



A union of professional unions of architects serving architects

UNSFA, the National Union of Professional French Architects Unions, is an apolitical union of professional unions organization that aims to enhance the role of architects and defend their moral and material interests.

This commitment, serving all architects, aims to enable them to:

- break the isolation to which the pursuit of their activity can lead by offering a wide range of opportunities to meet, talk and debate;
- stay informed and receive training to update and broaden their skills;
- be represented or to engage in direct dialogue with all partners and national, European and international institutions. Being actively involved in all matters that affect, direct and organize the role of the architect, UNSFA has for 40 years been working to improve working conditions. Its federal structure promotes democratic representation and local support for architects. UNSFA depends on the commitment of all architects. Its recognized voice provides a forum for expectations and ensures collective responses to architects that are enriched by the sharing of an extremely wide range of skills and experiences.

UNSFA is committed to architects and contributes to the drafting of regulations.

Through their union, architects have initiated many institutions that are dedicated to the profession.

UNSFA promotes the profession of architect

Whatever the structure or operational form, UNSFA defends the best conditions for the development of business and fights for the role of the architect to be exercised in the public interest.

It helps architects by providing appropriate support structures that are suitable for the daily activities of the architect.

Skills of the architect: sharing services and enriching experiences.

UNSFA maintains the skill of the architect

The men and women who make up architectural firms are the priority of UNSFA. The union of professional unions ensures that training is at the centre of the professionalism of every one of them.

- For initial training, UNSFA is the point of contact of the Ministry of Culture and Communication.
- In terms of professional training, UNSFA is campaigning for state-certified architects wishing to obtain project management authorization in their own names to be able to take training courses with contents and of durations of quality to permit them to operate properly in this capacity.
- In terms of continuing training, UNSFA is jointly responsible for GEPA (*Groupe pour l'Éducation Permanente des Architectes*, [Group for the Continuing Education of Architects]) which refreshes its training curriculum every year in order to meet the changing needs of architects so that they can face the challenges of their ever-changing activities and mission. UNSFA advises architects personally
- Technological changes, adaptation to the regulatory and social environment, business management, communication and business development, and so on.... whatever advice is being sought, UNSFA has the answers.
- A legal department is available to architects to address any issues, in particular employment law.
- The "Prescrire" club is responsible, in conjunction with local unions, for organizing technical information meetings about new products and building materials. UNSFA keeps architects informed. To break the isolation that agency steering can impose, UNSFA has developed: • Archilink, the intranet network, with the Archi Info club, to boost the sharing of experiences and knowledge;
- "Passion Architecture", the quarterly magazine, which is distributed free of charge and is recognized by its readers as being a source of information and a synthesis of our professional environment;
- the annual conference, which is a place for exchanges and meetings for the entire professional community, which leads to the emergence of areas for debate and initiatives.

As the representative voice of the profession, UNSFA participates in the development of the profession of architect through its proposals and actions.

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Presentation

Since 1969, the National Union of Professional French Architects Unions has been promoting the work of professional architects.

UNSFA federates the department-level and regional unions of architects, which have understood the importance of taking collective action at national level.

The French Constitution provides the appropriate framework for collective action: "All persons are entitled to defend their rights and interests through trade union activities and to join the trade union of their choice". Our union of professional unions brings together architects, both men and women, who have decided to unite their efforts and talents to put them at the service of everyone on a voluntary basis.

UNSFA defends rights as well as moral and material interests, both collectively and for individual architects practicing in the context of the law of 3 January 1977 on architecture, pursuant to the provisions of the Labour Code (Waldeck-Rousseau law of 21 March 1884).

UNSFA intervenes in all fields, including the negotiation of inter-professional regulations and forward thinking in terms of training, as demonstrated by the publication of the "Architect's professional record", a course that provides a framework for basic professional knowledge.

UNSFA represents architects in relation to institutional or professional organizations at the national, European and international levels.

UNSFA represents employer architects at all joint committees with employees' unions.

UNSFA develops numerous initiatives that are resolutely turned towards support and assistance in the practice of the profession:

- The "Archilink" intranet network, which is accessible as soon as the architect becomes a member, which makes working as an architect easier on a daily basis thanks to the "Pro" formula.
- "Club Prescrire", recommendations club, which favours dialogue and meetings between architects, influencers and building professionals.
- "Gepa", Group for Continuing Education of Architects, meets the continuing training needs of the architects, actors of the living environment and of building
- The "Passion Architecture" quarterly magazine, which keeps readers up-to-date with the news about the profession.
- The website <http://syndicat-architectes.fr>, which presents our union to the general public.

The history of the union of professional unions

The birth of UNSFA: the unity of the profession

"All persons are entitled to defend their rights and interests through trade union activities and to join the trade union of their choice. Preamble to the Constitution of the 5th Republic.

The UNSFA came into being at a Constituent Assembly on 9 November 1969, rising from the ashes of the General Confederation of French Architects (CGAF). This event represented an important milestone for architects†: from that time on there was a single organization representing the interests of all architects, regardless of their age, status, type of activity, income or school attended. The UNSFA is the expression of the modern unity of thought and common history that unite architects. It goes beyond the diversity of the profession, which is also its collective wealth.

Albin Chalandon, Minister of Public Works, attended the first UNSFA conference in Strasbourg in 1970: for the first time, the presence of the Minister responsible for architecture demonstrated recognition by the government at the highest level of architectural unionism. Pierre Glénat, a trade union activist in the former Provincial Association and the ANSF, was elected first president of the new Union of professional unions.

44 years, 13 presidents

- Pierre Glénat (Toulouse), 1969-1973
- Alain Gillot (Paris) 1973-1977
- Joseph Brémond (Béziers) 1977-1981
- Michel Delaporte (Argenteuil) 1981-1985
- Jean Causse (Nice) 1985-1987
- Alain Vaconsin (Orléans) 1987- 1990
- Alain Huber (Paris) 1990-1993

- Jean-Louis Lissalde (Tours) 1993-1997
- Dominique Riquier-Sauvage (Montmorency) 1997-2001
- François Pélegrin (Gournay sur Marne) 2001-2005
- Michel Roulleau (Nantes) 2005-2009
- Philippe Klein (Strasbourg) 2009-2011
- Marie-Françoise Manière (Villers-Cotterets) 2011-2013

The articles of association of UNSFA make it a national union of departmental and regional unions. Decisions are taken at National Councils (6 per year on average) involving local representatives, and at Annual General Meetings, which take place at Conferences. The executive is provided by an office. The president is elected by the General Meeting for a term of two years, which can be renewed once. In accordance with the legal status of trade unions, UNSFA is fully independent with respect to political power. This remains one of its strengths.

43 years, 43 conferences

- 1970: Strasbourg. Building and its environment: political and economic implications
- 1971: Paris. Architecture and the living environment
- 1972: Bordeaux. The development of professional practices
- 1973: Antibes. The inclusion of architects into the economic world
- 1974: La Baule. Training of architects
- 1975: Paris. Reconciling the French with architecture
- 1976: Villeneuve-les-Avignon. Skill - Resources - Freedom
- 1977: Caen. Architectural quality, social demands
- 1978: Aix-les-Bains. The new architects
- 1979: Tours. Architecture and daily life
- 1980: Marseille. The new frontiers of architecture
- 1981: Biarritz. Freedom for architecture
- 1982: Vittel. Architecture in question
- 1983: Avignon. Architecture, urban planning and decentralisation
- 1984: Angers. Profession: Architect. Skill for new requirements
- 1985: Lyon. Partners in construction
- 1986: Nice. "Archis la vie"
- 1987: Versailles. Architects and partners
- 1988: Les Arcs. The European architect
- 1989: Paquebot le Mermoz. The Architect, the company and Europe
- 1990: Pompadour. Europe in practice for architects
- 1991: Arles. Does an architect have a right to be present and participate?
- 1992: Paris. Time to go for architecture
- 1993: Niederbronn. The architect and money
- 1994: Bordeaux. The foundations of the profession
- 1995: Enghien. The private order
- 1996: Lille. A struggle for architecture
- 1997: Tours. Initial and continuing training
- 1998: Marne la Vallée. The order: strategy and development
- 1999: Lyon. Architecture for all: architecture as a social value
- 2000: Paris. Independence, ethics and responsibilities of the architect
- 2001: Marseille. The architect alongside the citizen
- 2002: Dijon. The joys of architecture of for all
- 2003: Nantes. Society and quality of life: the architect shoulder to shoulder with the citizen
- 2004: Nancy. The place of architecture today
- 2005: Paris. Social cohesion and Architecture
- 2006: Strasbourg. Architecture, Politics, Europe
- 2007: Orléans. Being an architect tomorrow: Civic ambition
- 2008: Toulouse. Did you say sustainable development? The response of the architects!
- 2009: La Rochelle. Architects: Action! UNSFA, 40 years serving architects.
- 2010: Lyon. Architects, actors for change.
- 2011: Bordeaux: the Architect with skills for everyone
- 2012: Nice: New struggles for architects

A concept of the architect and architecture

Over 44 years, UNSFA has fought many battles to defend the interests of architects, to ensure their independence and to try to obtain the best possible conditions for them to pursue their activities.

The social developments to which architects must adapt without losing their identity and the themes that UNSFA has

addressed are extremely diverse: they include the economic crisis, payment conditions, European construction, training, the Procurement Code, contracts and relationships with companies and materials manufacturers, to name just a few examples, with UNSFA at the forefront.

Despite this variety of issues and the diversity of union responses, the same concept of the architect and architecture has governed all these interventions. Its willingness to defend the independence of architects from companies and investors is at the heart of the UNSFA commitment. A person with the capacity to see the overall picture in direct dialogue with the sponsor and providing both current and future sponsors with the skills of the artist, aware of the public interest of architecture in defence of the quality of life.

Alain Huber, UNSFA President, wrote in 1992: the architect is subject to two pressures, which are modern opposites: on the one hand there is economic pressure, which forces the architect to meet specific, immediate interests, and on the other hand there is social pressure for quality of life.

That is why the slogan is clear: accepting, promoting and stimulating all innovations and all methods of operation that can help to enhance the presence of the architect within society, while preserving the independence of architects and encouraging the virtuous practice of architecture for the public good; refusing and fighting anything that could damage the independence of architects or that could prevent architects from providing the services that citizens expect.

The status of "liberal professional" is a means of defending this independence, which is why architects are, rightly, strongly attached to it. UNSFA has always defended this status whenever it has been threatened, but it has also always been keen to promote the diversity of methods of operation (agency employee, formation of architecture firms). This diversity is indeed an asset to the profession, as long as the definition of working rules and economic organization allow the architect to stay in charge of his or her activity.

These are the principles that have guided UNSFA in the development of a union ethos in all its major struggles.

Union ethos of 1992

It originates from the dominant profile of the architects, but it unites through its departmental and regional sections. Architects who have opted for the main features of the liberal profession, which does not preclude the creation of architectural firms:

- Independence from the power of money (businesses, developers, consultants, industrialists) and political power
- Professional ethics that ordinal control helps to guarantee
- The reciprocal choice of professional and client
- Total responsibility: in order to remain free and creative and serve the interest of their clients as they wish, professional architects cannot limit their responsibility to mere compliance with standards
- Personal commitment: whatever the method of operation (private professional, working with a partner or working as an employee of his or her own company), without interfering with the development of joint work that allows the business to progress
- Skill, guaranteed by a protected title, supported by the continuing training that is necessary for the architect and his or her associates.

By applying these principles, UNSFA aims to bring together all architects who want to master liberal professional architecture firms:

- Able to provide project management tasks that more complex, since they have the skills to manage the quality of collective action, ensuring the quality of the collective approach and forming the basis of the architect's specific skill, even when the architect is called upon to intervene in other fields
- Sustainable and robust, as required to ensure client confidence and handle changing methods
- Collectively and objectively engaged in permanent action for training that is perfectly suited to their specific needs and geared towards shared thought
- Capable of entering into contractual commitments of value in order to rise above mere subservience to regulatory standards.

These criteria give UNSFA architects an identity and give UNSFA a main target. However, it is clear that other colleagues in distinct professional positions who believe that this concept also places value on their own working methods are also entitled to join UNSFA.

International action

UNSFA provides international representation from the Architects' Council of Europe and the International Union of Architects.

UNSFA acts as part of the French delegation within the context of an association: The International Council of French Architects (CIAF), also bringing together the National Council of the Order of Architects and the Architecture Union. The CIAF provides representation of the French profession, while allowing its member organizations to be independent.

The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) is an association that was founded in 1990 and is based in Brussels. It has 46 member organizations from 31 countries of the EU geographical area. The CAE acts in relation to the European institutions. It makes them aware of the development of the harmonization of the practices of EU architects, in accordance with the conclusions of its working groups and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

Having existed for 20 years, the CAE is a reference for information and an observatory of the profession in Europe. Its data represents capital that is used to develop a strategy for the future of architects in the EU with the aim of preserving the independence of the role and demonstrating the importance of public architecture within the context of the internal market for services.

Operation: Two Annual General Meetings validate the political leadership of the organization and are supported by an executive board of 11 members, responsible for formalizing the findings of studies in thematic groups. Contributions to working groups and draft resolutions at the General Assembly are the usual ways of contributing within the EAC. Policies implemented by the CAE have a double effect - first at **European Commission** level, then at the level of the ministries of each member state.

Contributions: UNSFA delegates contribute to various working groups, which are organized into three thematic areas:

- **Access to the profession:** Initial training, the "**Qualification**" Directive, professionalizing experience and accreditation.
- **Professional practice:** access to architectural services, trade in services, regulation of services, domestic services market ("**Services**" Directive), regulation and quality.
- **Architecture and Quality of Life:** responsible architecture and environment, urban issues, research.

UNSFA is developing a proactive policy linking the European project in 2020 and the conditions for the practice of architects in a regulated profession.

UNSFA is developing the conditions for the implementation of a coordinated European project for the architectural profession, which regulated by warranties and the quality of services provided, guaranteeing the independence of the role and the recognition of the public interest of architecture.

The education reform following the Bologna agreements was accompanied by a critical analysis of policy by the public authorities in respect of architects. As a result, UNSFA asserted a claim to the introduction of professional training of 2 years. This was confirmed by the **publication of the Professional Record in 2007**, the refusal to ratify an HMONP (authorization to operate as a prime contractor under one's own name) for a period of 6 months in 2008, thus recognizing the relevance of the policies of the recommendations made by the UIA and CAE resolutions.

The International Union of Architects (UIA)

The International Union of Architects was founded in Lausanne (Switzerland), on 28 June 1948, to unite architects from all over the world, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, or architectural doctrine, and to federate their national organizations.

Made up at the time of its creation of delegations from 27 states, the UIA today unites the most representative professional organizations of architects in 130 countries and territories, and groups together more than one million three hundred thousand architects worldwide.

The UIA has become an accomplished non-governmental organization, the professional network of architects from all continents.

The European Council of the Liberal Professions (CEPLIS)

The European Council of the Liberal Professions (CEPLIS) is the only inter-professional association that brings together all the liberal professions under one roof at community level. As such, CEPLIS is an approved organization of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and maintains close contacts with the European Commission, Parliament and Council. CEPLIS is registered under Belgian law as an international non-governmental and non-profit organization. Its members are European associations aiming to represent the profession to the European Union institutions, as well as national associations grouping all liberal professions associations within the Member States.