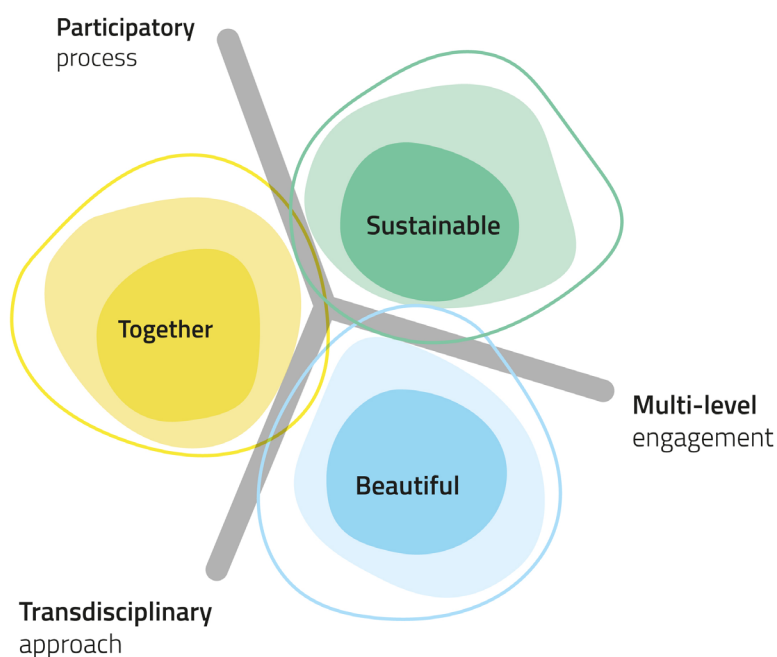


# ACCESSIBILITY IN THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS




August 2023

## 1 THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS



The **New European Bauhaus** (NEB) initiative is an enabler for the green transition of Europeans to imagine and build together a sustainable and inclusive future that is beautiful for our eyes, minds, and souls. It aims at transforming different sectors of the economy, especially the built environment, so that they contribute to our climate goals and to an improvement of the quality of life of all citizens. In addition to creating a platform for experimentation and connection, the initiative supports positive change also by providing access to EU funding for beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive projects.

The New European Bauhaus gives space for creation and experimentation founded on:

-  **sustainability**, from climate goals to circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity
-  **aesthetics**, quality of experience and style beyond functionality
-  **inclusion**, from valuing diversity to securing accessibility and affordability.

Working principles of the New European Bauhaus:

- **Participatory process:** involve civil society or representatives of social groups ('the stakeholders') within a highly participatory framework. When persons with disabilities play a central part in the design, the result is more likely to be accessible and enjoyable for everyone.
- **Multi-level engagement:** implement an effective exchange both horizontally (with peers) and vertically (with others operating on a different scale). Effective multi-level collaboration should produce transferable and scalable solutions to disseminate knowledge in a cross-sectoral manner and activate cross-border experimentation with new ideas.
- **Transdisciplinary approach:** bring together knowledge from different fields and practitioners from various fields. They work on solutions that affect different aspects of a project – social, economic, cultural, artistic, architectural, ecological etc. Transdisciplinary ways of working also encourage solutions that can be applied in a variety of disciplines and fields and are not limited to one area only.

The **New European Bauhaus Compass** elaborates the values and working principles of the initiative, including the concept of accessibility.

### **New European Bauhaus in action – examples of projects that foster accessibility**



Aalborg East (Denmark) was an isolated and deprived residential area in Denmark's fourth-largest city. A strategic masterplan turned the area from isolated to inclusive. More than 2,000 affordable homes were included in a major urban transformation project, where homes were renovated, new shops were added, private homes were built and a number of social initiatives were adopted. The unique thing was that the residents have sat at the table as urban planners. No homes have been demolished, no residents have been displaced. Previously, none of the homes were accessible, whereas now up to 60% have been converted into accessible homes.

The Multisensory Museum (Netherlands) is a project at the interface of research and architecture. The project socially innovates architecture processes by developing a co-design method that engages persons with disabilities and architects together in a creative endeavour. The result is an enticing space that draws the museum visitor in through all the senses (sound, touch, smell, vision, motion), giving an architectural expression to inclusion and dialogue, providing a new way of experiencing a museum visit.



## 2 ACCESSIBILITY

Around 1 in 5 Europeans have disabilities. Accessibility is a precondition for the enjoyment of rights and the full participation of persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Accessibility is therefore an essential component of inclusion. It should preferably be achieved through a design for all approach.

Accessibility relates to the built and digital environments, products, services and design processes.

Accessibility must be assessed against a set of criteria or standards.

In addition to legislation on the accessibility of certain products and services, in the EU there are accessibility standards for ICT and for the built environment.

A city is accessible when persons with disabilities can participate in the community like other people. For instance:

- get information;
- use buses, trams and metros;
- enjoy parks and playgrounds: get in and around buildings like the school, library, sports hall.

## 3 SPECIAL MENTION FOR THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS IN THE ACCESS CITY AWARD

Cities play a central role in reimagining sustainable living and achieving climate neutrality by making change happen and involving citizens in the transformation process.

Hence, the Access City Award 2024 will reward a city whose work on accessibility is aligned with the values and principles of the New European Bauhaus.

