

The Question of Housing in the scope of NEB goes South (NEBgS)

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In the 20th century, technology gained world scale and accelerated our time. We believed that we were freeing ourselves from geographical, corporeal, and temporal ties. However, beyond all the climatic changes that we were devaluing, the covid-19 pandemic made our human and vulnerable side more evident. It became clear that we should move towards the 21st century, recognizing the paradigm shift that leads to a new urban condition as NEB strives to inspire.

Financing pressure cannot admit easy (and bad) solutions. Southern European countries face common climatic and social threats. If they strengthen their ability to cope, they can develop together social and nature-based solutions, sustainable while still accessible, affordable, inclusive, and aesthetically qualified. This challenged 6 southern architecture schools to create NEBgS. Under the umbrella of education several co-design thematic events took place in 2021. One of them was The Question of Housing, coordinated by Porto School.

Considering that cities and urban territories are a priority issue, the discussions recognized that housing is a central question for our common future. The main challenges were listed: the right to adequate housing intertwined with the different fabrics as an essential condition for reducing social inequalities and moving forward; design solutions as key strategy to ensure resilient and adequate buildings; the critical dimensions of a new paradigm that imposes the long life of the building stock while ensuring social integration, comfort, and energy efficiency; the articulation between intervention measures in the built heritage and the need to revisit, recycle, reuse, retrofit, are key words at the present; and learning and closing the gap between academic research and the institutional framework is crucial.

The QoH demands, as before, an answer that goes further the individual action and depends on our cooperation in the construction of holistic solutions for an inclusive and sustainable tomorrow.

