

EXHIBITION OF EUROPEAN RESULTS OF EUROPAN 7

Suburban challenge, urban intensity and housing diversity

THEME

The session of **Europan 7** – a European architectural competition on an urban scale followed by project implementations – was launched on January 13, 2003, in **19 European countries** on the theme

"sub-urban challenge, urban intensity and housing diversity"

All towns are faced with the phenomenon of urban sprawl, splitting, and fragmentation. The increasing use of the car, the development of out-of-town shopping centres, the increase in the number of leisure complexes, and the extension of business/industrial parks, seem to be leading inexorably to a "dispersed town" urban model. There is, visibly, a new will to act in these contemporary areas, in order to reorganise them by reviving the traditional planning ethos of European towns, and by associating this with the challenges of urban sustainability.

The means to fulfil this need for the progressive transformation of the contemporary town are provided by the existence of land development opportunities and the appearance of a desire for spatial innovation that has been generated by the evolution of lifestyles. Individual autonomy is increasing, as is the diversity of social interactions within the same family, professional mobility, and the speed of communications; all of which lead to a more spread out town. On the other hand, there is a strong demand for a neighbourhood social life which needs to be rebuilt on new foundations. Architects responsible for transforming the

dispersed town must ask themselves how they can give it a new set of values.

Europan 7 proposed to tackle this issue at the point of the interface between the urban planning level and the architectural level.

How can the dispersed town be transformed to a sustainable town with its foundations in the new social and cultural demands that are currently emerging? How can the creation of new residential districts, with innovative typologies and complex programme briefs, be fashioned into a strategic urban tool?

Housing diversity

The issue for EUROSPAN 7 is to initiate new thinking on research into typological innovation. How can appropriate housing perspectives be offered to town dwellers with myriad cultural and social profiles?

Urban intensity

In today's contemporary town, how can one give housing districts a new dynamism, and favour the spatial intensification of the social life which can take place within them.

Sustainable process

How can new logics of urban assemblies be conceived, that are adapted to the fragmented, heterogeneous territory of the contemporary town? How can a landscape be created that, while enabling mobility, will offer elements of urban coherence and environmental quality?

European, European architectural federation of national organisations, each of which organise and manage an architectural competition followed by implementations, enabled **2,031 teams** (out of **3,500 registrations**) of **young architects and professionals in related fields, under 40 years old and from Europe**, to work on one or two of the **68 proposed urban sites** from a territorial and architectural perspective.

Fifteen juries representing the **19 participating countries** (Austria and Hungary, Belgium, Croatia, Finland and Latvia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Estonia, Switzerland and the Czech Republic) chose the **57 winners, 62 runners-up** and the **67 teams with honorable mention** during the seventh session.

European 7 is not only a competition of ideas. The 68 towns that proposed sites for the competition have undertaken to follow up the projects with **urban and implementation studies**.

Of the **119 winning teams**, **41 %** entered the competition for sites in a country other than their own, i.e. **an average of three to four foreign winners per country**. Among the foreign winning teams, 11 are based in Spain, six in Germany, five in the Netherlands, five in Italy and four in France.

The 7th session was characterised by the **international make up of the teams** as **27,5 %** of them included members of different nationality.

The national juries were composed of nine members: clients, municipal authorities, the culture officials, and researchers, most of them architects. At least three of the nine jury-members were from a country other than the one whose proposals they had to assess.

They worked over **two sessions**. A first selection of some 20% of the projects focused on the urban concept of the proposals and their relation to the pre-set theme of the competition, and a final selection enabled to determine the **186 winning projects and honorable mentions**.

A Towns and Juries Forum, an internal European event which brought together site representatives and of national jury members in **Graz (Austria)** from November 14 to 16 2004, carried out a comparative analysis of the **401 preselected projects** grouped around the **6 sub-themes** of the session (**Considering residential fragments; articulating new polarities; revitalising over-planned housing developments; exploring the urbanised edges; dealing with infrastructure; converting urban voids**).

The European Forum of Ideas and Results in Athens (Greece), the 6, 7 and 8 May 2004, brought together young European architects, the cities and the organisers around an **exhibition of the prize-winning entries**. This European event featured the meeting of young prize-winning architects with the representatives of the 68 sites in workshops, thematic debates led by international experts and lectures about the prize-winning projects and implementations from previous sessions.

CREDITS

This exhibition was made in the context of the seventh session of Europan

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