

Questions and Answers: European Commission announces winner of Loi 130 architectural competition

Today, the Commission announced the results of an architectural competition launched in the spring of 2018 to identify the best solution to replace part of its ageing offices in the European quarter. The winner is a consortium of five companies specialised in the provision of architectural and engineering services: RAFAEL DE LA-HOZ ARQUITECTOS, Spain (Team leader); Perkins+Will UK Limited, UK; Latz + Partner Landscape Architecture Urban Planning, Germany; TECNICA Y PROYECTOS S.A., Spain; and, MC2 ESTUDIO DE INGENIERIA S.L.U., Spain.

The second prize goes to the consortium 2PORTZAMPARC, France (Team leader); Florence Mercier Paysagiste, France; and, ARTELIA Bâtiment & Industrie, France.

The third prize has been awarded to BURO II & ARCHI+I / B2Ai, Belgium (Team leader); C.F. Møller Danmark A/S, Denmark; DELVA Landscape Architects, Netherlands; and, VK Engineering, Belgium.

What is the vision behind the Loi 130 project?

The European Commission is continuously looking for more efficient ways of working that make the most out of every euro spent and are environmentally-friendly. The Commission is also supporting the efforts of the Brussels-Capital Region to make the European quarter a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Through the Loi 130 project, which is being developed hand-in-hand with the Brussels authorities, the Commission is playing its part in this endeavour.

The idea behind the Loi 130 project is to identify a forward-looking, innovative, sustainable and cost-efficient solution to replace the aging Commission premises at rue de la Loi 130. The new premises will combine offices with facilities accessible to the wider public like restaurants, shops and public spaces with green areas. The project seeks to contribute to the livelihood of the neighbourhood and to attract more visitors and residents of Brussels to this part of the city.

How does this project fit into the efforts of the Brussels authorities to make the European quarter a nicer place to work, live and visit?

In 2008, the Brussels-Capital Region adopted a masterplan (Schéma directeur pour le Quartier européen) to give a new impulse to the European Quarter. It then organised an urban planning competition that resulted in the plan [Projet Urbain Loi](#). The project lays down the vision of the Brussels-Capital Region to turn the European quarter into a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

The Loi 130 architectural competition seeks to identify a solution to upgrade the oldest Commission buildings in the area, in line with the vision of [Projet Urbain Loi](#). The competition has been organised hand-in-hand with the Brussels-Capital Region. The Commission will continue its collaboration with the Brussels and Belgian authorities during the next stages.

Where exactly will the new complex be located?

The new buildings are part of [Projet Urbain Loi](#) and will be built on the site located between rue de la Loi, chaussée d'Etterbeek, rue Joseph II and rue de Spa.

How much will this project cost?

At this stage, it is hard to give a precise cost estimate. Preliminary estimates show that, by concentrating staff and functions in modern and more efficient buildings, the Commission will generate savings compared to renovating its existing buildings or renting alternative office space elsewhere in the European quarter.

What happens next?

Now that the competition is over, the preparatory works should start. This includes negotiating the service contract with the winner of the first prize, developing the design in detail and obtaining all necessary building permits.

When will construction works start and when are they expected to finish?

The first phase of the works, towards chaussée d'Etterbeek, is expected to start in 2025. Once the first phase is finalised, the second phase, towards rue de Spa, can start. The entire complex should be finished by 2035.

How did you ensure a fair and impartial selection process during the competition?

The European Commission organised the Loi 130 competition with the objective of selecting the best possible project that responds to its needs and fits into the development plan for the upgrade of the European quarter as put forward by the Brussels-Capital region – [Projet Urbain Loi \(PUL\)](#). To guarantee a fair process, the Commission followed the internationally recognised standards of the International Union of Architects (UIA/Unesco) – the only global organisation that represents architects worldwide – which also formally endorsed the competition. In line with these rules for example, the identity of all participants was only revealed after the jury had decided who the winners were.

The jury consisted of renowned architects and engineers, as well as representatives of the European Commission and of the Brussels-Capital Region. Through the composition of the jury, technical expertise in the field and an in-depth knowledge of the functioning of the EU institutions and of the region were combined to guarantee that the best projects were selected.

The architects and engineers who participated in the jury meetings were

Olivier Bastin, Architect (Belgium); Peter Benuska, Master architect of the European Commission; Paul van Bergen, Engineer (Netherlands); Kristiaan Borret, Master architect of the Brussels-Capital Region; Brian Cody, Engineer (Ireland); Almut Gruentuch-Ernst, Architect (Germany); Dominique Lyon, Architect and UIA representative (France); and, Monica von Schmalensee, Architect (Sweden).

For More Information:

- [The European Commission announces winner of Loi 130 Architectural competition](#) (10/07/2019)
- [Website of the Loi 130 Architectural competition](#)