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### *European Schools of Architecture – the way ahead, a few thoughts*

The EAAE is the forum where European Architecture Schools exchange information and experiences on architectural education and research. As such it has to deal with a considerable variety of member institutions in a time characterized by constant and unpredictable changes. Our cities and regions are confronted by a wide variety of spatial-social issues, such as the increase in urban population, climate adaptation, or making the existing stock of real estate sustainable, while global socio-political uncertainties are pushing many challenges a step further. The consequences of these issues need to be deeply investigated and understood at different scale levels and throughout various viewpoints, particularly when devising future transformations.

The above-mentioned conditions must be considered and reflected in the academic environment. Here the aim should be to find a workable balance between long-term perspectives and attention to what is currently taking place in society, in practice' and at the university. The EAAE member schools are leading institutions in the built environment area of knowledge and expertise and in this framework their task is pivotal: to take care of current and next generation of built environment professionals, providing sound academic, integrated and interdisciplinary training in which spatial and technological innovations can be kept in balance with the understanding of places and surroundings, of identity and culture.

Moreover, in the 21st century students and alumni will continue to learn throughout their lives. Life-long learning is therefore an additional challenge that our institutions need to put and keep on the map. In order to do so, we have to acquire more knowledge about how students study, how teachers teach, and how to strengthen participation, engagement, and mutual exchanges also after the regular course of study. Forms of blended learning, combining online and campus-based teaching, will increasingly be shaping the basis of future learning environments. All this has to take place while internationalization will continue to influence many of the involved institutions, along with their student and teaching populations. In terms of strategy as well as content, education and research are therefore both challenged more than ever to navigate between the international academic environment and the connections to local culture and context.

Some relevant and down-on-earth questions may help us move forward, also concerning the challenges pointed out here above. Here in a row: how do we see the future of our degree programs in 10-15 years time? Where do we see new opportunities? Are we taking sufficient account of the academic and professional ambitions of the future? Is this also the case in light of our international ambitions? Do we consider the offer of courses in our schools still to be up to date? Is there a need for new MSc programs? Is the relation with practice still sound? And how do such ideas relate to the organization structure and the financial position of the particular schools? There may be indeed other issues that could be added to this list. In any case, to find answers to these questions, discussions are pivotal and the EAAE is certainly the appropriate place to exchange experiences and best practices.

### *Personal statement*

Next to education and research, I've always had a particular interest in development and coordination tasks with special attention to the relationship between academia and practice. In the course of the years, I've been involved in organizing and leading many events, conferences, symposia, and workshops. Many of these activities were the base for publications and further developments in research and education. My opinion is that both the results of design and research must be used as a breeding ground for discussions about the future of our discipline with various parties so that opportunities for cooperation can also arise outside academia.

I've started my academic career as a teacher from practice and I've been engaging with all types of duties within the university, getting to know from several angles the way such an academic institution is functioning. For years I've combined the work in practice with university teaching and researching; although not easy in terms of time, I've learned a lot from this mutual exchange, enabling me to transfer knowledge to students and vice versa. Furthermore, I've had the opportunity to be the responsible coordinator for the Architecture study program for some years, taking care a.o. of renewal actions and their strategic communication but also of accreditation processes and exit qualifications. From 2014 until the end of 2019, I worked as Vice Dean of Education at the Faculty of Architecture & the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology. In this position, I had the opportunity to lead several strategic activities expanding beyond the TU Delft and engaging as well with colleagues from other disciplines in various national and international education and research events. Next to it, I'm also an active member of ARENA (Architectural Research European Network Association) where I'm part of the editorial board of the journal AJAR and co-editor of the symposium series DR\_SoM (Design Research Series on Methods).

In the first term as a council member, I've been actively representing the EAAE in several actions, collaborations, discussions, and conferences reaching out to and involving many of our network members. Remarkable is the active participation in the NEBC (New European Bauhaus Collective), including the international NEBC conference of 2021, and the work as lead partner for the CA2RE+ project, in the framework of which I've been leading the last conference held in Delft in March 2022. Moreover, I've developed a number of services for our network, such as setting up a renewed publication strategy along with the new open and online EAAE publishing platform. Worth mentioning is also the involvement on behalf of the EAAE in a few Horizon projects - one of which, DigiNEB, just got selected for the grant negotiation phase. All these actions are in the course of further development and will be beneficial for many member schools.

Therefore, also for the continuation and consolidation of the above-mentioned activities, I would like to carry on with my position as an EAAE council member. I'm confident that with my multi-faceted experience I will continue to be an added value to the EAAE network and the achievement of its strategic objectives.