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ANNEX 1

Report on the co-design phase

ANNEX

to the

**Communication from the European Commission to the European parliament, the
Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

New European Bauhaus : Beautiful, Sustainable, Together

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REPORT ON THE CO-DESIGN PHASE

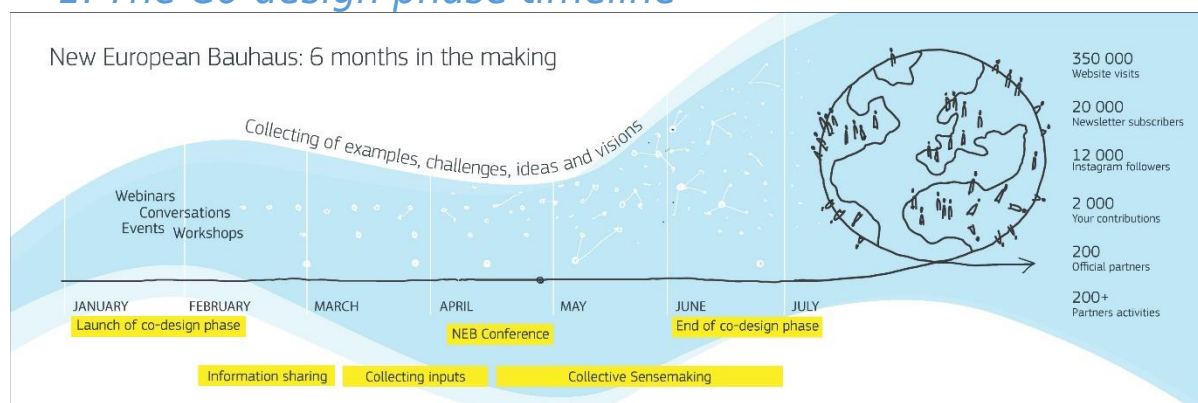
For the New European Bauhaus initiative, the Commission chose an unusual approach: It conceived a bottom-up project based on participation and inclusion. After the launch of the project in September 2020¹ by Commission President von der Leyen, the Commission went into listening mode and gave the opportunity to all interested people to share ideas, examples, visions and challenges that should be taken on board for the project.

In this annex, you will find a report on this “co-design phase” that has informed the concept of the New European Bauhaus presented today in the Commission communication. Over six months, the Commission has conducted an extensive collaboration with citizens, professionals and organisations and harvested from it the key challenges and ideas that will guide the New European Bauhaus in the short and long term.

In total, more than 200 multidisciplinary conversations took place, and more than 2000 contributors directly shared their ideas, challenges and visions via the New European Bauhaus website. Furthermore, about 12.000 people followed and interacted with the initiative on Instagram and more than 8500 viewers followed the New European Bauhaus Conference online². In this phase, the support of both the official New European Bauhaus Partners and the Members of the High-Level Roundtable was essential, as they have been working as amplifiers, activating their networks and stimulating new conversations.

This document summarises the main findings of the co-design phase. It also outlines the methods and tools used..

1. The Co-design phase timeline



- **January to Mid-February:** Official launch of the initiative on 18 January 2021 with the opening of the dedicated website. Development of a strategy to activate conversations around the initiative (information webinars, call for partners, reach out for networks). Selection of the High-Level Roundtable Members.
- **Mid-February to Mid-March:** weekly webinars and workshops to amplify the involvement of organisations and communities; the High-Level Roundtable takes shape. The first batch of Partners is selected.
- **Mid-March to Mid-April:** start of the screening of incoming contributions; extraction of trends, key topics, challenges, from the collected inputs; organisation

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ov/SPEECH_20_1655

² https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/co-design/conference_en

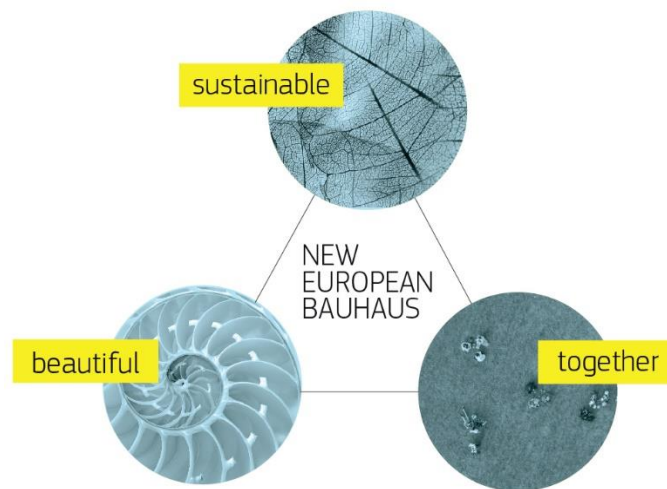
of the New European Bauhaus Conference (22-23 April). First meetings of the High-Level Roundtable; activities of partner organisations.

- **Mid-April until end of June:** collection and screening of the contributions. The High-Level Roundtable meets every two weeks. Selection of a new batch of Partners each week.. The first results from the sense-making of the website contributions are shared, discussed, tested and enriched in many events organised by partners and other independent stakeholders.
- **End of June:** Close of the co-design phase.

2. Key principles:

2.1. Starting with values

Since the beginning, the New European Bauhaus has been associated to three fundamental values - aesthetics, sustainability, and inclusion - with a strong focus on living spaces and lifestyle. The ambition to make the Green Deal a cultural, human-centred, and positive, tangible experience is built on this precise set of values.



Flowing from the triangle Beautiful - Sustainable - Together, the co-design phase set out to answer key questions:

- What do the concepts of aesthetics, sustainability and social inclusion mean for people in relation to places and forms of living?
- What are the most pressing challenges faced by citizens in relation to their living environment?
- What are the concrete ideas that could support a New European Bauhaus movement?
- What should be the ultimate scope and the main priorities of the New European Bauhaus initiative?

2.2. Get inspired by existing projects and ideas

Many good initiatives at the interplay of sustainability, inclusion and aesthetics already exist. This is true for sustainable architecture as illustrated by the 2021 Pritzker Prize winners³, for the transformation of social housing blocks in Bordeaux⁴. It is also reflected,

³ Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal Receive the 2021 Pritzker Architecture Prize, honouring their works on the renovation of existing buildings.

⁴ See details at EUMiesAward

for example, in the growing number of community gardens where neighbours participate in the transformation of the public green, or in cultural festivals that raise awareness on environmental issues through art.

To activate those who are already working on the dimensions of the New European Bauhaus, value their projects and harvest their ideas, the co-design phase put one focus on existing projects that can inspire the initiative. Overall, about 1800 examples were submitted to the website.

The New European Bauhaus Prizes⁵ 2021 reinforced this approach.

Ten different categories were established to cover the diversity of dimensions relevant for the New European Bauhaus. In each category, a special prize for the younger generation was awarded:

1. Techniques, materials and processes for construction and design
2. Buildings renovated in a spirit of circularity
3. Solutions for the co-evolution of built environment and nature
4. Regenerated urban and rural spaces
5. Products and lifestyle
6. Preserved and transformed cultural heritage
7. Reinvented places to meet and share
8. Mobilisation of culture, arts and communities
9. Modular, adaptable and mobile living solutions
10. Interdisciplinary education models

The response has been impressive with more than 2000 applications received from throughout the EU within the one-month deadline. The selection process was also participatory with public voting and an evaluation by the official partners of the New European Bauhaus. The final winners will be announced on the 16 September in a prize ceremony in Brussels.

2.3. Spread the Conversations as key tool

We all know from our dinner tables and office meetings that the best ideas emerge from conversations. And they get even better, when you bring people from diverse backgrounds and with different opinions together. That is why the key tool for the co-design phase was conversations at various levels.

The emphasis was put on seeking the collaboration of different sectors, institutional actors, or groups as diverse as possible, in order to break established 'silos' and start new connections based on cooperation towards shared objectives.

The Commission supported these conversations with a tool kit made available on the website, and by participating in them.

The conversations spanned those organised at local level, by national governments and pan-European initiatives. The results of these conversations were shared with the Commission..

In April, the Commission organised a global conversation: the New European Bauhaus Conference, a hybrid event with more than 40 international speakers and facilitators. The conference gathered more than 8500 viewers from 85 countries. Multiple panel discussions and eight workshops enabled fruitful dialogues between the participants. The

⁵ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/2021-prizes_en

results of the workshops were collected during the sessions and fed into the sense-making.

2.4. Growing a community

The New European Bauhaus builds on a growing community around two actions to inspire a movement: the call for official partners and the High-Level Roundtable.

2.4.1. Partners

From the start of the co-design phase, the Commission launched a call for official partners of the New European Bauhaus on the website.

The official partners are non-profit organisations that share the values of the New European Bauhaus and have proposed concrete actions to support its further development and implementation for example events, reports, conversations.

From a first group of 20 partners on the 25 March, the community of official partners reached more than 200 by the end of the co-design phase. The call for partners will remain active throughout the implementation phase to help grow the community further.⁶

2.4.2. High-Level Roundtable

From an initial group of nearly 80 experts identified by the Commission to form the High-Level Roundtable for the initiative, 18 Members⁷ were selected because of their personal experience and expertise covering the different dimensions of the New European Bauhaus. They do not represent organisations or countries. In the selection process, special attention was paid to geographical, sectoral and gender balance.

The role of the High-Level Roundtable is to share and express their ideas on key themes, innovative ideas and challenges. The Members exchanged ideas on a regular basis with the President and the two lead Commissioners and worked together through a series of workshops. They also acted as community ambassadors, engaging with their networks to spread the conversation and gather insights in their home countries and beyond.

Building on their exchanges, the High-Level Roundtable members shared their vision and their ideas for action in a concept paper⁸.

3. Methodology and tools

3.1. The New European Bauhaus website as a first engagement tool

Given the restrictions caused by the pandemic, granting the public direct access to the co-design phase meant setting up a digital platform where people could easily share their ideas and their experience. Since its inauguration on the 18 January 2021, the website offered two main entry points for contributions: one designed to collect short stories and one for free-format contributions.

3.1.1. The short stories collector

This entry point was designed to gather short inputs (about 2000 characters on average). It was possible to share them via three separated channels, each one of them tackling a different dimension:

- **Existing examples and projects:** what have been already realised and developed.

⁶ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/partners-0/partners_en

⁷ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/about/high-level-roundtable_en

⁸ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/high-level-roundtable-visions_en

- **Visions and ideas:** project proposals not yet implemented.
- **Challenges:** wishes and needs of citizens.

Some examples of short stories:

Respecting the planet while helping people in need

A shelter in Jankowice designed for homeless people who are too unwell for night shelters, but too healthy for public healthcare. For them, the single-storey building hidden behind old trees is a home with shared spaces, private areas, and is accessible by design. Ecological materials and installations, as well as re-using materials for the interior elements, ensure the sustainability of the building.

Educating kids towards responsible citizenship and sustainability

Empowering and educate children to become engaged in sustainability, democracy and Global Goals. By teaching kids how cities are planned and engaging with their creativity, a one-year long programme for 5th graders resulted in them envisioning and presenting their Sustainable Dream City in class.

A sustainable health centre improving the morale of patients and staff

The expansion of an Out-of-Hospital Emergency Care Centre in A Coruña, Spain was made by constructing a wooden building with natural materials, a prominent level of prefabrication and low energy consumption. The building approaches a net-zero consumption, integrates vegetation and natural light into the surroundings and has proven to be beneficial for the patients.

Upcycling bricks and ceramic tiles to create new construction materials

A project about the reincarnation of building materials based on the care and appreciation for their inherent values. Upcycling Construction and Demolition Waste (CDW) in the form of bricks and ceramic tiles from Barcelona creates new materials for the circular economy and reflects the architectural identity and history of the colourful streets of the city.

3.1.2. The free from collector

An additional entry point offered the possibility to fill a form upon the submission of a contribution, structured with four open questions to support the framing of the input inside the NEB initiative.

3.1.3. The harvesting of conversations

Throughout the whole co-design phase, many conversations were organised around the New European Bauhaus initiative. Especially in the first weeks, dozens of “**activation sessions**” were organised by the Commission to **stimulate the participation among specific networks**. While these first meetings were closely followed and curated by the NEB Team in itself, a **growing number of cross-pollinated events started to pop-up autonomously week after week**, especially after the New European Bauhaus Conference in April. In many cases the events’ organisers shared the result of the conversations on the website.

3.2. Analysing data: general approach

3.2.1. Principles

The co-design phase, and specifically the activities related to the harvesting of the contributions, were built around a number of key principles.

3.2.1.1. Transparency

For the process to be fully open and participative, it is necessary for it to be consistently transparent. This principle has been ensured through the website of the New European Bauhaus, where, together with the fundamental links to the participation tools, it is possible to find information about the High-Level Roundtable, the partners, and a calendar to keep track of the main events happening around the initiative. Furthermore,

all the contributions have progressively been made accessible to the public⁹ through the development of a visualisation system. Thanks to this tool and its research features, any interested user or organisations has the possibility to conduct their own “sense making” and analysis.

3.2.1.2. Diversity and equal treatment

The profiles of the contributors are truly diverse, ranging from short testimonials to long summaries of series of events up to essays, position papers or research articles. **Despite the disparity in complexity, wording, and length, it was important to screen every entry with the same level of attention.**

3.2.1.3. Clustering

Another fundamental point that guided the screening was the idea of **avoiding forcing the contributions under specific, pre-defined categories**, and then to proceed on a quantity-based approach that would have limited the analysis to *how many entries talk about a certain topic*.

The method was continuously adapted in function of the content that was collected over time, grouping stories and ideas under different clusters of topics and questions they could answer.

After the identification of specific trends, it was crucial not to lose single voices in the big numbers and to value with **extra attention the unique entries**, so to counter-balance the weight of large groups of similar contributions.

3.2.2. Enablers and Scales: a matrix

Beyond the identification of trends and outliers, the clustering process also aimed at the identification of **a set of enablers, a typology of resources required to support the transformation** (Networks, Culture, Education, Research, Infrastructures, Places, Technology, Policies & regulatory framework, Strategies and Programmes). The list of enablers was crossed with **scales of application**, starting from the local dimension and “zooming out” until the global context (Building, Neighbourhood, Village & Urban, Regional, National, European, Worldwide and Multiple).

The **combination of enablers and scales into a matrix** was an important milestone to connect the overall trends in the aspirations with the more concrete ideas about how to progress towards the desired transformations.

4. Activities and Findings

4.1. Activities

There was a huge variety and diversity in the activities that took place. The Commission did not control the activities that were proposed by other organisations to keep the conversation as inclusive and open as possible. It is impossible to mention all organisations and activities in this document. The examples stand for many more.

A wide variety of audiences were reached: it ranged from architects to scientists, from social housing organisations to industry, from children and art students to public authorities.

Local grassroots organisations teamed up and held events in their neighbourhood or region (Galicia in Spain, Gdynia in Poland). In other cases, partners reached out to their European networks to establish **European wide conversations** around a certain theme

⁹ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/co-design/co-designing-new-european-bauhaus-0_en

(Housing Europe¹⁰, The Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA)¹¹, IFLA Europe (International Federation of Landscape Architects), New European Bauhaus Collective¹², Europeana¹³, Europa Nostra¹⁴, Triennale Milano¹⁵, Wood4Bauhaus Alliance¹⁶).

In some Member States the initiative was adopted by **national players or ministries** (Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Lithuania, Germany, Slovenia, Estonia, Italy, and others). Other cities and Member states reached

¹⁰ <https://www.housingeurope.eu/blog-1558/the-new-european-bauhaus>

¹¹ <https://www.beda.org/news/new-european-bauhaus/>

¹² <https://www.ace-cae.eu/activities/new-european-bauhaus-collective-nebc/>

¹³ <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/new-european-bauhaus>

¹⁴ <https://www.europanostra.org/cultural-heritage-as-an-integral-dimension-of-the-new-european-bauhaus-initiative/>

¹⁵ <https://triennale.org/bauhaus>

¹⁶ <https://wood4bauhaus.eu/>



out to their peers in neighbouring countries to organise **regional conversations** (Nordic Bauhaus¹⁷, Bauhaus of the Sea¹⁸ or ‘NEB goes South’, a platform gathering architecture departments of six universities¹⁹)

¹⁷ <https://www.nordicbauhaus.eu/#/page=1>

The official partners and the members of the High Level Round Table of the New European Bauhaus played very often a crucial role in these initiatives.

The New European Bauhaus stimulated the development of many **activities involving children and young people**, often with the objective of bringing their creativity into the co-design phase. For example, the Bavarian State Ministry for Housing, Construction and Transport launched a competition for children under 14 years, asking them to submit a picture to inspire the future of constructing homes and living together. The Saxon State Ministry of Justice and Democracy, Europe and Equality together with the city of Chemnitz and its State Office for School and Education organised a similar competition, offering a prize to young citizens from 14 to 18 years of age for the best vision for the future, to be represented with drawings, paintings, graphics, sculptures or models.

Arkki, a Finnish cultural platform, launched an art competition to reflect upon the NEB initiative, while Architektūros Fondas, a non-profit organisation from Lithuania, will organise five-days workshops in seven small towns around the country to enhance young people's understanding of their living environment, encourage creativity and foster a sense of personal responsibility.

The New European Bauhaus also triggered a lot of interest in the **industrial community**. Several sectorial organisations applied as partners for the New European Bauhaus, organising events and workshops (e.g. Fashion Council Germany, LafargeHolcim foundation or the concrete initiative). The European wood industry created the Wood4Bauhaus alliance, the first time ever that the sector tries to join forces in a common project. The European Roundtable for Industry organised two sessions on the New European Bauhaus focusing mainly on the construction sector. The community of renewable energy joined the conversations and brought interesting insights to the process.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) activated its ecosystem of partners located across the EU, to raise awareness on the New European Bauhaus and to co-create interdisciplinary activities in cities and rural areas on topics such as green transition through architectural, cultural and historic sites, circularity and urban resilience, universal mobility as a key enabler for social inclusion.

National governments and **regional entities** participated actively in the co-design phase. For example, the Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda organised a conference to investigate the role that Spain can play in the definition and implementation of the New European Bauhaus and initiated an institutional dialogue and an exchange of experiences between relevant projects and actors. A similar case is the one of the 'Nordic Bauhaus', where over 1600 people from different Nordic countries under the steer of the Finnish Ministry of the Environment discussed important topics for the Nordic climate, drawing inspiration from the traditional local wooden towns and the Nordic welfare state. In Germany, the Ministry of the Interior organised a workshop to gather input from different actors on the ground. In Lithuania, the Ministry of Environment together with the Ministry of Culture organised The New European Bauhaus National Discussion.

The New European Bauhaus triggered a lot of interest in the **European Parliament**: The Committee for Culture and Education (CULT) and Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee organised a series of events around the Bauhaus from informal exchanges

¹⁸ <https://bauhaus-mar.pt/en/>

¹⁹ Athens, Zagreb, Valencia, Porto, Bologna and Toulouse

with the Commission to an official hearing with experts from different Member States²⁰. A cross-party and cross-committee Friendship group was founded, reflecting the holistic approach of the New European Bauhaus and gathered more than 30 MEPs. They participated with input to the Co-design phase and organised a public event with the civil society.

The **Committee of the Regions** organised a conversation among mayors of European Capitals of culture and European Capitals of innovation and its own members with support and participation of the Commission.

The European Commission organised a series of webinars to inform different communities and to gather input as well as the **New European Bauhaus Conference**²¹. The different services of the Commission that work on certain aspects of the New European Bauhaus reached out to their respective communities and organised workshops and events for example with representatives from the youth or from coal regions to explore how the New European Bauhaus could help the transition in their views.

Most of the conversations and events focused on a European audience. But there was also activity outside of the EU, for example in Turkey, South America and the US. The Commission chose deliberately to include non- Europeans in the High-Level Roundtable to underline the global ambition of the project. In addition, several of the partners from outside Europe organised events where they connected with European counterparts.

4.2. Outreach

4.2.1. Digital communication

The key principles for the communication strategy are openness, engagement and co-creation, with content based on the stories shared by the people. The visual identity of the co-design phase was very light, around sketches . The objective was to give people the chance to take ownership of the concept and get creative.

Since January 2021, the campaign has reached and engaged a significant audience across Europe:

- Instagram: The account (elected as the main communication platform due to its visual nature) reached more than 12 000 followers.
- Twitter: Without a dedicated twitter account, conversations using the hashtag #NewEuropeanBauhaus generated about 23 000 engagements
- The official website registered more than 350 000 visits
- The newsletter counts more than 20 000 subscriptions.
- A Pinterest page was activated.
- The Webinars generated an audience of 4300 participants.

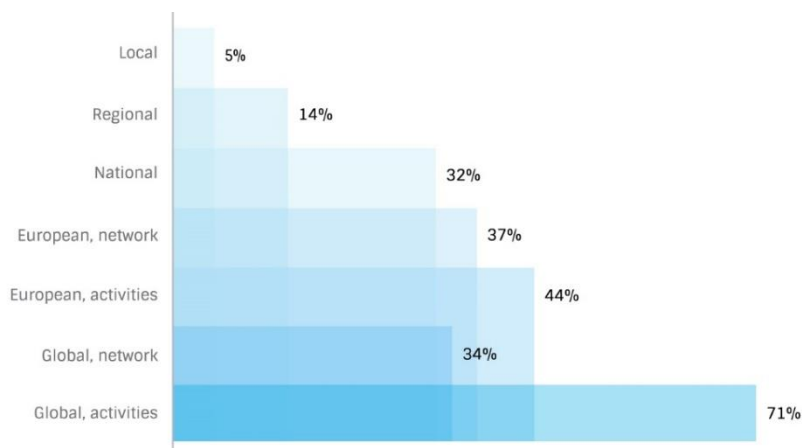
4.2.2. New European Bauhaus official Partners

By the end of the design phase, 750 entities had applied for official partnership among which 270 were accepted and published on the web site.

²⁰ <http://www.eu-smart.community/index.html>

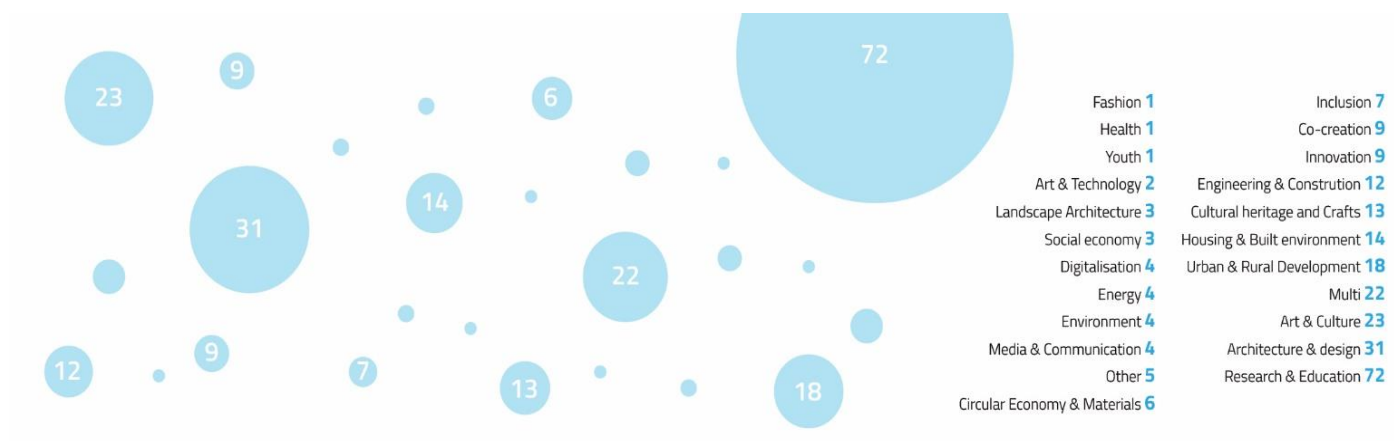
²¹ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/co-design/conference_en

The outreach of the community of official partners ranges from organizations active on a local scale to EU-wide networks encompassing multiple entities. The cumulative reach of the organisations that are until now official partners can be estimated in the order of millions.

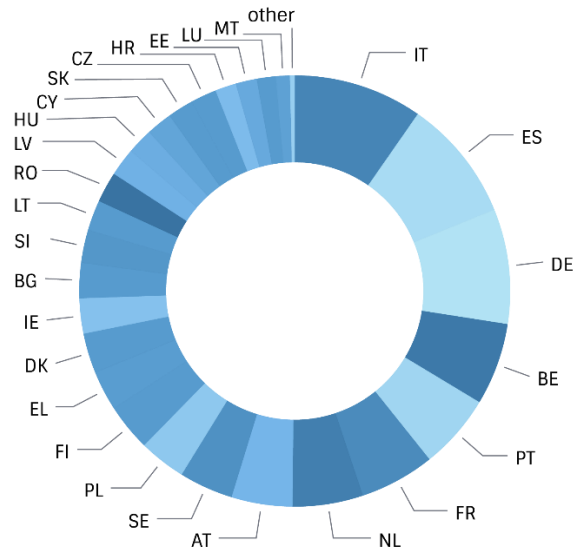


(networks refer to partner organisations having members in various countries whereas activities refer to partners established in only one state but developing some of their activities in other countries)

The partners represent a great diversity in terms of sectors and fields of expertise.



The Community counts partners in most of the Member States and 36 % of them are transnational networks with members in many Member States and beyond, improving the geographical reach and balance.



Partners geographical distribution including the coverage of networks

4.2.3. Stories collected

4.2.3.1. The short stories collector

In total about 1800 contributions were collected through the short-stories collector. Some were long explanations of research; others were short remarks about an idyllic place, a memory or a certain building or technique.

Number of contributions: Examples (1145), Ideas (452), Challenges (167)

4.2.3.2. The free form collector

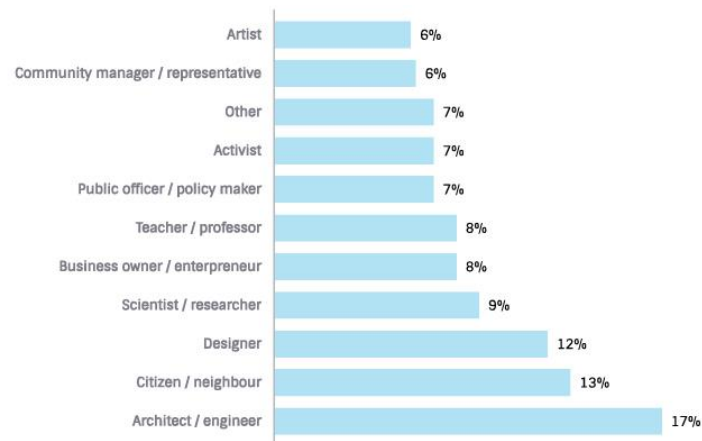
About 200 contributions were shared via the free form collector. This entry point reached a wide variety of participants: professionals, researchers and research groups, private companies, school and universities, cultural organizations, Governmental and Non-Governmental organizations, regional and national agencies, networks and hubs. Among the groups and associations that submitted their contributions, their scale of engagement also varies, and it goes from the local dimension to the international and global level.

4.2.4. Geographical and sectoral balances

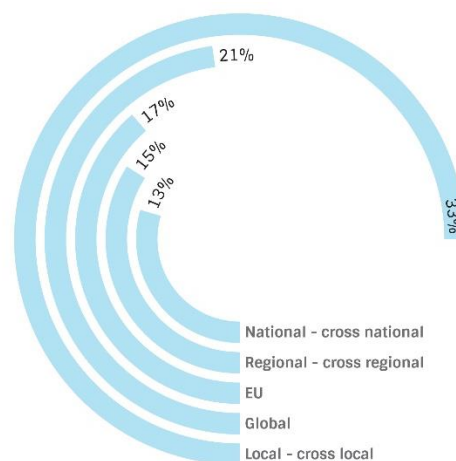
The Commission paid special attention to geographical and sectorial balance: During the first weeks of collection, Italy, Spain and Germany were the countries with the highest number of submitters and activities. Stimulated by interventions by the Commission, partner organisations, High Level Roundtable Members and others, the project could reach a wider audience throughout events, conversations and activation sessions.

For what regards the role of the contributors, the New European Bauhaus attracted naturally **a large interest from the building sector** (architects and engineers), mainly because of the explicit reference to the architectural world embedded in the name of the project. A series of topical events planned directly with and for specific groups of organizations supported the reach out for unrepresented (or less represented) sectors. This, along with the integration of partners from various fields, has improved the sectoral diversity.

What is your role?



Most contributions came from the local level.



4.3. Findings

The analysis of the findings is based on the data gathered from the short story collector, the free form collector, the harvested conversations and events that the European Commission has organized and/or participated in.

Looking at what the concepts of aesthetics, sustainability and social inclusion mean for people in relation to places and forms of living required disentangling the entries and the multiple dimensions.

Sustainability was mostly associated to the 'green' aspects, such as circular economy, energy efficiency, re-use of materials. **Inclusion** was linked to greater attention to the needs of marginalized or vulnerable groups, participation in decision-making of all groups of society, increased affordability and accessibility in the housing stock, bridging and connecting people. **Aesthetics** is usually related to a rediscovery of history and

architectural heritage, places that feel familiar, or are in harmony with the natural world, places or forms that appeal to people's creativity and imagination.

"Trusting in new, however, it should not mean rushing blindly into a future without roots, rather exploring the positive interaction of the identity background of a country (its genius loci), with languages, materials, technical and production ways of today's world."

"The inhabitants are not only concerned with the practical knowledge of the renovation works. They are also emotionally involved and they feel the need of a poetic and sensitive relation to the places in which they live during these transitional periods."

(New European Bauhaus Website, short story collector)

Most of the topics are interconnected: for example, having access to green spaces can also make people come together; affordable houses need proximity to the labour market to create a healthy and functional living ecosystem. Local improvement of a place cannot be done without taking the DNA of the place into account.

5. Emerging axes

The clustering of the entries has led to four fundamental axes as explained in the present communication:

- Reconnecting with nature
- Regaining a sense of community and belonging
- Prioritising the places and people that need it the most
- The need for long term, life cycle and integrated (circular) thinking in the industrial ecosystem

5.1. Reconnecting with nature

A recurrent aspiration identified in the entries is the fundamental need to re-connect and re-build a relationship with nature. The general tendency reverts to a holistic thinking that tackle lifestyle and mind-set, economy and society and planetary boundaries through an eco-centric approach.

"People in urban centres have been alienated from nature for decades. Today the need for open green spaces is more important than ever before."
"Inside the Nature (vertical green, green buildings, green plazas, urban vegetable gardens ... the green it hasn't to be any more something outside and different from the city but one of its principal materials)"
"The objectives of Barcelona Superblocks program are to make a city healthier, more liveable and of short distances. It does so by putting people's health in the foreground, reorganizing the mobility, making it more efficient and safe, while promoting active and sustainable mobility, gaining space for social relationships and aiming to a greener and more naturalized city with rich biodiversity."
"My proposal is based on the development of permanent educational programs in schools, for children, to involve them from an early age in the development and protection of the environment."
"We've invented nothing. We're only carrying on our ancestors' vision by respecting nature and allowing it to coexist with us."

(New European Bauhaus Website, short story collector)

Several voices argued that the built and the natural environment should not be treated as separate elements, but as interconnected parts of the same ecosystem. In the cities, nature should be an inherent part of the urban fabric, with interventions ranging from small-scale gardens to larger projects, with the common objective of 're-naturing' the city and letting nature take over. Tackling degraded city areas is one of the recurring ideas, especially where left-over spaces have the potential to be turned into high-quality living, active spaces, able to foster biodiversity and regeneration.

In spatial terms, urban planning should give equal attention to multiple dimensions at the same time. Restoring biodiversity and habitats must be tackled in conjunction with shifting mobility patterns from car-dominated to walkable and connected layouts for healthier and more liveable cities. Improving air and water quality by addressing unsustainable use of resources and waste management will also lead to improved quality of life and health for urban inhabitants and for nature.

" The square's green belt was treated as the beginning of an urban forest, the starting point of a reflection on the whole city as an urban ecosystem."

(Skanderbeg Square, Tirana, Albania - New European Bauhaus Website, short story collector)

Outside the urban realm, the loss of biodiversity, environmental vulnerability, the loss of local knowledge and farms are challenges that many rural areas face. In those cases, the proposed solutions mainly refer to sustainable tourism practices, permaculture or agroforestry models, smart or ecological villages, biodiversity restoration and integration of rural-urban dynamics.



"We would like to introduce sustainable planning strategies that can be used by local and regional actors in Alpine regions when converting former industrial locations into good working and living environments. Such a complex task needs to take the local economic, ecological and social context into account and cannot be mastered by a single expert alone."

(Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation project - New European Bauhaus Website, free form entry contribution)

5.2. Regaining a sense of belonging

A key topic emerging from the entries is the need to foster a sense of belonging, and to rediscover the spirit of a place reconnecting people with their living environments and with the local cultural and history.

"Lack of creative cultural public spaces. Spaces that will bridge art and society. Spaces for cultural social growth. Spaces for public discussions and conversations. Spaces for co-creation and collaboration. Spaces for skill development and workshops. The Space for total inclusivity."

"There is a clear desire for community life, a desire to be together, to be part of something."

"For immigrants, it's important to find back a family dimension for sharing moments with others. Usually these occasions are built around food, and common spaces in shared housing."

"Cultural activities will be helpful to create a shared narratives and values linked to the respect of the environment in a common space as a Forum where new cultural approaches could help solving social problems to reach a common wellbeing. We all know that cultural activities support 4 axes of sustainability: economic, social, environmental and above all human capital."

"Capturing the DNA of a community. Inspired by the principles of Bauhaus - renewed and reimagined for our age - this idea proposes a pilot project that combines research and visioning with consultative methods, to engage the community in the definition of their own unique experience signature. Through this, the proposal aims to assist in the development of more relevant and meaningful architecture and public space that reflect and refamiliarize the elements that are loved and valued in a given place or time, and that define its identity."

(New European Bauhaus Website, short story collector)

A good example on this matter is represented by the conversations carried out between different stakeholders from coal regions in transitions. They brought to attention the fact that transition policies focus on sustainability, innovation and creating new jobs, but they often overlook the dimension of community-building, cultural and architectural heritage and purpose. The transition must re-centre around the community's needs and vision for the transformation of their surroundings.

Another important challenge people have expressed is the lack of places of quality that could allow them to meet, exchange ideas and socialize with others, which negatively affects both social unity and individual well-being. It is for example the case of the former Soviet districts and buildings, where the process of renovation should not focus only on

the actual (re)construction, but also on finding a new sense of identity and promoting well-being.

"We must humanize the Soviet yards and neighbourhoods. Currently, there are no proper public spaces that could stimulate community engagement, recreational activities or local businesses. This issue calls for a search for an innovative, out of the box urban design, tools, and solutions.

-" Urban spaces and typologies that are common in city centres or old towns will never be adapted to Soviet districts, because these districts were built fundamentally differently. Accordingly, we have to almost reinvent these spaces and create new urban spaces for communities to enjoy and live in."

(New European Bauhaus Website, Free Form entry point)

Culture and art play a paramount role in reconnecting people with the character, the history and traditions that form the distinguished 'feel' of a place. In addition, they function as catalysts for bringing people together and bridging social distances through sharing different viewpoints and experiences and can also play a role in revitalizing neighbourhoods or even territories.

Expanding the concept of culture, the preservation of architectural heritage and cultural landmarks could play a significant role, especially inside projects of redevelopment and renovation. Using local knowledge and techniques is a way to reconnect people with the places they live in, but it also has the potential to rejuvenate economy.

Furthermore, people have expressed the ambition to become active in supporting the local business ecosystem and the decentralisation of several supply chains, from food production to distributed manufacturing of various goods. Supporting an 'economy of proximity' and a '15 minutes city' model (or "complete communities") can create more local opportunities and vibrant, mixed-use communities where all necessities are within reach for everyone

5.3. Prioritising the places and people that need it the most

Key dimensions that have emerged in this area are:

- The importance of equal participation of citizens in decision-making and the need for an inclusive approach that takes into account experiences and needs of different groups in both public and private contexts.
- The need to connect rural areas with cities, but also bridging the digital divide,
- The need to tackle homelessness and to enhance housing affordability and accessibility for the groups that face the most difficult challenges.

"But (recalling the Bauhaus) house is nothing without services, without sociality, collective and public space. Here it is, focusing on housing means working on the very core of our society: it means to take care of people, all of the people, no matter the colour of the skin, the place they come from, sex or religion they believe, if they are native or migrants."

"Inclusion - word with one meaning, but thousands of ways to be really included in our society. People with visual, hearing or moving impairment are not fully included in these modern days."

“Small cities and villages that could not stand the economic changes saw their younger generations leaving, their elder inhabitants more isolated and their built environment progressively abandoned.”

“In Europe there are a large number of municipalities and small nuclei of rural population that are in decline and are disappearing. However, many of them hold great potential by bringing together essences of historical, cultural, heritage and natural authenticity.”

“people with disabilities experience a strong self-isolation phenomenon due to: the attitude of the people around them (a subjective factor related to prejudice) - inaccessible built environment (objective factor directly affecting mobility). This phenomenon appears during childhood, at playgrounds - the place where children become self-conscious and aware of the differences between them.”

“Young people and the elderly are particularly excluded from the current [housing] offer. The former mainly because of their income, the latter because of a series of factors (accessibility, distance from the urban centre, loneliness, need).”

(New European Bauhaus Website, Short story collector)

Enhancing social inclusion requires tackling the needs of marginalized or vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, people with disabilities or immigrants, and ensuring equal access for everyone to services, green spaces and digital tools. On this last subject, many entries refer to them as good instruments to empower people and democratize the participation in decision-making.

Many rural areas are suffering from depopulation, which in turn leads to economic and/or social deprivation and degradation of the natural and built environment. Rural areas often suffer from the lack of (physical and digital) connectivity and a consequential lack of opportunities in terms of jobs or potential for innovation. Tackling connectivity and accessibility as a way to improve social inclusion holds true also for urban areas, where certain neighbourhoods are physically and/or socially disconnected and thus suffer from marginalisation and unequal access to services. In urban areas, the issue of ‘shrinking’ cities also has negative economic, social and infrastructural consequences that require a long-term strategy.

A significant number of entries and conversations affirm that the focus should not be solely set on housing and the built environment alone, but also on facilitating the access to services and infrastructures.

5.4. The need for long term, life cycle and integrated thinking in the industrial ecosystem

There is an urgent need to tackle the unsustainable use of resources and waste in different industries (e.g., construction, fashion, manufacturing).

“As the Bauhaus opened a discussion about we think and realize buildings, the new one has to consider how the building process put strain on ecosystems that we are part.”

“The use of dry Posidonia as thermal insulation reminds us that we do not live in a house but an ecosystem.”

“Life cycle data and regulations as the base of a sustainable industry - with timber as an example.”

“We are proposing to adopt mycelium (plutorus spp.) and waste into a composite material to replace current highly toxic building materials.”

“Upcycling could reduce the dependency on imports and help to create jobs in local manufacturing practices.”

“The approach of architects towards the furniture projects of new houses should be more disruptive and creative, assembling and combining refurbish furniture items.”

(New European Bauhaus Website, Short story collector)

In the construction industry, the main message is to avoid demolition by focusing on the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of old buildings.

Nature-based solutions and materials are essential for a new way of thinking in industrial ecosystems. Solutions inspired by the natural world can contribute to a more integrated and circular approach. Buildings and industrial processes should be seen as part of the natural ecosystem. Examples of circular practices, upcycling, avoiding and re-using different kinds of waste can be transferred and upscaled.

Regarding urban renewal or rehabilitation of housing, several key elements need to be taken into account for an integrated, long-term approach.

“One of the biggest challenges in Flanders and in Europe is the urban renewal of existing buildings. What is typical in Belgium is that there are many private owners. This makes it a challenge to find solutions to renew and renovate this existing building in collaboration with the private owners. How can we stimulate this by giving the means for these private owners to be involved, to participate, and to find ways to renovate? How can we adapt the system by taking into account the Belgian specificity?”

(New European Bauhaus Website, Free form entry point)

New techniques and materials could offer solutions for a long-term perspective in the construction sector. Using upcycled materials or waste from demolition, as well bio-based materials for rehabilitation in terms of reinforcing the structural integrity or improving the thermal insulation of old buildings. Aside from nature-based and circular solutions, other technologies and innovations can play a significant role. For instance, heat recovery and renewable energy, 3D printing, data collection and sharing tools for improved energy efficiency, water usage and waste management. Digital tools can play an effective role in capturing the ‘life’ of communities and foster collaboration and community engagement in urban development or provide insightful information regarding the needs of residents in relation to their living environments.

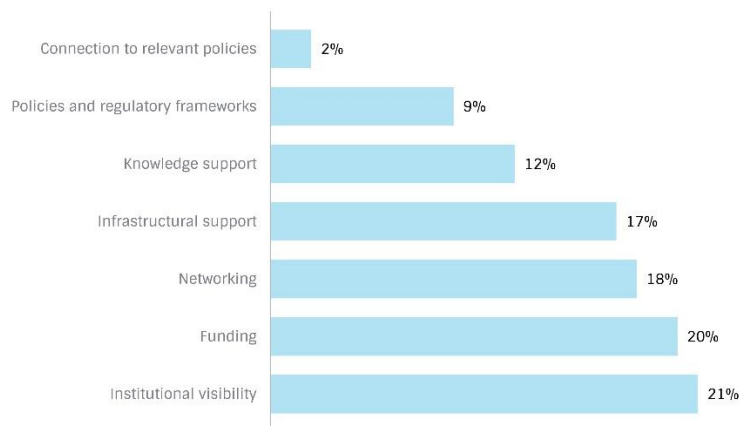
The transformation of certain economic sectors needs better training and re-skilling the workforce towards the integration of life cycle thinking and practices in all the dimensions and processes of the industrial ecosystem. A re-evaluation and more research into the cost of unsustainable practices should be conducted in order to set priorities and shift the most damaging cycles.

Life cycle thinking should be applied at all scales: at the neighbourhood scale, by working and re-using local materials, such as transforming discarded materials into urban furniture

or shared spaces, or at the national or international scale by effecting change across the value chain of key industries.

6. Ideas for action

Contributors highlighted different needs to enable the transition and implement the New European Bauhaus. It ranges from funding to networking and a better visibility of promising projects and products:



Beyond this horizontal indication, some clear recommendations for action merged from the contributions.

6.1. Attention to small scale interventions

The New European Bauhaus should pay particular attention to actions and changes on street and neighbourhood level, because even the smaller actions can make a big difference. In addition, neighbours are experts in their own neighbourhoods. Successful small-scale projects also lower the threshold for change: small initiatives are already there and just need to be reinforced. It is often difficult for them to apply for EU funding because of the design of the calls.

6.2. Working on multiple scales at the same time

There is a growing awareness of the fact that the actions undertaken inside Europe, influence the rest of the world – and the other way around. There is also an awareness on the interconnectedness of smaller and larger scales and the potential to work with the same principles across different structures. The New European Bauhaus conversation and cooperation is therefore expected become global and some contributions developed concrete ideas in this field.

6.3. Working with transdisciplinary for an integrated approach

A meaningful transformation of places requires not only to involve many different competences and knowledge, but also to engage them in transdisciplinary dialogues and exploration. Multidisciplinary ways of working are often mentioned, but many stories go beyond the concept of inter- or multidisciplinary. For them, true innovation lies in combining and accepting knowledge support from experts and non-experts, giving to ‘doing’ and ‘thinking’ the same level of importance. Ideally, this is matched by working in safe environments based on mutual trust and collaboration.

6.4. Starting from a participatory approach

Successful inclusive design and urban planning should start with inviting all people into the conversation. Too many times, contributors wrote that in this framework participatory process is partial, or even symbolic. Making sure that the process is driven by the people who will also benefit from its design, is the key to make sure that solutions fit the needs and the place of intervention in the best conceivable way. Among the tools for achieving higher participation the contributors often mention crowdfunding and other cooperative financing possibilities for citizens.

6.5. Innovation beyond a technology push

A new paradigm of innovation is needed to go beyond strictly technological models and achieve a harmonious relationship between technology and society. Technological innovation has a lot to bring to the New European Bauhaus ambition, from the smart use of digital tools to new materials. However, the impact of innovation does not necessarily stem from the novelty or the technology itself: the innovation challenge might come for example from new industrial methods cutting down costs and making available solutions more affordable or from waving new technology and traditional craft and local-based solutions to fit specific contexts or aesthetical choices. The 'art and science' field has also been mentioned as a promising axis to nourish a broader approach of innovation.

6.6. Between past and present

Recognising and understanding the importance of heritage, local knowledge and traditions and their role in shaping a sustainable future. The need to re-assess the practices that are unsuitable to the current social and environmental challenges, while considering old forms of knowledge that might contribute to shaping up new future directions.

6.7. New forms of financing

Innovation can come in the form of financing solutions. New public-private partnerships, managing projects differently, new opportunities that will allow citizens and smaller enterprises to become more involved.

7. VII. Conclusion & Next steps

The co-design phase was the first important step for the New European Bauhaus initiative. It shaped its identity – both process and content wise.

In the next phases, the New European Bauhaus will continue with a participatory approach and will work further on deepening the axes emerged from the co-design phase. To ensure a wider audience and an even more inclusive approach, it will intensify the efforts of reaching out to people.

The tools that were used to reach out to collect experiences and visions have been suitable given the limitations imposed by the pandemic. However, digital tools exclude certain groups or people from sharing their voices. The next phases should enable different settings and conditions that will enable working with people on the ground.

The community of partners will grow and become more diverse, and a special focus should be given to partners outside of Europe to shape and strengthen the global dimension of the initiative. It will also involve political actors and the industry more closely as key actors in enabling a transformation of the industrial ecosystem.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all the people and organisations who took the effort to share reports, views and expertise and organise and participate in conversations. Together we make this initiative.

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