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Architecture & Finance

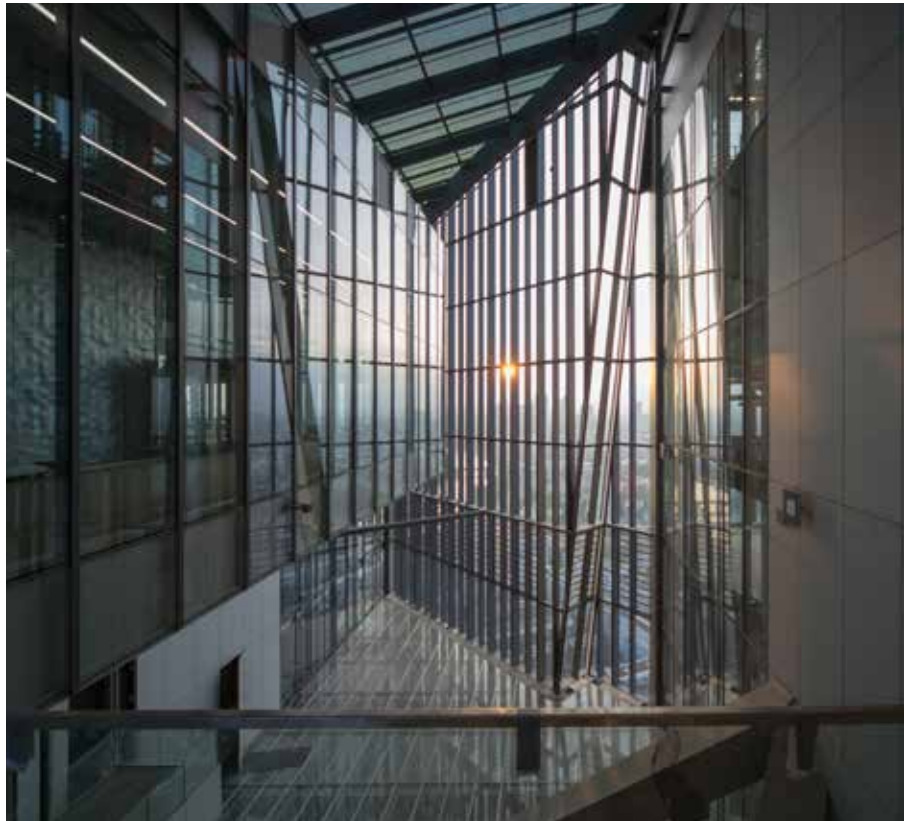
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The new ECB premises. Architecture and design

The design of the Vienna-based architects COOP HIMMELB(L)AU comprises three architecturally interlinked elements: (i) the Grossmarkthalle (Frankfurt's former wholesale market hall), (ii) the office tower, and (iii) an entrance building that connects the two other elements. The building ensemble also includes an underground car park and ancillary buildings such as the entry control points and the logistics centre. The total gross floor area of the new ECB premises amounts to approximately 185,000 m².

The competition brief and final decision focused on the functionality and sustainability of the new premises, and these key aspects continued to play an important role in the subsequent design and implementation phases. The structural and spatial design of the new premises has created a working environment that meets various functional requirements and facilitates open communication, thus promoting teamwork and interaction at every level. At the same time, the structural and spatial flexibility of the design means that changing requirements can be adapted to with little effort.



Atrium © ECB / Robert Metsch.

The Grossmarkthalle

The Grossmarkthalle was built between 1926 and 1928, on the basis of the design of Martin Elsaesser, Director of Town Planning for the City of Frankfurt am Main at the time. Until 4 June 2004 it housed a wholesale fruit and vegetable market. The former market hall, which has been a listed building since 1972, formed an integral part of the design for the ECB's new premises. Having been fully restored, the building has retained its fundamental appearance and now houses the more public areas of the ECB. The new main entrance leads to the hall area, which contains semi-public facilities, such as a visitor centre, the lobby, a cafeteria, a conference area and a staff restaurant. The new facilities have been integrated into the hall at an angle, based on a 'house-in-house' concept. This has not only provided access to parts of the Grossmarkthalle, but has also created manifold spaces

between the outer shell of the hall and the structures inside it.

Office tower

To the south of the Grossmarkthalle, two polygonal towers are joined by a glass atrium to form an office tower, which soars to a height of 185 m. The north tower has 45 floors, while the south tower has 43. The top office floor is at level 41, above which there are the services floors.

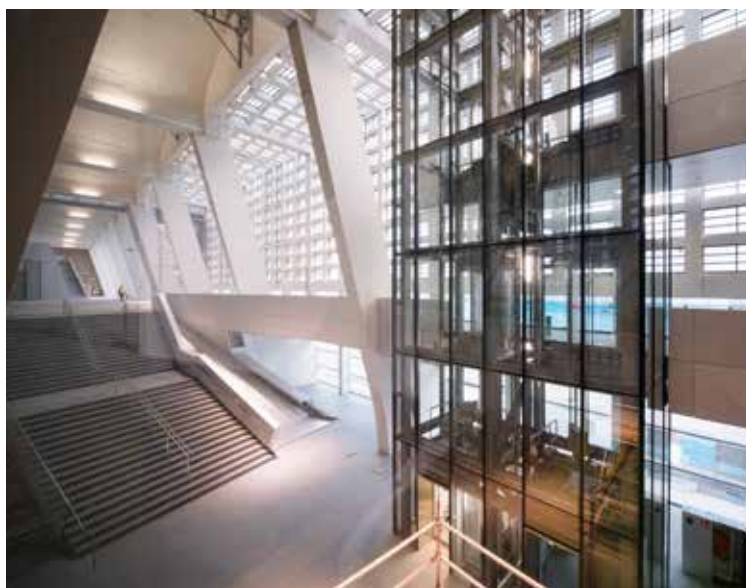
With its height and distinctive silhouette, the new high-rise complements Frankfurt's skyline. The concept behind the glazed atrium between the two office towers is one of a 'vertical city', with interchange platforms and bridges creating the impression of urban streets and squares. The interchange platforms enable people to change from the express lifts to the local lifts and divide the atrium into three

sections of varying height (between 45 m and 60 m). They can be reached via sets of stairs leading from the respective floors above and below, making it easy for staff to move between the two towers and communicate with each other on an informal level.

The two towers house the vast majority of workplaces at the new premises (maximum 2,900) and internal meeting rooms. The large council meeting room and the offices of members of the ECB's decision-making bodies are located on the upper office floors. All floors offer a high level of flexibility to allow for a variety of office configurations, from single offices to larger offices that can accommodate 10 to 12 people. The offices are located along the outer facades of the towers, and on every floor there is a kitchenette and communal area.



ECB-Premises, Ensemble © ECB / Robert Metsch.



Conference area © ECB / Robert Metsch.



Air view © ECB/Andreas Böttcher.

Entrance building

The entrance building marks the main entrance to the ECB on Sonnemannstrasse, creating an aesthetic and functional link between the office tower and the Grossmarkt halle. With its asymmetrical design, inclined facades and generously proportioned windows, it forms a clearly identifiable main entrance to the ECB from the north of the site.

The entrance building itself houses the press centre, from where the ECB's press conferences are broadcast. The two-storey press centre is accessible via a lobby, above which there are temporary workstations for journalists. There is also a second auditorium next to the large press conference room. ●



Grossmarkthalle © ECB / Robert Metsch.