



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

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PRESS RELEASE

**No 'green shoots' yet for the architectural profession in the economic recession, says ACE**

**Brussels: 14 October 2009: The Architects' Council of Europe's (ACE<sup>1</sup>) Survey on the impact of the economic crisis on Europe's architectural profession, shows that the worst might still be to come for architects, despite some timid, positive signs of recovery. The Survey, published this September, shows that over a third of all architectural offices in Europe have laid off staff since September 2008, and there could be more lay offs later this year.**

According to the ACE's Survey, architects are slightly less pessimistic than last year, and there is a small, but rising trend of optimism. For example, in April 65% of architects felt pessimistic about the future, but by this September this had dropped to 56%. While 12% believe their workload will decrease significantly over the next three months, 22% expect a small increase in work.

The recent Survey, the third carried out by the ACE since March 2009, shows that the architectural profession may begin to see the end of the negative effects of the economic crisis sometime in 2010.

However, when mixed with indications from individual European Union Member States it appears that the effect of the economic crisis on architects' offices varies considerably across regions. In certain countries (for example, Ireland, Poland, Hungary and Spain) the profession anticipates the situation will deteriorate further over the next three months, whereas in others (For example, Germany, Finland, the UK and Austria), architects anticipate an improvement. Unfortunately, the regions where the situation is expected to deteriorate outweigh those which anticipate improvements.

Overall the Survey reveals that 37% of architects' offices have shed staff since September 2008, and 21% expect to make further redundancies in the coming three months. However, the picture is slightly more optimistic in terms of anticipated workload, as 24% of architects' offices are optimistic about taking on more work, a 14% increase since April, and the percentage of those who are pessimistic has dropped from 48% to 43%.

In private housing which accounts for 45% of their workload, 16% of architects feel optimistic about the future (up from 11% in April) and 45% feel pessimism about future work – down from 68%. The changes in levels of pessimism and optimism in the field of commercial work, which accounts for 23% of architects' workload, follow a similar trend.

ACE is carrying out these quarterly online surveys to assess the impact of the economic crisis on Europe's architectural profession, and will continue to do so as they help predict the end of the crisis by detecting an increase in optimism and in expectations for an increase in the workload. Their value extends beyond the architectural profession itself, as this profession is recognised as a key indicator of economic health and of the effects of a crisis, so an increase in the construction industry's order books is a sign of economic recovery.

The results of the most recent survey this September have been compiled for publication, and 'weighted' to ensure statistical reliability, although the survey takes the form of an opinion poll.

For full information on the survey please contact Adrian Joyce, Senior Adviser:  
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To download a presentation of the results of the survey go to:  
[http://www.ace-cae.org/docs/aceinfo/overview/Third\\_Econ\\_Survey\\_Sept\\_09.pdf](http://www.ace-cae.org/docs/aceinfo/overview/Third_Econ_Survey_Sept_09.pdf)

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<sup>1</sup> The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) is the European organisation representing the architectural profession at European level. Its headquarters and Secretariat are located in Brussels. Its growing membership consists of Member Organisations, which are the nationally representative regulatory and professional bodies of all European Union (EU) Member States, Accession States, Switzerland and Norway. Through them, it represents the interests of about 480,000 architects. The principal function of the ACE is to monitor developments at EU level, seeking to influence those areas of EU Policy and legislation that have an impact on architectural practice and on the overall quality and sustainability of the built environment.