Abstract: Data from the Architects Council of Europe (ACE) show a very inhomogeneous distribution of architects among European countries, for example, high numbers of architects in Italy and Germany versus low numbers in the UK and France. These discrepancies cannot be explained by differences in the domestic construction markets. This paper reviews models of professionalisation to explain the heterogeneity among European architects and shows potential implications for the planning profession in Europe. We analyse the 2018 ACE data for the five European countries with the strongest labour markets for architects. Our findings led to three main conclusions: Firstly, such models of professionalisation add to an understanding of statistical data on architects in Europe. Secondly, a better understanding of the statistical data requires more than a single theory. Thirdly, as to the planning profession, the standard process model of professionalisation may work well for the UK, but not for the other European countries.

1 Historical view

Architecture in Europe has a long, inspiring history. As with many other modern professions, architecture became professionally academised in the 19th century. The most influential foundation in this context was Paris’s École Polytechnique, founded in 1794. Education was oriented both towards rationality as the core principle and, later, industrial production. This polytechnical concept influenced the subsequent foundation of architectural schools in Continental Europe and the USA. In the mid-19th century, also in Paris, the Beaux-Arts school of architecture became equally influential (cf. Egbert, Van Zanten 1980; Pfammatter 1997). Since then, in almost all European countries we find this coexistence of, on the one hand, the engineering version of architecture – which finds architects competing with civil engineers – and on the other hand, an understanding of architecture as art.

The understanding of the role that entered into the professionalisation of architecture in the 19th century was formed in the Renaissance (Larson 1983; Wilkinson 1977). Newly introduced during the Renaissance was, on the one hand, the reference to a formal architectural language with an artistic and universal perspective; on the other hand, the inclusion of planning, i.e., urban and regional planning, within the task spectrum of architecture (cf. Giedion 1941). The Renaissance princes sought to plan...
and design cities through their architects. Initially (i.e., in the 15th century) the standard was the ‘città ideale’ (ideal city). By the 17th century at the latest, the need for fortification was added, so that urban planning could keep pace with the progress of warfare. With the beginning of the 20th century, planning emerged as an independent academic discipline (Davoudi, Pendlebury 2010).

No wonder that architects often consider themselves as generalists or “specialists for the general view” with regard to building (Kraft et al. 2002: 18). The International Union of Architects declared: “We, the architects […] believe that architecture involves everything that influences the way in which the built environment is planned, designed, made, used, furnished, landscaped and maintained” (UIA 2011: 3). However, there had always been critical voices. For instance, John Ruskin, an influential 19th-century architectural critic and pioneer of heritage conservation in Europe, saw architecture as an art, framed by a philosophical-religious context, and considered the concept of an architectural profession – one that builds on formal education – as a modern error (cf. Clark 1992: 538).

For the last twenty years, the main challenge for the architectural profession in Europe has arisen from EU harmonisation, involving both deregulation and re-regulation at all political levels (cf. Le Bianc, Svensson 2010). For the architectural profession, the consequences are mixed, since European harmonisation means recognition of architecture as a profession (including protection of the title) but also rigorous deregulation. Paterson and colleagues (2003) analysed the degree of regulation for professional work (including architects) in various European countries. They found a high level of “system-stability”, meaning low flexibility regarding the kind of regulations in a country.

Despite the efforts towards European harmonisation and European transnational planning projects (e.g. Interreg), national differences continue to play an important role in planning systems and cultures. With the emergence of modern national administrative states in the 19th century at the latest, urban and regional planning came largely under state regulation and developed differently. These differences have been thoroughly studied (for example, ESPON 2018; Berisha et al. 2021) and still determine the context for professional planning activities (Nadin et al. 2020).

2 Models of professionalisation

How can we understand architecture as a profession? The main advocate of today’s professions is the sociologist Eliot Freidson (2001), who describes professionalism as a third organisational logic of work alongside market logic and that of bureaucratic administration. From this perspective, professionalism means self-organisation and self-regulation of experts, as found in medicine and law.

EU Council Directives between 1975 and 1985 singled out eight professions. Besides
doctors and lawyers, these are midwives, nurses, veterinarians, dentists, pharmacists, and architects. However, in the scientific literature, architects (along with veterinarians) have received comparatively little attention. Freidson commented: “While broad comparative studies of architectural practice are not available, the picture one gets is that architecture, in general, is in as weak a position, economically and legally, as engineering, and has succeeded in gaining little official privilege” (2001: 172).

For a better understanding of Freidson’s assessment of the architectural profession, we introduce the main conceptual models of professionalisation and match them to data provided by the ACE at the European level. These models are condensed representations of a state of research and offer abstract pictures of professionalisation. Even though the models have a descriptive character, they can be used normatively in the sense of an orientation guide as soon as it is a matter of developing a profession. We introduce three models, beginning with a traditional view of professionalisation and concluding with an integrated model based on current research.

To start with, professionalisation is generally considered a process through which an occupation or trade may become a recognised profession. In a seminal paper, Harold Wilensky (1964) proposed a process model. This considered professionalisation as a sequence of seven steps, starting with a job becoming a full-time occupation, progressing to founding a professional association, and culminating in the creation of a code of professional ethics (Figure 2).

In general, this model claims that professions or occupations may differ in their stage of professionalisation. Moreover, the same profession may follow different paths of professionalisation in different countries, depending on state regulation and the national “system of professions” (Abbott 1988; i.e., the specific field of professions or occupations that compete in a country. The process of professionalisation involves a kind of social closure with the capitalist market, resulting in a specific service monopoly (the ‘neo-Weberian’ view, cf. Saks 2010).

Secondly, international studies on professionalisation, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, revealed some fundamental differences, the main distinction being that between Anglo-American vs. Continental forms of professionalisation (cf. McClelland 1990; Svensson, Evetts 2003). Using the seminal notion by McClelland (1990), professionalisation in the Anglo-American form follows a ‘from within’ approach, based on professional groups of varying autonomy that develop their associations and seek to establish and defend their position in society. In contrast, in nations such as France and Germany, a ‘from above’ approach dominates, with the state regulating professional education and work (the Continental form). Thus, in the Continental form, professionalisation is fostered by state regulation (Figure 3).

A current model of professionalisation is the discourse of professionalism. We introduce this in a very generalised form, based on three propositions: First, there are different important actors, such as the state and the professions, which interact and thereby define what professionalism means. Second, today, the main work context for professionals is organisations (rather than single practices), thus professional work must also fit and function within modern

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Fig. 2: First professionalisation model: The order of professionalisation (Wilensky 1964).

A profession results from a process that involves partial (social) closure within the capitalist market.
organisational structures. Third, ‘professionalism’ has become a modern form of self-organised expert work that – within companies/organisations – serves to control work from a distance (without direct supervision). We extend the set of actors by including universities (Figure 4).

The three models presented form a sequence and complement each other. The process model (Figure 2) was still based on the idea that professions could be distinguished from other occupational groups. The second model (Figure 3) differentiated the role of the state, especially with regard to state control of higher education and thus of qualifications. The third model (Figure 4) focuses on the discourse of professionalism and thus on the role of professionals in organisations. It sheds new light on the relationship between professions and universities, which goes beyond the disciplinary qualification of professionals.

3 Materials and methods: the ACE data

In the following, we apply the three professionalisation models to data provided by the ACE (2019). For this purpose, we describe and structure the ACE data by highlighting trends and persistent differences among architects in Europe.

Our analysis will focus on the five European countries with the largest architectural markets according to ACE data: Germany, the UK, Italy, France, and the Netherlands (cf. ACE 2019: 1–6). These five countries account for two-thirds of the architectural market in Europe (67%) and 60% of the construction market. The analysis of the ACE data is complemented by interviews with national contact persons from the ACE.

Table 1 provides an overview of the architectural profession in the five selected European countries. Table 1 encompasses registered architects, that is, qualified professionals who are allowed to call themselves ‘architect’, as the title is protected throughout Europe. We see the highest proportion of architects in It-
dually, with 160,000 registered architects (3.6‰ of the Italian population), followed by Germany with more than 100,000 architects (1.3‰ of the German population). France, the Netherlands, and the UK have similar proportions of architects between 0.4‰ and 0.6‰ of the population. This pattern seems to have remained relatively stable over the last ten years (although the number of architects has increased in Italy and the UK).

Besides differences in the numbers of architects, we see further persistent differences concerning gender, the sizes of practices, and the types of work undertaken by architects:

- **Size of practices**: In the Netherlands and the UK, we see a high proportion of large architectural firms (more than 50 employees), compared to France, Germany, and Italy.
- **Type of work**: Not all architects are primarily concerned with building design. The proportions involved in that type of work differ by country and are particularly low in Italy (only 41%), the situation in Italy being defined by the moderate construction market. Planning defines only a very small proportion of architectural work (less than 3%) and has been declining in Europe since 2008.
- **Gender**: In general, the share of women architects is increasing all over Europe. However, in the Netherlands and the UK, the proportion of women is still low (20+%) compared to France, Germany, and Italy (around 46% women). Data on gender distribution are likely to be male-biased in the ACE surveys, as only registered architects were asked, not all trained architects.

We abstain from analysing the many further data provided by ACE, as differences may be caused by divergent categorisations. In particular, we exclude data on revenues, as they depend on different national frameworks for taxation and accounting. Furthermore, data that depend on a definition of contractual roles (for example, ‘independent architect’) are omitted; such definitions depend on national regulations and may be inconsistent at the aggregated European level. The focus, therefore, is on comparatively simple measures such as numbers of architects or practice sizes.

One last note on planning: Overall, planning-related activities account for well below 5% of architects’ work in all five counties (see Table 1, % planning). In the case of Italy, we see that this share has fallen sharply (from 13% in 2010 to 3% in 2018). Table 1 also shows the differences between national planning systems (according to Berisha et al. 2021). The Italian planning system is still classified as traditional (‘conformative’). Possibly, the decreasing share of architects involved in planning in Italy shows the influence of EU harmonisation.

### 4 Results

We applied the professionalisation models to the data provided by the ACE (2019). Table 2 provides an overview of the persistent patterns in the ACE data as well as potential explanations from the three models of professionalisation. Details are provided in the sections that follow.

#### 4.1 First model: the process of professionalisation and path dependency

If we look at the countries in which professional associations of architects first gained recognition, we observe a path dependency. We see a low density of architects in countries with the oldest remaining professional associations (as listed in Table 1), namely the UK, France, and the Netherlands. Conversely, the highest densities are found in countries where professional associations are comparatively young; Germany and Italy. It appears as if the architectural professions in different countries followed distinct pathways, sometimes connecting related fields of architectural activity, sometimes not. France and the UK each have a national body solely concerned with the registration of architects, whereas, in Italy and Germany, these bodies represent several occupations. For instance, in Italy these comprise (besides architects): planners, landscape architects, and conservationists. In Germany, we hear voices such as: “Doesn’t the architect now hide several professions that are difficult to cover with a common basic education, at least not without it being at the expense of the actual architectural education?” (Kraft et al. 2002: 18, translated). In contrast, despite discussion about specialisation, the self-image of UK architects as a complete profession dominates: “As an architect, I am not aware of any difference in design for interior or exterior. This is one profession. […] The architect is out in the street, attracts interest and controversy. The architect is the first point of contact for the client” (UK interviews).

The path dependency concerns the understanding of the professional role of the architect. In the UK, the role of the architect as designer is primarily to deliver the drawings of a proposed building, whereas the German fee system is based on the assumption that architects will be contracted to deliver the completed
building to the client. In Italy, the expanded role of the architect also includes further tasks such as interior design or conservation, Italy having the highest share of protected UNESCO World Heritage sites in the world.

Moreover, different national pathways may be linked to different cultural embeddings. For instance, in Italy and Germany, architecture has an added cultural value: it represents a “fashionable education” (Italy interview) and highly attractive academic pathway, including for women. Here, architects can consider themselves as cultural pioneers (but, of course, need not do so). In contrast, in France, there are official initiatives to motivate more students to study architecture. Florent Champy’s (2001) sociological review concluded that architecture in France is an “endangered” profession (outdated?) with the image of providing a “luxury service (2001: 110-111). “We can also add that, on the cultural level […] in France people think they can do without an architect.” (France Interview, translated)

4.2 Second model: Continental vs. Anglo-American forms of professionalisation in European architecture

The difference between the Continental and Anglo-American models of professionalisation also refers to the role of the state as a regulatory authority. For this, Table 1 summarises the findings of Paterson et al. (2003) concerning professions in the EU. That study assessed the “degree of regulation density” (i.e., regulations on market entry for professionals, such as qualification requirements) as well as market conduct regulations (for example, fixed prices, ad-

|                        | France     | Germany    | Italy      | Netherlands | UK         |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Architects             | 30,000 [29,400] | 111,200 [95,500] | 160,000 [155,000] | 10,600 [9,100] | 41,000 [31,600] |
| Architects per 1000 population | 0.4 [0.5] | 1.3 [1.2] | 2.6 [2.4] | 0.6 [0.6] | 0.6 [0.5] |
| % female               | 37 [56]   | 38 [29]   | 43 [30]   | 23 [14]    | 26 [21]    |
| % aged < 40 years      | 25 [47]   | 21 [31]   | 27 [58]   | 25 [32]    | 31 [51]    |
| % solo practitioners*  | 69 [60]   | 81 [59]   | 79 [74]   | 62 [57]    | 59 [45]    |
| % practices > 50 employees | 0.2 [0.0] | 0.0 [1.6] | 0.1 [0.0] | 3.5 [2.4] | 5.2 [9.5] |
| % working part-time    | 9 [5]     | 17 [10]   | 25 [11]   | 33 [10]    | 18 [4]     |
| % building design      | 71 [72]   | 86 [67]   | 41 [50]   | 63 [69]    | 65 [69]    |
| % interior design      | 9 [5]     | 4 [7]     | 21 [15]   | 10 [11]    | 5 [6]      |
| % planning             | 3 [7]     | 1 [3]     | 3 [13]    | 2 [6]      | 2 [3]      |
| Architectural market [10³ Euros]** | 961 [1104] | 4871 [3988] | 2072 [2709] | 783 [902] | 2265 [2800] |
| Size of the construction market [10³ Euros] | 277 [263] | 306 [217] | 195 [185] | 108 [86] | 368 [251] |
| Planning system (Berisha et al. 2021) | state-led | market-led | conformative (traditional) | market-led | state-led |
| Regulatory intensity in architecture (in 2003)** | 3.1 | 4.5 | 6.2 | 0 | 0 |
| National level of regulatory intensity (in 2003)** | 4.6 | 6.0 | 6.5 | 2.6 | 2.2 |
| Foundation of national professional organisation*** | Société française des architectes, 1840 | BDA, 1903 | Consiglio, 1948 | BNA, 1842 | RIBA, 1834 |
| Order / Chamber / Register | Conseil National de l’Ordre des Architectes | Bundesarchitektenkammer, BAK | Consiglio Nazionale Architetti, Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori | Bureau Architectenregister, BA | Architects Registration Board, ARB |
| Professionalisation form | Continental | Continental | Continental | Hybrid | Anglo-American |

Selected data from ACE (2019, Tables 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-6, 2-1, 2-5, 3-1).
Research undertaken by © Mirza & Nacey Research, Ltd., commissioned by the Architects’ Council of Europe.

* here: architects who report running a practice with staff = 1 in the ACE survey; **total revenues of architects in a country; ***cf. Paterson et al. (2003); ****oldest remaining organisation
As we see, the degree of regulation is fairly low in the Netherlands and the UK, both on a general level and with regard to architects, compared with the closer regulation seen in France, Germany, and Italy.

With regard to these data on regulation (although dating back to 2003), we see a clear divide between the UK (Anglo-American model) and a group of European countries, including France, Germany, and Italy, that follow the Continental model of organising professional work. For instance, in France, Germany, and Italy, architects are authorised to submit construction-related documents to building authorities, such as applications for building permits or design approval. Here, we find a higher percentage of solo practitioners and fewer large-sized firms ('large' for a specialist professional practice). Particularly in Germany and Italy, individual practices in architecture had long been protected by state regulations, for example, concerning fees (cf. Bielefeld, Würfele 2005). We can assume that professional competition is more intense in the UK, where we find far more large-sized firms.

The architectural profession in the Netherlands can be categorised via the Anglo-American model or – in concordance with studies from health care (for example, Schepers, Casparie 1997; Duyvendak et al. 2006) – following a hybrid system. In the Netherlands, the main professional organisation in architecture is an industry association, the BNA, with companies as members. Here, entrepreneurship has become a hot topic within the discourse on professionalism. However, more than supporting a market-oriented attitude, today it is companies (more so than states) that organise the inter-professional cooperation in which architects are embedded, thereby contributing to the (organisational) discourse of professionalism.

“The crisis in the 1990s, the internationalisation of architectural practices in the Netherlands increased. The offices have become highly collaborative and commercially competitive.” (Netherlands interview, translated)

4.3 Third model: the discourse of professionalism and the gender issue

In contrast to the previously discussed models of professionalisation, the concept of the discourse of professionalism does not explain general differences. However, if we look at the specific national constellations of the four actors in the discourse of professionalism, then national specificities of the architectural profession may become apparent. Nevertheless, their explanation would require further research. In the following, we discuss the persistent patterns identified in professional architecture in Europe and look at the specific national constellations in the discourse of professionalism (Table 2), with particular reference to the role of universities. The findings indicate that the gender issue might be seen in a specific light.

| Persistent differences among architects in Europe: ACE data (Table 1) viewed from three theoretical models of professionalisation (Figures 2–4). |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Professionalisation model       | Order of professionalisation                     | Continental vs. Anglo-American form of professionalisation | Discourse of professionalism                   |
| Differences in the numbers of architects (density) | Late professionalisation (Germany, Italy): increased density | Fewer architects due to intensive market in Anglo-American model | France: overregulation of architectural studies (low number of architects) |
| Differences in the size of practices | - | Anglo-American model (UK, Netherlands): larger, competitive practices | Italy: tax relief for small firms (high proportion of small practices) |
| Differences in the type of work | Late professionalisation (Germany, Italy): less demarcation from neighbouring fields of work | - | Germany: regulated fees (HOAI until 2020) |
| Differences in the numbers of female architects | Fewer female architects due to traditionalism in 'old' professions | Fewer female architects due to highly competitive work with fewer part-time opportunities | 1) Increase in part-time work: more female architects (EU) 2) Studio system conserves a traditional role in countries with reduced regulation (UK, NL) |
4.3.1 Differences in the numbers of architects (density)

France, as a Continental European country, like Italy and Germany, tends toward regulating and protecting professions. However, in contrast to Italy and Germany, the number of architects in France is low, at only 0.4 per 1000 inhabitants (Germany: 1.3; Italy: 2.6). As mentioned above in the context of path dependency (3.1), the ‘old’ architectural professions (with professional association dating back to the early 1800s), as in the UK and France, might be slightly narrower in their self-definition, whereas the ‘young’ architectural professions, as in Germany and Italy, tend to include related tasks.

With a view to the discourse of professionalism, we could even say that architecture in France is overregulated. In France, university studies in architecture are offered exclusively by the Ecoles d’Architecture (ENSA). Prior to taking up professional practice, architects must obtain a Diplôme d’Etat d’Architecte. Both Germany and Italy led the restructuring of architectural education in the Bachelor/Master system that allows for a great variety of specialisms and educational pathways. Therefore, the study of architecture seems much more attractive in Italy and Germany than in France. So it was of little help that the French state continued to protect the architectural profession: in France, it is obligatory to contract an architect for any building with a floor area greater than 150 m² (revised in 2017). “While there are approximately 30,000 registered architects in France [who are accredited to work independently], there are approximately 45,000 architecture graduates. […] Many efforts have been made in recent years by the government to encourage the use of architects or to awaken schoolchildren in particular to opportunities in architecture, but there is still work to be done.” (France interview)

4.3.2 Differences in the size of practices

In Germany and Italy, we see a very high proportion of architects operating as solo practitioners. As already noted, state regulations in Germany and Italy long protected small architectural practices. Until 2020, Germany regulated architects’ fees, which protected small practices. Italy still supports small firms (with annual turnover less than 45,000 Euros) with fiscal privileges, thereby helping them survive but yet not incentivising them to grow (source: Italy interview).

4.3.3 Differences in the type of work

It would be helpful to depict the ‘system of professions’ in Italy, in which architecture is embedded, to better understand architects’ array of tasks and services and why building design accounts for such a low proportion of their work. This picture would have to include, for instance, ‘geometra’ (land surveyors), who manage local construction tasks and are unknown outside Italy (source: Italy interview). However, such a detailed overview is beyond the scope of the present study.

4.3.4 Differences in the numbers of female architects

In general, the proportion of working women is closely linked to the availability of part-time work (cf., e.g., Booth, Van Ours 2008, 2013; Rosenfeld, Birkelund 1995). This may explain why both the proportion of part-time work in architecture and the number of female architects have clearly increased from 2008 to 2018 (Table 1). This holds for all countries included in our study, except France (see footnote 5).

Furthermore, one may argue that cooperation between the architectural profession and universities might reproduce existing patterns in architecture, including a tendency towards ‘masculine dominance’. As described by Cuff (1991), universities reproduce the professional culture of architecture through their use of studio structures, the focus on design, and their recruitment strategies. This goes along with a specific professional culture of creativity (cf. Cohen et al. 2005), including a ‘star cult’ surrounding some globally or locally renowned architects. As Hilde Heynen (2012: 331) argues, this ‘star system’ reproduces ‘masculine dominance’ and can result in lower numbers of working women architects, despite the increasing numbers of women studying architecture (and more options for part-time work). This effect might be expressed more strongly in countries such as the UK or USA, where the state refrains from protecting the architectural profession.

5 Discussion and conclusion

Our paper draws two main conclusions: Firstly, theory from the sociology of professionalism adds to an understanding of statistical data on architects in Europe. We found interpretations for all of the persistent differences between European architectural cultures, which we se-
lected from ACE data. Secondly, for a better understanding of the statistical data, we need more than a single theory. In the following, we will discuss the ACE database and methods of interpretation.

5.1 Heterogeneity of architects in Europe: a biased sample?

The focus on the top five European architectural markets made it easy to apply an explanatory pattern, such as a rough distinction between Continental versus Anglo-American models of professionalisation. Interpretation of the ACE data could become much more complicated if the analysis included additional European countries such as Spain, Belgium, or Switzerland. All of these countries have densities of architects (per 1000 population) somewhere between 0.8 and 1.3. Countries such as Belgium and Switzerland display a hybrid culture that might both differentiate and complicate the analysis.

One solution might be to conduct regression analysis on the entire ACE dataset. This would require checking the reliability of the ACE data. To distil driving factors in the data might help not only to compare gross differences, such as examples of Continental versus Anglo-American models of professionalisation (such as Germany vs. the UK), but also to study more nuanced deviations and differences (for example, the discourse of professionalism in Belgium vs. the Netherlands). Even so, the five countries in our sample already showed such heterogeneity in organising architectural work that the analysis required three theoretical approaches.

The interviews from our small selection of countries already revealed widely differing self-images of architecture across Europe, which is reflected in particular in the expectations for future development, which are somewhat pessimistic in Italy (“The future is bad: too many architects, too high taxes […]”) but rather optimistic in the Netherlands (“The future of architecture lies in hybridisation with consulting and sustainability issues”). Thus, for a better understanding of the cultural value of architecture in European countries, regression analysis does not suffice or may even be misleading. A study of the cultural embedding of architecture in Europe would clearly require a more extensive series of interviews or ethnographic enquiries. This also pertains to the analysis of governance within the discourse of professionalism, including cultural and institutional mechanisms of reproducing ‘masculine dominance’ through the ‘star architect’ and studio system.

5.2 What shapes architecture in Europe?

From the point of view of the European Commission, the standard and most important guiding theoretical perspective is the economic one, particularly with regard to securing open market access. However, the differences in the ACE data cannot be explained via degree of market closure or monopolies. From an economic perspective, professions capitalise on monopolies. A study by Paterson and colleagues (2003) of professions in Europe confirmed that high regulatory density (monopolies) results in higher revenue for fewer professionals in a market. However, the 2018 ACE data set (Table 1) does not support such a relationship; on the contrary, it shows that the higher the regulatory density, the higher the number of architects (except for France). Furthermore, architects in the regulated French system actually earn less than their colleagues in the deregulated architectural markets of the Netherlands and UK.

Moreover, the heterogeneity of architectural work in Europe cannot be understood by focusing solely on the governing agents (as in Figures 3 and 4). Rather, we need to include pictures of the national systems of professions (cf. Abbott 1988). Such overviews would reveal the current fields of professional architectural work within a country, including the overlaps with competing professions such as civil engineers, designers, or planners. Such views exist, for instance, for the field of professional environmental services in Switzerland (for example, Mieg et al. 2013). However, such studies are very costly and only provide a snapshot at a certain point in time.

European harmonisation brings about not only deregulation of professional work and open access to architectural markets in Europe, but also: (i) harmonised, more flexible higher education, and (ii) a sort of re-professionalisation due to the ability for a profession to lobby at the European level in Brussels (for the case of engineers, cf. Arkell 1999). Both processes concern the architectural profession: (i) The so-called Bologna Process, starting with a declaration at Bologna University in 1999, harmonised higher education in Europe and created a new flexibility to define postgraduate programmes for any task related to the field of architectural work. This may threaten the architectural profession, as these Master’s-level pro-
grammes (for example, the many urban studies programmes in Europe) are open to students from undergraduate programmes unrelated to architecture. Any such threat may be more than compensated by the option of: (ii) re-professionalising architecture, which is the position adopted by the ACE as the main lobbying body for architects in Europe. Conducting surveys and providing data on the architectural profession in Europe is part of this (re-)professionalisation endeavour.

5.3 And the planning profession?

Unfortunately, fewer data are available for the European planning profession than for architects. However, the example of architects shows that the process model of professionalisation (cf. Figure 2) may work well for the UK (Frank 2015), but not for the other European countries (cf. Figure 3: professionalisation ‘from within’ vs. ‘from above’). For European recognition of the planning profession, two of the factors presented can be useful: re-professionalisation at the European level (through lobbying the European Commission) and the new coordinated role of European universities (cf. Figure 4), which is reflected in planning by AESOP, the Association of European Schools of Planning (www.aesop-planning.eu).

However, all efforts at the political level will come to nothing if the concrete practical tasks and performances of planners cannot be distinguished from those of other groups in the field; and if this distinction cannot be controlled by the profession, i.e., by planners themselves. Planning in Europe still takes diverse forms and remains strongly regulated at the national level (cf. Cotella, Stead 2011; Berisha et al. 2021). Future developments for the professional field will likely include transnational planning in Europe, the complexity of which necessitates qualified planners (cf. Cotella, Dühr 2016).

Further research on planning as a profession could also help clarify some issues related to the architectural profession in Europe. Using typologies of national planning systems (e.g. Berisha et al. 2021, see Table 1) and considering the tasks associated with the systems could shed more light on both the discourse of professionalism (see Figure 4) and the system of professions (Abbott 1988) in which planning and architecture are jointly involved.

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Notes

1 Besides classical studies on architectural work (for example, Cuff 1991) and professional culture in architecture (for example, Cuff 1991), a specific line of research highlights gender issues in architecture (cf. Adams, Tancred 2000; Fowler, Wilson 2012; Heynen 2012; Sang et al. 2014; Stead 2018).
2 This third model is an amalgamation of several approaches: (i) Fournier’s (1999) and Evett’s (2013) understandings of the ‘discourse of professionalism’ as a ‘disciplinary mechanism’, addressed by the third proposition; (ii) the concept of new, ‘hybrid’, or “corporate” roles of professionals in organisations, described by Noordegraaf (2007) and Muzio et al. (2011), as in the second proposition; (iii) and Abbott’s (2005) concept of ‘linked ecologies’, as in the first proposition. For an overview see Mieg and Evett (2018).
3 We conducted five interviews in March 2020 (mainly via the ACE); two for the UK and one each for France, Italy, and the Netherlands. Instead of conducting an interview in Germany, we conducted a second one in the UK (Scotland). Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020, we had to substitute the ACE contact for Italy. The interviews were conducted via telephone, Skype, and email. We discussed the ACE data from three perspectives: the professional role of architects and their self-understanding; the role of key actors in the professional field of architecture (government, construction firms, universities, professional associations…); and characteristics of the national labour market for architects.
4 We also see two common trends in Europe: The number of young architects (under 40) is decreasing and the proportion of part-time work is increasing. Whereas the growth of part-time work seems to be a phenomenon of the current transformation of work relationships in Europe, the decrease in the number of young registered architects may have many causes (e.g., increased market competition, higher qualification demands, less interest in being registered…).
5 Inspecting the data for France, we see that the reliability of the survey is also limited, particularly the first data collections in 2008 and 2010. In 2008, the proportion of women in architecture was 36%; this number ‘dropped’ to 27% in 2010, and finally ‘increased’ to 33% in 2012 and
38% in 2014. This fluctuation is artificial, and is caused by the small sample sizes of the first national surveys (cf. ACE 2008).

6 For clarification: Only professionals explicitly registered as ‘architects’ (i.e., excluding ‘landscape architects’, etc) are taken into account by the ACE study.

7 Regardless of possible national definitions, ‘solo practitioner’ here represents architects who report running a practice with staff = 1 in the ACE survey.

8 This can easily be concluded from the data in Table 1. The architectural market in the Netherlands is slightly smaller than that in France, but the number of architects has three times the number of architects. Similarly, France employs 75% of the number of architects than the UK, yet its architectural market is worth only slightly more than 40% of that in the UK.

9 For instance, the 4CITIES Erasmus Mundus Master’s programme in urban studies specifies a background in “geography, planning, architecture, history, criminology, political science, sociology, demography, media & communication studies, cultural studies, or a similar discipline” (https://www.4cities.eu/admissions-faq).

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