Publicat a *COL·LEGI D'ARQUITECTES DE CATALUNYA* (http://coac.arquitectes.cat)

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Appearance of the dean before the Catalan Parliament to talk about the Architecture Act

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On Wednesday, 1 March, the dean of the Architects? Association of Catalonia, Lluís Comerón, appeared before the Regional Commission of the Catalan Parliament to put forward the COAC?s view of the content of the draft bill for the Architecture Act.

In his presentation, the dean emphasised the importance of having the optimum legal framework to help construct a better future for our cities. Giving a historical overview, he reiterated the important role that public authorities have played throughout the years in helping to transform and improve our urban heritage. Nevertheless, it is a fact that these days collective instruments and the prevalence of economic criteria have positioned quality and the resources for achieving it as non-priority values, putting an emphasis on short-term results and thus mortgaging our future generations.

As Comerón explained, the clear objective of the bill is to establish and define the public interest in architecture as a fundamental element of social cohesion and well-being. It sets out the measures for the dissemination, promotion and education of architectural quality, such as the creation of the Architectural Quality Council of Catalonia, the Catalunya d?Arquitectura award, and the promotion of specific local policies.

In the sphere of public procurement, it envisages the instruments whereby public authorities, within the framework of the Law on state contracts, can guarantee exemplary actions and tender procedures: with measures to ensure that criteria of architectural quality are always given precedence; promoting continuity between project and site management, the balanced composition of tender panels, procedures that facilitate the access of young qualified people to the profession, and establishing guidelines for calculating tender prices when preparing projects.

Finally, the dean thanked the various institutions and associations that represent the professional collectives directly involved in the development of architectural projects for their contributions and participation.

Response to parliamentary parties
In response to the questions put forward by representatives of the different parliamentary parties, Comerón commented on the following points:
- The **utility, significance and reason** for the Architecture Act, which enshrines a value that is not covered by other current legislation: the general interest in architecture.
- **The contribution to reducing job insecurity**, raising awareness of the value of architecture.
- **The need to highlight the value of architectural quality, disseminating and transmitting it** so the general public are provided with grounded reasons to help them appreciate buildings, public spaces, cities, etc., not using investment values as a criterion, but rather how they improve our way of life.
- **The importance of improving public procurement processes**, promoting the ?two rounds? system and providing the tools to ensure that the economic criterion is not the prevalent one.

Presentations from other associations Apart from the dean of the COAC, representatives from the Associations of Civil Engineers; Industrial Engineers; Economists; Quantity Surveyors; Industrial Engineering Technicians and Public Works Engineers also presented their standpoint in respect of the future law. In this respect, the Associations of Industrial Engineers and Graduate Industrial Technicians expressed their opposition to the law, calling for the withdrawal of the bill. On the other hand, the Associations of Quantity Surveyors and Public Works Technicians were clearly in favour of it.

Hearings
You can view the statements of the different institutions and associations on the Canal Parliament website.
- Hearing on 15 February: The La Col Architects? Cooperative, Arquitectes per l'Arquitectura (AxA), the Architecture and Sustainability Group of the Architects? Association (AUS), the Urban Architects? Group of the Architects? Association (AAUC), the Council of Schools of Architecture of Catalonia, the Federation of Municipalities of Catalonia and the Catalan Association of Municipalities. View here [2].
- Hearing on 1 March: Architects? Association of Catalonia, Associations of Civil Engineers, Industrial Engineers, Economists, Quantity Surveyors, Industrial Engineering Technicians and

Public Works Engineers. (Not yet available) View here **Veure aquí**

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