



QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE PARAMETERS OF AWARDS IN ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES OF LATVIA

Ilze MIKELSONE¹, Sandra TREIJA²

Riga Technical University, Riga, Latvia
E-mails: ¹ilze@taktila.lv; ²sandratreija@yahoo.com

Abstract. While evaluating the built environment, predominant agreement on what aspects constitute an achievement or failure in architecture is changing in the course of time. The subject of the research is *value set agreements* in regional comprehension, followed by the generic tree of award in architecture and construction industries of Latvia. Recently, besides the original task of promoting quality, the judgment typology can be considered a significant evidence of what the contemporary questions, problems and challenges consist of in the regional architecture. Based on the method of analytic comparison, this research paper lists regional awards as established public forms of judgment, reflected in professional editions and mass media during the last two decades. By sorting them by responsible initiatives, aim formulations, establishment data, criterion and target audience, the paper focuses on the general examination of affiliation segments and quantitative and qualitative indicators in the awards assigned since 1990. Conclusions include the data on widespread generalizations in the terms of criteria, segmentation and fragmentation, reputation of subjectivity, commercialization and expansive development in awarding, and at the same time raise the lack of constructive criticism culture in Latvia.

Keywords: architectural awards, construction industry awards, value-set agreements, regional values, awards in transition.

Introduction

The idea of awarding is simple and similar in every industry – to celebrate the excellence and beauty. Although it is generally accepted that one of the most important factors that contributed to all cultural processes and pervaded all spheres of life in ancient Greece was competition spirit¹, today it is considered that expansion of awards (Lūse 2013a.) in built environment, instead of being a form of expressing gratitude for merit or excellence, serves contradictory competition between participants and stakeholder groups (Lūse, Holcmane 2013) causing uncertainty and mistrust in professional organizations and society. In a wider sense, an award for success in architecture and built environment is not only a statue, gratuity or diploma. The evaluation field has direct and indirect impact on various forms of judgment, – subjects on objects in press reviews, problematic topics and case studies in industry conferences (Lūse 2013b; Drukis 2013), good practice building selection for books (e.g. Holcmane *et al.* 2013) and comprehensive socio-economic process descriptions through the perspective of the real estate (e.g. Klavis *et al.* 2013) processes. The same field also includes results of public architecture competitions and competitive price of a square

meter on the real estate market. Thereby, evaluation processes with awards are not only a concern of publicity and subject of attention; its deeper mission and importance is *to give clear messages to society about accepted values in the industry*. This significant part is jeopardized, if uncertainty and mistrust towards objectivity of awards expands further; at the same time the eclectic value formations are an accepted phenomenon in contemporary society and balance might be reached through recognition and acceptance. Following discussions in professional environment, several target question groups emerge and illustrate the relevance in achievement typologies.

- The first group considers methodology and principles, by which objective or subjective awards are nominated and judged. This group also reflects prestige level in target groups;
- The second group concerns the professional discussions about the awarding ceremonies and criticism in regard to criteria, by which the awards are nominated and judged;
- The third group questions whether various award evidence relates to one common quality-standard system in built environment.

¹ Called *Agon*.

These questions set the following tasks of this paper: 1) to summarize and display the overview of all initiatives applicable in Latvia in respect to awards of the built environment; to collect data from available award-policy requirements, such as aim formulations, criteria, etc.; 2) to gather data for affiliation and quantitative and qualitative parameters; 3) to establish relevance and conclusions.

Methodology

The methodology is closely related to the systemic analysis, in which the research subject – the award – is either a part of bigger systems (Fig. 1) or can be analyzed as inner typologies in both, quantitative and qualitative terms (Fig. 2).

The scheme of a bigger system (Fig. 1) displays divisionary overview of the processes and impacts on the one part and theory form on the other that influence and establish a set of values in the built environment. The value set: 1) has own properties; 2) it is influenced by Zeitgeist²; 3) contains value systems by hierarchy; 4) might be studied from the point of view of individuals or groups of individuals that create *attitudes and conjectures*. Awarding systems are parts of these. According to this scheme the award

industry is not only the subject of sociology, legislation, non-governmental and trade-union initiatives and economy, but also a meeting point of two more rare sciences: 1) axiology, which studies the value theory and meta-ethics; 2) paranumismatica³, a branch of historical research covering the history of orders, medals and honorary signs (Eihe 1989). In the framework of this publication, the research methodology selects and analyzes two *contacts* within the awarding process, – the subject of award and the recipient industry as a representative segment of the built environment (Fig. 1).

During the study, data was collected about awards in the following segments of the built environment stakeholders, who can perform none, one or all three roles in the awarding process, – “origin”, “judge” and “recipient” of the award. These stakeholder segments include:

- Clients, developers;
- Consumers and users;
- Architects, designers;
- Carpenters, builders, construction companies;
- Publicists, historians, scientists; and
- Ideas, concepts and challenges.

² General beliefs, ideas, and spirit of a time and place.

³ Phaleristica.

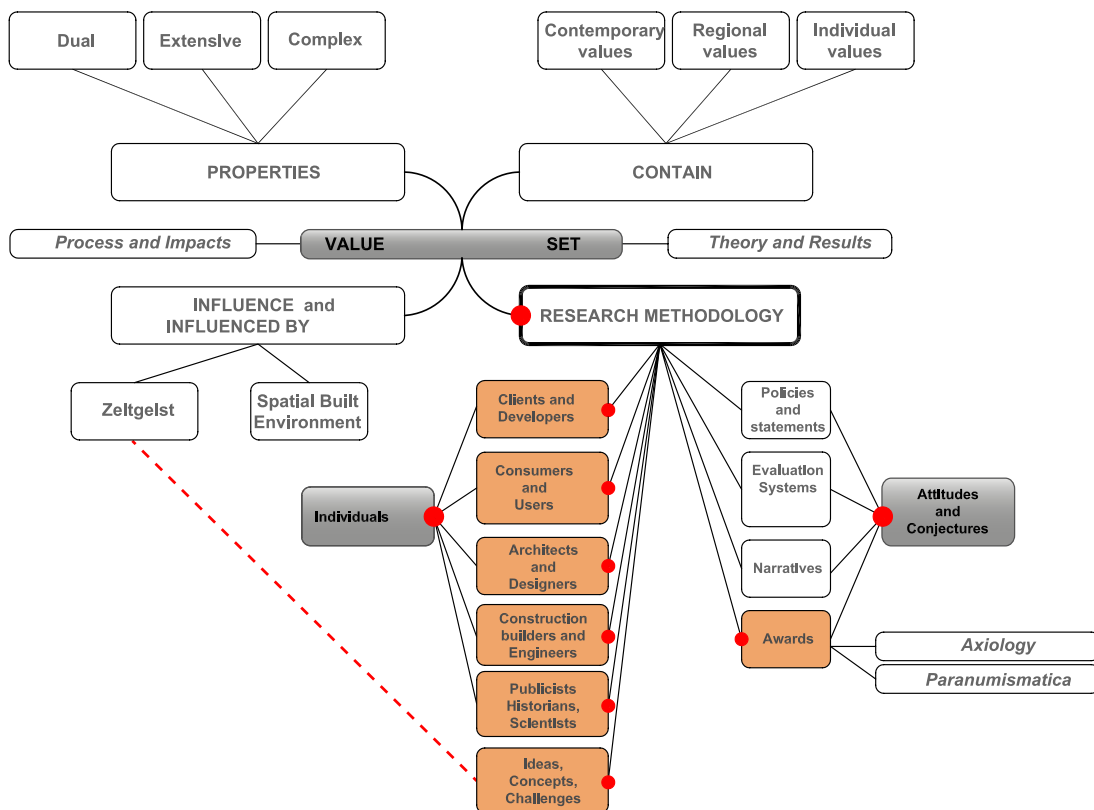


Fig. 1. Methodology with analytical system overview, where awards are positioned in a wider value set of built environment (created by authors)

Since the most challenging part includes relationships between these groups, the 2nd methodological scheme used in this paper contemplates awards as a system itself (Fig. 2). It allows displaying the original source, inner relationship and relevance between the award producing segments and industries. Based on this method, awards are classified by parameters on the following:

- Affiliation to “the origin-issuer” typology based on legislation (“National and municipal”, “NGO’s”, “Commercial”, Academic”, etc.);
- Affiliation to “the thematic-viewpoint” typology based on industry’s segments (“Architecture and design”, “Construction and building”, “Sustainability”, “Energy efficiency”, etc.);
- Quantitative growth since 1990;
- Qualitative parameters in three characteristic case studies.

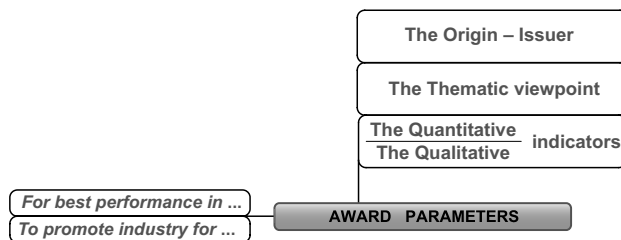


Fig. 2. According to the methodology overview, awards are parameterized by “the origin-issuer”, “the thematic-viewpoint” and the qualitative and quantitative indicators (created by authors)

Context

Since regaining of the independence in 1991, Latvia has experienced significant growth and development in the architectural evaluation process. The Annual Prize for Architecture was established in 1995 by the Latvian Association of Architecture (LAoA... 1995), when the first annual show was held. It was also the first evaluation of performance as a part of architectural profession rather than general achievement in the economic field (as it used to be under the Soviet regime). Built construction industry has followed from 1996 on (LBA 1996), launching a tradition to separate architectural achievements from construction achievements as incomparable. Since then the awarding institute has been developed step by step under the neoliberal democracy and civil society circumstances in a quantitative (Fig. 3) as well as qualitative sense; some awards don’t exist anymore, while others are flourishing and ramify. Today it has become clear that since the first annual architectural award in 1995, the understanding of an “evaluation subject” has expanded further into more comprehensive understanding of the built environment, and “quality standards” have segmented in several aspects.

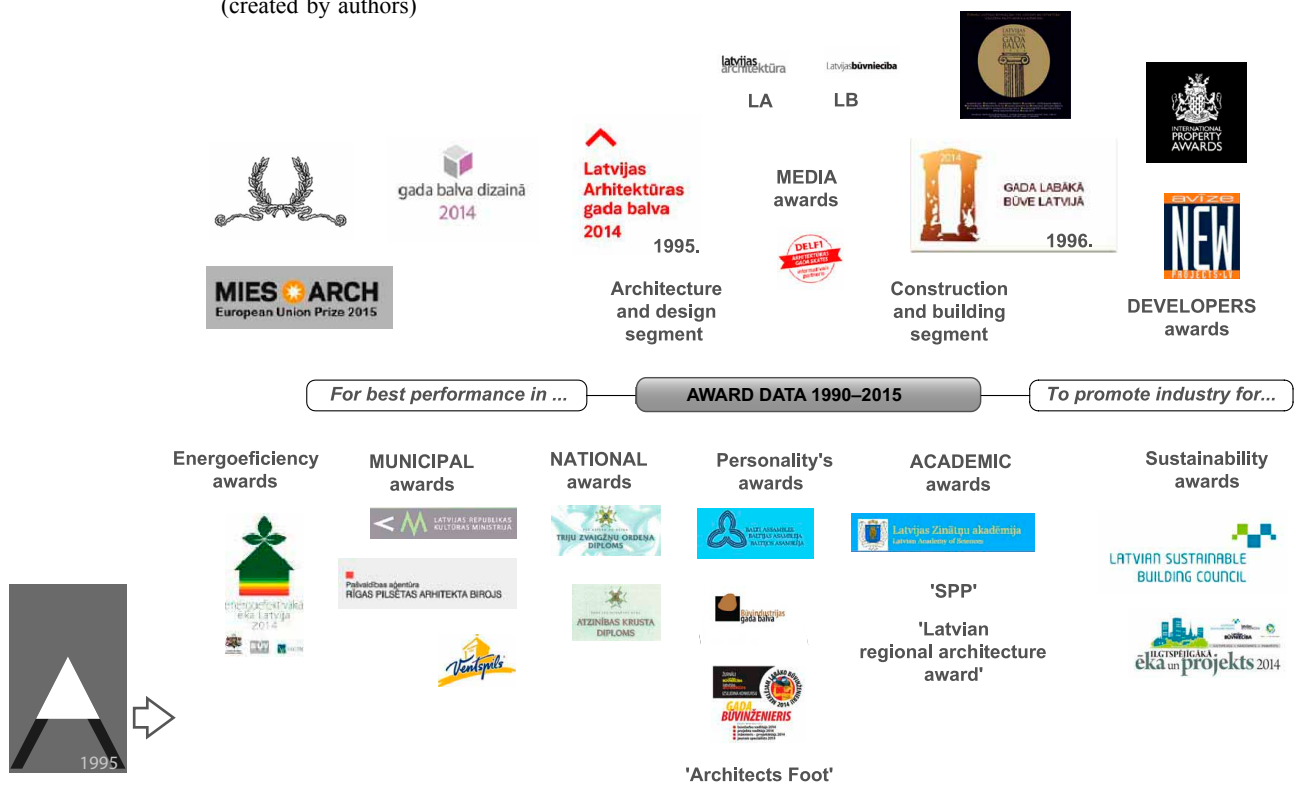


Fig. 3. Quantitative development of awards in the built environment industry of Latvia (created by authors)

Legislation of awards in Latvia

Generally an award is a mark of excellence, given for some military or civilian merit, but every award is determined by the era, culture, traditions, geographic location (Europe) and public administration model. In Latvia the current award system consists of three basic groups in the following hierarchy (Stipre 2014):

- State awards are the highest awards in the country. State awards are primarily decorations, but they can also be a medal or insignia, if they are given the national award status. They can embody honorary titles of national importance awarded to personalities for their lifelong contribution (LR MK 2004);
- Executive awards – by the government, executive bodies, their subordinate institutions, as well as local awards. This group consists of the so-called “paper awards” such as acknowledgments, medals of honour, etc. (LR MK 2010);
- Other awards: departments (independent national institutions and legislative), judiciary, international organizations, public and non-governmental organizations, professional (doctors, athletes, chemists, architects), companies, etc. characterized by a group of professional honors – these are not only the individual, but also collective awards for the whole team.

All three groups in this hierarchical division of the awarding system are represented and related to the industries of the built environment. According to online policies available for almost all awards mentioned below, except a few (VP 2001; AVF 2006), missions and aims of all awards are alike or completely similar, where popular definition includes “for the best performance in [...]” and aims “to promote industry for [...]”. The three basic groups established have been reorganized according to the segments of origin and linear hierarchy, including the origin, format and other indicators (Fig. 4).

“State awards” relate to personalities of various professions and occupations (Ducmane 1993), and both, architects and builders are on the lists of laureates. For example, as of December 2014, nine persons – architects (engineers, city planners, and constructors) have received The Order of Three Stars (State Chancellery 2013) and one person – architect has received The Cross of Recognition (*Croix de la reconnaissance*). Architectural practice of these persons can be of local or international nature. Some laureates are architects by education, not by occupation and in majority of cases these persons have demonstrated significant accomplishments for society at large beside architecture, either in pedagogy, politics, entrepreneurship or cultural background. These awards are historically rooted as decorations of national significance (Grīnberga 1999) given for special Persons *in connection* with architecture and thus are not further discussed in this paper.

“Executive awards” might be referred to different municipal laws, initiated as “best architecture” prizes by the cities (Riga, Ventspils, Liepāja) or specialized prizes awarded by governmental institutions (Ministries, agencies, etc.) for achievements in various topical issues, for example, conservation and heritage, energy efficiency or impact on national culture groups.

“Other awards” is the most extensive division directly referable to the development, spread and segmentation of awards discussed in this topic.

The award typology by the “origin-issuer” parameter

This research has collected the data on the existence of more than ten direct or subordinate, active *local* award-producing entities, one *inactive local* award-giving entity, three *European* award-giving institutions, which have been piloted and approbated in Latvia since its joining the EU⁴,

⁴ European Union.

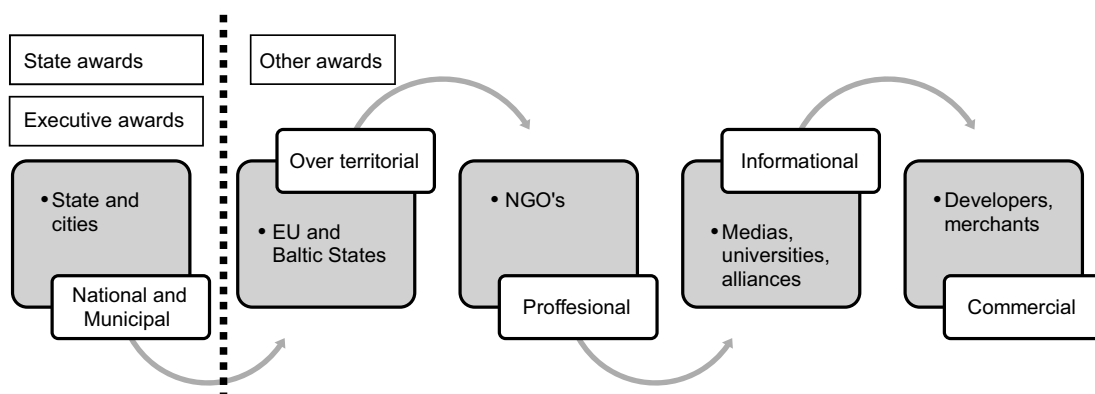


Fig. 4. Linear hierarchy and division in the origin of awards: State Awards, Executive Awards, Other Awards (created by authors)

one *Baltic States* selection entity (Person award) and one *globally positioned* award-giving institution from the real estate segment. The collected data has been classified according to the linear hierarchy scheme (Fig. 4) and afterwards the award nomination clusters have been developed in accordance with the origin-issuer typology (Table 1):

- *The National and Municipal awards* segment combines “State awards” and “Executive awards”. The segment includes an award of special honour concerning cultural events of national importance, including in architecture, promotion of regional architecture in the cities or towns; it can also deal with cultural heritage and topics of the international conventions or other initiatives. Both these segments – the National and Municipal awards – are supported by legislation groups (LR MK 2010) and are cost-free service;
- *Over-territorial awards* are locally accepted international (European and Baltic) contests. These contests either use judgment material from already made local selections or offer independent submission;
- *Professional awards* are annual initiatives of different NGOs and institutes – unions, associations and societies. Professional awards are foreseen by the inner policy regulations (mostly available for free download at the web sites) and are paid

service. Professional awards mostly represent initiative “to recognize and comment excellence in the field of [...] and to draw attention to important contributions in the development of new concepts and technologies”; with an aim of protection and promotion of a corresponding industry;

- *Industry-Informational awards* in this paper are used to denominate mostly hybrid – origin by foundation, media and journalism initiatives, supporting governmental initiatives, academic initiatives or special *niche* product initiatives;
- *Real estate awards* are given in the industry to entities, whose interests range from marketing tools to a position of product and service. These awards present initiative “to show to all and above all, to potential buyers, the best constructed and designed objects in the past year”. This segment had existed in Latvia for 3 years and had its last local award ceremony in 2008.

From the point of legislation this origin-issuer topology analysis also shows the amplitude of assessment from award-judgment to award-service. The only non-commercial awards are the national and the municipal ones; the rest local awards depend on the market circumstances, such as demand, supply and self-sufficiency in financial security.

Table 1. Types and numbers of awards in relation to recipient in the built environment industry

Origin-Issuer	Award title	Establishment Data	Recipient	Participation Fee
The National awards				
(State Chancellery 1993)	Decoration “The Order of Three Stars”	1994	Person	–
(State Chancellery 1993)	Decoration “The Cross of Recognition”	2005	Person	–
The Municipal awards				
by Ventspils municipal administration (VP 2001);	“Ventspils city award “White sludge””;	2001	Building	–
by the State inspection for Heritage Protection, Republic of Latvia and International Council on Monuments and Sites (VKPAI, ICOMOS 2003);	“The Great Award of Cultural Heritage”	2003, every 2 nd year	Building and Person	–
by the Riga City Architect’s Office (RPAB 2011);	“Riga Architecture of the Year Award”	2011	Building	–
by collaboration of the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia and the <i>Journal of Latvia’s Building</i> [Latvijas Būvniecība] (e.g. LR EM <i>et al.</i> 2011);	“The most energy efficient building in Latvia”	2011	Building	–
by Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (LR KM 2014);	“Excellence of Culture Award”	2014	Phenomenon	–

Origin-Issuer	Award title	Establishment Data	Recipient	Participation Fee
Over territorial				
by the European Commission, relevant in Latvia since 2004 (EU 2004);	“Mies van der Rohe prize”	Since 2004	Building	–
by the Baltic Assembly (BA 1998);	“Baltic Assembly Prize for Literature, Arts and Science”	Since 1990, relevant to architecture only 1998	Person (culture, science and arts representative)	–
by the European Centre for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies (EC 2013);	“European architecture prize”	in LV since 2013	Building	–
by the Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage and Global Change: A new Challenge for Europe (JPICH), (JPICH 2014)	“The European Award for Architectural Heritage intervention AADIPA”	in LV since 2014	Building	–
Professional				
by The Latvian Association of Architects (LAoA 1995);	“The Latvian Architecture Award”	1995	Building or concept	+
by The Latvian Builders Association (LBA 1996);	“Best building of the year in Latvia”	1996	Building	+
by the Latvian Designers’ Society (LDS 2008);	“Annual Design Award”	2008	Interior	symbolic
Industry Informational				
by The Latvian Association of Architects (LAoA <i>et al.</i> 1989);	“Janis Baumanis ⁵ prize in architecture”	1989, every 3 rd year	Person	–
by the Architecture promotion foundation (AVF 2006);	“Architect’s Foot”	2006	Person	–
by the Latvian Sustainable Building Council, both professional media: the Journal of Latvian Building (LB), the Journal of Latvian Architecture (LA) and the World Green Building Council, WGBC, (e.g. LIBP <i>et al.</i> 2012);	“The most sustainable building and project in Latvia”	2012	Building and project	–
by media: the <i>Journal of Latvian Building</i> (LB), the <i>Journal of Latvia’s Architecture</i> (LA) (LB, LA 2014);	“The Annual Award of Latvia’s Building construction”	2014	Building	+
by the Latvian Builders Association (LBA 2013)	“Annual building industry prize for lifelong contribution in the construction industry”	2013	Person	+
by media: the <i>Journal of Latvian Building</i> (LB), the <i>Journal of Latvia’s Architecture</i> (LA) (LB, LA 2007);	“The best engineer of the year in Latvia”	2007	Person	+
by the Riga Technical university, Faculty of Architecture and Urban planning (RTU APF 2012);	“Regional architecture prize of Latvia”	2012	Project of a study process	–
Real estate				
by the Latvian Real Estate Association (LANIDA 2006–2008);	“New projects Prize”	2006–2008	Building	No information
by the International Property Media Ltd (IPM 2014)	“International Property awards”	2014	Building	No information

⁵ John Friedrich Bauman (*Jānis Frīdrihs Baumanis*) (born May 23, 1834, died on 19 March 1891) was the first academically educated Latvian architect.

The award typology by the “thematic-viewpoint” parameter

In order to assess the awarding system majority in Latvia as “open” or “close” in terms of award stakeholders, an analysis of the roles in the awarding process, such as “origin”, “judge” and “recipient”, has been conducted. It has shown that traditional awards in professional industries do not primarily demonstrate the opinion of the user, the client or society at large; it is a voted judgment of the experts, who select works from a limited pool (the submitted works). The award recipient in the built environment of Latvia might include a building (or spaces related to the building and architecture), person, event and visionary proposal⁶. Thus, another significant classification of awards can be done by thematic-viewpoint argument. It is rooted in observations that historically awards in Latvia tend to “belong” to either segments of more aesthetic and contextual focus, as Architecture and Design (AD), or have closer resemblance to functionally utilitarian focus, as within Built Construction (BC) field. A purely Academic segment and a purely Marketing segment emerge as more marginal segments. According to the research data, from thematic-judge typology four of all award clusters (1 building award, 1 design award and 2 person awards) belong to architecture and design industry, five (3 building awards and 2 person awards) belong to built construction and media industry, 2 (two) are academic prize initiatives, 1 (one) is a media award and 4 (four) are awards that include professional media presence. In this division only academic prizes are neutral in the terms of industry relations.

As seen from the point of thematic viewpoint typology, division in AD and BC is a relative parameter and generated more or less by the education that majority of involved people possess. This means that both the industry of architecture and design and the industry of built construction in Latvia attract certain ideas, cooperation partners and target audience, which differ among themselves even though they cover similar interests, aims and missions. There is no complete, openly positioned real estate developers’ prize with the purpose of marketing in Latvia at the moment. Last precedent is recorded as coinciding with the economic peak in the time period of 2006–2008. It is important to note that so far only the architectural field has had the approbated EU prizes. Academic prizes and cultural excellence awards are also more applied to architecturally valuable objects or architectural heritage topics. On the other hand, the built construction segment has managed to attract a sustainability challenge through International patrons (WGBC); this segment also collaborates with the State energy efficiency programs and has attracted the majority of professional media assistance.

Quantitative parameters of awards

In order to analyse whether awards have grown in quantity and in which segment, a comparative analysis have been conducted. Expansion of awards (Fig. 5) is attributable to both, segments AD and BC.

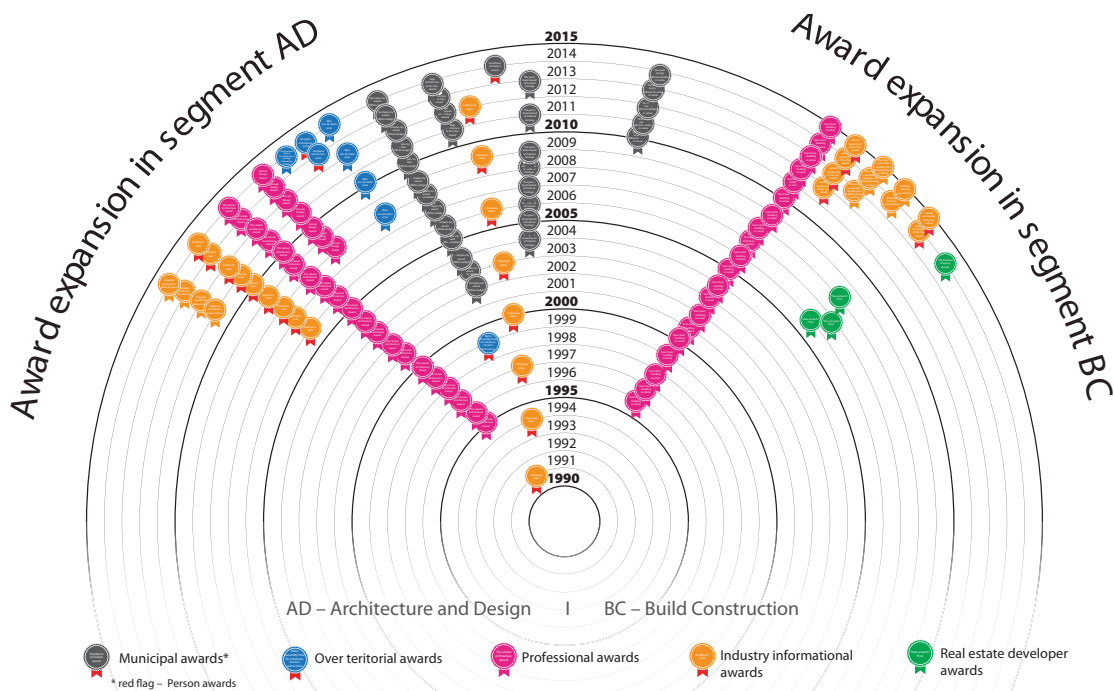


Fig. 5. Expansion of awards according to the relevance of award-producing segment affiliation (created by authors)

⁶ “Paper architecture”.

Qualitative parameters of awards

The generally accepted awarding praxis defines that all awards given, except the ones that relate to immaterial subjects (concept or project), are grants for built entities, which comply with the legislation of Latvia and are legally commissioned for operation at the moment of submission. This means that awards are never used to judge their subjects for their technical conformity to regulations, instead offering the qualitative selection by certain criteria applied. The paper establishes three typical case studies for qualitative criteria analysis from architecture and design segment; built construction segment and a recently emerging segment, which represent the sustainability concept.

One of the most prominent awards, which is important in the segment of architecture, is “The Latvian Architecture Award”. It is held by the LAoA⁷ for 19 years, attaining the maturity peak, as compared to business cycles. According to the LAoA policy, the award is recognized as “an essential component of the professional environment”^{8, 9}.

“The Latvian Architecture Award” has the only website by the award origins, which offers full translation in English of all the contest information, and also includes a classified overview of previous results (Figs 6, 7). All the works submitted for the competition are evaluated by two juries (a national and an international one) based on the equally important criteria: *idea and concept; integrity or inner unity; conformity to task; context and scale; accuracy and fundamentality; social awareness and emotional impact*. The contest of 2014 had 9 no-

minations, but this parameter is annually updated after discussions and acceptance by the organizational board. Website offers two-sentence explanations of the criteria. For example, the criterion of “*idea and concept*”, according to the information on the website, is “the basis of any work. It must reflect a clear idea and a bold statement. The concept must be original and innovative within the context of contemporary architecture and architectural processes”. According to the results of glossary¹⁰, an “*idea*” means “the notion, view, how human consciousness reflects reality and expresses his/her attitude towards the world around” and “*concept*” means “intention, generalized thought”. Another example, the criterion of “*social awareness and emotional impact*” is meant to evaluate “a positive emotional impact on the user and can become one of the main factors for project’s public acceptance and its true importance, having a lasting value for people”; whereas the glossary explains “the emotional” as “expression of feelings; experiences, intentional and unintentional human and animal *subjective* responses to internal and external irritation effects”. Submission is a paid service; the award ceremony traditionally takes place in May together with the educational satellite events, exhibitions and other activities. This award has gained good publicity skills, all the lectures are available on Youtube and in 2014 it had the first television broadcast of the ceremony.

Another of the most notable traditionally originated awards that roots in the segment of built construction industry is selected by LBA¹¹. According to the LBA policy



Fig. 6.; Fig. 7. LAoA laureates 1995 and 2012, both are school buildings in the town of Saldus, Latvia (www.arhitektura2014.lv⁹)

⁷ The Latvian Architecture Award by The Latvian Association of Architects (LAoA).

⁸ The Latvian Association of Architects.

⁹ [1995] St. Gregor School in Saldus, 26 Liela Street; Authors: Architects A. Andersons and I. Andersone; [2012] Saldus Music and Art School; Authors: MADE arhitekti – M. Putrāms, L. Krūmiņa, E. Ozola, U. Sedlovs, L. Amoliņa.

¹⁰ www.tezaurs.lv.

¹¹ The Latvian annual building award by The Latvian Builders Association (LBA).

statement, the award “Best annual building in Latvia” aims “to identify and promote the best quality building, which put into operation more efficient and safer construction in Latvia, to promote the professional growth and quality of the industry, to commend and promote good examples and to motivate the industry for new developments”. Besides, it is declared that “competition is based on clearly defined quality criteria for assessing the object”, “the best professionals and experts of the construction industry are members of the jury” and “competition is open to all participants in the construction”. All works submitted for the competition are evaluated in three rounds by a national jury, which includes architects. Policy statement reveals the criteria, which are not followed by further explanations: *constructive solutions; the use of innovative technologies; engineering and microclimate; building comfort and functionality; built-in equipment; quality of work; public benefit*. The competition has 17 nominations, which is almost twice as much as the first case study offers, but similarly the nominations are a constantly changing objective. Submission is a paid service; the award ceremony traditionally takes place in March together with the accompanying activities. This award has also managed to attract noticeable press media coverage, especially using industry magazines and recently (2015) also social networks.

One of the most challenging awards *in the sustainability segment of built industry* is initiated by the market stakeholder alliance¹² incorporating the media, governmental and NGO institutions. According to their policy statement, the award is recognized as “competition of most sustainable building and project of 2014”. It aims “to identify and promote more sustainable building projects, as well as creative and sustainable ideas in our country”.

All works submitted for the competition are evaluated in two rounds by the national jury and based on the following criteria: *a building site selection and*

orientation; utilities or functionality of the public open space object and environmental context; energy efficiency in buildings and utilities or public outdoor object service; maintenance of power consumption required for lighting purposes; efficient use of water resources; construction materials; waste reduction in building process and operation; transport and mobility in buildings; environmental availability of the public outdoor object and internal environment quality in the buildings; environment quality utilities or public outdoor objects; social and economic benefits; innovative solutions. The competition offers three nominations. It is one of the novel contests (since 2013), and it positions itself as a pilot project open for future development.

There are common traits among the criteria of all cases. For example, the “context and scale” criterion in the segment of architecture and the “building site selection and orientation” in the segment of sustainability might be referred to as similar qualities. Also, the criterion of “social awareness” in the segment of architecture might be closely related to the “public benefit” criterion in the built construction industry. At the same time all of them can have completely different accents depending on the viewpoint of the judge. Most of the criteria are either too philosophical or too intensive to be evaluated critically in the given time period. Minor differences are observed in evaluation procedure and aim formulation, but notable differences exist in criterion focuses. All three segments demonstrate similar concepts for attributes and award witnessing accessories (such as statues, diplomas) (Figs 8, 10). Most of award messages are expressed through typical ceremonies (Fig. 9); the only variations refer to informal aspects such as “ceremony outfit”, including dress code, design of a statue, diploma image, website designs, photograph angles and qualities, as well as other identification marks of the contemporary society.



Fig. 8. LAoA laureate 2014, architect Zaiga Gaile (www.arhitektura2014.lv); Fig. 9. The LBA award ceremony 2013 (www.gadabuve.lv); Fig. 10. Sustainability award laureates 2014 (www.ibp.lv)

¹² Hybrid-origin: alliances.

Conclusions

The research verifies observations about rapid development of the award institute segments in the built environment of Latvia. Most of the regulation policies *by external descriptions* are complete, publicly available and well promoted in the mass media and tend to relate either to the Architecture and Design segment or the Building Construction segment in several aspects, including the informal one. The compliance of roles shows that the origin, evaluation and recipient of the awards typically cover the same context. The research has generated five conclusions on the characteristic features of awards, as common generalization of criteria, segmentation and fragmentation between stakeholder's viewpoints, risk of subjectivity causing mistrust in results, commercialization and lack of constructive critical methodology and culture.

Generalization of the aim and evaluation criteria.

Awards are selected according to the universally compatible aim formulations ("best", "highest quality", "most sustainable", "outstanding contribution", etc.) and similar criteria are applied to awards of different origin. As the conducted case studies show, the evaluation criteria are also notably universal, extensive, philosophical or impossible to ascertain. Although every award ceremony is followed by extensive discussions and misunderstanding testimony by professionals and general society, after taking a closer look at the criteria, it becomes obvious that these are based on very general definitions. Likeness and universality of requirement conditions allows presuming that each party – participants, experts, recipients, professionals and society at large – *interpret* the criteria according to their own understanding. Thus, messages are clear, but within different industry groups they are perceived and interpreted differently. Due to some other reasons, these messages are perceived otherwise also within separate groups. Last but not least, they adapt to locally available "judgment material".

Segmentation and fragmentation. The range of awards becomes more diverse by segment, not by aim, thus the process of award segmentation has been identified. The evaluation models have the tendency towards *detachment* depending on contemporary, topical trends. This also means that upon reaching higher standards in one segment of achievement in the building, others might be left with less or without any focus. Reasons causing "uncertainty" may be also influenced by overall, globally identified processes. Within indisputable power of the Vitruvius triad¹³ definitions, values and value sets of architecture have not been questioned for centuries. Nowadays, in the age of information and speed, the consequences of different internationally recognized chal-

lenges (post-modern society, neoliberal processes, spread of identity and individualism, inequality, relevance of energy efficiency and resource efficiency, etc.) hit the fragmentation in the context of Vitruvius triad. As soon as a single review of the whole diversity of contemporary architectural behavior is problematic, specific segments are diverging and are not mutually comparable anymore. Another phenomenon is considered obvious on the local market of Latvia, – fragmentation between "architecture" and "construction" industries, which lacks a single common *system*. By the "recipient and compliance of roles" parameter research comes to the conclusion that the majority of the roles of the awarding process stakeholders match with the same origin or concept. This means that award givers mostly grant awards *within* their own organization and conceptual limits of their own segment, causing the risk of stagnation and self-service.

Risk of subjectivity. Historically awards are presumed as "objective" in the eyes of society, and this is also how it is positioned in military, sports or other industries with clearly measurable results. In more than 90% of the local built environment award cases (except energy efficiency segment), evaluation is the result of expert jury discussions and voting rounds, which means it is basically subjective. Thus, the second reason considered for award mistrust progression might be hidden in the methodology, by which most of the awards in Latvia are revealed. Awarding targets are commonly determined bilaterally, either as "opinions" – *voted conjectures and attitudes of expert juries*, or "calculations" – measurable results by concrete criteria systems, whereas in Latvia the first one is more predominant. Criteria are mainly quality-orientated (interpretive); the result is based on the average sum of expert opinions. The society expects professional organizations to be objective, but in reality the opinions of experts are also subject to professional fragmentation, can be influenced by several impact factors and thus are completely subjectively orientated. Since experts are represented by 10–14 persons or more and in most cases evaluation consists of two to three steps, objectively the result is also based on compromise principle. Last but not least, the available "judgment material" is embedded in limitations and consists of no more than the annually *submitted materials*.

The risk of subjective evaluation is more pronounced in small and medium size communities. Observations show that for the last couple of years the jury has included an international jury round in the final decision to escape subjective links to local industry, conflict of interest and enhance the award prestige.

Commercialization. Besides the local unpopularity of global certification systems¹⁴ (despite dynamic ideological

¹³ Firmitas, Utilitas, Venustas.

¹⁴ DGNB, LEED, BREEAM, etc.

and commercial initiatives of IBP, since 2006), the awards of the last two decades were developed within professional and commercial target divisions under the context of established traditions – expert jury voted awards. In terms of *product and service*, which the awarding institution undeniably considers, it is split in two parts. Only the state awards are completely non-commercial. Submissions in professional contests are often a service paid by the recipient of award, and the contest is often supported by bigger or smaller commercial entities from the industry. Exception is the hybrid-origin awards, where the market and media initiatives pilot governmental policies and have certain agreements on collaboration. But also their achievement definitions together with continuous self-regulation updates have rapidly adapted to public demand and market segments.

Lack of critical-thinking culture. Despite informal discussions in the professional community and society at large, which sometimes present sharp and negative communication, the lack of professional and constructive criticism is recognized, which is also characteristic in small and medium size communities. This may be one of the presumptions that, instead of being a professional driving force, the award spreading phenomenon in the built environment of Latvia is closely related to the competition spirit under the speeding neoliberal economy and global market challenges in the segmentation of industries, including the built environment.

It is contemporary to believe that *attention* is a huge part of success, thus it is also a part of the awarding process and gaining attention for a certain segment can become the main hidden aim. But it is also fundamental that by default all awards have external description and inner dynamics, where preconditions are varying and the mission is *to introduce* change.

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KIEKYBINIAI IR KOKYBINIAI ARCHITEKTŪRINIŲ IR STATYBOS PRAMONĖJE SKIRIAMŲ APDOVANOJIMŲ KRITERIJAI LATVIJOJE

I. Mikelsons, S. Treija

Santrauka

Vertinant sukurtą aplinką, dominuojantis susitarimas dėl architektūros pasiekimų ir nesėkmių laikui bėgant kinta. Tyrimo objektas yra Latvijoje regiono mastu numatyti vertės kriterijai, susisteminti į bendrinį architektūrinių ir statybos pramonėje skiriamų apdovanojimų klasifikacinį medį. Dabar šalia pirminės užduoties – kokybės skatinimo, pagal vertinimo tipologiją svarbiu gali būti laikoma klausimų, problemų ir iššūkių, išskylančių regioninėje architektūroje, sprendimo šiuolaikiškumas. Analitiniu lyginimo metodu nagrinėjami profesiniuose leidiniuose ir visuomenės informavimo priemonėse per pastaruosius du dešimtmečius minėti regioniniai viešai įsteigti apdovanojimai, rūšiuojant juos pagal atsakingas iniciatyvas, tikslų formulavimą, įsteigimo duomenis, kriterijus ir tikslinę auditoriją. Straipsnyje daugiausia dėmesio sutelkiama į bendrus, nuo 1990 m. įteiktų apdovanojimų afiliacijos segmentų ir kiekybinių bei kokybinių indikatorių tyrimus. Išvadose pateikiami plačių apibendrinimų duomenys. Pažymima apdovanojimų skyrimo sistemos Latvijoje ribotumas, o kartu ir vis didėjanti konstruktyvios kritikos kultūros stoka.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: architektūriniai apdovanojimai, statybos pramonėje skiriami apdovanojimai, vertės kriterijai, regioninės vertybės, pereinamieji apdovanojimai.