on 23/24 March 2000); Presidency Conclusions (Council Meeting in Brussels on 22/23 March 2005)] and must therefore, alongside cultural policy, increasingly also be taken into account as a cross-cutting issue in all relevant areas of European policy, especially economic, competition and single market policy, as well as regional and environmental policy.

#### The European Forum for Architectural Policies **requests**

6. the **European Union Ministers responsible for urban and spatial development** to take note of the recommendations submitted by the European Forum for Architectural Policies and to take the importance of *Baukultur* for sustainable urban development into account in the Charter on Sustainable European Cities and in the conclusions they adopt at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion to be held in Leipzig on 24/25 May 2007;
7. the **Council of the European Union**, in the light of the EFAP's recommendations of 27 June 2005, to invite the European Commission to report on the implementation of the measures called for in its Resolution of 12 February 2001 on architectural quality in urban and rural environments [OJ C 73 of 6.3.2007, p. 6].

#### The European Forum for Architectural Policies **recommends**

8. that the competent government agencies in the **Member States of the European Union** strengthen the importance of *Baukultur* as a cross-cutting issue in the policy areas mentioned in paragraph 5 above and, when taking European policy decisions, pay particular attention to the impact of European economic, competition and single market policy as well as regional and environment policy on *Baukultur*. Particular emphasis should be placed on strengthening *Baukultur* as a contribution to sustainable urban development, as a factor in structural assistance and as a topic for research;
9. that the **Member States of the European Union** actively further expand the exchange of experience and knowledge among themselves on questions of *Baukultur* and also integrate the accession countries into the process. Alongside the European EUKN (European Urban Knowledge Network) and URBACT networks, the EFAP provides a suitable framework as an informal platform for the exchange of experience.