

## ПРОФЕСИОНАЛНА СОЦИАЛНА ОТГОВОРНОСТ ПРИ УПРАВЛЕНИЕ НА ЗЕЛЕНИТЕ СИСТЕМИ

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## PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT IN THE CITIES' GREEN SYSTEMS

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**Abstract:** *Activities in landscape architecture are directly related to the application of altruistic concepts for the improvement of public welfare. Experts, working in this profession, perform functions related to management of various complex projects for improving the living conditions of the community. Through their work they exert significant effects on the economic, social and environmental development. Professional social responsibility of the landscape architect is an integral part of ethical behavior not only within the profession but to society and is a factor for sustainable development of urban green systems.*

**Key words:** *professional social responsibility, green system, landscape architect, competency, model of competence, sustainable development.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Activities in landscape architecture are directly related to the application of altruistic concepts for the improvement of public welfare. Experts, working in this profession, perform functions related to management of various complex projects for improving the living conditions of the community [1]. Through their work they exert significant effects on the economic, social and environmental development. Professional social responsibility of the landscape architect is an integral part of ethical behavior not only within the profession but to society and is a factor for sustainable development of urban green systems.

IFLA (International Federation of Landscape architects) definition of a field of work of landscape architects is „Landscape Architects conduct research and advise on planning, design and stewardship of the outdoor environment and spaces, both within and beyond the built environment, and its conservation and sustainability of development. For the profession of landscape architect, a degree in landscape architecture is required.”[6] First of all in the code of ethics of the profession are imposed standards related to interaction with the society.

## II. DISCUSSIONS

### *A. Interpretation of the term “a professional social responsibility of the landscape architect”*

The popular definition of socially responsible behavior is „behavior of individuals or organizations to take responsibility for the impacts on society and the environment as a result of decisions made and actions” [8], [9]. Taking into account the special products created by the specialized work of the landscape architect, they influencing the social development and welfare, and the society could definitely require and expect from the landscape architect to demonstrate a social responsible behavior through the performance of their specialized work. The social responsibility behavior of this profession is performed through the work of the specialists and is executed through transparency and ethical behavior which leads to a firm development, improving the conditions of life, health and welfare of the society.

The Corporate Social Responsibility is one of the most widespread concept in literature and the media's. It is a conception when the companies integrate with their own free will their activity of preservation of the environment and their social initiatives in their business strategies and in interaction with all interested persons. [9]. The process of demonstration of the corporate social responsibility is characteristic for organizations in which landscape architects are working. In this paper we are trying to give the definition to the conception of a professional social responsibility which is characteristic for the person performing activities of a certain profession. The conception „a professional social responsibility” refers to the individual who performed a definite labor activity in the sphere of landscape architecture and directed at the improvement of the conditions of standard of living”. According to many authors the social responsibility includes the obligations of the business towards the society, the widening of their circle outside the economic functions and inclusion of the social activities as necessary ones. The concept of professional social responsibility refers to the persons practicing the profession [5]. Our understanding of the professional social responsibility of the landscape architects exceeds the limits of the business and organization and enters the field of executing the profession to in all aspects-science, art, technique, technology and social development. ***The professional social responsibility of the landscape architect reveals in its relations with different parties concerned. These are private clients, different social institutions and social groups as well.***

The professional social responsibility is brought up by giving the standards in the educational product. The educational standards reflect the social necessity of executing the profession of the landscape architect [7].

Society continually stated their needs parking areas for improving living standards and environmental performance in urban areas. The question is what kind of park areas. Society does not giving specific and stringent requirements regarding the appearance of the park. The role of the landscape architect is here. He must apply the obtained knowledge and create park to appeal to people to be part of the village green system and improve the ecological balance of the area. The society is not thinking about these details, because delegate the responsibility of specialists. So in the process of social evolution landscape architect profession has become as socially significant and has found its key role in the relationship economy, society and nature [10]. Delegating responsibility of landscape architects to improve the living environment, society expects professionals to

make these creative ideas demonstrating socially responsible behavior. There arises a conflict in public understanding and understanding of the professional person for socially responsible behavior. Socially responsible behavior is necessary, but it is not a fact and constant.

The landscape architects participate in the production process of the weal - park. On the one hand, in this production process, he is as a business entity and it must make a profit, part of which to capitalize and improve his property. On the other hand, the landscape architect must to produce a high quality product that will satisfy the needs of society. Morality, ethics and responsibility in this process from the perspective of society are required, but they are not absolute given. In the process of production and exchange of the public good park public the society wants professionals to demonstrate socially responsible behavior in the projects implementation. In turn landscape architects require from society leeway to practice their profession and to make profits from the goods and services. The deal is done by institutionalization of the rules. Society grants the specialists the autonomy to define their own norms of behavior and action, freedom of self-regulation, freedom to choose clients. Society gives the landscape architects specific powers, which are not granted to ordinary citizens, to fulfill their social roles. For its part, the professionals agree to provide services and products with high quality, for improving the welfare of society, and demonstrate the necessary social responsibility for the consequences of their decisions. In the process of self regulation reveals the role of professional associations and educational institutions, who are formed to impose certain ethical rules, principles and standards. All professional organizations must create and enforce a code of ethics in which to formulate the parameters of professional social responsibility. They perform the necessary social function, to set standards for socially responsible behavior of the specialists and to monitor their compliance [12].

The concept of professional social responsibility refers to individuals engaged in purposeful work within landscape architecture, and aimed at improving living conditions. Expression of social responsibility professional landscape architect is required in dealing with different stakeholders. These are private clients, other public institutions and community groups. In first the education system necessary educate young professionals in professional social responsibility. This is done by setting the necessary education standards. Educational standards reflect the public need from the landscape architect.

### ***B. Competency requirements and professional social responsibility of landscape architects***

Many authors like Boyazits and Maccleiland, Iliev, Koleva ect., working on the separation of the two concepts „competence” and „competency”, which are based on the creation of competency models for the occupation. According Koleva „Theoretical delimitation of competences (specific to position) and competency (inherent in the person occupying the position) is important, but in practice and in the organizations, fleshing out the two concepts is a complex task.” [4].

In standard „Terms and Definitions to Support Understanding of ACCME's Updated”[14], developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality standards for medical education, is a formulation of basic concepts such as competence and competence:

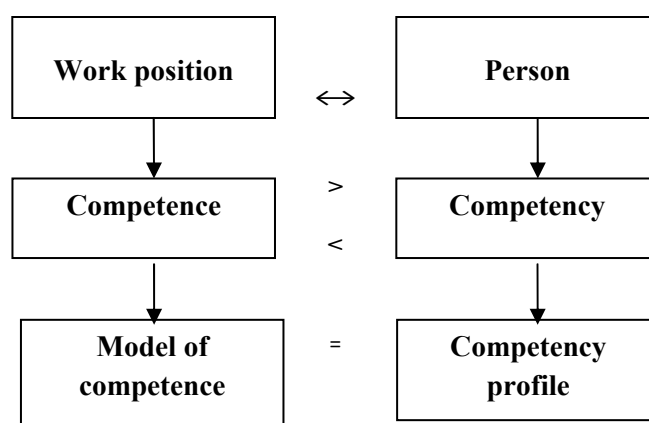
- **Competence** – a combination of knowledge, skills and performance, the ability to apply knowledge, skills and judgment in practice.
- **Competency** – an underlying characteristic causally related to effective or superior performance in a job.

Competence = Knowledge + Skills + Experience

Competency = Ability of individuals to use (K + S + E)

Correlation between competence and competency shows how a particular person is suitable for the position.

TABLE 1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN „COMPETENCE” AND „COMPETENCY”



Different authors have their definitions but they are often are controversial and discussion. In this paper is accepted the distinction between the two concepts proposed by Charles Woodruff (1991) and the following working definitions [15]:

**Competency** is the ability of individuals to use, interpret and apply the acquired knowledge and skills for his entire adult life, according to the requirements of the specific job.

**The competence** refers to the work and talk about the field of professional activity in which a person is competent. It refers to the position.

According to Armstrong competencies can be distinguished by [15]:

- **Behavioral („soft”) skills** – emotional intelligence, values, professionalism, communication skills, teamwork, ability to take decisions, achievement orientation, ability to motivate, leadership and more.
- **Technical („hard”) skills** that define the specific skills and abilities – what employees should know and able to do their job effectively. Technical skills can be generic - relating to a group of related occupations or specific - relating to the job.

Many governmental organizations, NGO and research teams are working on developing integrated systems of complementary competencies (competency models). These are frameworks (matrices) of competencies describing behavior necessary in order to achieve the best results work. Behaviors are detailed so that the employee can decide whether his actions meet the standard that requires the competence. Such frameworks are defined nationally (USA - O \* Net), at sector level (SFIA, DOL/ETA), a European sector level (e-Competence), at the corporate level [13]. Defined as frameworks for describing the profession and work position. They also formulated mandatory technical skills and related the personal (soft skills) competencies. Often in the soft skills are included competencies related to integrity and professionalism. These competencies needed in the profession incorporating demonstrating professional social responsibility. The process of establish the parameters of professional social responsible behavior is part of the process of establishing standards of conduct. The professional standards can be achieved by the professionals with adequate professional education. This goal is pursued in this study to provide the framework and formulate the social responsibility of this profession - landscape architect.

The profession „Landscape architect” is a regulated professional activity which requires a definite educational degree (ECLAS European Council of landscape architecture school).The international organizations like International Federation of Landscape Architects IFLA, European Federation for Landscape Architecture (EFLA) [6], as well as ECLAS European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools, the Project Le Notre /Thematic Network Project in Landscape Architecture/ create standards for accreditation , licensing and practicing of the profession. They generalize and maintain a data base for the best practices in the sphere of the landscape architecture. Such organizations maintain and shape the borders of the professional responsible behavior of the practicing landscape architects and also give the parameters of the development of the educational standards in the speciality. IFLA published the areas of competence of the landscape architects who had acquired an educational degree generalizing the main components of the education in different member- countries of the international organization [3]. Acquiring of education and demonstration into practice of knowledge concerning the following are included:

- *History of cultural form and an understanding of design as a social art*
- *Cultural and natural systems*
- *Plant material and horticultural applications*
- *Site engineering including materials, methods, technologies, construction documentation and administration, and applications*
- *Theory and methodologies in design and planning*
- *Landscape design, management, planning and science at all scales and applications*
- *Information technology and computer applications*
- *Public policy and regulation*
- *Communications and public facilitation*
- *Ethics and values related to the profession*

The main areas of knowledge are generalized into:

- Technical knowledge (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6);
- Abilities for business efficiency (7);
- Relations between persons and social efficiency (9);
- Social- economic responsiveness and social responsibility (8, 10).

Landscape architects apply the acquired knowledge regarding communications and social assistance, ethics and values by demonstration of the professional responsible behavior subject to social needs. The execution of the profession landscape architect and the demonstration of the professional responsible behavior affect the improvement of life's quality.

The specific aims and priorities of the profession reflect the main aspects in the conception of firm social development. The work of landscape architects in the different areas of science and practice affects the firmness of the system. The most direct expression of this influence is revealed in the increase of ecological indexes of the environment through the applying of professional project decisions. These decisions indirectly reflect on the increase of the social welfare and define the economic value of the created natural product.

The term „professional” is used for description of a specialist who executes and develops the acquired from education and experience knowledge and works according to rules and ethical norms established in his sphere of activity [11]. The term „professionals” is used to people having a qualification in a specific area. They must have special knowledge and theoretical education, relevant experience, knowledge and skills that are vital to the welfare of society, membership of a professional organization [10]. The professionalism of the landscape architect reflects the social ethical norms and can be institutionalized. By creation of professional standards which are applied and controlled by professional unions.

The profession landscape architect is historically acknowledged and institutionally confirmed in time as socially important and unique. This obliges the specialists who have acquire this education and who have been working in practice to show their responsibility to society and the increase of the profession's image. Depending on the application of professional knowledge of landscape architect in different areas in the different countries are separated different positions within the profession. These positions have been institutionalized in different ways.

The educational preparation of the landscape architects in Bulgaria has been highly accredited and acknowledged by IFLA. The educational programme of landscape architecture in the University of Forestry is acknowledged and published in IFLA Manual of educational institutions which conduct a professional training in Master's degree in landscape architecture [2]. The educational standards include an acquiring of standards of professional behavior which leads to the improvement of the social welfare and applying of social responsible decisions. In the frames of the professional development and practice a licensing of the project rights is applied which regulates once more and establishes definite professional standards for work. The licensing is accomplished by the Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria (CAB). The Union of Landscape Architects joins the professional stratum and works for the establishment of good practices in the profession. Its work is connected with the establishment of ethical professional standards and reflection of social interests connected with the execution of the profession [3].

Imposed educational standards include the acquisition of standards of professional conduct, leading to improvement of public welfare and implementing socially responsible decisions.

Last year was elaborated MATRIX COMPETENCE OF PROFESSION „Landscape Architect” for conditions in Bulgaria. In the develop process are covered possibilities for the expression in the practice of these professionals in both public and private sectors.

TABLE 2. MATRIX COMPETENCE OF PROFESSION LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT FROM BULGARIAN

Qualification levels Fields of competence	Landscape Design Trainee	Landscape Architect Planner	Landscape Architect - Team Leader	Landscape Architect - Management and Administration	Chief Landscape Architect
General Duty	A	AA	AA+	AA++	AAA+
Acquired skills into practice and enforced in practice leadership skills	B	BB	BB+	BB++	BBB+
Technical experience and using professional techniques and methods	C	CC	CC+	CC++	CCC+
Competence in planning, organizing, managing finances projects	D	DD	DD+	DD++	DDD+
Communicative skills	EE	EE	EE+	EE++	EEE+
Teamwork, leadership and management	FF	FF	FF+	FF+	FFF+
Educational requirements	G-	GG	GG	G+	GG++

All levels and groups reflect the educational competencies and skills acquired in „Landscape Architecture” at the Forestry University and in the practice. It was analyzed the job requirements for specialists in public administration and private sector. Within the matrix were formulated and the necessary skills associated with demonstrating socially responsible behavior by the professionals.

Qualification levels include: Landscape Design Trainee, Landscape Architect Planner, Landscape Architect - Team Leader, Landscape Architect - Management and Administration, Chief Landscape Architect.

Fields of competence are grouped as: General Duty, Acquired skills into practice and enforced in practice leadership skills, Technical experience and using professional techniques and methods, Competence in planning, organizing, managing finances projects, Communicative skills, Teamwork, leadership and management, Educational requirements.

The main application of the matrix is within professional organizations and associations of the landscape architectural activities and in favor of public sector institutions. The bases of the matrix were set five qualification levels at the professional positions and seven groups of competencies. In one group competencies „Teamwork, leadership and management” about the specialists from all levels of qualifications is to demonstrate a social responsible attitude and ethics of the profession and the organization.

By applying the matrix, the socially responsible behavior of landscape architect will be not only the recommend element at work, but could be mandatory when they were included this within the job requirements of working positions in the organizations.

Specialists are realized in the frames of education and science, private and public sector of economics. The work of landscape architects busy in the public sector has got a special importance. They are responsible for the management of the green systems at national, regional and local level. Their work influences directly the efficient use of the means for improvement of life's quality.

Their social responsible behavior in taking management decisions directly reflects on the behavior of the colleagues from the private sector.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

Social responsibility is multidimensional in that being responsible goes beyond just being respectful of others; it means experiencing, as well as appreciating, our interdependence and connectedness with others and our environment.[12] Professional social responsibility beyond this definition means the application of professional knowledge and skills of landscape architects in the public interest.

Landscape architecture is profession important for social development that has direct relevance to the responsible use of land and for improves the quality of life.

Professional social responsibility is required to educate through the imposition of educational standards and professional ethical standards of professional associations. It is the sole responsibility of the professionals in practice and has to demonstrate from the person exercising the profession. The quality of living environment is directly related to the occurrence of socially responsible behavior in making professional decisions by landscape architect. Professional associations are those which should initiate and encourage the implementation of socially responsible decisions by professionals in practice.



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