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Report on the Architectural Profession

The Competition Authority found that consumers were benefiting from competition in architectural services. However, the new statutory registration system for architects raised concerns.

Our report (published March 2006) recommended that the new regulator for architects should be **independent** of the profession. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government did not accept this recommendation. Instead, the RIAI, the largest professional representative body for architects, was appointed as the new regulator.

The Minister has implemented other recommendations in the report that reduce the conflict between the RIAI's role of representing its members and its statutory roles of protecting consumers and regulating architects.

Before publishing the report, the Competition Authority secured the removal of:

- RIAI rules that restricted advertising by architects; and
- the inclusion of percentage fees in draft contracts published by the RIAI.

A list of the priority recommendations not yet implemented is given below. Implementing these recommendations will improve competition in architectural services.

Unimplemented Recommendations:

Recommendation	Addressed To	Report Reference
Irish architects should only need to be on the statutory register in order to be recognised in Europe; they should not also require RIAI membership.	Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	R4.
Ensure all registered architects can enter architectural competitions.	Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	R6.
Promote and monitor the use of sliding scales of professional indemnity insurance requirements.	Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Limited and Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	R8.

