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New European Bauhaus local conversations

The new European Bauhaus initiative is bringing a breath of fresh air to the EU Green Deal. The initiative is based on three pillars, sustainability, aesthetics and inclusivity and opens new collaborative possibilities between the Commission, cities and other stakeholders.

Cities across Europe have been applying and experimenting with the principles of the European Bauhaus for many years. Most of us are already working on making change possible and creating more inclusive, beautiful and sustainable places, for and by all citizens. Sometimes our perspectives may lack alignment and our efforts may not create synergies. We "only" need to bring our heads and hearts together to agree on what our shared priorities could be, and how to share the responsibilities of changing for the better.

This series of exercises are a way to contribute to the design phase of the New European Bauhaus, while we discuss on how to design our city, together.

.. first a few quick guidelines

Some useful questions to ask ahead of the local conversations in your city:

* How can the local conversation support your city in creating beautiful, sustainable and inclusive places ?
* What root problem/challenges does your conversation need to address ?
* Target scale that you may want to define (neighbourhood, district, city, metropolitan area, etc.)
* Who needs to be on board for your conversation to be fruitful and make your idea thrive ?

Following your local conversation or a series of conversations, please fill in the below template and share it with: [masha.smirnova@eurocities.eu](mailto:masha.smirnova@eurocities.eu) and [alessandro.rancati@ec.europa.eu](mailto:alessandro.rancati@ec.europa.eu)

# Harvesting the results

**a. Please share the topic around which your local conversation(s) are organised** (e.g. co-designing the city, accessible urban spaces, the spirit of a place, new relationship with nature.. ).

Four conversations:

#1: Urban Arenas – tangible experiences, cases from Hamburg, Aarhus, Trondheim and Melbourne

#2: Design/Methodology – Design driven research, neighbourhoods, water (as connector & narrative)

#3: Craftsmanship/Baukunst – circularity, new materials, cultural heritage & resilience, old crafts & young people

#4: Connections / Networks – building a movement – OASC, ICLEI, Union of Baltic Cities, Goethe Inst.

**b. Please share some key details around your local conversation**

Number of participants: approx. total of 160

Which local stakeholder groups did you invite? Why them? Would you have invited someone else but could not? Municipality, Academia, Civic Organisations, Entrepreneur, Networks

Please add the dates of your conversation(s): 29 April, 18 May, 1 June, 15 June

**c. Please share the outcome of your conversation based on the following guiding questions:**

* What are the emerging themes that you identified from your local conversation and can share with us?

Urban Arenas, Craftsmanship/Baukunst, Connecting Narratives, Dedicated Networks are a significant fundament from our point of view for NEB pilot projects

A regional approach appears to be a very focused and high potential approach

* Can you identify the key challenges that the ideas or examples address, directly and indirectly?

Key challenge: co-designing tangible and impactful experiences for creative sustainability and climate action in urban arenas with multiple stakeholders aligned within a city and across multiple cities in a region

* What are the ideas you identified that bring change, or the existing virtuous examples you discussed? Can you describe what aspects made them special or particularly relevant?

Engaging multiple stakeholders including citizens, urban designers, artists/creatives in urban arenas to co-create tangible experiences that are scalable and transferable

* How would you initiate change, and what would you need for it to be sustained in time?

Co-Design a clear transformational path for the urban arenas, engage stakeholders with intrinsic motivation and with their different perspectives, align everyone for the purpose of tangible experiences beyond prototyping, but for pilots with transfer potential to a longer-term autonomous existence. Co-create roadmaps for these transformational paths including finance mechanisms.

* What is needed to increase synergies and mitigate possible trade-offs between aesthetics, environmental sustainability and social inclusion (incl. affordability) within the realm of your project, idea, vision?

Strong, engaged stakeholders with experience and perspectives in each of the NEB dimensions

* What are the gaps and obstacles, including within city administration, that prevent good projects from being implemented?

Missing policies for experimentation, finances, personnel resources

* Based on your local context, what are the most conducive methods to co-create your city that can bring life to the new European Bauhaus Initiative? (e.g. living labs, mission-oriented approach, participatory budgeting, citizen’s assemblies..)

Urban arenas with highly engaged stakeholders from civic society, academia, the municipality, citizens and the business sector (for example quarter developers) with the will and means to experiment in public spaces with longer term perspectives

# Recommendations

* Do you have ideas on how to trigger a broader transformation at European level based on your local learnings?

Capacity building on an interregional level, for example in regard to road mapping, urban arena co-design, citizens engagement and experimental governance policies.

* Based on your conversation, what should be the scope of the New European Bauhaus initiative?

Guidance and navigation for cities and regions in regard to the various missions and calls that will permit to generate partnerships and finances for pilot projects. Knowledge sharing through conversations and a platform. Ideally, the NEB initiative should have funds to trigger and support innovative and even radical approaches that might fall through the rosters of “traditional” calls.

### Useful links

European Commission Joint Research Center: Conversation toolkit <https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/system/files/2021-01/conversation-toolkit-NewEuropeanBauhaus%20_inproved.pdf>

Danish Design Council local conversations toolkit: <https://bauhaus-conversations.eu/>