



Europe riding on Taurus – ancient fresco found in Pompeii

Introduction

The European Central Bank (ECB) has decided to construct its new premises on the current site of the Grossmarkthalle (wholesale market) in the eastern part of Frankfurt am Main. For this purpose, it has launched an international urban planning and architectural design competition. The objective of this Competition is to identify the best design proposals for the new ECB premises and to choose an architect or group of architects to undertake the final construction of the new ECB premises. The design proposals will have to provide solutions for the functional integration of the old Grossmarkthalle building which constitutes part of the purchased area.

A new home for the ECB

Public buildings are conveyors of meaning and this one in particular symbolises the European Monetary Union and our currency, the euro. The new building should reflect our values and our identity as a central bank and an European organisation. We are building for a new concept of public service, founded on the principles of integrity, excellence, efficiency and transparency.

The new home of the ECB should inspire the ECB's culturally diverse staff with pride and should grace the city with a landmark of design, however simple and unpretentious. It should be welcoming to the outside while providing a secure environment.

We would like all of these qualities to be expressed with originality as part of an inspiring contribution to the building of a unified Europe.

Functionality

Our new premises should provide a functional environment, which meets the diverse requirements of its users. At the same time, we expect the architectural proposals to foster interactive communication between people in order to avoid the creation of organisational barriers and to promote teamwork. The design should in particular maximise the likelihood of personal interaction across intra-organisational boundaries and hierarchical layers.

Quality design

Europe's artistic legacy is part of its cultural heritage. In this sense, we expect high quality designs which will provide Europe with an icon of modern architecture.

Flexibility

As the ECB is a young organisation with emerging new challenges, flexibility and rapid response are key to its performance.

The functional and spatial programme amounts to approximately 100,000 sqm of main usable space for office areas, conference facilities and space for other necessary activities.

The architectural design should be based on a modular approach. The first phase of construction should provide 2,500 workplaces. The possibility of two modular expansions of 500 workplaces

each is to be planned for. The architectural proposals should include these growth modules in the overall urban planning for the site and show how they will integrate with the architectural and organisational scheme for the first phase.

Office areas must be highly flexible and adaptable to changing requirements. Office concepts must be designed to be reversible with little effort or cost. The standard floor sector must be structured so that all standard office layouts are possible, i.e. cellular offices, communicative offices (combi offices), group and open plan offices. The basic facade grid must be large enough to allow for a reasonable variety in the configuration of workplace furniture.

Cultural diversity

The ECB is a culturally diverse institution today and will be even more so after the EU Enlargement, when new Member States join the Union and eventually adopt the euro. A multinational workforce and international atmosphere form the core of our strengths and need to be welcomed in the plan for the ECB's new premises.

Urban environment

The new premises, including the Grossmarkthalle, should sensitively reflect the site's history and fit into both its immediate neighbourhood and the overall urban plan of Frankfurt. The Grossmarkthalle is a listed building, under historical preservation order, and must retain its fundamental appearance. However, the

considerable technical and physical defects presently in the building offer a challenge to the engineers of the 21st century.

Technical requirements

The core business functions of our institution require the highest levels of reliability, security, operational safety, and flexibility. These requirements shall be considered accordingly in the design of the technical plant and infrastructure. Consequently, the technical systems must be conceived for defined emergency situations and constructed in such a way that neither breakdowns nor operational shutdowns will result in interruption of the bank's activities. The entire premises shall have all utilities and appropriate backup systems.

Indoor climate is of great importance for the comfort and productivity of our staff as well as for the cost efficiency of the buildings. Systems to provide a climate appropriate to the requirements of the different functional areas shall be provided with a view to creating an optimal environmental balance.

Design proposals and technical concepts shall support the principle of sustainable development. The efficiency of the buildings including economical, ecological and social aspects has to be seen in relation to the operating costs, future maintenance and energy consumption.

Security, safety and health

The ECB's functions require high security standards. When responding to these needs, the architect's design should nonetheless strive to organise the facilities and provide security solutions in such a way that all security requirements are successfully met with minimum disruption to the bank's functions and in the least visible way.

In the context of possible threat scenarios and their probability of occurrence, candidates shall consider all aspects of security and safety design. The design shall respond in a well-balanced manner to parameters such as building height, relevant stand off distances of buildings to public areas, modular security zoning and physical barriers on the site.

The safety of the ECB staff and visitors is a high priority. Accordingly, escape, fire protection and structural systems shall be designed to protect the lives of individuals and to minimise the risk exposure of the ECB. Specifications prescribed in the local building code are considered as the minimum requirements. We welcome innovations and improvements beyond these standards.

Architects are invited to aim for a design which takes into account the personal feelings and safety concerns of the staff working in a highly visible public institution.

Efficiency

As a supra-national public institution, the ECB feels accountable to the citizens of Europe for the responsible management of its resources. Therefore, the new premises should be built in a cost-effective manner. Decisions on investments, however, should be taken with a long-term perspective and consider the whole lifecycle costs of the premises.

About the ECB

The ECB was established on 1 June 1998. Its legal framework is the Treaty establishing the European Community and the Statute of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) which is attached to the Treaty as a Protocol.

The ECB, together with the national central banks (NCBs) of all 15 EU Member States constitute the ESCB. The Eurosystem consists of the ECB and the national central banks of the 12 Member States which form the euro area. It does not include the NCBs of three EU countries (Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom) that have not yet adopted the euro. The term "Eurosystem" thus denotes the organisational form in which the ESCB performs its core functions. The distinction between "ESCB" and "Eurosystem" will vanish when all EU Member States have adopted the euro.

The Eurosystem performs the central banking functions in the euro area. Its main tasks are conducting monetary policy in the euro area and issuing euro banknotes and coins. The euro area is the second largest economic area with a single cur-

rency in the world. The euro is the common currency for around 300 million Europeans.

The primary objective of the ECB is to maintain price stability in the euro area. Without prejudice to its primary objective, the ECB also supports the general economic policies in the euro area.

The supreme decision-making body of the ECB is the Governing Council. It consists of the six members of the Executive Board of the ECB and the governors of the NCBs of the Member States that have adopted the euro. The President of the ECB is both Executive Board Chairman and Chairman of the Governing Council.

The key task of the Governing Council is to formulate monetary policy for the euro area. It specifically determines the interest rates at which credit institutions may obtain liquidity from their respective national central banks.

The Executive Board of the ECB consists of the President, the Vice-President and four other members. All are appointed by common accord of the Heads of State or Government of the 12 countries that form the euro area. The Executive Board is responsible for implementing monetary policy as formulated by the Governing Council and gives the necessary directions to the national central banks of the Eurosystem for this purpose. The Executive Board also prepares the Governing Council meetings, makes proposals to the Governing Council on the issues/items requiring decisions and manages the current business of the ECB.

The third decision-making body of the ECB is the General Council. It consists of the President and the Vice-president of the ECB along with the

governors of all 15 NCBs of the EU Member States. The General Council contributes to the advisory and co-ordinating functions of the ECB and to the preparations for the enlargement of the euro area.

The ECB serves a geographical area that currently comprises 12 EU Member States, each with its own history, culture and economic background. The number of Member States in the euro area is expected to increase significantly in the coming years following the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union and further economic and political integration.

The ECB enjoys full independence in performing its tasks and has all the instruments and powers necessary to effectively conduct monetary policy. It has its own budget and its capital has been subscribed and paid up by the NCBs. It performs its functions in accordance with the principles of transparency and openness.

As a truly European organisation, the ECB reflects common traditions and shared values as well as the cultural diversity of its staff. As a public organisation it emphasises efficiency. The ECB employs at present around 1,200 staff from all Member States of the European Union at its premises in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

The architects participating in this Competition are invited to find innovative solutions that support these ideas and the requirements of the ECB laid down in this competition brief.

Eurosystem



EUROPEAN
CENTRAL BANK



NATIONALE BANK VAN BELGIE/
BANQUE NATIONALE DE BELGIQUE



DEUTSCHE
BUNDESBANK



BANK OF GREECE



BANCO DE ESPAÑA



BANQUE DE FRANCE



CENTRAL BANK OF
IRELAND



BANCA D'ITALIA



BANQUE CENTRALE DU
LUXEMBOURG



DE NEDERLANDSCHE BANK



ÖSTERREICHISCHE
NATIONALBANK



BANCO DE
PORTUGAL



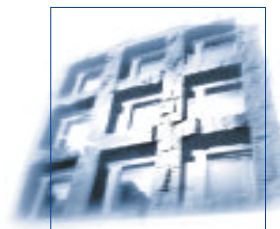
SUOMEN PANKKI



DANMARKS
NATIONALBANK



BANK OF ENGLAND



SVERIGES RIKSBANK

ESCB