

# Urban Maestro.

New governance strategies  
for Urban Design

# Innovative Development Tools

online

9•16•23 June 2020

Workshop #3

Report

- Financial incentives for architecture competitions
- Innovative urban development strategies
- Tools for supervising the place quality across different contexts

**UN HABITAT**  
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

**UCL**

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The URBAN MAESTRO workshops aim to bring together private and public European stakeholders (from national, subnational and local levels) and combine institution-based (top-down) with project-based (bottom-up) analysis. Via peer-to-peer learning methods, these actors of innovative urban design practices will contribute to co-creating recommendations to boost spatial quality in cities across Europe. The workshops will further elaborate the knowledge of Europe-wide typologies of innovative urban design governance and will feed into the global urban debate and stimulate a discussion about the role of architecture and urban design in the achievement of the urban dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals, the European Urban Agenda, and the New Urban Agenda.

After identifying an initial list of the most effective and innovative tools of urban design governance, and describing their common principles, approaches, and challenges, the selected case studies are brought forward into a more focused stage of the investigation through in-depth studies and peer-to-peer learning activities. The workshops intend to develop a common understanding of the governance of urban design, share innovative practices, and create the basis for a European learning and reference framework on the innovative urban spatial policy. It also aims to build a long-term network for supporting the discussion on urban design governance and the drive to urban quality across the continent (and beyond).

Urban Maestro's third workshop took place online on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2020 (the real event in Vienna was cancelled due to the existing travel restrictions in Europe). The workshop focused on the actions that support quality outreach in the formal urban development processes. It analyzed the tools that aim to improve the spatial quality through such practices as quality chambers, land value capture, and which engage most directly with formal regulatory processes, financial needs, financial instruments, and innovative financing tools.

The workshop was divided into 3 sessions allowing each time focusing on a different tool and counter comparing the experiences coming from different contexts:



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9 June

## Session 1. Architectural competitions & Finance

online webinar  
moderator - prof Matthew Carmona, University College London - Bartlett School of Planning; architect and urban planner

9.45	<b>Registration &amp; Welcome</b>
10.00	<b>Introduction</b>
10.10	<b>1. EUROPAN (EU)</b> Didier Rebois – General secretary of European, Architect and Urbanist + Q&A
10.30	<b>2. National subsidies for setting up architecture competitions (CZ)</b> Josef Morkus – Senior Ministerial Counsellor, Head of Conception a Methodical Unit, Ministry of Regional Development + Q&A
10.50	<b>3. Concept tendering procedures (DE)</b> Robert Temel – Architecture and Urban planning researcher, Spokesman of Plattform Baukulturpolitik + Q&A
11.10	<b>Breakout group sessions</b> (accompanied by invited experts) 1. Fuensanta Nieto – co- founder of Nieto Sobejano architects 2. Georg Pendl – President of Architects' Council of Europe, Architect at Pendl Architects 3. Leo van Broeck – Vlaams Bouwmeester, Architect at Bogdan & Van Broeck
11.45	<b>Key takeaways and conclusions</b>
12.00	<b>Private expert group discussion</b> (guest speakers, invited experts, Urban Maestro team members)
12.30	<b>The end of the session</b>

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16 June

## Session 2. Innovative urban development strategies

9.45	<b>Registration &amp; Welcome</b>
10.00	<b>Introduction</b>
10.10	<b>Emerging tools and strategies for public-private collaboration</b> Michael Mehaffy – KTH Royal Institute for Technology Stockholm
10.15	<b>1. Standmakers Fonds (NL)</b> Hans Karssenbergh – founding partner of STIPO, public developer, placemaker, advisor and trainer, co-initiator of The City at Eye Level
10.30	<b>2. Belval developments (LU)</b> Vincent Delwiche - General Manager at Agora s.à.r.l. & Cie
10.45	<b>3. Samoa Ile de Nantes (FR)</b> Marika Frenette - Wigwam consulting and engineering
11.00	<b>Breakout group sessions</b> (accompanied by invited experts) 1. Tony Mulhail - Associate director of RICS 2. Marlana Happach - Warsaw city architect 3. Giovanni Ferrero - City of Torino, Co-City project
11.45	<b>Key takeaways and conclusions</b>
12.00	<b>The end of the session</b>

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23 June

## Session 3. Tools for supervising the place quality

online webinar

9.45	Registration & Welcome
10.00	Introduction
10.10	1. <b>Q-teams (NL)</b> Sandra van Assen & José van Campen – Researchers and Urban planners at TU Delft
10.25	2. <b>Design advisory boards in Austria (AU)</b> Daniel Fügenschuh – Architect, Director of Austrian Chamber of Architects
10.40	3. <b>Design for London (UK)</b> Esther Kurland – Director of Urban Design London
10.55	Breakout group sessions (accompanied by invited experts) • Guido Princis – Riga city architect
11.45	Key takeaways and conclusions
12.00	The end of the session

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## 2. 9th June. Financial incentives for architecture competitions

How to set up architecture competition schemes and how do they contribute to higher-quality living environment?

Moderated by: Matthew Carmona (UCL)

### 2.1. European (EU) / Didier Rebois

Didier Rebois, an architect and urbanist, the general secretary of European, presented the European's example (non-profit organization) – a European open competition for urban-architectural projects, oriented to the young professionals under 40 years old, often followed by the implementation of the projects (at least 30 percent of projects lead to realization). It is organized in each country at national level, always identifying at least two possible sites for projects. European offers innovative and strategic responses to local urban issues and feeds in into a debate on the European scale.

Each European session costs around 5-6 million euros, where 95 percent of funding is offered by national and local levels (80 percent from multiple partners, 15 percent from subsidies) and 5 percent come from sale of catalogues, cities hosting European forums, etc. Meanwhile, each country is flexible to organise the competition and its ambitions in respect to their own budget, the main organization has a fixed team.

#### WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC MODEL OF EUROSPAN?

IN THE FINANCING OF A SESSION YOU MUST INTEGRATE  
– **THE OWN COMPETITION FINANCING** TO ORGANIZE THE COMPETITION  
– AND WHEN THE FINANCING OF PROCESS PROJECTS EXISTS WHERE EUROSPAN CONTINUES TO PLAY A ROLE DURING AN INTERMEDIATE PHASE  
**IMPLEMENTATION**  
THE FIRST PART FINANCING THE COMPETITIONS IS VERY CLEARLY DEFINED, IT IS THE SAME PRINCIPLE FOR EVERYONE  
THE SECOND IS MORE COMPLEX BECAUSE THE ADAPTATION TO THE COUNTRY, TO THE LOCAL CONTEXT IS VERY VARIABLE FROM A COUNTRY TO THE OTHER

##### 1 THE COMPETITION PART

EUROSPAN COSTS BETWEEN 5 AND 6 MILLION EUROS PER SESSION ALL FINANCING INTEGRATED

1- **95% OF THIS MONEY COMES FROM NATIONAL (STATE) AND LOCAL LEVELS (CITY - REGION)**

2- **LESS THAN 5% COMES FROM THE SALE OF CATALOGS, CITIES HOSTING EUROPEAN FORUMS, ETC..**

3- **NOTHING COMES FROM EUROPEAN BODIES OR LEVELS**

##### ON THE 95% NATIONAL OR LOCAL

1- **80% COMES FROM PARTNER SITES BUT A SITE IS MOST OF THE TIME OF MULTIPLE PARTNERS**

2- **15% OF PUBLIC SUBSIDIES APPFROM NATIOANAL MINISTRIES**

EUROSPAN OPERATES BON A LARGE MAJORITY OF LOCAL PUBLIC FINANCING ON THE PRINCIPLE "EACH CITY (GROUP OF ACTORS) PARTICIPATES"

BUT THE AMOUNT IS VARIABLE FROM ONE COUNTRY TO THE OTHER. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NATIONAL ECONOMY OF course BUT ALSO THE FINANCING SHARE THAT THE NATIONAL STRUCTURE RECEIVES

## 2.2. National subsidies for setting up architecture competitions (CZ) / Josef Morkus

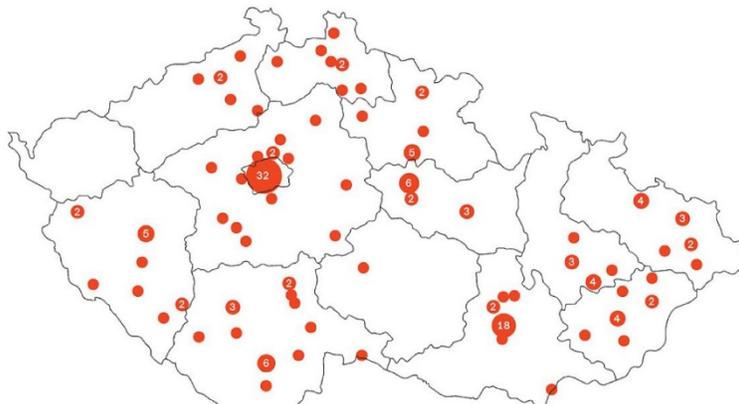
Josef Morkus, the Senior Ministerial Counsellor and Head of Conception a Methodical Unit at the Ministry of Regional Development introduced the Czech Republic's national approach to organizing architectural and urban competitions in the country. These processes aid to obtain the project and offers easier follow up of public tender, and although it is not obligatory, it is regulated by Public Procurement Act+ internal rules of Czech Chamber of Architects. Following the public competitions has multiple benefits, among those – a possibility to put the quality criteria forward, more transparency and cooperation. The organization of it costs around 2-2.5 percent of the total investment costs, whereas the average value of awards is 10,000-20,000 euros. Majority of the competitions focus on public streets and squares projects and planning studies.

The Architecture and Building Culture Policy that was implemented in Czech Republic in 2015 defines the need of funding from public budgets that resulted in shaping the national subsidy programme for 2019-2023. In 2019, the Ministry of Regional Development received applications for 8 projects from different municipalities of which 5 succeeded to get the financial support. The next call for submissions is planned for 2021.

The benefits of national subsidies for organising competitions require great deal of investment to the administration of the processes, which might reduce the enthusiasm of applying it to smaller projects, but has a great impact on improving the quality of the developments, is evidence-based, and promotes cooperation among the professionals. Its success depends a lot on the timing of it, the difficulty of the procedure, further support of the projects, and especially the local leadership.



### Realized Projects Based on Competitions



Source of picture: Tomáš Zdvihal, CBA, ERA 2/2020, <https://www.era21.cz/cs/clanky/clanky/2020-05-05-50-let-soutezi-v-cr/>

It is important to set up the soft tools for the dissemination of the process and projects, therefore multiple proactive tools were set up:

- Awards (project based on competition, co-operation of municipalities and architects, urban projects)
- Standards for public infrastructure accessibility

In addition, direct assistance tools are applied as programme for competitions for preparing the spatial plans.

### **2.3. Concept tendering procedures (DE) / Robert Temel**

Robert Temel, Architecture and Urban planning researcher, Spokesman of Plattform Baukulturpolitik, Member of the Beirat für Baukultur in the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Co-founder and chairman of the supervisory board of WoGen Wohnprojekte-Genossenschaft e.Gen, presented the concept tendering procedure in Germany that is an alternative to the standard model for selling land in cities (based on bidding) that focuses on the quality of the new developments proposed. Concept tendering procedures refer to a fixed land price and, therefore, results in lower revenues, but has long-term benefits of such procedures (affordable housing, higher quality buildings).

Furthermore, certain concept tendering procedures are divided into two sections; the selection procedure and the options phase in which the architectural, legal and financial conditions are clarified. Only once both sides have agreed upon this process, the final change of ownership would take place. Additionally, several concept tendering procedures also make use of a participant application phase prior to the actual selection or a simplified first procedure stage in order to reduce the number of projects that must be compare

There are certain challenges that apply to the use of concept tendering procedures as:

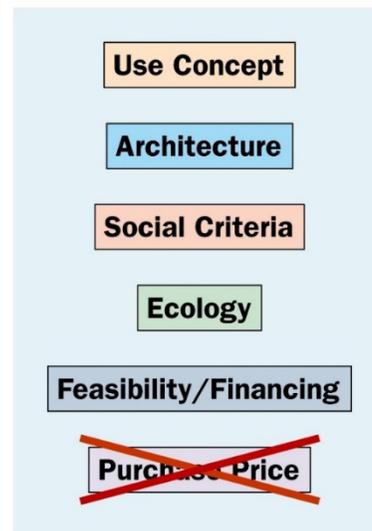
- The political support in the city government
- The acceptance in the city administration (urban planning/housing vs. property management)
- Legal difficulties (state aid law, municipal law, public procurement law)
- Planning issues (quality assurance, possibilities for cooperation)

The financial incentive of the concept tendering procedure is the purchase price of the land, which is below full market value hence it allows for the higher quality of the developments (architecture, programme, density, citizen participation, etc.). It nevertheless requires new informal tools for quality assurance.

Robert Temel shared a few key lessons learned from the realized projects as:

- Higher urban development and architectural qualities through fixed land price and quality criteria
- Departure from the price allows affordable living
- Competition for concepts makes contribution to quality
- Concept tendering allows broader involvement, participation
- Procedures allow creativity and innovation to be made fruitful
- Approach is transferable (own land necessary)

### Concept criteria



### Main takeaways

- Concept tendering procedures are much more suitable for developments on public land.
- Having a group of qualified multidisciplinary experts in the municipalities makes a part of the success of the procedure that assures that high quality standards are followed.
- The competition briefs must be short and prescriptive in order to avoid generic solutions.
- The approach can be adapted in other cities and contexts if they follow the guidelines of the procedure.
- Concept tendering can be helpful when solving the issue of affordable housing.

### 3. 16th June. Innovative urban development strategies

How to manage public and private interests and assure positive long-term results?

Moderated by: Frédéric Saliez (UN-Habitat)

#### 3.1. Emerging tools and strategies for public-private collaboration / Michael W. Mehaffy

Michael W. Mehaffy, Ph. D., project leader at the Centre for the Future of Places, KTH Royal Institute for Technology Stockholm, and president of Structura Naturalis Inc. Consultancy, talked about the emerging tools and strategies for public-private collaboration. He presented a list of current mechanisms as PPPs, land value capture, tax funding mechanisms, public sector incentives, regulatory streamlining, and consensus planning. Often these tools are used in combination using a “toolkit” approach as different contexts present different goals and constraints.



**MECHANISMS**

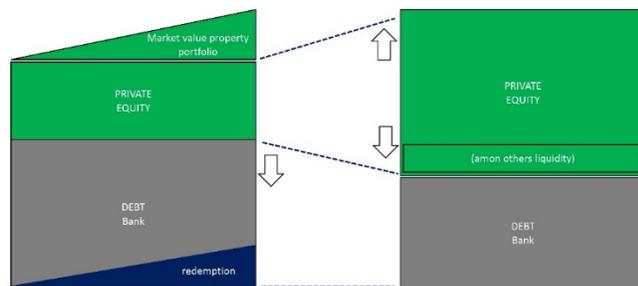
- *Public-private partnership (PPP)*
- *Land value capture (e.g. tax-increment finance)*
- *Other tax funding mechanisms (e.g. tax credits, “Georgist” policies rewarding creativity and penalizing resource and land consumption)*
- *Public sector incentives (grants, feebates, system development charge offsets, etc.)*
- *Regulatory streamlining, e.g. form-based codes, “plug and play” models*
- *Consensus planning, e.g. charrettes, “QUIMBY” etc.*

Michael W. Mehaffy speaking at a microphone in a video inset.

### 3.2. Stadmakers Fonds, Club Rhijnhuizen (NL) / Hans Karssenber

Hans Karssenber, founding partner of STIPO, public developer, place maker, advisor and trainer, co-initiator of The City at Eye Level, introduced the practice of Stadmakers Fonds that acts as a matchmaker between the citymakers (re:Kreators, Placemaking Europe) and investors. On one hand, we see a lot of social and financial innovation, but it lacks financial infrastructure. The work of Stadmakers Fonds is strongly inspired by Joost Beunderman's work on "Compendium for the civic economy". After presenting the first approaches of Stadmakers Fonds in Utrecht, Hans stated that this type of financing mechanism is needed throughout the Netherlands in order to support the local economy of projects link to place making, and could be eventually upscaled to European level as many similar initiatives already exist but lack a better define strategy in order to grow and develop in the long-term.

#### STADMÄKERS FONDS



#### Main takeaways

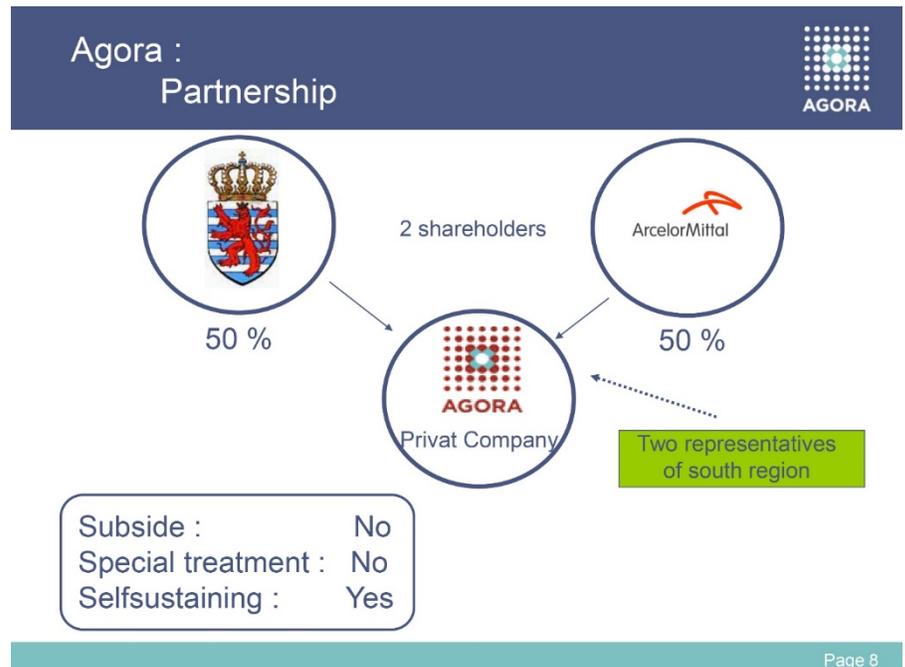
- SMF operates as a lender in the market economy for land and real estate development. They provide loans for the development of projects with a social dimension. The receivers of the loans would normally not be able to access loans from more traditional banks because outside the categories of projects that are financed or being considered too risky. Sometimes an equity investment is made as well by the umbrella organization in order to make the loan viable;
- It works with the logic of a social enterprise - rates are kept minimum under the constraint to cover management costs and make the fund financially sustainable. Extra gains are re-invested in the fund to maximize the financing opportunities;
- Both commercially led projects and more community-oriented projects can be financed by SMF. There may be a tension between different objectives in the same project, sometimes a compromise needs to be made;

- It appears to be a model designed for the specific context of Utrecht. Replicability and scaling appear to need a European-wide infrastructure and kick-start funding.

### 3.3. Belval developments (LU) / Vincent Delwiche

Vincent Delwiche, General Manager at Agora s.à r.l. & Cie, presented the Belval urban development in Luxembourg that turned a brownfield to a district of 18,000 inhabitants. The success of this project lies within a unified vision for the site, strong leadership of the public authorities, positive context, and good economic model for the site. Vincent explained that one of the specific influential features of Luxembourg country is that there is no land for sale and that the current politics brought forward the economy and innovation as a driving force to deal with the crisis and unemployment.

After 3 years of the Belval brownfield study with the economic interest group and assuring to set up a sustainable economic model. The site is half occupied by the office and commercial activities, half by housing, of which about 3300 inhabitants and about 250 companies, shops, and public institutions are already on the site.



## Main takeaways

- We are used to see public-private redevelopments as some rapid solution to solving certain urban areas, while in the reality; it is a long-term engagement that might take up to 20 years or more. Therefore, there might be tensions in the debate on the sustainability (social, economic...). How robust are these partnerships then in the times of economic crisis or the change of political ideas? What about the continuity of the quality of the vision? How to guarantee long-term goals?
- The involvement of the 'third group', the inhabitants, and the responsibility of local authorities towards them is also an essential element not to be forgotten in the public-private partnerships.

### 3.4. Samoa île de Nantes (FR) / Marika Frenette

Marika Frenette, Founder of Wigwam Consulting and Engineering and vice-president of Novabuild that groups over 400 industries and developers in the region of Loire, started her presentation by explaining the geographical and political situation of Nantes in order to better shape the context and challenges of Île de Nantes. She noticed that for robust planning, it is important to have the same organization that would follow up the development from the ideas to realization. Samoa Île de Nantes has a unique organizational structure, merging public and private interests, and gathering a variety of stakeholders in the decision-making environment.



Marika presented 4 lessons/tools learned from the experience of working with Samoa projects:

1. Quartier de la Création – deals with economical challenge and giving new identity to the city
2. Prairies aux Ducs (Plinth) – reinvents the ground floor design and economy of the project
3. Ilink – conciergerie lab – suggest alternative models of governance that are more oriented to the inhabitants
4. Zelige – Les Ruches co-housing – first cooperative housing in the area incorporating the design ideas of the inhabitants

She concluded by stating that the key ingredients for success are being aware of the economical challenge, transferability, impact on the quality and citizen experience and impact on the ecosystem of the professionals. One of the key risks identified is having a strong actor in the field that overtakes the control of the processes and may divert it to top-down solutions.

### **Main takeaways**

- Strong political vision for setting the level of ambition that both public and private operations will need to reach. For example, create economic value around creation and art;
- Important to implement a mix of informal (soft) and formal (hard) design governance tools: in this case, the 'master plan' is quite strict and offers a common ground for all the operations that are taking place throughout the island but allows enough space for a diversity of small size experiences, more experimental by nature, involving social economy and other experimental economic models, participation, co-design or co-housing, experimental usages of ground floor;
- Co-design and co-creation as important tools, which can have a real impact on the quality of places and of the project delivered (under the condition that it is co-design and not consultation). When implemented since the beginning, these tools can enable building a long-term vision, since they create cohesion and support around the projects.

## 4. 23rd June. Tools for supervising the place quality across different contexts

How to manage public and private interests and assure positive long-term results?

Moderated by: Kristiaan Borret (BMA)

### 4.1. Q-teams (NL) / Sandra van Assen & José van Campen

Sandra van Assen & José van Campen, Researchers and Urban planners at TU Delft, introduced the model of the Q-teams, active in the Netherlands. Q-teams are multidisciplinary and advise on the matters of spatial quality in spatial assignments. They serve public interest and aim to enrich projects, policies, and culture. They do so by reviewing the quality of design. There is no central organization and, therefore, no 2 Q-teams are the same. The scope of their work varies depending on the complexity of the issues (object-based, area-based, integrative), they can be active on variety of scales. Its impact relates to the whole governance context and planning system. In the Netherlands, the scope of spatial planning is broadening – they will have New Environment and Planning Act (expected by 2020). Likewise, the scope of spatial quality is broadening, starting with the architectural quality and developing into spatial quality, it is now rather comprised of spatial and environment quality. Dutch design governance is not limited with the built environment, but also non-built environment. Q-teams acts as balancing instrument between private and public interests, between planning and design, between expertise and participation, and between formal and informal tools.



#### Q-teams:

- Widespread
- Spatial quality dialogue
- Collaboration & negotiation
- 139 q-teams (+ 355 aesthetic control committees)

No 2 q-teams are the same

**139 Q-teams**

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Sandra and José chose to present 3 examples of Q-teams:

1. Statutory, municipal Q-teams (Commissie Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Apeldoorn)
2. Non-statutory, regional Q-teams (Kwaliteitsteam Hoeksche Waard)
3. Less-statutory, national Q-teams (Kwaliteitsteam Ruimte voor de Rivier)

The challenges of understanding the real impact of Q-teams consist of:

- No consistent application, nor a consistent system
- Black box
- Factors for success and failure are unclear
- No evidence of impact
- 

### **Main takeaways**

- Involvement of the public: so much of the today's developments are driven by public opinion: how to engage the public opinion in the processes of design review panels?
- Importance of the political mandate for quality panels in order to set up the vision;
- Professional expertise vs public consultation in design review panels;
- The idea of public value is becoming so broad that the role of expert inputs through Q-teams and similar mechanisms is vital;
- Some mechanisms exist within quality panels that can engage the public (i.e. through educational role);
- The potential of positive impact of these practices seems to be very consistent.

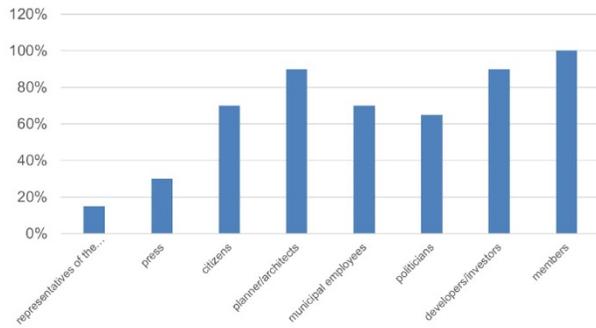
### **4.2. Design advisory boards in Austria (AU) / Daniel Fügenschuh**

Daniel Fügenschuh, an architect, director of Austrian Chamber of Architects, member of design advisory boards in Wels (AU) and Munich (DE), talked about the tradition and culture of design advisory boards in Austria. The average duration of the design advisory board membership is 5 years, each year there is an average of 40 projects processed in a board. Only around 20 percent of these boards are open to the public, and only 12 percent of respondents state that the public is informed about the decisions taken on the board. The other issue of the design advisory boards is that they do not manage to politically bind their decisions.

**Individuals participating in meetings:  
public meetings**

Q13: Who usually takes part in meetings of the board?

GG: respondents of public boards; n=20



**4.3. Design for London (UK) / Esther Kurland**

Esther Kurland, the director of Urban Design London, started her presentation with a short overview of the design governance history in the UK, starting with Royal Fine Arts Commission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and GLC in London (working in 33 local authorities). Esther put the accents on the important elements of the design governments that relate to the design review boards, notably informing policy, providing training and project advice, supporting the network.

Design Governance is made up of.....



The support of the London policies and national policies, design guidance and planning system had a massive influence on the take up of the design review board models by requiring them for certain design processes. Now, there are 31 active panels in London, offering paid expert service, and around 75 percent of the panel managers think that the advice given has improved the schemes. The panel advice is non-binding, it is part of the planning process and needs to be taken in consideration alongside all the other inputs to that system, which includes community engagement.

### **Main takeaways**

1. Design review is a tool that can work in a very effective way shifting the view of a developer and offering him and the local authority other possibilities that they couldn't envisage before hearing from the panel;
2. Nonetheless, sometimes design review panels are not able to influence developers and its design teams as they are not open and willing to change its schemes as well as buy-in local authorities to listen to the opinion of the panel;
3. Design review panels are a flexible and loose structure, in terms of composition and operating rules, which is useful to assure the right expertise for each type of development;
4. Design review is only a tool in a wider design governance landscape and does not work in isolation;
5. Although most of the times the design review has a positive impact on the quality of developments, more research is needed to better understand its real impact extent and what type of key ingredients are necessary to ensure that these processes are fruitful.

There is a claim that review teams have a diversity of professional expertise, and this is what enables them to be critical and to the point, and that anecdotally 8/10 times they positively influence the outcome. However, the lack of "specific ingredients for success" raised many questions from people coming from other countries on the extent to which this is a powerful tool for success or a somewhat weaker hybrid of a more formally organized review process.

When it comes to financial aspects, it seems that the review process can question underlying assumptions about profitability and suggest a dramatic shift in the quality to be delivered, but in principle this critical or even "subversive" advice might be ultimately ignored.

## 5. Session Conclusions and Key messages

### **Competitions are a widely used tool for promote urban and architectural quality**

Compared to standard bidding, architectural and urban competitions can offer more transparency in the selection process, and a greater emphasis on quality criteria as well as the means to compare alternative solutions to a given brief. Competitions are used primarily to select a designer for projects and for gathering different creative ideas for significant projects, sites or design challenges. They can also be used to:

1. identify new design talent, in a market that tends to favour tried and tested teams
2. stimulate a public debate on sites and projects
3. garner involvement in helping to define particular projects or programmes
4. help build a culture of good design – locally, nationally or internationally

There are diverse practices relating to the use of design competitions across Europe. In some countries (e.g. Austria, Denmark or Switzerland), design competitions are widely used for bigger building projects commissioned by governmental bodies (national, regional or local) for public tenders and projects. In others, competitions are rarely used (e.g. UK), partly because they are associated with costs overruns. Their status also varies across countries and in some there is a legal obligation to host them (in France design competitions are mandatory for all new public buildings above a defined threshold value).

### **Design governance tools carry a cost**

But all design governance tools carry a short-term cost in their use, and design competitions illustrate this well. Some professional associations and practitioners, for example, complain that teams are not properly compensated for entering architectural competitions which lead to an excessive use of resources. They call for stricter guidelines in the rules and conditions for architectural competitions, preferably at the EU level. Two-phased competitions (1<sup>st</sup> phase widely open but requiring minimal investment, 2<sup>nd</sup> phase by invitation to a limited number of candidates) are seen by many as striking a fair balance between the need to offer opportunities to emerging talent and for avoiding an unproductive waste of resources.

Competitions also carry a significant cost for their promoters (in the Czech Republic seen as 2-2.5% of development costs), perhaps explaining the divergence in their use across different countries. In Europe, competitions are typically financed by public funds (and by the free or below market rates of entrants). There seems not to be a mechanism in place for extracting these costs from the development value. By contrast, in Central Sydney (Australia), zoning bonuses are offered to developers who engage in a design competition process.

Instead, in order to promote their use, two forms of initiatives have been taken by cities, regions and countries:

1. Offering direct subsidies for the costs of competitions (Czech Republic)
2. Providing indirect subsidies through i) provision of technical assistance for preparing the competition brief, selecting eligible candidates and juries, provision of legal or administrative assistance, and conducting deliberations (e.g. BMA or Cellule Archi); ii) drafting guidelines for a competition's organisers; iii) promoting a specific competition format (e.g. EUROPAN, case#39, Concept Tendering case#10)

### **Competing for land and investment**

Concept tendering is also a form of competition, but focusses on the overall site development, rather than the design of projects. By transferring public land at a discount price, it provides an explicit financial incentive for the private developer to deliver concepts with specific social attributes. Similar to design competitions, this formal mechanism can be used to encourage good design through factoring design in as a 'quality' factor to be considered when evaluating 'concepts'. It does not always follow, however, that this is the case as local priorities vary and design quality is not always prioritised.

City makers funds (e.g. Stadmakers Fonds) are a formal financing tool that tend to be more focused on quality given that place-based innovation is written into their objectives. Such funds act as matchmakers between socially motivated developers and investors. Such initiatives are still rare in Europe and tend to be associated with places that already have a tradition of social enterprises / development. Whilst many questions remain about the replicability of such initiatives in other contexts and scales, and their financial viability in different economic contexts, they seem to be effective at using financial incentives to deliver design quality.

### **Softer models in a crisis**

Emergency situations (such as the Covid-19 global pandemic) can lead to innovation in the governance approaches and to new links and networks among

different actors (citizens, public administrations, etc.). When facing crisis, agility and adaptiveness are great assets which favours the use of soft powers. The widespread use of tactical urbanism across Europe has proved to be very efficient and more responsive to short-term and changing needs. Co-creation processes also fall into this category and are often more effective than top-down models in meeting immediate local needs and opportunities. They facilitate experimentation and enable the building of long-term vision in a more collaborative and cohesive manner.

### **Strong leadership of public authorities**

Complex urban areas within and around cities, involving large brownfield sites and obsolete industrial spaces, call for strong urban design leadership amongst public authorities. Some cities have established dedicated urban regeneration agencies with a strong vision for setting the level of ambition that both public and private operations will need to reach. These agencies tend to have autonomy to manage a predefined delimited area, with their own set of instruments and financial resources to push for development (e.g. establishing public private partnerships, control over public land and planning powers).

Cooperative planning approaches in defining development concepts and strategies of intervention will enable and mobilize local stakeholders, which in turn inform the specific characteristics of building and urban proposals fostering higher quality outcomes. In these contexts, conventional planning tools need to be supplemented by informal processes of dialogue and negotiation, involving property owners, different institutional actors and residents to reach compromises about future developments.

Co-design and co-creation may also be important tools, they can unlock available expertise and financial resources which can have a real impact on the quality of places and of the projects delivered. When implemented early on, these approaches can encourage a long-term vision, helping to create cohesion and support around the projects.

### **Design review is effective but faces challenges**

By different names, design review is widely adopted and considered effective at delivering better design outcomes across Europe. In this position increasingly panels have moved away from a focus on aesthetic considerations to a broader concern with delivering wider urbanistic benefits (place value). When it operates well, design review acts as a means to challenge and shift thinking, both of developers and of public authorities. This requires expertise in the financial aspects

of schemes, with review process questioning the underlying assumptions about profitability. To operate effectively, the process needs a strong political mandate to give panels legitimacy. But as a mechanism that directs professional expertise towards the peer review of development projects, some worry that the failure to engage the public is problematic and raises issues around the differences and relative legitimacy of professional versus lay opinions on design.

Design review is ultimately just one tool in a wider design governance toolbox, and works best when not operating in isolation. Like all tools examined by Urban Maestro, design review works most effectively when part of a larger system that mobilizes a range of informal (soft) and formal (hard) design governance tools to address urban challenges. More research is required to examine how design review varies between contexts, to understand the key components of success and how effective it is as both a formal and informal tool.

### **Diversifying stakeholder involvement can improve inclusion**

There is potential for innovation in securing a greater involvement of stakeholders, particular community stakeholders, across different informal tools. In relation to design competitions, for example, how competition briefs are defined, the nature of juries and their deliberations, how discussions and results are disseminated, and whether the general public can vote or otherwise express an opinion, all provide means to democratize the process. As with design review, this raises issues about the value of different forms of knowledge – professional versus lay – and the weight that should be attached to them.

Related to this are questions of transparency and equal opportunities in the conduct of all design governance processes, both as regards the ability to take part, to be selected (e.g. do friends choose friends), and to engage in the process.