

Mr Donald Tusk
Prime Minister of Poland
00-583 Warszawa,
Al. Ujazdowskie 1/3

7th May 2013

Dear Prime Minister

Status and Reputation of Planning in Poland

I am writing to you on behalf of the European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP-CEU). We are extremely concerned about the proposal to downgrade the status of the Polish Chamber of Town Planners. This will not only undermine the status of planning but also the sustainable economic future of Poland..

In my letter to you dated 26th October 2012 (which I attach) I set out the reasons for our concern. I also explained why the ambitions you have for economic growth and the wellbeing of your country will not be achieved unless there is a strong and informed planning profession. Since I wrote in October, it has become clear that the need for a qualified and experienced planning profession is now accepted generally. Despite this the future of the Policy Chamber of Town Planners is still threatened.

This continued threat now appears to be based, in part, on an erroneous assumption that a qualified engineer or architect can provide sound planning advice. This fails to understand that the expertise required to plan our towns and cities is fundamentally different from those of the architect or engineer. Although many planners are also qualified in these professions, the unique skills of planners lie in their capacity to diagnose and map out the future of whole communities at the local, city-wide or regional scale. These skills are therefore fundamentally different from those required to design an individual building, development project or engineering structure. The unique role of the planner is set out in the *Charter of European Planning* (attached).

It is essential that there is public trust in the planning process and that the interests of communities are protected in the development of our towns and cities. It is at the heart of planning to be concerned with the wider public benefit and the assessment the economic, social and environmental impacts of development proposals. These services are currently provided through the members of the Polish Chamber of Town Planners .

The current proposals do not appear to understand this. They pose the risk that planning in Poland will be undertaken by those who are not trained, experienced and qualified to do so. Unplanned development based on unqualified advisors is damaging to the wellbeing of communities. It can be compared with the damage to the health of individuals from unqualified doctors.

Therefore it is with concern that we, in the ECTP-CEU, have learnt that the proposals to deregulate planning in Poland are still being pursued. We urge you to retain the status of the Polish Chamber of Town Planners within the Polish planning system and drop proposals to deregulate town planning in Poland

Yours sincerely,



Dominique Lancrenon
ECTP-CEU President / Présidente ECTP-CEU

Cc:

- Mr Marek Biernacki, Ministry of Justice of Poland
- Mr Sławomir Nowak , Minister of Transport, Building and Sea Management in Poland
- Ms Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Ministry of Regional Development of Poland
- Mr Jacek Sztechman, President of The Polish Chamber of Urban Planners