

Charter of  
Spanish  
Architecture  
2015





# Charter of Spanish Architecture 2015

*The future that awaits Spanish architecture will be different.*

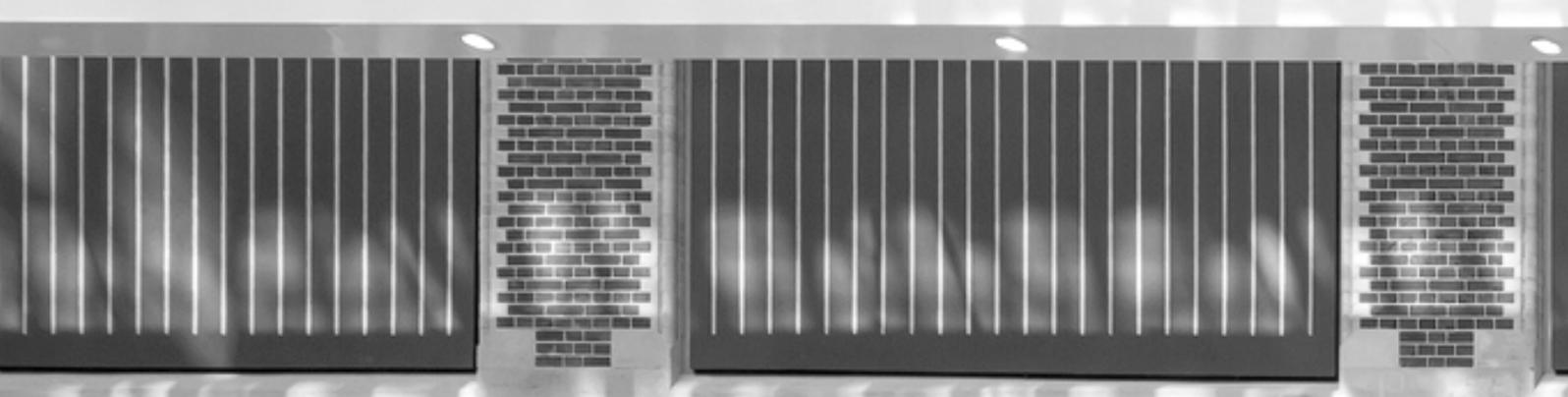
*We therefore need new ideas and attitudes that can help us to overcome the current situation and promote the recovery of the role that architecture has played in the Spanish, European and global context. The quality and recognition of Spain's architecture guarantee its ability to take on this role, the consequences of which will be borne by our architects.*

*We must make a strong commitment to renewal and quality. This requires dedication and energy, while at the same time having to cope with financial difficulties. The solutions cannot wait. The architecture sector runs the risk of being permanently condemned to deeper levels of cultural, social and economic marginalization, dragging down with it the entire Spanish social habitat.*

*The lessons learned from other European countries such as France and Germany show that the recognition and appreciation of architecture merits a replica in Spain. The benefits will undoubtedly be felt in terms of social welfare, economic output and cohesion with Europe.*

For all these reasons, Spanish society needs —and its architectural institutions demand—  
measures to promote:

**The recovery of the sector's economic base**  
**Quality housing, urban planning and public spaces**  
**A competitive professional structure**  
**A solid cultural base**  
**A strong, independent civil society**



# The recovery of the sector's economic base

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We have seen that the construction industry cannot and must not be the driving force of the Spanish economy. Nor is it acceptable that it accounts for less than 5% of the GDP.

A reasonable level is the European average, around 9%. This goal should be set by whichever government is in power with a relatively short-term horizon, not more than three years.

## ***Demands by Spanish architecture***

1. Stimulate credit flow in the sector.
2. Encourage building renovation in the context of the right to adequate housing and the implementation of integrated urban renewal programmes which cover homogeneous areas (districts).
3. Promote comprehensive architectural initiatives focused on structural safety, habitability, accessibility, energy saving and the heritage values of buildings, on the basis of architectural projects.
4. Promote the decisions of a Special Senate Committee which, like the French National Assembly, conducts a comprehensive analyses of the architecture sector and drafts proposals for improvements, thinking in terms of citizens, cities and the broader territory.
5. Propose a Social Pact for Construction, Housing and Employment like the one promoted by the Architects' Guild in Huelva, aimed recovering employment in the construction sector and improving the quality of life in our suburbs.

## ***To achieve these objectives, Spanish architecture can provide:***

1. Improved legal and technological quality of architectural projects through the application of the CSCAE Quality Manual.
2. Ongoing professional training programmes for architects with a view to reorienting the sector towards the improvement of previously constructed buildings.
3. Involvement of the Architects' Guilds in the process of streamlining building permit processing in order to avoid duplicated controls and reduce financial costs.
4. Promote a more competitive business network for professional architectural services, in both large companies and small firms.

# Quality housing, planning and public spaces

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Urban planning, housing and public spaces (streets, squares, parks and facilities), are the natural domain of architecture. Our architecture is a framework for citizens' everyday lives. Its undeniable importance therefore requires its responsible application. In particular, the configuration of our public spaces is a matter of public interest that must be managed by impeccable tendering procedures. Project tendering procedures are not only a legal imperative. They are also the fairest, most equitable and reliable way to adjudicate the definition of public spaces. The regeneration of our cities requires a fresh type of urban planning.

## ***Demands by Spanish architecture:***

1. The systematic use of architectural project competitions as prescribed by EU Directives. Stringent competitions that clearly define the contractual, functional and economic conditions require strict compliance, with the final selection criteria based on quality.
2. Elimination of auctions or procurement procedures based solely on costs, without taking quality into account. This inevitably leads to poor results, budgetary slippage and transparency issues, as we are now seeing one day after another.
3. Regulated guidance procedures for each type of contract and quality specifications for projects.
4. Reformulation of the basic premises of urban planning.

## ***To achieve these objectives, Spanish architecture can provide:***

1. Obligatory compliance by tender winners with the initial conditions, in particular with the stipulated final cost and the functional utility of the project.
2. Efforts within the guild to eradicate dumping and breaches of public contracts.
3. Specific proposals to improve architecture-related aspects of the Public Sector Contracts Act.
4. Participation in the drafting of project tender conditions, including compulsory quality standards and the prevention of reckless underbidding.
5. Active participation by architects in urban renewal processes.

# A competitive professional network

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The recovery of a skilled, competitive professional network able to work in Spain and abroad is incompatible with the current market conditions for architectural services, characterized by uninformed demand and vulnerable supply, a lack of a transparent negotiating framework and ignorance of the value-for-money factor.

## ***Demands by Spanish architecture:***

1. Defence, development and implementation of the Construction Planning Act (LOE), particularly with regard to triennial responsibility and liability.
2. Avoid the identification of competitiveness with apparent cheapness and the supply of undetermined services at prices that are incompatible with quality. Avoid the conceptual confusion between the market for consumer goods and the market for professional services.
3. Define procedures that allow recipients of professional services to access the market with sufficient information and transparency.
4. Facilitate the establishment of larger corporations, while at the same time fostering quality and competitiveness in small and medium sized companies.
5. A similar fee structure to the German HOAI in order to ensure dignified rates for providers of architectural services.

## ***To achieve these objectives, Spanish architecture can provide:***

1. The implementation of a Quality Plan for architectural projects at the design and construction stages.
2. Promote and participate in the Ministry of Development's task force on exporting architecture.
3. Propose updates and improvements to the Technical Code and the Construction Planning Act, including the integration of the architectural project as a technical document.
4. Specialized training for architects and promotion of their access to new salaried or self-employed posts.

## A solid cultural base

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Architecture is a major asset of our collective culture. As many European Union documents point out, it is a cultural creation. Protection of authorship is an essential aspect of any strategy that seeks to gain respect and consideration for cultural objects. Unfortunately, the architectural discipline lacks any type of legal recognition by the Parliament of Spain, in contrast to the strategies adopted by the parliaments of other European countries, which are actively engaged in the defence of architecture and its heritage value. In Spain, architects' guilds, schools of architecture and architecture foundations have taken on the difficult, meritorious task of documenting, archiving and disseminating architecture for the public. These bodies form an insufficiently recognized cultural network.

### ***Demands by Spanish architecture:***

1. Recognition of architecture and its social and cultural values through a Parliamentary declaration or an Architecture Act such as those under debate in Catalonia and Andalusia.
2. Support for the archival, cultural and informational work of the architecture guilds, schools and foundations.
3. Recognition of intellectual property rights over constructions, albeit with the logical limitations required by their public nature.
4. Changes to public procurement policies.

### ***To achieve these objectives, Spanish architecture can provide:***

1. Ongoing dissemination and promotion of architecture through initiatives for the general public (exhibitions, publications, awards and competitions, World Architecture Day, etc.) by architecture schools, guilds, foundations and business initiatives.
2. Collaboration with the Ministry of Development in the organisation of the Spanish Architecture and Urban Planning Biennale (BEAU), the Ibero-American Architecture and Urban Planning Biennale (BIAU) and EUROPAN.

## A strong, independent civil society

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The professional guilds are an essential part of civil society, but the legislation that regulates them is obsolete to some extent. Our institutions must adapt their structures and the guilds' legal and statutory framework to the current needs of an industry in the process of radical change.

### ***Demands by Spanish architecture:***

1. Support by the public administration in the form of legal measures to facilitate the renewal and technological modernization of the architects' guilds. This urgent requirement is currently faced with obstacles of all kinds, many of them external. Support is also required to resolve the decapitalisation of architecture institutions.
2. Financial support for architecture schools, foundations and guilds.
3. Publication of the Higher Council of Architects' Guilds Statute amendments in the Government Gazette.

### ***To achieve these objectives, Spanish architecture can provide:***

1. A determined effort by the architects' guilds to adapt their structures to the economic capacity of architects and the needs of a dynamic, changing society.

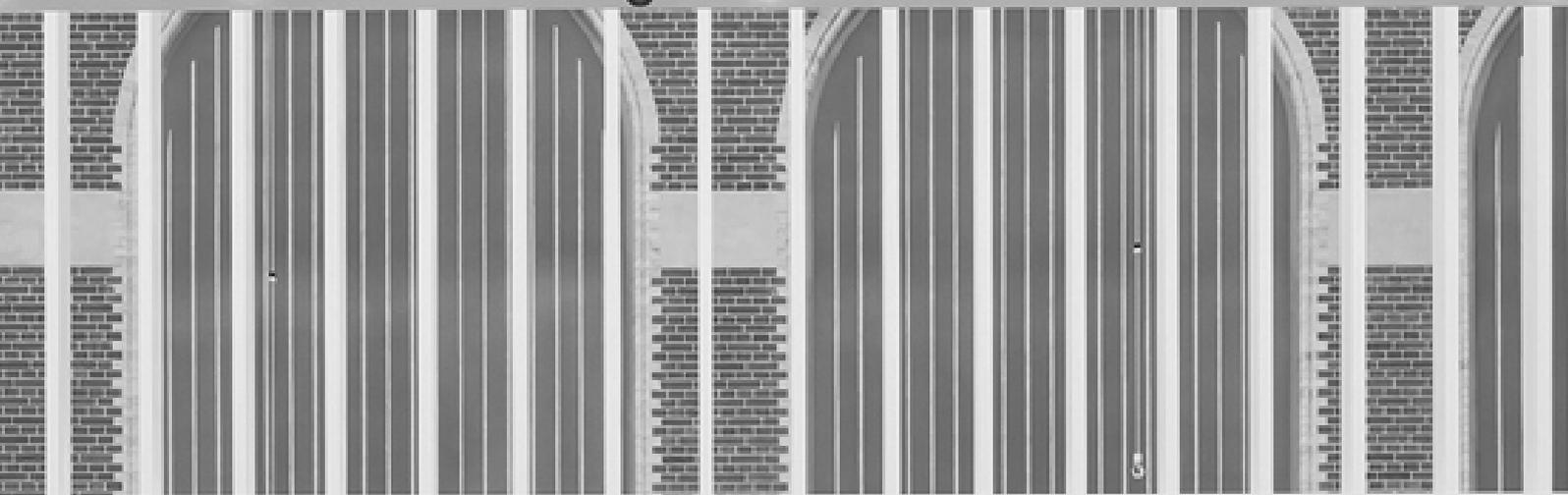


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