

From Recommendation To Action TOWARDS A SHARED CULTURE OF ARCHITECTURE

European Conference on Architectural Policies (ECAP), 11-12 June

Jutta Kastner, Policy officer
European Commission,
Directorate General
Education, Youth, Sport and
Culture

How Architectural Policy serves the public interest?

- **Architecture** is a **cultural, environmental** and **democratic** issue
- Our built environment shapes how **we live**, how **resilient communities** are, how we relate to **our past and future**
- Architecture is **public by nature**





TOWARDS A SHARED CULTURE OF ARCHITECTURE

INVESTING IN A HIGH-QUALITY LIVING
ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE





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EU Member State Expert Group on High-quality architecture (2021)

Six key recommendations

Promote a culture of quality in the built environment

Embed architectural quality in public policies

Foster transdisciplinary and participatory approaches

Support knowledge creation and dissemination

Strengthen international collaboration and peer-learning

Promote sustainable, inclusive and beautiful environments



EU-Level Actions

The **New European Bauhaus**, launched in 2020, bridges the European Green Deal with the built environment — bringing together sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion.

The **EU Work Plan for Culture 2023–2026** includes a strong commitment to high-quality *Baukultur* and interdisciplinary cooperation.

EU Funding Programmes (**Creative Europe, Horizon Europe, Interreg ...**) support architectural research, co-creation, adaptive reuse, and knowledge exchange.

Quality-based principles are gradually integrated into **public procurement, cohesion policy, and green transition strategies.**



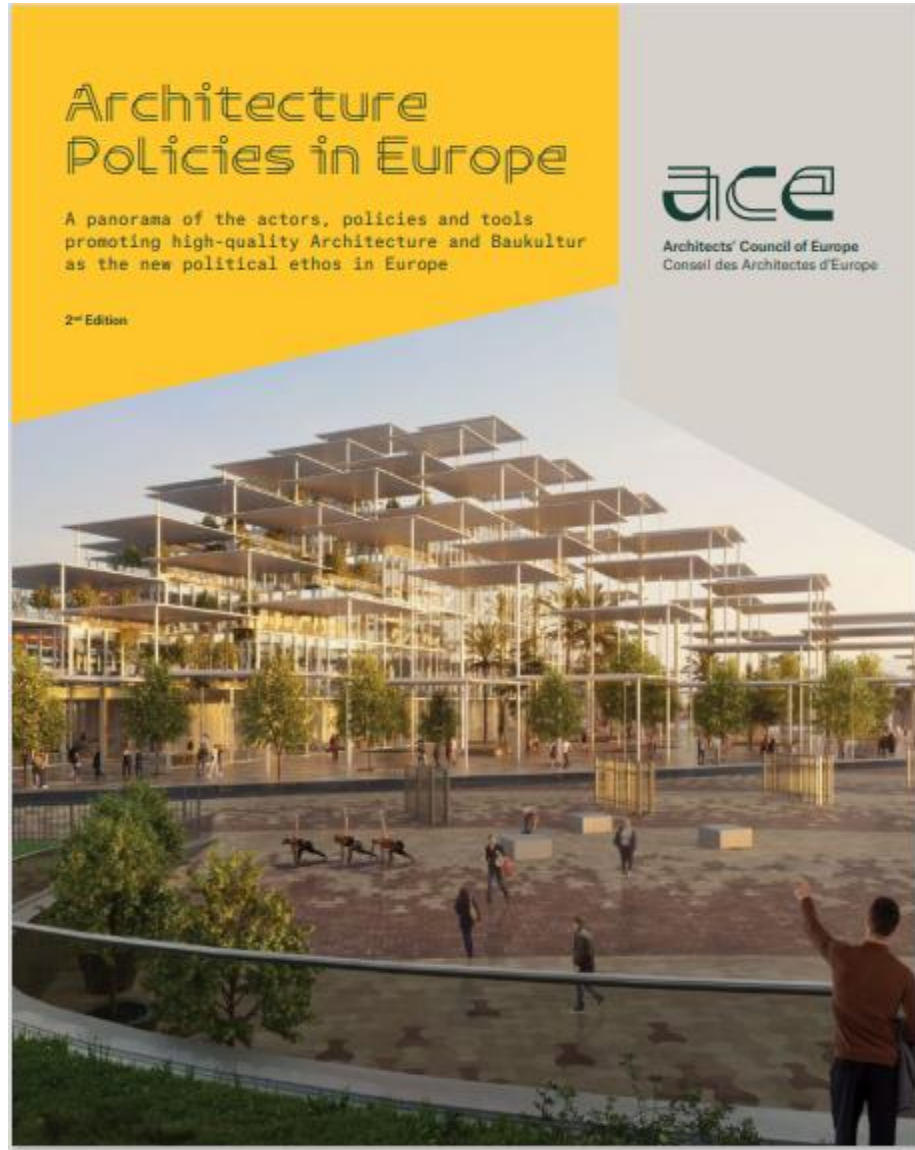
National & Local Progress

Examples of tangible policy changes

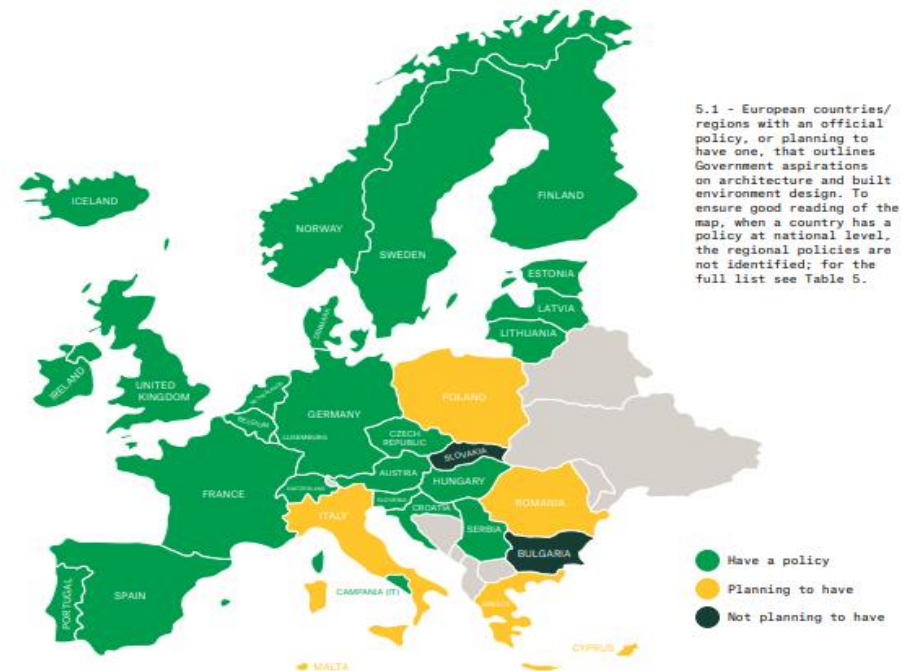
- Germany – recently adopted **Federal guidelines for Baukultur**
- Austria's **Baukultur strategies** work across governance levels.
- France has developed a **national architectural strategy** focusing on climate and public awareness.
- Portugal and Slovenia are building **public platforms for architectural culture**.
- Cities like Barcelona, Ghent and Helsinki are placing **inclusive and participatory design** at the centre of urban development.



Architecture Policies in Europe



If we look at the geographic distribution of the public administrations that have adopted a policy document, plus the ones that are still developing their first documents, it is possible to observe that in the following years almost all the EU will be covered with policy documents outlining government aspirations on architecture and built environment design.



Despite local administration not being part of this research scope, it is worth mentioning that an increasing number of European cities have adopted municipal architectural policies inspired by national / regional policies. With a higher prevalence in the Nordic countries, currently there are approximately 95 cities with a municipal architectural policy document, in some cases adopted over a decade ago (e.g., Bergen, Malmo, Helsinki, Oslo, Stockholm, Vienna) (see Section 5.3).

Peer-learning among Member States, regions and cities



Peer-learning visits programme

1. **Berlin, Germany:** Smart cooperation for urban development, 11-13 March 2024
2. **Caceres, Spain:** Citizen participation and urban redevelopment, 20-22 March 2024
3. **Toulouse, France:** Responsible urban development, 10-12 April 2024
4. **Prague, Czech Republic:** Public space design, 24-26 April 2024
5. **Vienna, Austria:** Gender planning, 15-17 May 2024
6. **Grand Paris Sud, France:** Tactical Urbanism, 5-7 June 2024
7. **Brussels, Belgium:** A Master Architect for inclusive public procurement, 17-19 June 2024
8. **Bordeaux, France:** Frugal architecture and sustainable dwelling renovation, 3-5 July 2024
9. **Oulu, Finland:** Culture taking over a post-industrial building, 11-13 September 2024
10. **Vilnius, Lithuania:** Wooden architecture for a sustainable city, 18-20 September 2024
11. **Malmö, Sweden:** Sustainable regeneration of industrial area, 9-11 October 2024
12. **Gdansk, Poland:** (Urban) Participatory design workshops, 23-25 October 2024





Transforming Gdańsk through community engagement

PEER-LEARNING VISIT REPORT



Creative Europe

PUBLISHED IN JANUARY 2025



Outstanding Challenges

- **Architecture to must be embedded more strongly in other public policies** — especially those related to energy efficiency, climate resilience, health, and social inclusion.
- We must ensure that **quality-based procurement** becomes the norm, not the exception — moving beyond lowest-price criteria.
- We need more **support for architectural education and public awareness** — especially in schools and non-specialist settings.
- More **diversity and accessibility in the profession itself**. A shared culture must also be an **inclusive culture**.



Conclusion

Architecture is a public good.

We build not only for ourselves, but for future generations.

Policies that value quality in the built environment are an expression of care — for our climate, for our societies, and for our democracy.

The 2021 report “**Towards a Shared Culture of Architecture**” sets out a **vision**:

The European built environment and architecture of tomorrow should be of high quality and to the benefit of everyone.

The vision is becoming reality, but continued action is needed.

Let’s turn principles into practice, and policies into places where people thrive.





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Thank you

JUTTA KASTNER
Policy Officer



European Commission

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Unit D.2 – Creative Europe

J-70 02/004

B-1049 Brussels/Belgium

+32 2 299 18 64

jutta-suzanne.kastner@ec.europa.eu

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