

NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS

Title: **Analysis and study of architectural spaces as educational sources, using data**

How is our relationship with educational spaces? Do we learn from these spaces? Would our learning and formation improve if we had better buildings? How? In what ways? What differences are there between virtual and physical spaces? Obvious as it seems, in both situations learning processes based in assimilation of contents can take place. If we focus in team learning, in which we share and contrast opinions, express emotions through a variety of languages, not only through auditive and visual codes, then, the difference between online and face-to-face training is huge. Think of the physical space, the educational environment! Through university life, there are excellent options of online training. But, the Europe of the future needs to think about the need of suitable educational spaces not only for the first years of education but also during throughout primary and secondary years. This as well as virtual educational platforms. We need to use these spaces called schools, but what for?

In the *Escuela en Arquitectura Educativa (EAE)* of the *Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Instituto Universitario de Ciencias de la Educación IUCE UAM* <https://arquitecturaeducativauam.es/> we are interested in demonstrating that architectural spaces are able to educate by themselves. This is why we focus on these educational spaces as a main raw material or resource, because of its easy access and full connection with childhood and youth in their growing and formative years.

We consider 3 main scales:

“Macro-scale”, where links between the school centre and its neighbourhood can be identified.

“Meso-scale”, in which the proper school centre is analysed, beginning in the main entrance of the building and ending in the classroom. Here, physical factors such as lighting, air quality, sizes and scales, students’ arrangement inside the class, colours used, temperature, noise, materials, etc. must be taken into account. Should the illumination inside the classroom be the same during a session of Maths and problem solving and a session of Poetry reading? These physical factors complement other psychological ones. Are these spaces extensions of students’ homes, as pedagogue Francesco Tonucci defends?

“Micro-scale”, where, once inside the classroom, furniture design and decoration of the room itself take the leading role to transform this classroom into an intimate and social place where we spend (students and teachers) such a great amount of time during a school year. This micro scale focuses on the manipulative elements that we use on a daily basis and that we need to keep on reinventing so that educational innovation becomes a reality.

Our project aims to achieve educational spaces which are **Welcoming** (smart, sustainable, supportive and safe. The four “S”), **Versatile** (personal, flexible, capable of embracing different methodologies and uses), **Theatrical** (spaces which allow students

move towards a non written future. Today's design shouldn't stop possible future stages) and **Positive** (that promote positive attitudes related with the learning process).

The project is divided in three main parts:

One of them is due to analyse physical factors in the classroom and possibilities of recycling existing materials and furniture. Data related to the following issues will be compiled:

- Classroom size
- Orientation
- Vegetation inclusion
- Type of lighting (natural and artificial one)
- Temperature throughout the school year.
- Type of materials in walls and ceilings.
- Colours used
- Entrance or hall of the building
- "User friendly" circulation.

In the second one, teachers', student's and families' requirements involved in the educational process will be considered:

- Teachers' requirements dealing with the different subjects.
- Teachers' requirements related to the methodologies used.
- Communication between students and teachers.
- Welcoming and communication with families.

In a third part, (posterior in time and conclusive) a manual/guide showing the different possibilities and solutions would be created, as a result of the first two investigations.

How does it all sounds? This is not a new project, nor are there new aspects and in many European countries there are initiatives that have been already been studying all of these issues. What it could be an opportunity in creating this new Europe is trying to join forces and define a common European tale, respecting territorial features and peculiarities. By rethinking our educational spaces, we would sculpt a new European sense, a new European citizenship. We need to share ideas between us and weave links. And once having a solid conception of our own identity, we could extend our threads and create new nets with other continents, such as Latin America. Would you come along in this process of building a future in which educational spaces will be a learning source?