

Special Issue

QUESTIONS 4 – International Workshop in Architecture and Urban Planning
Sustainable Development and the Built Environment

FOREWORD

The present volume includes papers presented at the Fourth International Workshop in Architecture and Urban Planning, organized by the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca. Preceding the diploma-project sessions of the Faculty and the related exhibition, the workshop was organized in Cluj-Napoca (Romania) on the 23rd and 24th of June 2015 and was entitled “QUESTIONS - Sustainable Development and the Built Environment”.

Responding to the Call for Papers, scholars and PhD students/candidates, professionals in architecture and architectural higher education contributed to a refreshed understanding of sustainable development in relation to the built environment (both practice and theory), at different scales, from urban region to object of architecture and interior design. By this year’s workshop we tried to find some answers to the questions raised by today’s practice or theory in the fields of urban planning, urban design, architecture and interior design and to raise some new questions about sustainable development related to the built environment. The workshop is aimed at examining the spatial, environmental, socio-economic and cultural aspects that need to be integrated in the conceptualization of the built environment. Faced with the development of the city, urban planners and architects must first produce built environments where environmental issues are critical to the design process, integrated in such a way as to create both the well-being of human life and the welfare and protection of natural ecosystems.

The contributions were grouped according to two main topics: sustainable development and urbanism, respectively sustainable development and architecture. Further, each topic developed into three subtopics questioning different themes, as follows:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND URBANISM

• **Morpho-functional aspects**

The challenges of inner-city densification; the conversion and restructuring of urban brown-fields; smart growth and the control of urban sprawl; issues of urban ecology and urban biodiversity; planning and designing the intermodality of urban mobility.

• **Social and normative aspects**

Fostering community participation in urban development; dealing with the shrinking city syndrome; dealing with gentrification; interactions between urban planning and urban activism; integration of sustainability objectives in urban policy and legislation; teaching for sustainable urban planning and design.

• **Landscape aspects**

Landscape urbanism; planning for landscape quality; defining landscape-quality objectives; integrating landscape-quality objectives in spatial planning policy and legislation; development and implementation of new technologies and instruments in landscape planning and management.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHITECTURE

• **Design for sustainability**

Contemporary sustainable design concepts - “zero-waste”, “design for environment”, “designing out waste” etc.; sustainability issues in contemporary design and/or contemporary art; centres for

biodiversity and urban ecology; waste management plants; topography, green space and architectural design.

• **Developing the architectural heritage**

Heritage policy as development tool; learning from local (building) wisdom; cultural tourism and sustainable development; temporary and small interventions as sustainable development strategies; recent conceptualizations of “quality” and “value” in architecture; the aesthetics of reuse, “second life” design.

• **Engineering, building techniques and sustainability**

Integrating renewable-energy and other ecological aspects in the design of the built environment; sustainable constructive systems; “green building” approaches; the architectural impact of renewable energy infrastructure.

As part of the workshop, we celebrated the anniversary of 45 years of higher education in architecture at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, by the anniversary speech of Prof.Em.PhD Arch. Adriana Matei, former FAU Dean, president of Romanian Architect’s Union Cluj, conference preceding the opening session.

During the workshop, students, teaching staff, researchers and other professional community members had the opportunity to attend contributions by invited professors, mostly from universities involved in Erasmus programs with our Faculty: Prof. honoraire PhD Arch. Françoise Véry, Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture de Grenoble; Prof. PhD Eng.-Arch. Raf De Saeger, Faculty of Architecture, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; Prof. PhD Arch. Smaranda Bica, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Polytechnic University Timișoara; Enseign. Arch. Patrick Thépot, Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture de Grenoble. Other contributors to the workshop came from University of Applied Arts Vienna, Université de Bretagne Occidentale Brest, “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, Polytechnic University Timișoara, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, individual architecture offices.

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Organiser and Editor,
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