

RICS European Elections 2009 Manifesto

For **RICS** the European Parliament plays a crucial role in the European political decision making process. The European Parliament elections in June mark the first time in history that citizens in all 27 Member States vote their representatives together.

Against this background RICS wishes all candidates the best of luck and calls upon them to keep in mind the following three issues for the next legislative period:

1. **The importance of (valuation) Standards on the road towards Economic Recovery**

The **EU Economic Recovery Plan**, the Larosière **Report on Financial Supervision**, the Commission proposal for a Directive for Alternative Investment Fund managers and several other EU publications relating to the current economic and financial crisis all underlie the importance of **value** and **standards**. RICS thinks that the current economic crisis requires a re-thinking and a radically new approach in terms of **how the financial sector is regulated and monitored** and more precisely how this relates to property and property valuation. RICS calls upon the European Parliament to work towards increasing transparency in value determination and enshrining international valuation principles into practice at European level. This can be achieved via a combination of self- and public regulation.

2. **The creation of a more Sustainable Built Environment in Europe**

RICS believes that the use of energy efficient technologies, increased use of renewable energies and changing people's behaviour are the key tools in achieving the EU targets of **cutting the energy consumption by 20% by 2020**.

- RICS fully supports the important step that has been taken in allowing **ERDF-funding** to be used for energy efficient and renewable energy measures in housing in all EU Member States, and we strongly urge the new European Parliament to build upon this in the discussions of the post-2013 Cohesion Programme.
- One of RICS' main aims is to contribute to a low carbon built environment, hence we endorse the **reduced VAT rate** on the provision, construction, renovation and alteration of housing as part of a social policy being made permanent and extended to all type of housing. For energy-saving and environmentally friendly goods, we would equally like to see a reduced rate.

- RICS fully supports the Parliament's objective to strengthen the provisions of the current **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive**. More than half of the existing stock in the EU is constructed prior to 1970 which means that most of the buildings that will exist in 50 years and later are here already. In its second reading, the Parliament needs to ensure that the focus of any measure taken is on tapping into the saving potentials embedded within the existing building stock.

3. The vital role of Housing and Urban matters on the European Agenda

The continued development of Europe's urban spaces as places where people want to work and live are vital to the economic and social success of Europe as a whole. **Housing policy** and **urban regeneration** are a competence of the Member States, which is the right approach as, whilst urban areas in the EU face similar types of problems, there are significant cultural and practical differences between the urban systems in the Member States.

However, many EU policies have a direct impact on urban areas, but the current existing inconsistencies call for a stronger coordination.

RICS fully supports the work of the **Urban-Housing Intergroup** of the European Parliament in keeping these issues on the European political agenda and sincerely hopes the Intergroup will continue its work in the new legislature.

RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) is the world's leading qualification when it comes to professional standards in land, property and construction.

In a world where more and more people, governments, banks and commercial organisations demand greater certainty of professional standards and ethics, attaining RICS status is the recognised mark of property professionalism.

Over 100.000 RICS members, who are Chartered Surveyors, operate out of 146 countries, supported by an extensive network of national and regional offices located in every continent around the world.

RICS' global headquarters is based in London. The European World Regional office is based in Brussels, supported by 19 national associations in Europe.

RICS has a Royal Charter which requires the organisation to maintain and promote the usefulness of the profession for the public advantage. This is what sets RICS apart from trade bodies.