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SADAS - PEA Announcement for the Architectural Competitions

The Board of Association of Greek Architects (SADAS - PEA), defending the timeless scientific principle that:

"The design of the wider public space, the common areas and the buildings, are related to the quality of life and are a public asset". SADAS – PEA considers that as a public asset it should result from procedures that cannot be questioned. At the level of architectural and urban planning, the only process accepted internationally, according to the UIA - UNESCO, is that of the "Architectural Competitions".

The current institutional framework, with many ambiguities and the possibility of deviations, had the effect of significantly reducing the cases of Architectural Competitions.

Bodies, Organizations and Administration, do projects bypassing the process of Architectural Competitions, arguing about the bureaucratic process and any delays in the completion of the project. Thus, often the circumvention of the established procedures was made for the purpose of self-promotion or self-service. -donors, to the detriment of the public interest. For this reason, they consider the procedure of Architectural Design Competitions "to be avoided" on the grounds of urgency.

Many projects (the Big Walk of Athens, Omonia, Elliniko, Panepistimiou str., Acropolis etc), are carried out without Architectural Competitions. The natural consequence is that these works are under constant scientific challenge and often social rejection. Nonetheless, this causes cultural damage while questioning the importance of architectural design.

Throughout the ages, SADAS – PEA tries to contribute to the formation of a modern institutional framework, taking into account the UIA - UNESCO directives and the adaptation of Greek legislation to the provisions of the European Community Directives.

The Association has proposed substantial solutions to the Ministry of Environment for a Regulation - Institutional Framework, which concerns the national procedures for conducting Architectural Competitions, the object, the types, the declaration, the judgement, the phases of their conduct, the rights and obligations of the host of the competition and competitors.

These proposals were recorded, in 2019/2020, in a draft of a formal working group for the drafting of a Ministerial Decision that would concern the institutional framework for the Architectural Competitions.

In this plan the principles, conditions and procedures for conducting Architectural Competitions were set out and it was recognized that the Design Competitions with awards are a very important process, with the aim of upgrading the public space and the built environment from an architectural, urban, aesthetic, cultural, functional, environmental and construction point of view.

Finally, after many months of waiting, the Ministerial Decision was published, on 31/05/2021, in Government Gazette 2239 / B / 21.

By adding two (2) points in par. 4 of no. 2 in the plan of the working group, the Governmental Decision drastically limits the scope of mandatory Architectural Competitions: Basically ABOLISHES them!

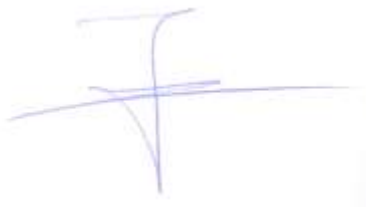
Specifically, the projects and studies are released from the obligation to conduct Architectural Competitions if *"they are included for financing in the ESPA or in the Recovery Fund or are co-financed by the European Investment Bank or implemented through Common Public and Private Projects"*. Respectively, in sub-paragraph c of paragraph 2 of the same article the projects and studies are exempted from the obligation to conduct Architectural Competitions *"Formations - renovations and design of urban equipment of free public spaces and in particular: important parks, groves and national or municipal gardens, central or historical sites areas, nature and landscape protection zones, networks of roads and sidewalks, coastal fronts of large development, etc."*, provided that *"the studies are prepared by technical services of public authority, signed by an architect and the Central Council of Architecture has given an opinion on them"*.

With these two points, the scope of application of the requirement for conducting Architectural Competitions disappears and the Decision is essentially self-abolished, because there is simply no public project without funding and a Municipality without Technical Service with an architect.

The Board of SADAS - PEA considers that the addition of these two points and the long delay in the publication of a Ministerial Decision, refer to behind-the-scenes procedures and reveal the long-standing intention of the administrators to abolish the Architectural Competitions, as an obstacle to an alleged rapid development" does not serve the public interest.

Because the Ministerial Decision offends the architectural society, bypasses meritocracy and ignores the public interest and the quality of life, it must be immediately withdrawn.

For these reasons, SADAS - PEA calls on the entire scientific and intellectual community, the Intellectual Institutions and the International Organizations to support his fair request.



Dimitris Xynomilakis
President of SADAS-PEA

