

# moodboard

The dire financial situation of architectural offices in Poland is a fact. Medium and small studios are in the worst position, with their profitability often on the brink of survival. At the same time, there are more and more investments, especially in the housing sector, which means there is plenty to design. In January 2025, more apartments were completed than in the previous year, and the number of those whose construction has begun is also higher (data from the Central Statistical Office – GUS). However, the average quality of what is being built is not satisfactory. Construction is fast, mostly at low cost, but with record-high profits. So why are architects one of the lowest paid links in this industry?

When we talked about what determines the quality of housing architecture in Poland at this year's The Budma Fairs, the topic of architects' salaries dominated the debate. Mateusz Mastalski, partner at the Danish studio Henning Larsen, who was present at the meeting, pointed out that in Denmark quality is not only the result of tradition, good architectural education of the society or solidarity of professional architects, but also the fact that they have more time for designing than in Poland and are better paid for their work. This relationship seems obvious.

We are therefore launching a debate on architects' salaries in Poland. We will continue this debate in future issues of A&B.

We also encourage you to take part in a survey on guaranteed minimum rates and salaries for architects. Please send your application and willingness to participate to Małgorzata Tomczak at [malgosia@archibi.pl](mailto:malgosia@archibi.pl) or to Anastazja Dżupina at [anastazja@archibi.pl](mailto:anastazja@archibi.pl)

# Minimum wages for architectural projects in Poland – what do architects think about it?

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## Marek Chrobak

President of the Main Board of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) for the 2024–2028 term. He is associated with the Rzeszów branch of SARP, where he also served as president for many years (2011–2019). He is a graduate of the Cracow University of Technology and co-founder of the ArchiGROUP studio. He is known for projects such as the 'P' building of the Rzeszów University of Technology and the headquarters of the Theological and Pastoral Institute in Rzeszów.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

That would be ideal. The minimum rate should be based on the hourly workload of an architect in a given category and, in combination with the GUS rate, would result in a minimum amount. The second method is the rate per square metre, although this depends on the region, the scale of the task and many other factors.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

170–250 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

220–320 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

220–350 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for buildings and public spaces, excluding tradesmen?**

280–420 PLN.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Architects should take care of pricing their work themselves in accordance with the suggested price list.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

After all, there is the Chamber of Architects. It should be the guardian of the ethical practice of the profession. There is no need for another organisation.

Marek **CHROBAK** ■

President of the Main Board of SARP



photo: Patryk Czornij

## Piotr Legerski

President of the Association of House and Apartment Builders and the Arkada Group. Since the 1980s, he has been carrying out housing projects in Cracow, including Starowiślna, Senatorska and Zabłocie streets. His company has gained recognition for the quality of its architecture and affordable prices, which earned him the title of 'Personality of the Year 2020' in the Business category. He often comments on the real estate market, pointing out challenges such as the rise in apartment prices in Cracow.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

No. The market determines the price.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

I do not know.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

I do not know.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

I do not know.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for buildings and public spaces, excluding tradesmen?**

I do not know.

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Price is determined by talent, professional status, experience and the complexity of the project.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

I am against trade unions. There is the Association of Polish Architects and the Chamber of Architects.

Piotr **LEGERSKI** ■

Developer, Chairman of the Board of the Arkada Group



foto: Marcin Czechowicz

## Bolesław Stelmach

Director of the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning in Warsaw.

General designer at Stelmach i Partnerzy Biuro Architektoniczne, a studio founded in 1992.

He graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Cracow University of Technology in 1980, and in 1988 he completed postgraduate studies in spatial planning at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology. In 2022, he was awarded the title of professor in engineering and technical sciences, in the discipline of architecture and urban planning. He has been a professor at the Lodz University of Technology since 2019.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre be entered for the project? Please briefly justify your answer.**

Yes.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

400 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

800 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

400 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

500 PLN.

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Enter the valid price list.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

The Chamber of Architects is the trade union, but it is unable to obtain the same guarantees as doctors or lawyers.

Bolesław **STELMACH** ■

Director of the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning in Warsaw



foto: Leszek Ogrodnik

## Robert Konieczny

Founder of the KWK Promes architectural studio. Foreign member of the French Academy of Architecture since 2017, honorary member of the Union of Czech Architects since 2022. Nominated twelve times for the Mies van der Rohe Award, winner of numerous architectural awards.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

Yes, the introduction of a guaranteed minimum wage is necessary, and the only effective solution is appropriate legislation. In many countries where we work, the application of minimum rates is a norm and a widely respected principle. Unfortunately, in Poland the situation is dramatic—the rates are embarrassingly low and conceptual designs are often done for free, which leads to the degradation of our profession. A guaranteed rate not only stabilises the market, but also influences the quality of architecture. If our industry is not able to act in solidarity, as is the case in other countries, appropriate legal regulations must be introduced.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

The optimal solution would be to adopt the model used abroad, i.e. to set the remuneration as a percentage of the investment value. Usually it is around 10 percent, including industry specialists, so it can be assumed that the share of architecture alone should be 7–8 percent.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

See the answer to the question about the rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

As I said, without proper legal regulations, I don't see any way to effectively work out fair wages. I don't believe in the common sense of our industry.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

Yes, we should have trade unions and effective lobbyists to represent our interests, not only in terms of wages.

Robert **KONIECZNY** ■

KWK Promes



photo: private archive

## Wojciech Krawczuk

President of the Poznań Branch of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP), graduate of the Faculty of Architecture at the Poznań University of Technology. He has many years of experience in the design and realisation of architectural investments. As the President of SARP Poznań Branch, he is already in his second term of office, actively working to improve the quality of urban space and promote good practices in architecture. He is involved in initiatives that bring together architects, investors and local governments, supporting sustainable development and responsible design.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

I don't know if the regulations will allow a minimum price to be introduced. Two decades ago, the Chamber of Architects had to withdraw the minimum wage price list for architectural services from circulation and even paid a fine because the UOKiK considered it a practice restricting competition. We should definitely talk about this, also more widely outside the community. We should show how much such services cost, what is included in the price and what costs we incur in connection with the order. This should be done among clients as well as among those who make estimates, especially young architects and those who underestimate. Going below a certain amount that allows architects and design offices to make a living should be a signal to everyone that such a service is risky, not only for the architect, but also for the investor and the project (investment) itself. Tenders in which the price is the dominant (or only) criterion must be replaced by those in which the lowest and highest prices are rejected, so that the bids submitted are standardised and closer to the average. In such a situation, the contracting authority can be guided by a qualitative choice. Choosing based on the lowest price causes a pathology - poor quality projects can be hidden behind a low price and thus win contracts, without investing in themselves and improving their skills. A poor project means poor quality of the spaces and facilities in which we will live. Ultimately, as beneficiaries, we all bear the social and health costs of this state of affairs. The minimum price should also be a reference in the estimated valuations of design work; if they are done without thinking, it is hardly surprising that the client assumes that he will spend 20 million on the construction and receives offers for 150 million zlotys

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

100–150 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

200–300 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

100–150 PLN.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

100–250 PLN.

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Through environmental education, based on the solidarity of this professional group.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

I do not rule out such a solution. The Chamber is treated by its members in a similar way to SARP, the members of the board work for the benefit of the community, while the female and male members are somewhat on the sidelines—they contribute nothing and learn little.

Wojciech **KRAWCZUK** ■

President of the Poznań Branch of the Association of Polish Architects,  
Front Architects





foto: Lubomir Nikoľov

## Marcin Kościuch

Vice-president for creativity in the Poznań branch of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) for the years 2024–2028.

He defended his diploma thesis at the Faculty of Architecture of the Poznań University of Technology in 1999. In the years 1996–2003, he worked in the ADS Studio team, among others on the design of the new Poznań-Ławica Airport Terminal and the new Halls of the Poznań International Fair. In 2004, he and Tomasz Osiegtowski founded the Ultra Architects design studio in Poznań.

### Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.

I don't know if it's possible, but I do know that we should start talking openly about rates, about how much our work should cost, because we have a difficult and responsible profession.

### What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?

Depending on the size of the job.

- Buildings with a surface area of 1,000 to 4,500 m<sup>2</sup>: usable floor area (UFA): approx. 350 PLN.
- Buildings with a surface area of 4,500 to 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>: UFA: approx. 300 PLN.
- Buildings with a surface area of more than 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>: UFA: approx. 280 PLN.

### What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?

600 PLN with interior fittings, simple landscaping. Plus supervision: minimum 8 per cent.

### What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?

Depending on the size of the job.

- Buildings with a surface area of 1,000 to 4,500 m<sup>2</sup>: usable floor area (UFA) approx. 350 PLN.
- Buildings with a surface area of 4,500 to 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>: UFA approx. 300 PLN.
- Buildings larger than 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>: UFA approx. 280 PLN.

### What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?

This is a difficult question to answer because of the very different tasks involved. You can't compare a hospital with a museum, but the project budget is an important consideration.

### If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?

First of all, let's start talking about it openly so that there is some point of reference when submitting offers. Of course, the offer will be tailored to the location, the specifics of the task, and the nature and potential of the studio.

### Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?

I think that's the wrong question to ask because such organisations would certainly deal with more than just this issue.

Marcin KOŚCIUCH ■

Ultra Architects



photo: Lubomir Nikolov

## Bartłomiej Kisielewski

Architect, partner at Horizone Studio. Since 1996, he has worked as an architect and lead architect, mainly on office and residential building projects in Poland and Germany. In 1996–1997, he worked in Berlin at Takamatsu + Lahyani Architects Associates, followed by Pysall Ruge Architekten. From 1998 to 2002, he worked as a designer at the DDJM architectural office in Cracow, where he worked on numerous commercial, office and residential buildings. Since 2001, he has been a fully qualified architect and a member of the Lesser Poland Chamber of Architects. Since 2024, he has been the vice-chairman of the Municipal Town Planning and Architectural Commission in Cracow.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

It can be used as a standard for project pricing, as is the case with the regulation on the pricing of project work for public procurement. Architects will compete on quality, not price.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

Approx. 4 per cent of the realisation costs; the realisation costs for shell and core are approx. 7000 PLN per square metre. Interior designs and additional developments should be paid for separately.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

Around 8–10 per cent of the realisation costs.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

Around 4–6 per cent, depending on the scope and complexity.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

Approximately 5–8 per cent of the realisation costs, depending on the scale and complexity.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Disclose project rates and discuss them publicly. Architects offering projects for 150 and 300 zlotys per square metre are, in fact, offering different products. The Chamber of Architects standards of professional practice describing the scope of work are a good guide.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

No.

Bartłomiej **KISIELEWSKI** ■

Horizone Studio



photo: Patryk Czornij

## Marek Kaszyński

Since 2023, Chairman of the Council of the Lesser Poland Regional Council of the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland. Since 2016, representative of the Main Board of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) for statutory and regulatory matters. Treasurer of the Cracow branch of SARP from 2012 to 2019 and president of the Krakow branch from 2019 to 2023. Since 2016, runs his own studio, Marek Kaszyński Architectural Studio.

Author or co-author of several dozen projects in the field of residential, public and historic architecture. Judge and competition secretary. Commissioner of the International Architecture Biennale in Krakow in 2015, 2017 and 2019 and organiser in 2021 and 2023.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

No, because the rate depends on the complexity and scope of the job.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

For the entire documentation, 2.7–9.4 per cent of the planned construction costs, analogous to the rates specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on (...) calculation of planned design work costs (...).

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

For the entire documentation, 2.55–9.4 per cent of the planned construction costs, analogous to the rates specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on (...) calculation of planned design work costs (...).

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

For the entire documentation, 2.55–9.4 per cent of the planned construction costs, analogous to the rates specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on (...) calculation of planned design work costs (...).

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

For the entire documentation, 2.25–9.4 per cent of the planned construction costs, analogous to the rates specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on (...) calculation of planned design work costs (...).

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

In competitive procedures, by correctly determining the value of the planned design work costs, in tendering procedures, for example by introducing the rule of rejecting the lowest bid, and by monitoring the aforementioned proceedings, including by the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland with the support of the Public Procurement Office.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

This function is fulfilled by the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland.

Marek **KASZYŃSKI** ■

Chairman of the Council of the Lesser Poland Regional Council of the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland



photo: private archive

## Robert Skitek

Architect, graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice. Since 2001, he has been running his own studio RS+. He has received numerous awards and distinctions in architectural competitions and for completed projects. In 2008, he received an award in the Young Architect category.

Since 2016, he has been a member of the Municipal Town Planning and Architecture Commission in Tychy, and since 2018, a member of the Council of the Municipal Museum in Tychy.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

Yes, absolutely. I don't know if it's per square metre, but that's one of the options. In tenders, the only de facto criterion for many years has been the price. The architects are further confused by the introduction of other criteria, such as the length of the warranty. It is standard practice to require the transfer of copyright in the project price. In the case of smaller investments such as houses, the prices offered for the project on the market (often not by architects, but by architect friends who just sign) do not even cover the labour costs.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

150 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

150 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

150 PLN.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

For buildings, 150 PLN, public spaces are difficult to price per square metre.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

First of all, a broad discussion in the industry. The price war is killing us; only investors who often have more funds secured anyway benefit from it. Force public procurers to apply the prices from the regulation. Stop free project estimates for public investors — they should apply the aforementioned regulation by securing funds for project documentation. It is often the case that when organising a tender or inquiry, the contracting authority does not even know about this regulation, and to get an idea of the costs, they send non-binding inquiries to several studios. In my opinion, we should react to this practice. Not only do we waste a lot of time, but clients often receive underestimated quotes, which results in underestimated funds for project documentation. Reject the lowest prices in tenders. Although this needs to be thought through more carefully, because if only one cheapest offer is rejected, it will be easy to get around it.

And in our environment: it's not possible without a 'stick', although it would also be good to work out some 'carrots'.

Apply penalties for 'signatories'. Apply penalties for those who work for free (for example, concepts as part of bids)..

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

Yes. Unfortunately, Chamber of Architects has never been able to solve this problem.

Robert **SKITEK** ■

studio RS+



## Oskar Grąbczewski

Architect and urban planner, graduate of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice and scholarship holder of IBA Emscher Park. Together with his wife Barbara and son Marek, he runs the architectural office OVO Grąbczewscy Architekci in Katowice. He is an academic lecturer, competition judge, columnist and architecture critic. He has received over a hundred international and national awards, distinctions and nominations, including in the EU Mies van der Rohe Award, German Design Prize and SARP Award of the Year.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

Yes, I am in favour of introducing minimum rates, analogous to the rates specified in the price list which is part of the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on the determination of the methods and basis for drawing up an investor's estimate, calculation of the planned costs of design works and the planned costs of construction works specified in the functional and utility programme, the price list drawn up by the Chamber of Architects, the SARP price list or foreign price lists (HAOI). As global examples show, an adequate level of remuneration for design work ensures a higher level of design, which can bring significant benefits to investors as well as users in the form of better designed buildings and spaces. Better, which means more economical, sustainable, more sensible and, last but not least, beautiful.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

The average amount should be around 300 PLN, but due to the different budget and standard of investments and the scope of the project, I suggest that the valuations should be based each time on the price list that is part of the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on determining the methods and basis for preparing an investor's estimate, calculating the planned costs of design works and the planned costs of construction works specified in the functional utility programme.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

The average amount should be around 250 PLN, but due to the different budget and standard of investments and the scope of the project, I suggest that the valuations should be based each time on the price list that is part of the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on determining the methods and basis for preparing an investor's estimate, calculating the planned costs of design works and the planned costs of construction works specified in the functional utility programme.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

The average amount should be around 300 PLN, but due to the different budget and standard of investments and the scope of the project, I suggest that the valuations should be based each time on the price list that is part of the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on determining the methods and basis for preparing an investor's estimate, calculating the planned costs of design works and the planned costs of construction works specified in the functional utility programme.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

The average amount should be around 500 PLN, but due to the different budget and standard of investments and the scope of the project, I suggest that the valuations should be based each time on the price list which is part of the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology

of 20 December 2021 on determining the methods and basis for preparing an investor's estimate, calculating the planned costs of design works and the planned costs of construction works specified in the functional utility programme, which should really be the responsibility of every contracting authority in the public sector.

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

In order of anticipated effectiveness: 1) a prayer campaign; 2) architectural education, making the public aware of the importance of architecture; 3) effective influence on legislation, which should promote and appreciate good urban planning and architecture, through consultations, discussions and negotiations with politicians and legislators; 4) professional solidarity.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

The Chamber of Architects and the Association of Polish Architects should be in charge of this, but of course other organisations may also emerge that will try to achieve this virtuous goal.

Oskar **GRĄBCZEWSKI** ■  
OVO Grąbczewscy Architekci



## Wojciech Fudala

Architect, urban planner and interior designer, he has been running his own architectural studio since 2022. He has been a member of the Katowice branch of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) since 2015 and served as a board member of the branch from 2019 to 2024. He has been awarded the Silver Badge of SARP for his activities.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

As a member state of the European Union, Poland does not currently have the legal option of introducing a guaranteed minimum wage per square metre of project. This is due to a 2019 ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union, which prohibited the imposition of such rates as contrary to the EU principle of freedom to provide services. Previously, minimum project rates were in force in Germany, for example. The Honorary Ordinance for Architects and Engineers (HOAI) regulated the range of remuneration, which had to be within a certain framework depending on the type and scale of the project. After the CJEU ruling, Germany had to withdraw the HOAI and the minimum rates became a recommendation rather than a requirement.

In these circumstances, it is up to architects, not politicians, to find a good solution. We need to make investors aware that if they want something special, the architect needs to spend more time on the design. This time obviously costs money, but in the end it will bring the investor much greater benefits, such as optimising construction costs or earning more from the usable space of flats or services.

It is worth mentioning an interesting solution, namely the Czech *kalkulačka* — a tool developed by the local Chamber of Architects. It supports the valuation process by estimating the working time according to the type of object (for example, residential, commercial), its size and complexity. On this basis, each architect individually determines their hourly rate. So if one architect offers a lower price than another, it only means that their hourly rate is lower than someone else's, not that their project will be incomplete. Although the calculator does not impose minimum prices, it does ensure transparency, allowing the investor to better

understand the value of a good project and know what they are paying for..

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

Just enough for the architect to be able to devote an appropriate amount of time to the design. This will increase the investor's profits from the sale of flats and make it a better place to live for the users of the space.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

Just enough so that the architect can dedicate the appropriate amount of time to designing the house. This optimises the construction costs of a single-family home and ensures maximum benefit for its future users.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

Just enough so that the architect can dedicate enough time to designing the office buildings. This will increase the investor's profits from the sale of offices and make it easier for the space users to work.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

Just enough so that the architect can dedicate enough time to designing these buildings and public spaces. This will benefit everyone who uses these spaces.

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

1. First and foremost, our environment must take care of the popularisation of architecture, so that it becomes part of everyday culture again. Our

foundation 'Ładnie' was established for this purpose. It consists of a group of architects who have decided to dedicate some of their time and knowledge to changing reality and increasing the appreciation of our profession. By organising events, we want to raise awareness that design knowledge and skills are essential for the proper functioning of the world and changing it for the better.

2. It is worth publishing the sale prices of properties, comparing the projects for which architects receive awards with those where architects limit themselves to the role of drawing executors. In this way, developers will see that if they go to architects who try to do something interesting, they can gain a lot from the sale.
3. In the case of tenders where there are several bids, the cheapest and the most expensive should be rejected first and the remaining bids should be selected.
4. Architecture students should be educated about the costs of a project and the value of our work from the very beginning. This would avoid the unconscious undercutting of prices by architects who are just entering the market.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

I don't see any need for this.

Wojciech **FUDALA** ■  
architect





phot.: private archive

## Mirosław Wojcieszak

Architect, graduate of the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning at the Poznań University of Technology. He has over 10 years of experience in renowned architectural studios in Poznań (Neostudio, Litoborski+Marciniak Biuro Architektoniczne, Lab 3 Architekci), where he worked on projects for multi-family residential buildings, offices, public buildings, and commercial and service buildings. Since 2021, member of the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland. Since 2023, member of the Association of Architects of the Republic of Poland.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

No, because setting a minimum rate per square metre could make studios that use better and faster (more expensive) technologies, more qualified and experienced staff, and so on less competitive. It seems fairer to develop a way of hourly billing that takes into account the qualifications of the employees and the software used. Besides, how can you compare the rates of an architect working in Warsaw, who has the high cost of living in a big city, with the rates of an architect working in a smaller district?

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

It depends on how big the team is, which software is used, how complex the project is and what the scope of the project is.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

It depends on the scope of the project, for example, how many details need to be worked out, how complicated the plot is, and how many customer changes the project needs to include.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

It depends on how complex the project is, whether it needs to be certified, the location, how complicated the installations are to coordinate, and the scope of the project.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

It depends on the scope of the project, the location, the complexity and the public procurement procedure.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

We should work on strengthening the position of IARP and SARP by increasing their membership, coordinating joint lobbying activities for solutions that are beneficial to us, including taking into account the quality and valuation of project documentation when estimating credit risk. The next step is to clearly define the scope of projects. Ready-made offer and contract forms developed by IARP and SARP, containing a uniform comparable scope of projects, would be helpful. This would help in negotiations with investors and allow for fair comparison of offers.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

It seems that even with two organisations — SARP and IARP — it is difficult to agree on some issues, so adding another one will not improve the situation. Work needs to be done to consolidate the community.

Mirosław **WOJCIESZAK** ■

GWPA



phot: private archive

## Piotr Urbanowicz

Architect, academic teacher at the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Arts of the Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski University in Cracow. He graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Cracow University of Technology, and received a scholarship from the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Tennessee Knoxville in the United States. From 2000 to 2004, he worked at Atelier Loegler, where he participated in the realisation of many competitions and projects, including the Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic Hall in Łódź, and as the head of the design team, he was responsible for the award-winning OPUS Film building in Łódź. Since 2004, he has been working at the Ingrden&Ewy Architekci architectural studio in Krakow, where he participated in the realisation of winning competition projects as the lead architect.

### **Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

Yes, it will help stabilise the project market and help architects ensure the quality of their services.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

This should be reflected in the estimated percentage of the investment cost per square metre.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

This should be based on the estimated investment cost per square metre and be in line with the rates set out in the chamber price list, and not less than what is stated in the price list.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

This should be based on the estimated investment cost per square metre and be in line with the rates set out in the chamber price list, and not less than what is stated in the price list.

### **What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

This should be based on the estimated investment cost per square metre and be in line with the rates set out in the chamber price list, and not less than what is stated in the price list.

### **If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

According to the Chamber of Architects price list.

### **Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

Yes.

Piotr **URBANOWICZ** ■  
architect



photo: private archive

## Łukasz Gąska

Architect, graduated with honours from the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning at the Poznań University of Technology. Winner of many international and national architectural competitions. Nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Foundation's Young Talent Architecture Award. He gained experience in Polish architectural offices, working on multi-stage projects of multi-family residential, office, public, and commercial and service buildings. Member of the Association of Architects of the Republic of Poland.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

No, the introduction of guaranteed minimum prices will not solve the problem of low architect salaries, as it is not the lack of minimum prices that is the main cause. Low salaries are the result of other factors that need to be identified through in-depth market analysis and economic research. Guaranteed minimum prices, like any market intervention, have side effects and often work counter to expectations. In a market where we are already seeing an oversupply of architects — as confirmed by data on the annual number of graduates and architectural design entities, with stagnating and declining numbers of construction projects — prices for design services naturally fall or stagnate due to increasing competition. Setting administrative minimum rates may prompt clients to look for cheaper alternatives in the grey market, and enforcing such rates in a very fragmented market would require huge expenditures that would not translate into real benefits. Additionally, the introduction of minimum rates would limit the opportunities for young studios and slow down the development of the industry.

**What should the minimum rate per square metre for multi-family residential architecture be without specialists?**

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for single-family homes without specialists?**

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for office buildings without specialists?**

**What should the minimum rate per square metre be for public buildings and spaces without specialists?**

Rates should be recommended, not minimum rates, calculated, for example, using a calculator similar to the Czech one (<https://www.cka.cz/sluzby/clenum/kalkulacky>).

**If the minimum rate is not guaranteed, how can we offer favourable rates for architects?**

Through:

- **The basics of economics** — IARP and SARP involvement in and response to economic issues in our industry. Raising awareness of how prices are formed in a market economy and what influences them.

- **Market education** — raising investors' awareness of the value of a qualitative design, which will encourage them to choose services based not only on price but also on quality.
- **Changing tender criteria** — in public tenders, the selection criterion should not be based solely on the lowest price, but should also take into account the quality and comprehensiveness of the design.
- **Self-regulation of the industry** — the creation of recommended (reference) rates by the architectural community, which can help in negotiations and maintain fair wages, without imposing rigid administrative regulations.

**Should architects as a professional group have trade unions that would only deal with the issue of architects' salaries?**

No. The situation can be improved by the activities of SARP and IARP.

Łukasz **GĄSKA** ■

GWPA

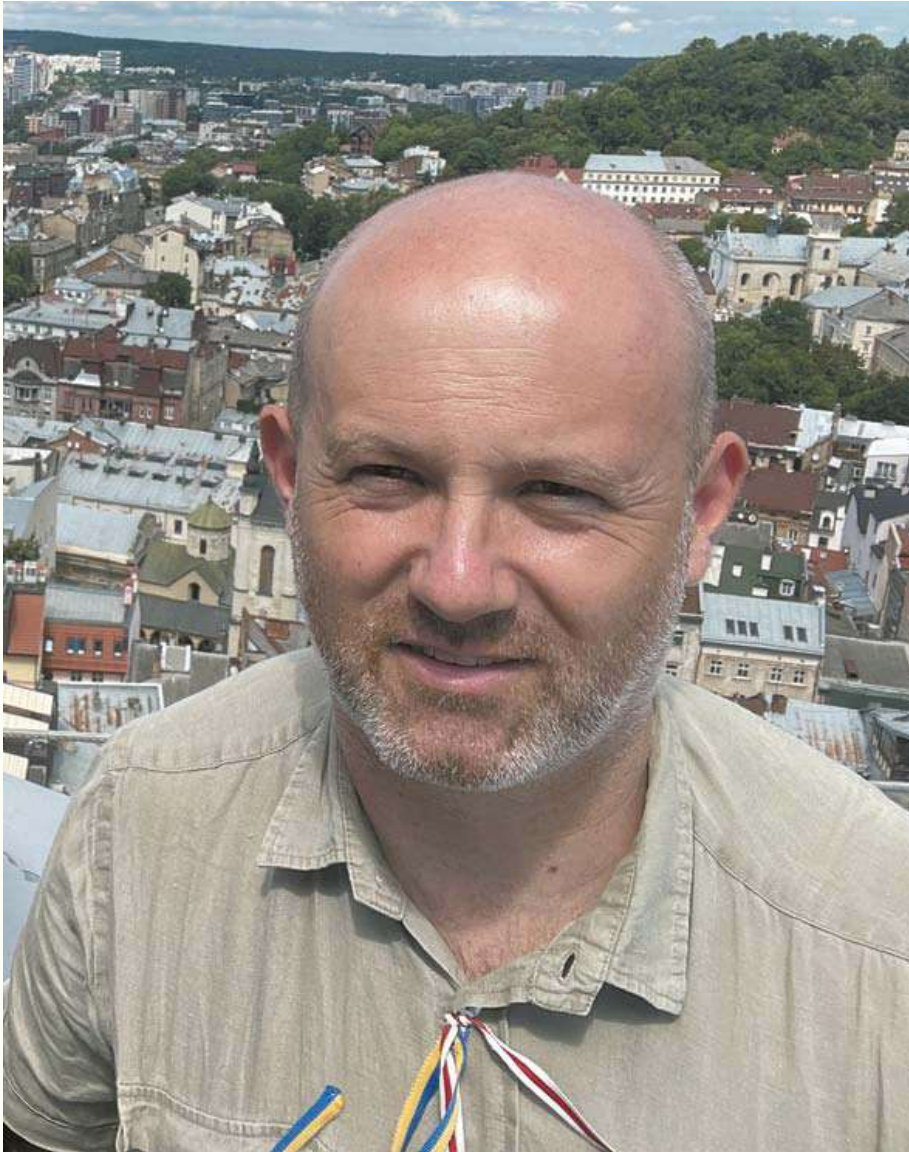


photo: Aleksandr Fenchuk

## Hubert Trammer

Architect, participant of the High-level Round Table of the New European Bauhaus. Collaborator of the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning in Warsaw. Teacher at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture of the Lublin University of Technology. Nominating expert for the 2015, 2019 and 2022 editions of the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture—Mies van der Rohe Award. Judge of architectural competitions. He has given guest lectures and led tours and architectural workshops for various institutions and universities.

**Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.**

When architects talk about their pay, they often present themselves as a unique group, which paradoxically can weaken their position and jeopardise their chances of change. It seems that only architects are willing to work for free, which sets us apart from other professions. Instead of isolating ourselves in this way, we should look for alliances and form partnerships with other groups that are also struggling with similar problems. Building broader coalitions could strengthen our cause. In Poland, many still dream of a completely free market, while in Germany there are regulated rates—for example, with regard to book prices. The question is how to translate this into architecture: should minimum rates be set based on square metres or perhaps the scale of the investment? One square metre is not the same as another, so it's not that simple. The key is to raise awareness—both among architects and clients. It is also worth addressing a taboo subject: architects often take commissions from material suppliers, hoping that the client will be more willing to pay if the cost is hidden in this way. This shows how much we need an open discussion about remuneration and clear rules in our industry.

Hubert **TRAMMER** ■

architect



phot: private archive

## Krzysztof Koszewski

Architect, doctor habilitatus of technical sciences, assistant professor at the Department of Architectural Design at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology, where he serves as Dean. A graduate of the same university, he specialises in the theory of architecture, media and the protection of architectural heritage. Author of the book 'Images of Architecture' and numerous academic articles. His research focuses on the relationship between architecture and the media, as well as the use of images in design. An active participant in the academic and professional community, involved in research and teaching.

### Should a guaranteed minimum rate per square metre of the project be introduced? Please briefly justify your answer.

In my opinion, rates should not be based on the square metre (including minimum rates), but on the value of the investment. What's more, the rates should be fixed and comply with the Regulation of the Minister of Development and Technology of 20 December 2021 on the determination of methods and basis for preparing an investor's cost estimate. This is especially true for all public investments, as they are influenced by the state, which does not impose anything on private investors, as this would certainly be poorly received and ultimately impossible to implement. The state or local government as an investor has the right, but also the obligation, to conduct investment processes in such a way as to obtain the best possible quality within the assumed budget. The expenditure on a project constitutes a small part of this budget, and an attempt to save on this part results in serious losses in the remaining, more expensive stages, not to mention the loss of quality of the designed space.

It seems that such a solution would improve the situation on the design services market, introducing sensible cost standards to replace the current pathology. With this approach, the market for services for private entities would also have a chance to approach normality.

Krzysztof **KOSZEWSKI** ■

architect,  
Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at  
the Warsaw University of Technology



phot.: Bartek Barczyk

## Małgorzata Pilinkiewicz

Architect, graduate of the Faculty of Architecture at the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice (1990). Since 1990, she has been a member of the Katowice branch of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP), and since 1992, she has been the co-owner of the Archistudio Studniarek + Pilinkiewicz office, specialising in the design of public, residential and industrial buildings. In 1995, she taught at the Department of Architectural Design at the Silesian University of Technology. Since 2000, she has been a competition judge for the Association of Polish Architects (SARP). In the years 2018–2022, she was the first female president of the National Council of the Chamber of Architects of the Republic of Poland. She has won numerous awards, including four nominations for the Mies van der Rohe Award, the SARP Award of the Year (2019), and the Gold Badge of the Association of Polish Architects (IARP) and SARP.

Understanding the work of an architect through the prism of minimum wages is equating and accepting the space for which we, as architects, are responsible and which directly shapes life in many of its aspects, with the value of remuneration for minimum thinking.

Surveys or discussions on social networks concerning ‘obligatory rates for minimum thinking’ are more inviting and mobilising for the fight for remuneration or trade unions than for the quality of architecture, both individually — each architect, and organisations that represent the architectural profession in Poland. In other words, they legitimise the questionable quality of this architecture and even the pathological phenomena that are occasionally reported in the media. Presenting the problems of the architectural profession in this way, also those shown through the prism of minimum rates and without reference to the problem with the quality prevailing around architecture and the lack of building culture in Poland, leads to the views also presented publicly that no one intends to talk about the quality and culture of designing and building, and thus the effort that is due to the designed space. What is more, in this way, the quality and responsibility of the work takes a back seat, perpetuating its dependence on labour rates, which is the state we have, with the ubiquitous not very glorious background architecture or architecture whose status is created by

the commercial and PR aspect, not necessarily following the quality due to the space it creates or in which it is located. Minimum rates could become an excuse for quality that is a response to these rates. Therefore, in conversations about the work of an architect and architecture, I raise the issues of preparation for the profession, awareness of the architect’s responsibility for shaping space, and, above all, knowledge and application of the principles of professional ethics by architects themselves. In these areas, few people working as architects see the possibility and future of building their image, ignoring them in their daily work as too demanding, too difficult. A survey on ethics in the architectural profession, for example on architects’ knowledge of the current Code of Professional Ethics for Architects (IARP, SARP), as well as the proposed amendment (according to BIP IARP), might encourage many architects to read the Code for the first time and — perhaps finally — to decide whether we need such ethical rules, whether we don’t want them, whether we don’t apply them in practice, and why. I realise that this is not only a difficult issue to get to grips with, but above all one that requires thought and reflection on how, in ethical terms, in the broadest sense of the word, the profession of architect is practised in Poland and to what extent it can still be a profession of public trust, not only in name but in practice. How much

do we respect each other, our clients and the space in which we leave a lasting mark? Investors could also have their say in this discussion, who may not be aware that architects are bound by such rules, or that architects do not apply them anyway, allowing themselves to dictate prices and wages for work without respect for the actual value of thinking and knowledge. Perhaps the results of such a survey or interview would show that the problem does not lie in the underfunding of the architect’s work and minimum rates, but in the level of awareness of architects of what the profession means and the responsibility involved in practising it.

Małgorzata **PILINKIEWICZ** ■

Archistudio Studniarek + Pilinkiewicz