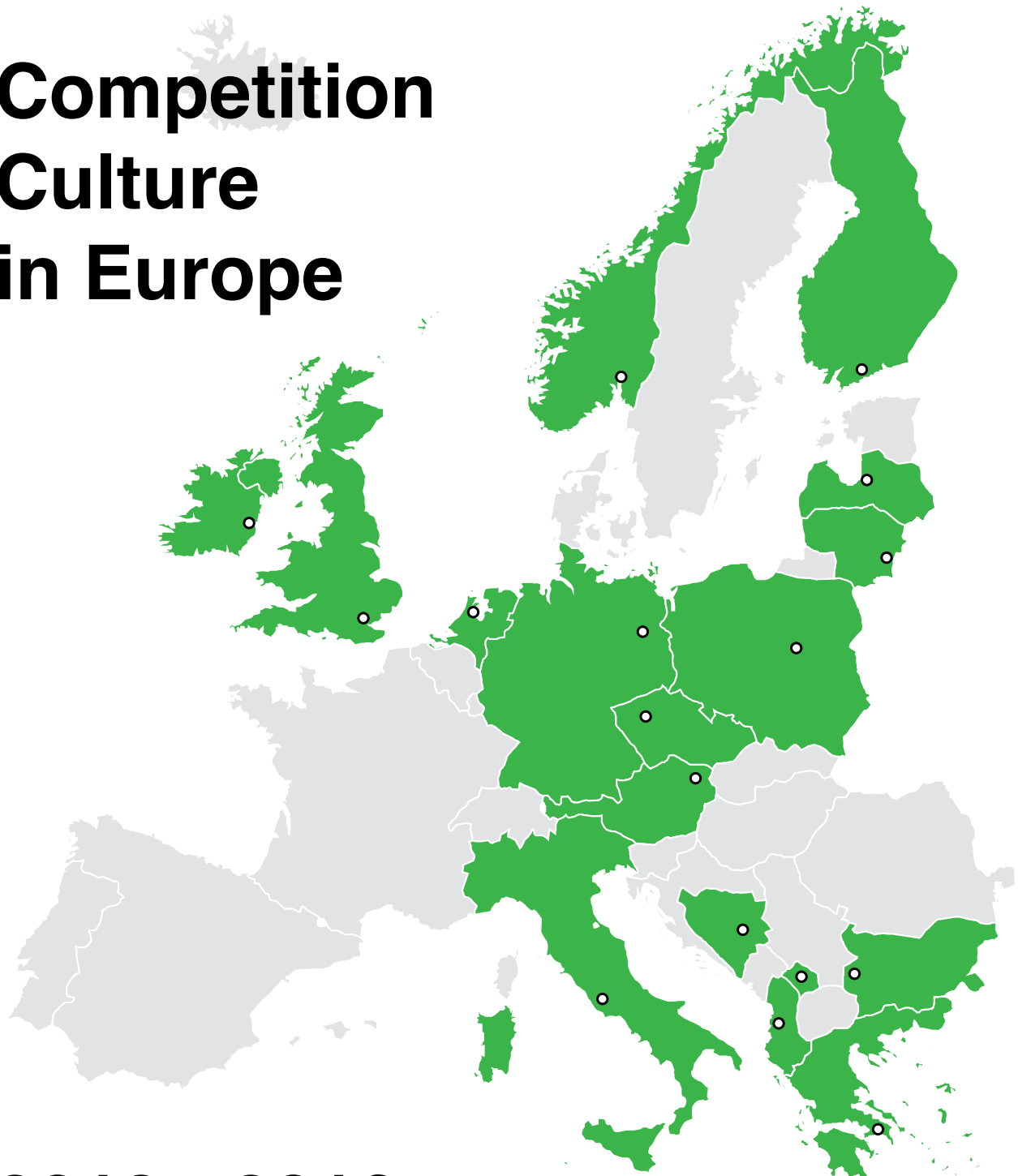


# Competition Culture in Europe



**2013 - 2016**

**Competition Culture in Europe  
2013 - 2016**

Results of a pan-European survey executed by Architectuur Lokaal,  
A10 new European architecture Cooperative and Project Compass CIC

to be presented and discussed at the

Conference on Competition Culture in Europe  
28 and 29 september 2017, Amsterdam

organised by Architectuur Lokaal



# Competition Culture in Europe

## Contents

- 5 Great expectations: new kids in town, Cilly Jansen
- 9 Overview of the results, Indira van 't Klooster
- 15 First impressions on competition culture in Europe, Cilly Jansen
- 23 Competition Culture in Europe, EU-data cards
- 33 Competition Culture in Europe, individual countries and case studies
- 155 Conference programme 28–29 September 2017, Amsterdam
- 161 Conference invitees 28–29 September 2017, Amsterdam
- 163 Biographies of authors, editors and graphic designer
- 169 Colophon

## **Great expectations: new kids in town**

### **Cilly Jansen**

Last year, the sixth International Conference on Competitions, a Scandinavian initiative by origin, took place in Leeds (UK). This edition sought to offer insight into current interdisciplinary research on the topic of architecture competitions. In this context the organizers hoped to raise awareness and pinpoint current social, political, and technological issues intertwined with the urban condition. These issues are topical around the world and call for new solutions in which younger generations are engaged. The question, increasingly, is how social challenges can be translated into physical terms. The central concern is how the city, as opposed to buildings, is used. The themes concern sustainability, energy, climate resilience, water safety, mobility, population decline and growth, vacancy levels, and redevelopment. In addition, issues relating to health, food, ageing population, and refugee accommodation, as well as terrorism, need to be addressed. The (built) consequences are the result of a well-considered process with clear management and realistic financial support and, in the most favourable case, based on an ambitious concept produced by interdisciplinary teams. Competitions, or more specific design contests, could offer new solutions.

Architectuur Lokaal is an independent, non-profit foundation in the Netherlands that promotes good commissioning in the building industry. The foundation highlights the importance of operationalizing design research and generating real opportunities for young generations of designers in practice – the new kids in town. By their nature, architecture competition procedures are an interesting instrument in this changing environment. Such contests amount to a search for the best design solutions and not, as in the case of tenders for architecture, for the most suitable office to carry out a specifically described commission.

Within Architectuur Lokaal the Steunpunt Architectuuroopdrachten & Ontwerpwedstrijden (Help desk for Architectural Commissions

and Design Competitions), initiated by the Dutch Chief Government Architect, was founded twenty years ago and supported by Dutch community associations, architects, housing corporations, project developers, and contractors. Since then we have developed digital manuals and formats for competition briefs that can be downloaded for free from the national portal [Ontwerpwedstrijden.nl](http://Ontwerpwedstrijden.nl). The website offers a database called Sesame that contains all public procurement procedures for architectural commissions and design competitions since 2005. Our database provides insight into the development of competition culture in the Netherlands, and thus also knowledge that enables us to fine-tune procedures for new, contemporary design questions.

In recent years more attention is being paid to exploring opportunities for spatial issues (design research) in the Netherlands – and subsequently to design contests, which have been neglected for many years. Moreover, design competitions are becoming increasingly common, and they are also increasingly won by young designers who have little access to procurement procedures, since they lack the experience, portfolio, or network to reach the clients who need their proposals.

The Steunpunt system attracted the attention of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), which resulted in a cooperative agreement for the establishment of the independent, non-profit Project Compass CIC in the United Kingdom. In 2015 a joint initiative resulted in an international platform called [TheFulcrum.eu](http://TheFulcrum.eu), which aims for better and more transparent public procurement for architecture via an e-procurement system. Other national organizations will be invited join the platform in the years to come.

The development of young talent in an international playing field, as well as the development of innovative process models that increase the chances of success for young architects, can be relevant for all countries in Europe. Even experienced architecture firms can benefit, while even in countries where the competition culture has a (sometimes regulated) centuries-long tradition (e.g., Germany and France) certain issues can arise from competitions. Besides famous

incidents, such as the Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition in 2014, the number of international entries is usually limited. The requirements for insurances, licenses, and national law are not compatible.

The good news is that the traditional competition scheme – which requires a complete design, including a costly model, from each of the interested designers – is no longer consistent with current international law regarding proportionality. These efforts are increasingly perceived as disproportionate, both by the designers and the writers of the competition briefs. Clients, especially backers of new initiatives, are no longer required to wait for dozens, sometimes hundreds of plans; they just want a limited number of realistic proposals.

To address the situation with regard to competition culture in Europe, Architectuur Lokaal developed the programme The power of knowledge islands for the period 2017–2020, with an international assembly to take place in 2017. This programme, supported by the Creative Industries Fund, aims to (1) increase access to international competitions for Dutch designers by making them digitally available through the establishment of a structured European network, for the purpose of improving the quality and accessibility of design competitions, and through an examination of competition procedures in Europe; (2) foster interdisciplinary collaboration and design research internationally; and (3) revitalize the competition culture, both within and outside the Netherlands. The programme allows us to search for new answers to contemporary issues, as mentioned above, and to increase the quality of commissioning.

Architectuur Lokaal wishes to express its gratitude for the work done by the correspondents of A10 new European architecture Cooperative and Project Compass to provide an initial insight into European competition culture. We look forward to the discussion in the years to come.

Cilly Jansen, director Architectuur Lokaal





## Overview of the results

### Indira van 't Klooster

This publication is an initiative of the foundation Architectuur Lokaal, an independent, non-profit national centre of expertise which contributes to a meaningful building culture in the Netherlands by improving patronage in architecture. Since 1997 its Steunpunt Architectuuroopdrachten & Ontwerpwedstrijden (Help desk for Architectural Commissions and Design Contests) has advised public and private clients concerning (European) procurement procedures and competitions (architect services and integrated contracts).

#### The programme

In the period 2017–2020 Architectuur Lokaal will develop a four-year programme to improve both the accessibility and transparency of competitions in Europe. The programme concentrates on the development of new, innovative processes that increase opportunities for young architects on an international playing field, thereby increasing the quality of the clientele. The goals of the programme are:

- to improve access to international competitions for architectural practices in the Netherlands and Europe
- to analyse competition procedures throughout Europe
- to establish a network of organizations concerned with good competition procedures
- to collect case studies of good and bad competitions throughout Europe

The programme is funded by the Creative Industries Fund in the Netherlands.

#### The partners

The programme started in 2017 with a survey on the competition culture in Europe. To be able to assess the current status quo, Architectuur Lokaal commissioned A10 new European architecture Cooperative to provide data for a baseline study on competition

culture in Europe. Members of A10 new European architecture Cooperative were invited by an open call to participate as correspondents in the survey . Correspondents from fifteen countries participated: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Poland. Furthermore, information from the United Kingdom was provided by Project Compass CIC, and information from the Netherlands was provided by Architectuur Lokaal. In 2014 these two organizations initiated the international platform TheFulcrum.eu, which aims for better and transparent public procurement for architecture via an e-procurement system, based on the system by the Steunpunt Architectuuroopdrachten & Ontwerpwedstrijden (Help desk for Architectural Commissions and Design Contests) as a uniform European ‘golden standard’. Other national organizations are able to join TheFulcrum.eu. All correspondents are well-respected professionals in their respective fields of work, as detailed in the biographies in chapter eight of this publication.

#### The survey

The correspondents were asked to research the situation in European competitions at present in their respective countries. The nature of the requested information is threefold: 1) concrete data on numbers; 2) practical information on platforms, critical discourse, and competition regulations; and 3) a journalist’s point of view on competition culture in the respective countries. The correspondents were asked to answer the following questions:

- how many and what kind of competitions were issued (roughly) between 2013 and 2016, above and below the European thresholds for procurement?
- how can these competitions be briefly described (client, who issued them, public/private, prize money, winners, topics, debate)?
- where were these competitions announced (portals) or how were they made public?
- how many of these competitions were or are in the process of being realized?

In addition, the correspondents were asked to provide the following information:

- an analysis of three competition briefs, to explain the nature of the general competitions.
- a list of organizations that provide critical debate about competitions in each country.
- short biographies and the contact details of all relevant persons in the competition scene (minimum of three; maximum of ten).
- a short analysis about the context and culture of competitions in each country (good, bad, topics, debate, successful, transparency, political involvement, professionalism of clients, quality of the briefs, prize money, chances of realization, etc.)

As can be concluded from the above questions, the results are not necessarily rock-solid figures. The collected data give a broader insight in the system of competitions in each country. The information generated has been converted into thematic maps, individual cards, and case studies, which together give a general view of the competition culture in Europe and make the information comparable on a national level within the European context.

### Definitions

The main goal of the survey is to get a clearer idea about the differences and similarities in competition culture between the various European countries, based on available information in every country. In this project the concept of 'competition culture' is understood as the combined set of factors that define the quality of competitions: the number of competitions, the transparency of briefs, juries and decision processes, requirements, number of successful procedures, and number of realized buildings following a commission to a winner; additionally, the publication of proposals that are not selected, the image of public and private clients, the political, cultural, and social context, accessibility, and international context. 'Culture' as such is not necessarily a subject that can be measured in data alone. It is also the result, for example, of habits, context, and personal points of view. But what is a 'competition' in the field of architecture? In

many countries the term is used for all types of 'architectural commissions' in which an element of competition is part of the selection, whether open, restricted, or by invitation. Architectuur Lokaal defines an 'architectural commission' as a commission or contract including 'a full design component'. An architectural commission must include the production of a design, not just the detailing or engineering of an available design. Also confusing is that in many countries the term 'competition' is used as a term for both the 'design competition' (in which an anonymous selection is sought for the best plan) and the 'procurement procedure' (in which the client is not looking for the best plan, but for the most suitable company). In this first survey there will undoubtedly be misunderstandings. That a design competition is a special type of procurement does not make things easier to comprehend.

#### Data

It is important to mention that the data has come from a variety of sources that are not set up equally in the surveyed European countries. This is an element of culture in itself. Thus, the difference between, for example, large-scale building projects and small-scale design competitions needed to be determined manually. This is easier in countries with a relative small amount of competitions than in countries which have many. In the latter (e.g., Germany, Italy, Austria), an estimation has been made by the correspondent. The same complications arose in the selection of case studies. How, for example, can three examples be defined from 1,500 procedures that sometimes do not distinguish between tender and design contest? In those cases the correspondents have been asked to select three examples that fit the aim of this survey, which is to focus on either smaller competitions or competitions that have interesting procedures/briefs and comment on the culture of transparency, realization rates, critical debate, etc.

#### The conference

The results of the survey will be presented at the international conference on Competition Culture in Europe organized by Architectuur Lokaal on 28 and 29 September 2017 in Amsterdam.

The programme will be continued and hopefully expanded to the fourteen European countries that are not yet represented: Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Hungary, Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. Each of these countries is welcome to add its information to this publication, which will be supplemented and updated in the coming years.

#### Further steps

The data collected in this publication is meant as a work in progress. The results from the survey and the conference will be combined and further processed in both online and offline formats.

Indira van 't Klooster, Architectuur Lokaal / A10



## **First impressions on competition culture in Europe**

### **Cilly Jansen**

After months of collecting data, checking and re-checking, we hereby present the first results of our survey on competition culture in Europe. The results will be discussed further at a conference in Amsterdam in September 2017. We would like to share some first thoughts on this collective effort in order to kick-start the debate.

#### European context

The European procurement law applies to all the EU member states, but individual countries can implement national legislation which can lead to certain differences. Moreover, in this survey we have selected countries in geographical Europe which are not necessarily EU member states. Countries that do not develop their own laws within three years after EU directives have been published are obliged to apply EU legislation. For EU member states, assignments with a value above a certain threshold must, in principle, be tendered according to prescribed European procedures. This implies, among other things, that these assignments must be announced by a client on TED (Tenders Electronic Daily), the official journal of the EU. It enables companies from all member states to enrol to receive the assignment. The procurement obligation is in principle only for contracts of so-called contracting services, not for private parties. The thresholds in 2016–2017 for (design) services are € 135,000 for the national government and € 209,000 for other contracting services. If the estimated value of the assignment is less than the European thresholds, then European procedures are not mandatory. National procurement acts can contain specific rules for assignments below the thresholds, such as publication on national platforms.

#### National practices

The process of becoming a member of the EU has also affected the competition culture in some European countries. Several had competition traditions that needed to be adapted to EU regulations

after admission to the EU, which was sometimes either welcomed or regretted. Some countries that lack a national procurement act, like Albania, mention the absence of a national procurement obligation as one of the reasons for today's problems in their competition culture (accessibility for young offices, transparency, chances of realization). Lithuania's new Architecture Law came into force in the summer of 2017. It contains a section for architectural competitions, the main points of which are: an obligation to organize architectural competitions for structures that are important in terms of state and public interest, architectural or urban aspect. The desire for improvements in Bulgaria and Greece is based on new legislation in place since 2016, which is based on the new EU directives of 2014. The reports from Italy, however, convey mainly disappointment. Italian competitions nowadays seem to be a poorly paid (if at all) waste of time, talent, and opportunities. The new legislation therefore brings hope.

Not all correspondents have indicated whether there is national procurement legislation in place, but some have commented on this. In Bosnia and Herzegovina procedures are not announced according to EU rules, simply because the country is not part of the EU. In Poland, moreover, Polish law prevents public institutions from organizing closed competitions. In some countries the correspondents observe that a more critical attitude of architects would be desirable. In Kosovo, for example, which is not an EU member state, jury reports are not (allowed to be) delivered. In the Netherlands a so-called Proportionality Guide, which must be complied with, is attached to a fairly general procurement act. This guide can be more easily adapted than a law.

### Definitions

In general the essence of the procedures will not differ widely in a legal sense. But for a better understanding of the different practices in various EU countries, some correspondents recommend better definitions. That could be very helpful indeed. The terminology that is used, or its translations, is quite confusing. The confusion probably also has to do with the many variations in the different



countries, but 'competition' is a term that is used for all of them. A clear distinction can be made regarding whether the client is looking for the most suitable architectural practice (which is then asked for experience, references, turnover, etc.) or for the best design (where experience does not play a part and the selection is anonymous). The first instance concerns procurement of architects' services; the second, design contests. For the purpose of design contests it logically follows that the selection must proceed anonymously. In addition, it is legally regulated that the jury should be competent for at least one-third in the field of the participants. It would be interesting to get a better insight into the terminology used to understand the variations between the extremes of architects' services and design contests, and hence the different cultures and best practices.

#### Issues

Of all the researched countries, only Finland reports no problems, apart from a single discussion on the results. The successful practice in Norway threatens to displace Norwegian architects from their own market. As a result the procedures tend to become less accessible, for example, because of the requirements that are imposed. Latvia notes that it is not possible for foreign architects to participate in selections without the collaboration of a local architect. The younger generation of architects have studied in European architecture schools, making these locals globally oriented. A general problem with selections for the tendering of architectural services are the requirements, which are universally perceived to be disproportionate. There is a lot of criticism concerning the briefs; there are hardly any generally accepted formats, and the selection is still based on the lowest costs in most countries, although there are procedures with fixed budgets for which a selection is made based only on the design.

The United Kingdom proposes special dispensation from the obligation to tender the services of an architect, as is possible in Japan. Dutch architects have tried to gain this exceptional position of trust in the procurement act, but the courts have not grant this request.

Accessibility to architects' services is difficult for young architects, but the idea that they should be able to participate in design contests is generally supported throughout Europe; possibly also in international teams. The two-stage procedures recently developed in several countries are worth investigating further. The contemporary mantra of 'participation' can result in unexpected competitors at competitions that are accessible to 'everyone', although opinions on good forms of participation may differ strongly. Some other issues mentioned by correspondents from several countries must be widely recognizable as well. For instance, the complaint that design contests are often seen as a political instrument or marketing tool, more than an instrument for innovation and quality for public buildings and public space. Fair payment to the architects is an issue, too. Many competition-winning designs are not realized, or the provided assignments are limited. The reasons for this can be political changes, lack of economic stability, bad project planning, problems in the briefs, annulment of the procedure, and so on.

#### Remarkable

The survey also provided some remarkable ideas suited for pan-European implementation. These include the following: In Greece the majority of jury members must be chosen from a centrally managed register catalogue, admission to which requires having an architect's license for a minimum of ten years, as well as either already having been awarded in a Greek or international competition, or having an academic position in a university. This raises some questions: what is the aim of this system, who maintains the register, and (how) does it contribute to transparency? On the opposite side, juries in Kosovo consist only of civil servants.

The two-stage procedure, with a limited concept in the first round, is used for development competitions/contests in the Netherlands. Whereas other countries speak of developers' competitions, the Dutch practice shows that participants in the (anonymous) first round can also be (young) architects. It is then permitted to expand

the team in the second round, when a developer or investor who places a bid on the site can join. In Austria it is possible that the winner of a developers' selection of subsidized social housing can buy the plot for a subsidized price. This raises questions in the context of EU legislation regarding aid received from the state. Like in the Netherlands, competition culture is in a period of renaissance in the Czech Republic as well, but there a group of 80 municipality architects plays an important role in this development. It would be interesting to know more about their status and mandate.

In Germany the former kooperatieve Werkstattverfahren are recalled: invited procedures in which a client chooses several offices who make presentations and discuss them with clients, after which the final proposal is worked out in what we today might call a workshop. Although this German procedure is not very familiar in the Netherlands, there are experiments that resemble this idea. Besides, forms for feedback within the two-stage competitions (and within the law) have proven to be possible. Finally, the case studies offer a wide variety of examples of how competitions work in practice in each of the surveyed countries.

#### Coordination and control

The differences in the coordination and monitoring of architect selections are quite large. If there is a central coordinating body for the contests, this is often accomplished through professional branch organizations and/or a chamber of architects. This does not automatically result in a healthy competition culture. Some correspondents criticize the performance and transparency of these organizations and the accessibility of the procedures for non-members. The Czech Republic has an Office for Protection of Competition, the status of which would be interesting to research further. Some countries see a role for the national government, like Albania. In the Netherlands, however, a central national body or unilateral regulations are not accepted. In general the government states that the market itself is responsible for regulation. The origin of Architectuur Lokaal as an independent foundation lies in

the (former) national architecture policy, when urgent problems required resolution. Although good results, formats, transparency, self-certification, etc., might be reached, the financing is vulnerable. Architectuur Lokaal is collaborating with Project Compass in the United Kingdom to establish a fair and independent competition environment. It is an admirable initiative, but the UK architects who volunteer in this idealistic organization have trouble continuing the project; at the moment, nobody is willing to structurally fund the organization.

#### Information cards

Apart from the individual maps that offer a wide range of information on national practice and examples (see above), we have also compared the surveyed countries on six topics.

- 1) How many competitions have been organized between 2013 and 2016?
- 2) What are the competitions about (topics)?
- 3) How many of the competition-winning designs are actually built, or are in the process of realization?
- 4) What is the lowest and highest prize money in one competition?
- 5) How do you assess the competition culture in your country?
- 6) In which languages are competition briefs available?
- 7) How many competitions are publicly commissioned, and how many privately?

For the purposes of this survey the most interesting map is probably Map 5: Competition Culture in Europe, which shows how the general competition culture has been assessed by the correspondents. It cannot be used to compare the countries; rather, it is basically the filter through which all data on any single country should be interpreted. Based on the results of the survey, five correspondents came to predominantly negative conclusions on their national competition culture: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Latvia, Kosovo, and the United Kingdom. Positive reactions came from Germany, Finland, Norway, and Albania. The opinion of the eight correspondents in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Poland lies somewhere

in the middle. All correspondents have been clear about room for improvement, which will be further discussed at the conference. Another topic to address is the difference between public and private clients. Looking at Map 7: Public and private clients, it is clear that most competitions are issued by public clients, which is perfectly understandable because procurement is a public matter.

So what is happening in the Netherlands and Latvia, where public clients are a minority? What type of clients are active there? Regarding fees and remunerations, we have established that those data are not always available, but the data we do have can be found in Map 4: Highest and lowest prize money between 2013–2016. This map reflects the highest and lowest available prize money in one competition in the last four years in a single country. Thus, there were competitions with no fee at all (Albania, Bosnia, the Netherlands, Finland, Latvia, Poland), while the highest prize money for a competition can be found in Finland and Norway. Map 3: Projects completed shows that the completion rate in Europe is, in general, quite low. By the looks of this map, the best chances to get a project realized since 2013 would be in Norway, the Netherlands, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Lithuania.

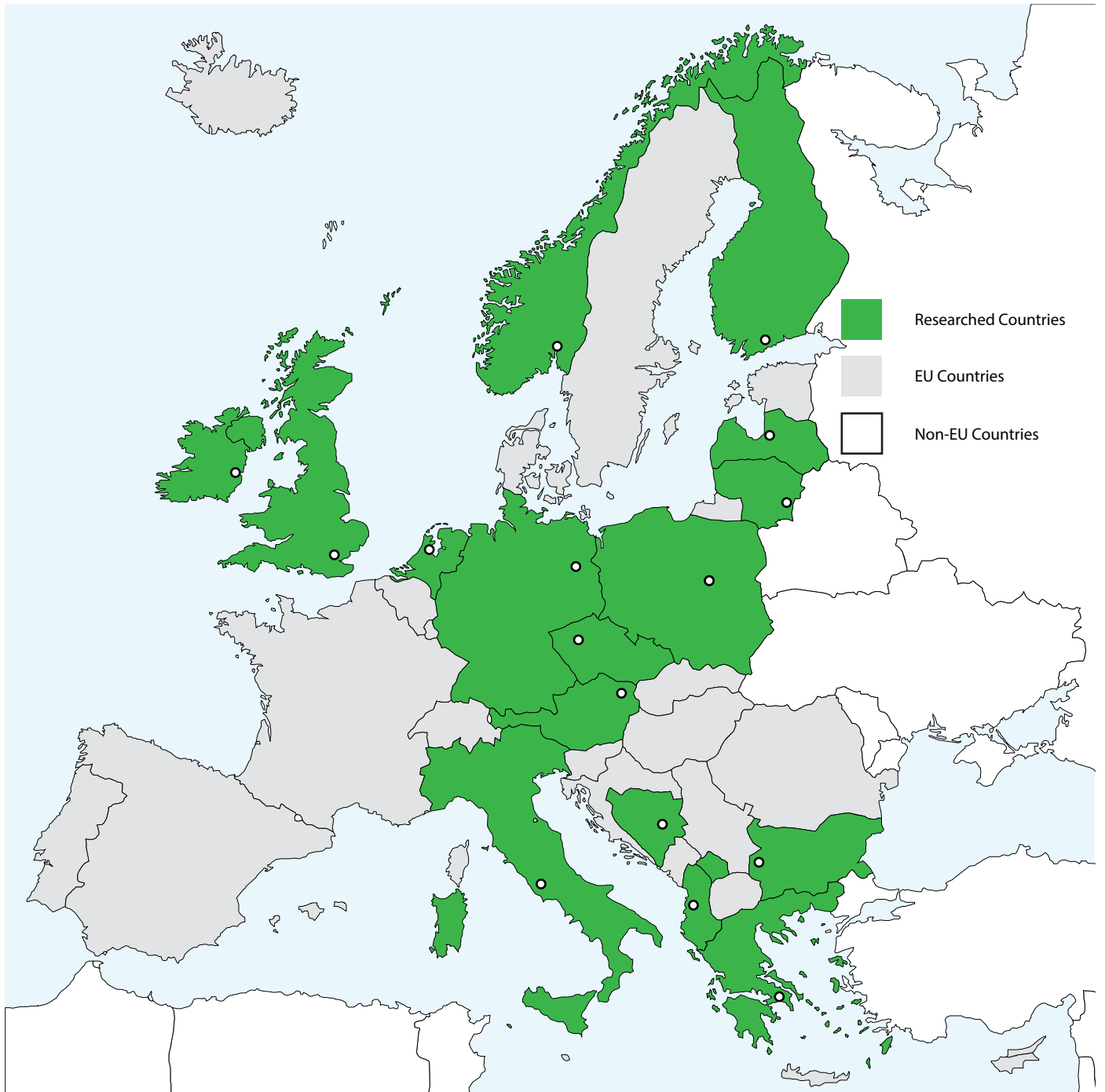
All these observations are worth exploring further. During the conference we will have the opportunity to do so. We are looking forward to this two-day effort, which will involve exchanging experiences, filling in the gaps and, in short, launching a European-wide debate on competition culture and how we can improve it.

Cilly Jansen, director Architectuur Lokaal



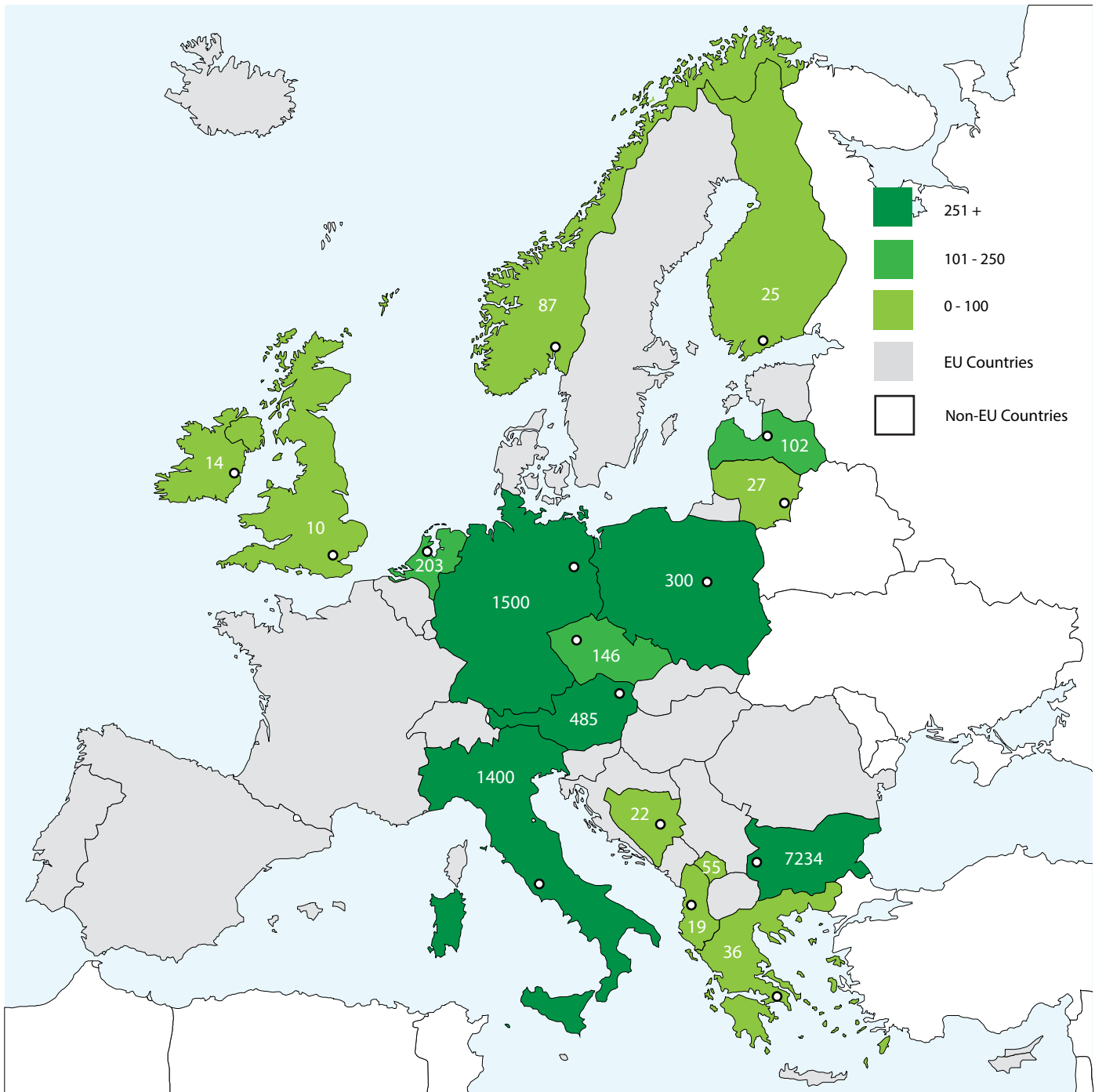
# **Competition Culture in Europe**

## **EU-data cards**

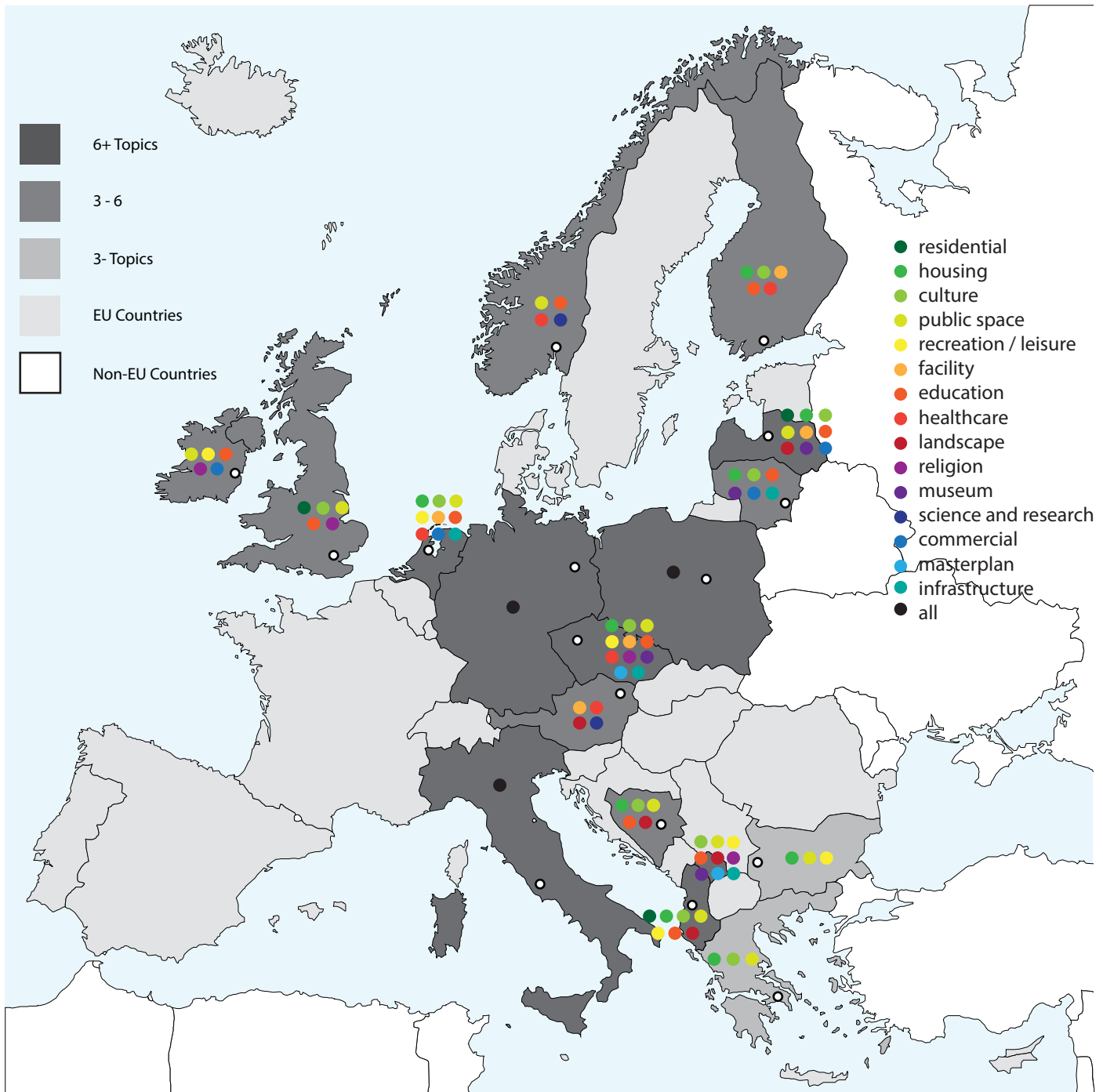


Competition Culture in Europe  
0. Surveyed countries



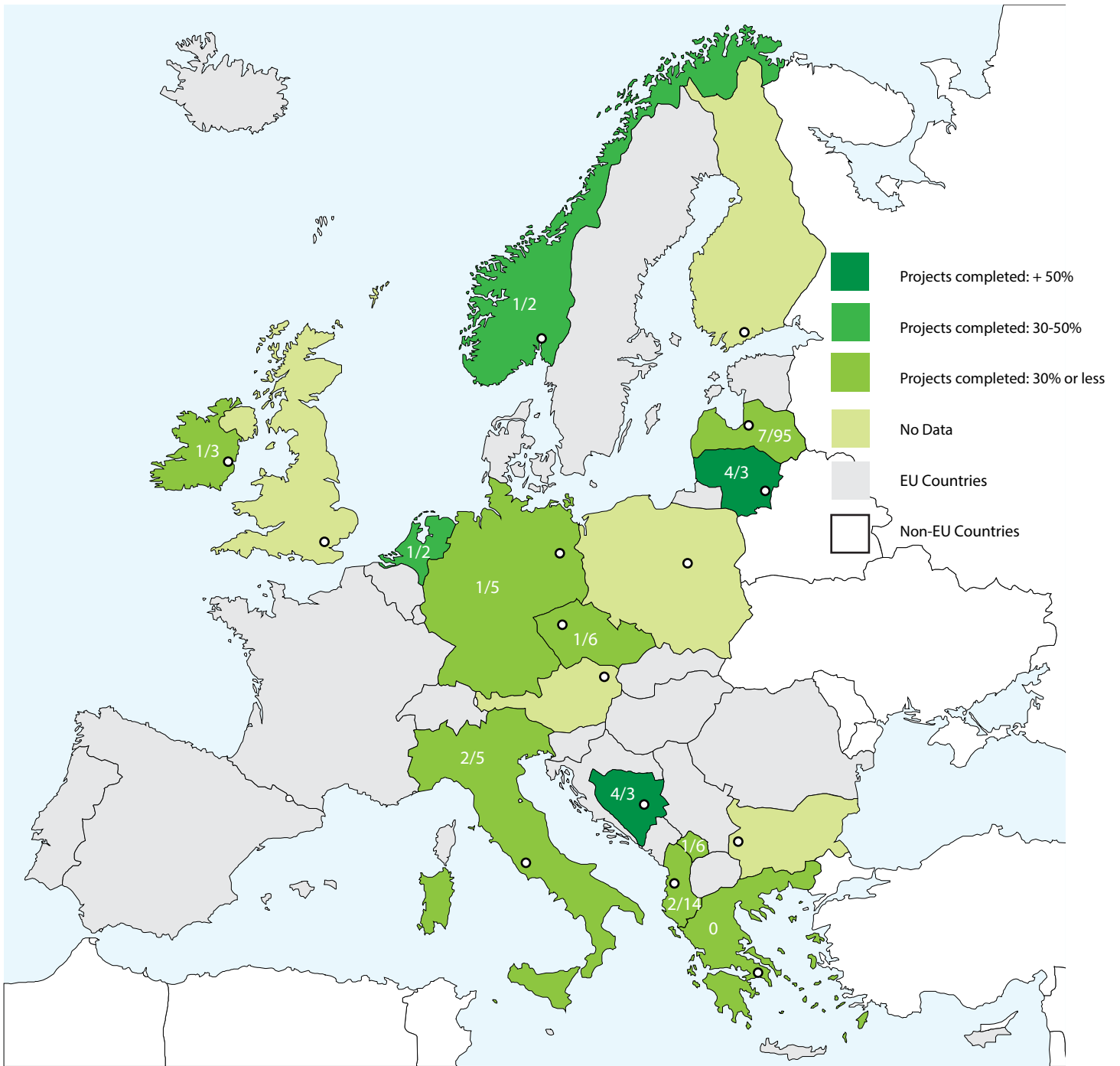


Competition Culture in Europe  
 1. Number of competitions 2013-2016



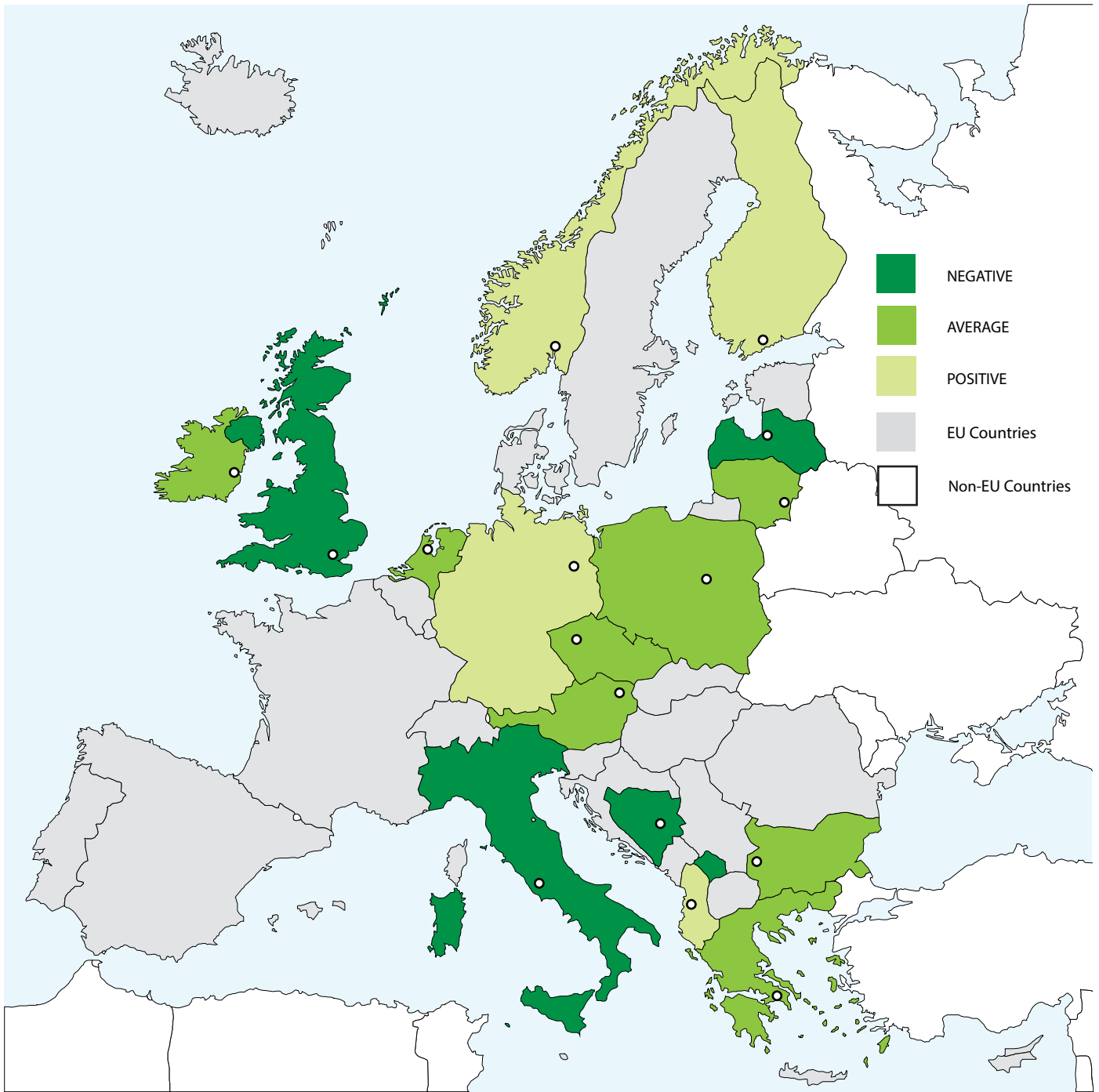
## Competition Culture in Europe

### 2. Topics

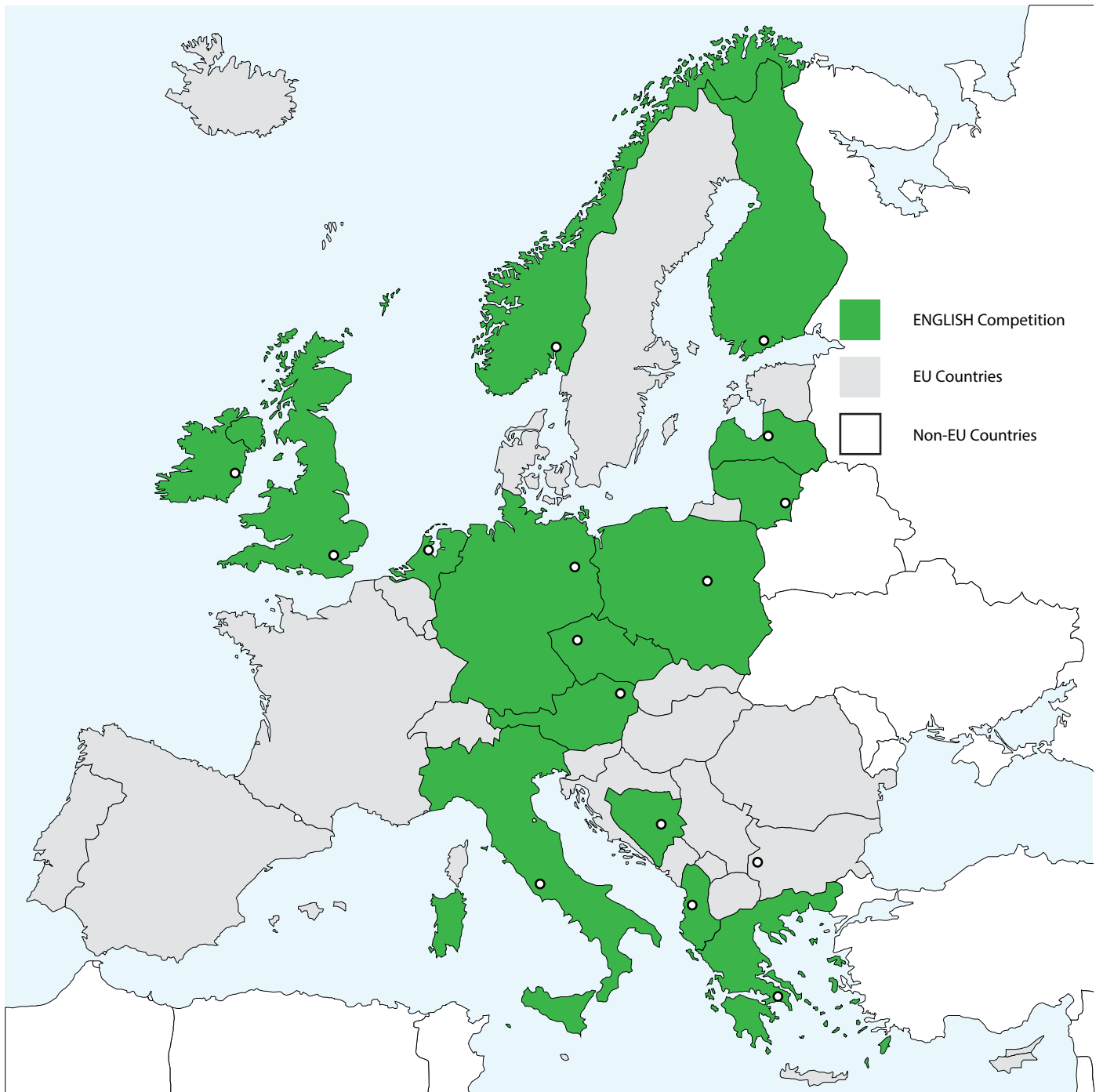


Competition Culture in Europe  
3. Projects completed

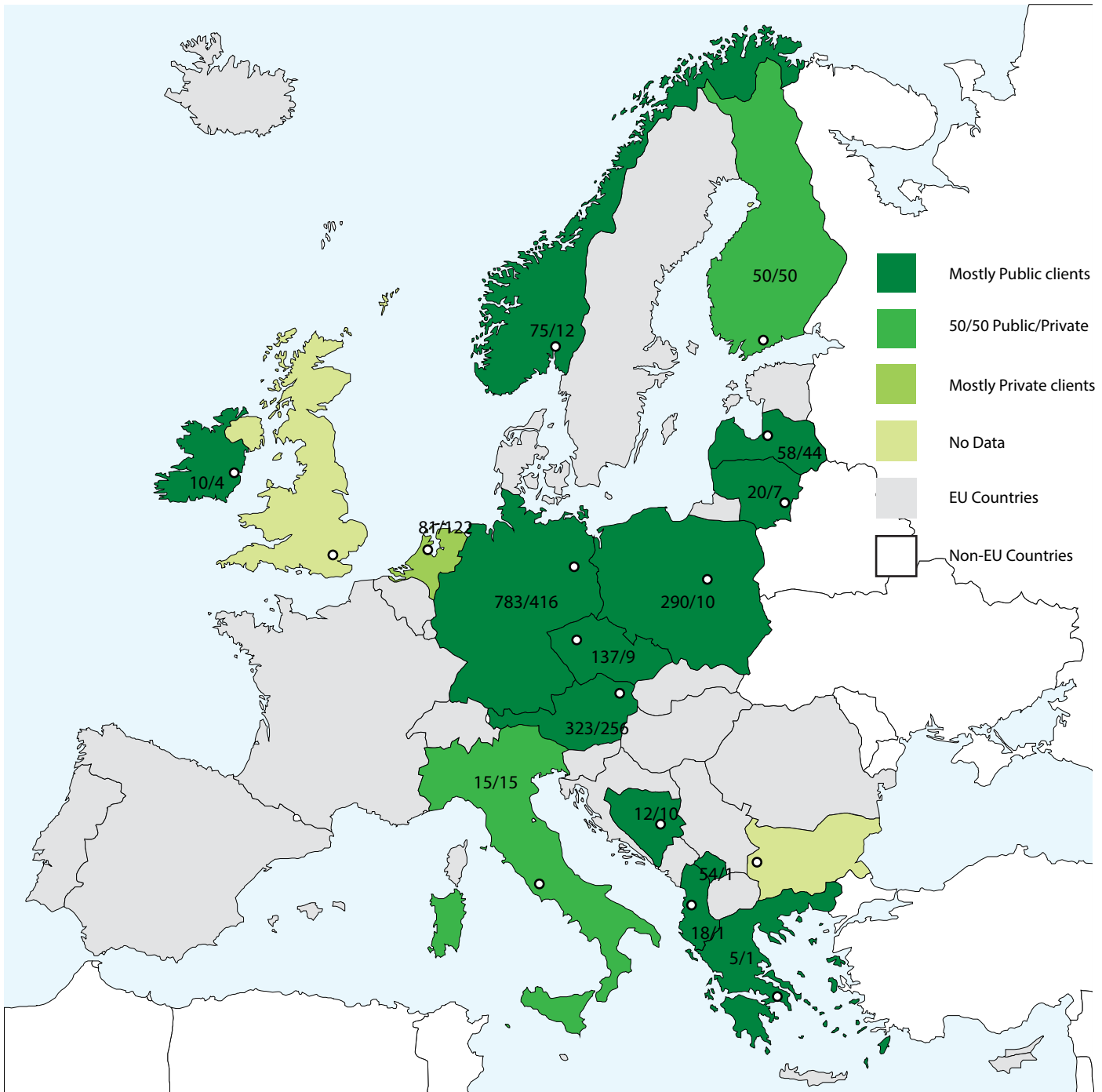




Competition Culture in Europe  
5. Competition Culture



Competition Culture in Europe  
 6. Briefs, if available in other languages



Competition Culture in Europe  
7. Public and private clients





# **Competition Culture in Europe**

## **Individual countries and case studies**





# Competition Culture in Europe: Austria

Competitions 2013-2016: 485

Topics: ●●●●

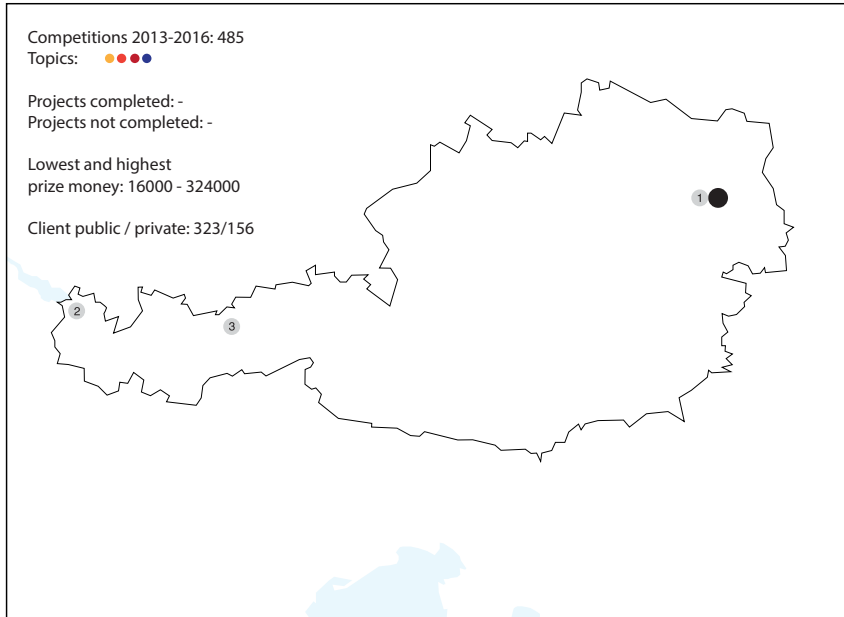
Projects completed: -

Projects not completed: -

Lowest and highest

prize money: 16000 - 324000

Client public / private: 323/156



## Main portal:

[www.architekturwettbewerb.at](http://www.architekturwettbewerb.at)

[www.auftrag.at](http://www.auftrag.at)

[www.competitionline.com](http://www.competitionline.com)

## Case studies:

1/ The Vienna Museum, 2015 <http://www.wienmuseumneu.at>

2/ Volksschule Höchst: a primary school for the municipality of Höchst.

[www.dietrich.untertrifaller.com/wettbewerb/volksschule-unterdorf](http://www.dietrich.untertrifaller.com/wettbewerb/volksschule-unterdorf)

3/ Campagne Areal, Innsbruck (competitive dialogue) [www.innsbruckinformiert.at/sts-9](http://www.innsbruckinformiert.at/sts-9), [www.iig.at](http://www.iig.at)

## Critical voices:

Bundeskammer der Architekten und Ingenieurkonsulenten, [www.arching.at/baik](http://www.arching.at/baik), [www.arching-zt.at](http://www.arching-zt.at), [www.archwest.at](http://www.archwest.at), <http://wien.arching.at>, <http://www.ztkammer.at>.

In order to increase the awareness about the benefits of architectural competitions, the Chamber sends out competition consultants to the local municipalities. They advise the clients and help with the call for entries.

Austrian Society for Architecture, ÖGFA – Österreichische Gesellschaft für Architektur, <https://oegfa.at>. Dedicated to the promotion, dissemination and mediation of architectural cultural issues by providing information with the help of publication, information on publications, scholarships and events Austrian Architecture Foundation

ArchitekturStiftung Österreich, [architekturstiftung.at](http://architekturstiftung.at). Its aim is the promotion of contemporary architecture as well as to enhance the excellence in Austrian architecture and its built environment in general.

## Brief analysis of Austrian competition culture

In Austria around 20% of the architectural competitions are open procedures. Around one to three times a month a new open competition is announced. Open competitions mostly allow young and small offices to take part without too many restrictions, and offer a chance to effectively build, as the chance of realization in Austria is quite high. Open competitions with a low threshold of technical requirements, office dimension and/or previous reference projects are an important tool for design quality and diversity, since not only the established or well-networked offices can take part. In Austria the trend goes towards restricted competitions. The hurdles to participate in such competitions are often very high. One reason for the clients to choose an invited or restricted competition is the fear of anonymity or getting architects with not enough experience and competences. That is why small municipalities hardly run open competitions. If they do competitions at all, they will normally choose a restricted procedure and even more often an invited procedure. Invited procedures are only permitted below EU threshold values. An alternative to these kinds of competition is the negotiated procedure, which is a competition-like process, in which the contracting authority negotiates the terms of contract with the successful candidate. A new Federal Procurement Act will be issued in Austria for 2017. Competition expert Walter Chramosta hopes that the differentiation between purely design-based competitions and negotiated procedures will be clearly preserved, because competitions as procedures within the architectural

profession must be protected, and do not belong to the administrative court.

In recent years, Austria has begun to offer competitive dialogues, particularly in the context of urban development competition. The idea behind this kind of procedure is to conduct a dialogue with selected candidates in order to develop a planning solution and to involve different stakeholders (developers, city and planning administration, planners, consultants, citizens) in the process from the early beginning. However, such a procedure is not always easy for the participating teams. It implicates a high risk of ideas copyright infringement and needs a professional moderation if the whole process is to be successful. In recent years Vienna has introduced a few times such a competitive dialogues, for example, for the reconfiguration of the urban area called Schwedenplatz. Here the procedure was combined with citizen participation, followed by a two-stage realization competition. Citizens were also involved between the two stages. This led to a high acceptance of the winning design.

Another specialized form of architectural competition is the design-developers competition, an instrument of quality insurance for subsidized social housing, which is mainly being applied in Vienna. Developers and architects bid together with a design proposal for a given site. The bid includes, next to the design, commitments concerning the prices for the end-users and a series of other quality criteria concerning sustainability (including social sustainability), efficiency, and of course architectural qualities. The winner is awarded

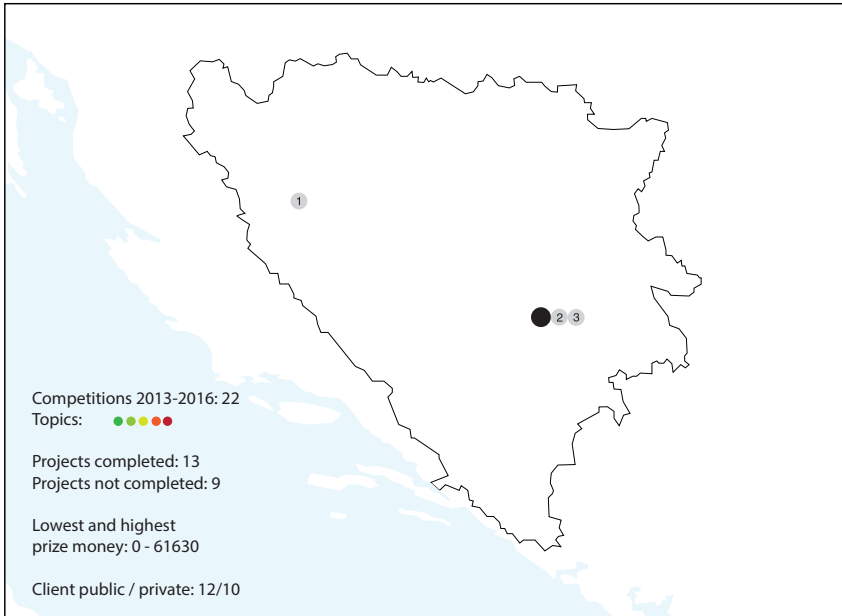
the site at a subsidized price, and is committed to further develop the design and build the project in question, according to the proposal.

The public-private partnership (PPP) procedures are also an increasingly criticized form of architectural competition in Austria. Particularly in the federal capital of Vienna, PPP-procedures are repeatedly being issued - mainly for large new school buildings in the new urban expansion areas under the responsibility of the city. The criticism is that these procedures make construction more expensive and that the architectural quality suffers. Last but not least, the commissioning of the competition winner is only guaranteed up to the permission planning phase and some principle details. All other planning phases are the responsibility of the private partner, who is free to commission whomever he/she wishes.

There have been some competition results which were then negated by the client. Architects have successfully protested against it. Examples include a building for the Viennese waste management and a development project Seestadt in the West- Austrian town of Bregenz. These are examples where the discussion about the quality and importance of design competition has found its way to the public by means of articles in newspapers.



# Competition Culture in Europe: Bosnia and Herzegovina



## Main portal:

Official gazettes: [www.sluzbenilist.ba](http://www.sluzbenilist.ba)  
Local daily newspaper: "Dnevni Avaz" [www.avaz.ba](http://www.avaz.ba)  
Web portals: [www.akta.ba](http://www.akta.ba)

## Case studies:

- 1/ Mt. Klekovaca - Urban Zone of the Klekovaca Tourist Center (2014)
- 2/ Sarajevo - The Arrangement of Strossmayer Street, Sarajevo (2015)
- 3/ Sarajevo - The Salvation Tunnel Memorial Complex (2016)

## Critical voices:

**Nasiha Pozder**, architect, urbanist and politician, [nasihap@af.unsa.ba](mailto:nasihap@af.unsa.ba); [nasa.pozder@gmail.com](mailto:nasa.pozder@gmail.com) holds a PhD in Technical Sciences at the Architectural Faculty of the University of Sarajevo, consultant at Green Council and UNDP, lecturer for Friedrich Naumann Foundation on Smart City and Responsive City Project.

**Dario Kristić**, architect and blogger, [dario.kristic@gmail.com](mailto:dario.kristic@gmail.com), [www.dario-kristic.wordpress.com](http://www.dario-kristic.wordpress.com), lives and works in Sarajevo as architect designer. Writes critically about architecture on his own website. Editor of AABH webpage.

**Association of Architects in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AABH)**, [info@aabh.ba](mailto:info@aabh.ba); [www.aabh.ba](http://www.aabh.ba). Vedad Islambegović, architect and president of the Association, a founding partner at Filter Architecture, an award-winning studio based in Sarajevo.

**CRVENA - Association for Culture and Art, Sarajevo**, Bosnia and Herzegovina, [www.crvena.ba](http://www.crvena.ba); [info@crvena.ba](mailto:info@crvena.ba) CRVENA is devoted to build knowledge and capacities for feminist organizing and acting by involving different groups and individuals coming from civil and political movements. Boriša Mraović, research and programme officer [borisa@crvena.ba](mailto:borisa@crvena.ba), Danijela Dugandžić, directress, [daniijela@crvena.ba](mailto:daniijela@crvena.ba)

## Brief analysis of Bosnian competition culture

Over the past four years some 22 architectural and urbanistic competitions were held, which was a considerably lower figure than during previous decades. In some municipalities or entire regions there were no competitions at all, despite obvious concurrent construction activities. That such a state of affairs is frustrating is evident from a recent survey on this topic conducted by the Association of Architects in Bosnia and Herzegovina in which 284 members participated (mostly young architects). This survey indicate that competitions should be the dominant modality for selection of project designs/solutions for both public investment projects and those private projects that are of major importance for a given locality. The respondents also believed that there should be no individuals or institutions who should be awarded project contracts without going through the competition process. 'The findings of this survey will serve the Association as an argument for future meetings and letters of appeal to official bodies that might be involved in public investment planning and implementation in the domain of architecture or urbanism, either at present or in the near or distant future.'\* It is quite obvious that architects seek a different state of affairs, because their primary desire is to safeguard the quality of constructed space and create conditions for objective and fair development of their own profession.

There are numerous reasons for the current, unsatisfactory situation with regard to adherence to the

principles of the competition process, but two reasons are essential: the first relates to the current state of the relevant legislation, and the other lies in the pervasive discontent with the modalities of organization and implementation of competitions over the past two decades. Administering competitions for a preliminary project is based on the state Public Procurement Law (articles 33 and 34), just as any other type of procurement. Instead, procurement in the domain of architectural and urbanistic design ought to be treated as procurement of high-quality services. In other words, publishing competitions for these types of services is not required by law, even for public investments of great public importance. In the past 30 years, most public buildings were erected through the method of direct negotiation or through the lowest-cost project documentation model. Unlike the competition procedure, this other method is much simpler, but less transparent and does not guarantee quality. Its prevalence contributes to the marginalization of the architectural profession.

Even when a competition is published the response tends to be low, which even led to annulment of a few competitions due to insufficient interest. Our talks with architects of all generations revealed a spectrum of reasons for this particular phenomenon. Some believe that competitions are published just pro forma: either as a cover for already formulated selection of a winning bid, or to expend the allocated budget by going through the motions of holding a competition. Also, there is an element of discouragement since, very often, winning designs are

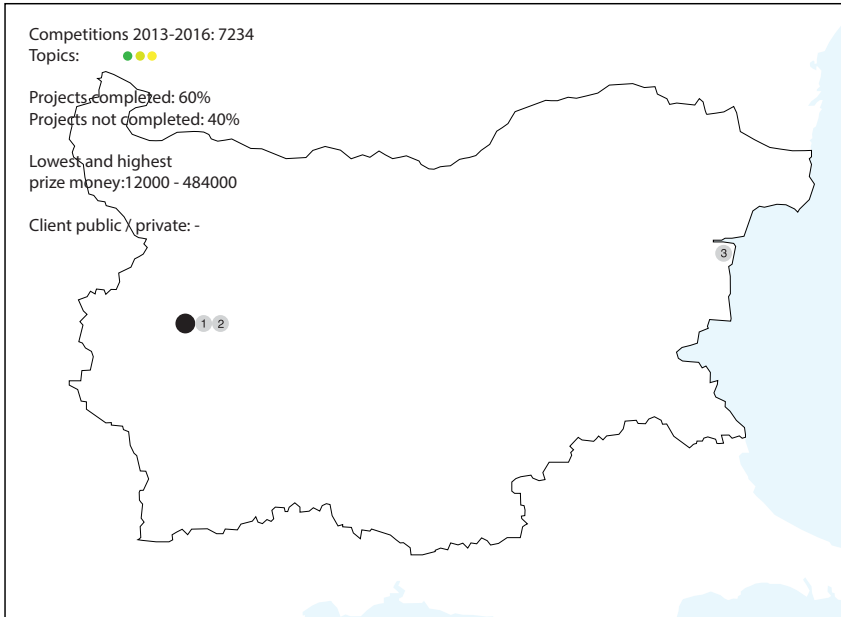
never implemented. This tends to discourage serious and established practitioners from applying to tenders. Furthermore, competitions that offer a single prize also have a discouraging effect. Competition topics and terms of reference are frequently unclear and insufficiently specified, while for some competitions deadlines are too short in view of the extent of the problem and the scope of works involved. Insufficient visibility/advertising of the published tenders also seems problematic – often it is only in local newspapers, on websites of local communities, or in the official gazettes, so it seems that competition organizers themselves do not want or need to encourage potential participants. The profession, but also the public, are both dissatisfied with the manner of presentation of submitted works. Exhibitions of submitted works are often omitted, with selection committees providing explanations of their decisions, which restricts the scope for exchange of ideas and views, as well as for promotion of architects, particularly young ones.

The recent competition on the design of the pedestrian bridge across the Miljacka River inspires hope that it is possible to organize and manage public competitions for architectural and urbanistic work within the given legal framework and current societal reality, if the principles of the profession are respected. This was the basis of the communication between the investor and the architectural organizing body.

\*[www.aabh.ba/novosti/anketa-rezultati-ankete-0-arhitektonskim-konkursima-u-bih/](http://www.aabh.ba/novosti/anketa-rezultati-ankete-0-arhitektonskim-konkursima-u-bih/)



# Competition Culture in Europe: Bulgaria



## Main portal:

[www.aop.bg/index.php?n=1](http://www.aop.bg/index.php?n=1). The Public Procurement Agency: public competitions are obliged to be always announced on the official website [www.kab.bg/a/nav/news/type/5](http://www.kab.bg/a/nav/news/type/5): private and public competitions are usually announced on the official website of the Bulgarian Chamber of Architects and the websites of the regional chambers

Ambitious international competitions always announce also on the most popular international competition portals (Bustler, Archdaily, competition-sonline, etc)

## Case studies:

- 1/ SVETA NEDELYA SQUARE, Sofia 2013, [www.sofia-agk.com](http://www.sofia-agk.com)
- 2/ BORISOVATA GRADINA, Sofia, 2015, [www.sofiacouncil.bg/](http://www.sofiacouncil.bg/)
- 3/ VARNA LIBRARY, Varna, 2015, <http://varnalibrary.bg/documentation>

## Critical voices:

**WHAT ASSOCIATION**, [whata.org](http://whata.org) ([whata.org/about-en/](http://whata.org/about-en/); [whata.org/contact](http://whata.org/contact)), [contacts@whata.org](mailto:contacts@whata.org). WhATA(ssociation) is an independent organization dedicated to architectural criticism, journalism, the organization and evaluation of competitions. Through its architectural blog WhATA, they have been discussing, analyzing and criticizing contemporary competition practice in Bulgaria since 2007 (among other architectural topics). Since 2011 they have been working relentlessly on imposing good competition practices despite opposition and legislation obstacles. As external experts they stand behind the organization of: Plovdiv Central Square Competition (competition brief, world-wide-web publication, public image, social media coverage, jury selection, Q&As), Varna Library Competition (competition brief, world-wide-web publication, public image, jury selection, Q&As)

## Brief analysis of Bulgarian competition culture

Architectural competitions in Bulgaria have been a constant cause of disappointment ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. They are usually ill-organized, often unfair or simply remain unrealized. Worse, they are more than often organized by state and municipal bodies, who never take the trouble of proper publicity, of writing catchy, contemporary competition briefs, and who love to announce them only on their municipal sites (which nobody reads).

At the same time, for the past 25 years Bulgarian architecture has been passing through a difficult transition period after the monopolitical system of the communist regime was substituted by market democracy. In 2006 Bulgaria acquired officially the status of full member of the EU, and subsequently coordinated its legislation according to EU rules and regulations. But creating a distinct, recognizable face of contemporary Bulgarian architecture is still an ongoing task, with architectural competitions as one of the most logical tools for achieving it. Nevertheless, according to EU legislation and good competition practices, it is obligatory for public money to be spent through competitions (and it is). And they are. As a result we now have three types of situations on the competition scene:

'Fake' competitions, formally following the law, but in fact secretly circumnavigating it. Within this group fall all architectural competitions disguised behind tenders for construction and engineering services. Architectural competitions are still regarded

as the 'slow way' to construction or utilization of EU or state funding. They take time which many municipalities or state organizations are unwilling to spend. Therefore these public entities announce public tenders for engineering and construction services which are in fact competitions between construction companies comparing prices and terms. Each competing construction company has in-house or subcontracted architectural studios which then design the project to be fulfilled in case the tender is won. A new version of the Public Procurement Act was enforced in 2016 with a number of improvements one of which is the obligatory requirement for all municipalities to build electronic systems for acceptance of competition entries by June 2017.

'Real' competitions which remain unrealized. This is the group including competitions which have either been cancelled after lawsuits or postponed for indefinite time by the Promoters themselves because of lack of financing/other plans for developing the region in question, etc. Within this group fall such notorious competitions as the City Centre Sofia (the competition results for one of the zones were cancelled because of lawsuits and will perhaps never be realized) or well-known good examples as Plovdiv Central Square which was cancelled because of change of the municipal development plans.

'Real' competitions which succeed in being realized. This group includes both 'quiet' competitions as the Visitor Centres Central Balkan Competition or 'loud' contesters like Varna Library Competition. These

are the examples which, in my opinion, have the power to change public attitude towards architectural competitions in the country.

At the same time public attitude is changing. More and more 'loud' competitions are organized, more and more private investors and public bodies accept the successful architectural competition as an excellent PR tool and are reluctant to risk their positive image by blocking the competition procedure or tainting or cancelling the results. What remains is:

- to build trust in competitions among the professional community;
- to clear the image of the competition as a slow, corrupt, and uncertain way to achieve a project (in the eyes of both public institutions and society);
- to convince the foreign audience of the quality, transparency and correctness of Bulgarian competitions so more foreign entries will compete and to ensure the rich variety of choices (which should be the aim of any competition for ideas) and, as a result,
- to build contemporary competition culture in the country.

What works extremely well in our local environment is the good example. Varna Library Competition is the last optimistic example, with Architects for Urbanity becoming the first foreign studio to sign a contract with a Bulgarian municipality after a fair international competition with an unprecedented popularity for our country, which was completely fair and transparent and based on Bulgarian Public Procurement Act and EU regulations. Now we need the building to be realized.

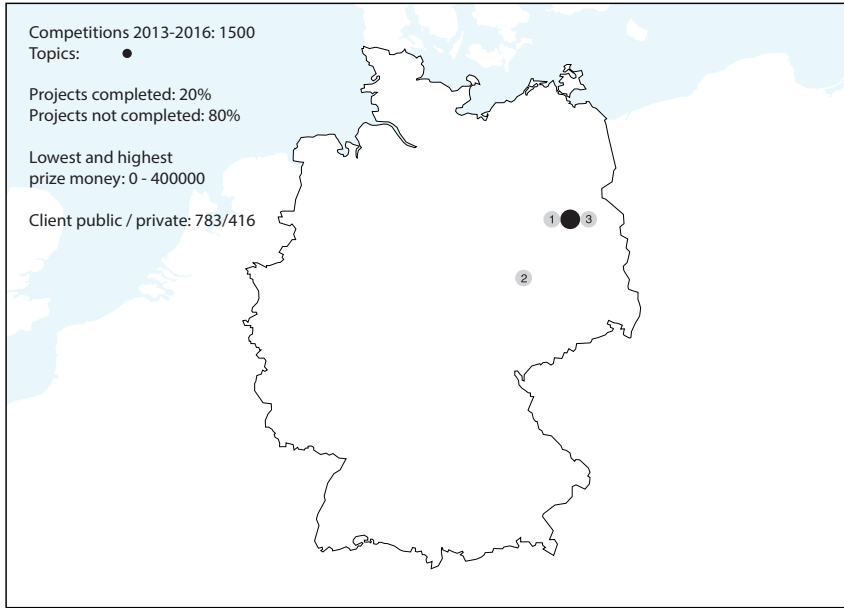








# Competition Culture in Europe: Germany



## Main portal:

[www.competitionline.com](http://www.competitionline.com): well-known, very big specialist for all competitions in Germany, also reporting now and then about important international competitions. In 2012 Competition Magazine was added, printed four times a year, with more reports, evaluation, and criticism than online. Wettbewerbe Aktuell, [www.wettbewerbe-aktuell.de](http://www.wettbewerbe-aktuell.de): very old, traditional specialist magazine, also focusing on architecture competitions only. They have completely missed the invention of the Internet (or underestimated it) which made 'competitionline' possible in the first place. They are a publishing house that also publishes books and brochures on topics connected to competitions. Baunetz and Bauwelt, [www.baunetz.de/](http://www.baunetz.de/) Current competitions of the federal ministries are on [www.bund.de](http://www.bund.de) and/or on the specific websites of the respective ministers involved, the city or commune.

## Case studies:

- 1/ Landesbibliothek Berlin
- 2/ Bauhaus Dessau
- 3/ M20/Kulturforum Berlin

## Critical voices:

**Benedikt Krone** from [competitionline.de](http://competitionline.de)

The Bundesarchitektenkammer and all Länderkammern (as well as some other lobby organizations for architects and planners), the Ministries, the mentioned media are important. The critical discourse on the big important competitions is carried over the daily press, most big German newspapers (FAZ, SZ, taz, Welt, Tagesspiegel, Frankfurter Rundschau) have specialized journalists that would comment regularly on competitions like Springer Campus, Bauhaus Dessau, extension of the Bauhaus archive in Berlin or especially M20 on Kulturforum in Berlin just recently (see case studies).

## Brief analysis of German competition culture

How would one define 'competition'? Germany has a long and rich tradition in public architectural competitions dating back a couple hundred years. For instance, the famous competition for the museums island in Berlin in 1883 – which was not the first architecture competition in Germany by far – already had 52 entries also from 'abroad' (which back then was mainly Austria)\*. Other famous examples could be the (private) competition for a skyscraper on Friedrichstrasse in 1923 (which remained unbuilt) that produced Mies van der Rohe's breathtaking visuals of a glass skyscraper (which then proved to be many times more influential and famous than any built project could have been), the competition for a new Alexanderplatz in the 1920s, the Potsdamer Platz in 1991 (the one that made Rem Koolhaas go ballistic over Hans Stimmann), and many, many more. And that is only Berlin.

Germany's rich and long history of public architectural competitions continues stronger than ever. It is positive that there are so many different types of competitions that offer a wide range of possibilities from which any single investor or public entity can choose any individually fitting type – or create their own out of the experiences of the past. The broad range of press in Germany also adds to the high standard of debate on architecture, city and public space in general, and on architecture competitions in particular.

There are regularly reappearing topics in this debate: One is that, due to the nature of a public com-

petition, the winners are always bound to a certain 'consensus'. So some critics say that only 'consensus architecture' is to be expected from these competitions. Which is certainly true for some competition results, where one wonders how on earth this could be the winner (maybe Bauhaus Dessau is an example of this). Also, the nature of beschränkte Wettbewerbe makes it very difficult for any architect to come up with a really daring and innovative proposal, as these are regularly excluded from the competition, sometimes before the jury even gets to see them. For many architects this is too much of an (economic) risk.

Speaking of risks, of course there is much criticism about competitions, because they tend to not be (fairly) paying the architects, and sometimes even stealing their ideas to realize them with another architect. This is true especially for open competitions; when 800 offices enter a competition with their proposal, how could you pay them in a fair way?

Yet, on the other hand, I cannot agree on that discussion to not do any open competitions at all. There is a regular critique that there are not enough chances for young architects, since most competitions today set such high standards/criteria for the contributors that only a handful of offices can enter. Either way, it is tough for young architects to 'afford' doing competitions. And still, there are to this day many examples of young offices who could only start by winning a public competition: from Gerkan, Marg and partner (winning the Tegel Airport in 1965, which they also built) and Volker Staab (winning the New Museum in Nuremberg

in 1993, which he also built), to young offices like Kersten+Kopp, Richter+Musikowski who started with winning competitions. The Spanish office of Gonzalez Hinz Zabala also belongs in this category, even if their winning proposal for the Bauhaus Museum in Dessau is far too boring, in my opinion – and to think that this is the 'winner' of a competition with more than 800 ideas is really rather painful.

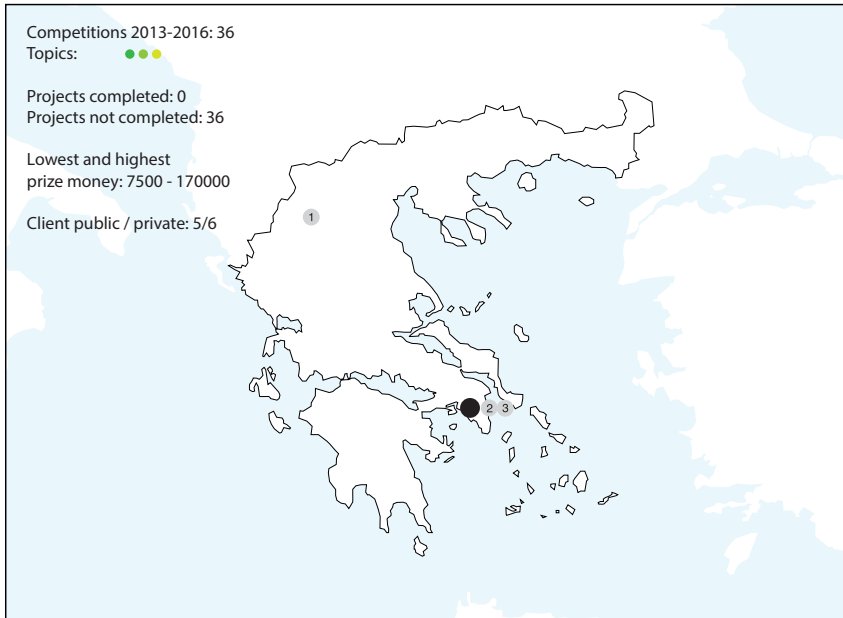
As a final thought, in speaking with many German architects over the past dozen years or so, I can remember many critiques on specific competitions. I think all of them were always full of praise of the kooperative Werkstattverfahren, a special kind of invited competition where a client would invite several offices, mostly about four to eight, and they would then make a first presentation of their ideas, discuss it with the client, politicians, and sometimes also external jury members or specialists, and only after that would their final proposal be worked out. Everyone seems really happy with this, as the in between presentation makes it possible to discuss radical ideas that would normally be removed from the competition. Also, it makes it possible to get feedback on questions much better than in the standard, anonymous competitions. So just from these talks, I got the feeling that these 'Workshop Competitions' could be the most popular among architects.

\*: Fun fact for competition fans: none of the entries were built; in the end, it was a direct commission by Kaiser Wilhelm that was realized.





# Competition Culture in Europe: Greece



## Main portal:

Greek Architects [www.greekarchitects.gr](http://www.greekarchitects.gr)  
 Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE) portal [portal/page/portal/ptee/SERVICES\\_INFORM\\_TPTEE/prokhriseis\\_meleton](http://portal/page/portal/ptee/SERVICES_INFORM_TPTEE/prokhriseis_meleton)  
 SADAS-PEA, Association of Greek Architects is the national union of Greek. [www.sadas-pea.gr](http://www.sadas-pea.gr) (Greek only)

## Case studies:

1/ Regeneration and Reuse of Former Lignite Extractive Zones in Western Macedonia  
 2/ A 'Landmark-Structure' for the Central Faliro Bay Pier, [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr) and <http://www.rethinkathenscompetition.org>  
 3/ Rethink Athens, <http://www.rethinkathenscompetition.org>

## Critical voices:

SADAS-PEA, the National Association of Greek Architects that has been an active agent in promoting the culture of open, public architectural competitions. Tonia Katerini, [sadas-pea@tee.gr](mailto:sadas-pea@tee.gr), [www.sadas-pea.gr](http://www.sadas-pea.gr)  
 Ministry of Environment and Energy is responsible for the legal/regulatory framework of architectural competitions. Eirini Klabatsea, [gramchora@prv.ypeka.gr](mailto:gramchora@prv.ypeka.gr), [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr)  
 UIA Greece is the Greek section of the International Union of Architects (UIA) supported by the Technical Chamber of Greece, [uia@uia-architectes.org](mailto:uia@uia-architectes.org), [www.facebook.com/uiagreeksection/](http://www.facebook.com/uiagreeksection/)  
 DOMES is a bi-monthly and bilingual architectural magazine, it has also been actively engaged in promoting design culture by organising four ideas competitions with an international outlook and the younger architects. Georgios A. Panetsos, [editorial@domes-architecture.com](mailto:editorial@domes-architecture.com); [info@domes-architecture.com](mailto:info@domes-architecture.com), [www.domes-architecture.com/en/](http://www.domes-architecture.com/en/)  
 Tzina Sotiropoulou, architect involved in architectural journalism. [tzina@architectones02.gr](mailto:tzina@architectones02.gr), [www.architectones02.gr](http://www.architectones02.gr)

## Brief analysis of Greek competition culture

The impact of the financial crisis on the construction sector was tremendous and thus architectural production received a huge 'shock', which also had important effects in the competitions scene. The total of public competitions organized dropped quickly: eight in 2008, zero in 2009, two in 2010, 2 in 2011. However, the 'New Framework for Holding Architectural Competitions and Competitions for Studies with Awards' that was promoted by the Ministry of Environment and Energy in 2011 changed the climate. The new framework amended the existing law regarding public procurements, assignment of studies and services (Law 3316/2005), introducing for the first time a legal framework and regulations for architectural competitions. Its key points were that it broadened the criteria that prompted the organizing of competitions regardless of their budget; it categorized the competitions in two types: architectural ideas and preliminary designs; and finally, it introduced the election of the majority of jury members from a centrally managed catalogue prepared biannually.

The jury catalogue included architects on two key requirements: ten year license and least one winning prize (first, second, or third) in Greek competitions, an award in international competitions or holding a permanent academic position in a Greek or foreign university. Through the new national competition standards, the Ministry claimed it would increase the transparency and the quality of the competitions by eliminating the fragmentary process existing in the past where

multiple actors involved, had low interest in quality or took advantage of the procedures for their own interests.

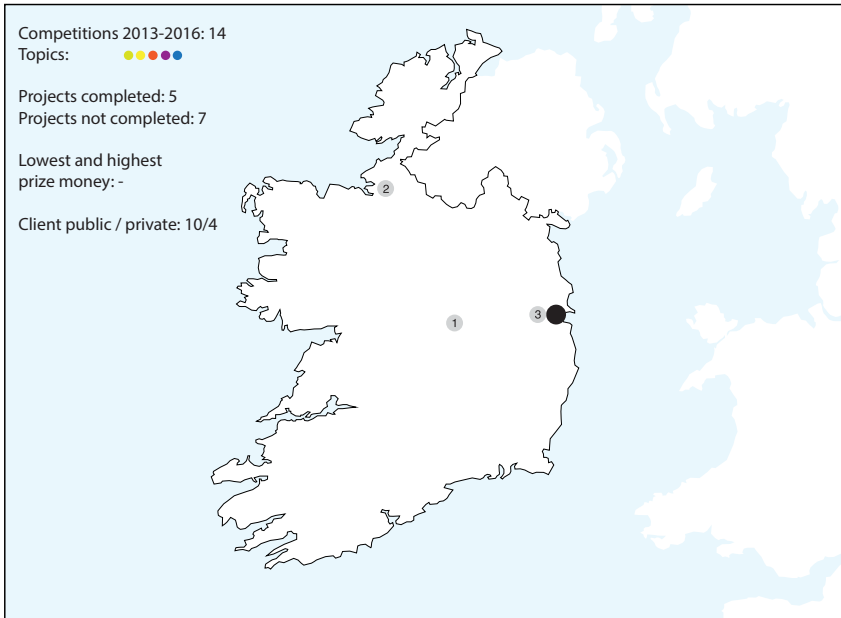
Despite the enlargement of the range of competition topics, there are some negative aspects as well. The clear separation between ideas competitions and preliminary design, introduced by the 2011-framework, increased the numbers of competitions, but at the same time, it did not lead to more project assignments for winning teams. One-stage ideas competitions where the client is not obligated to proceed to implementation have led to three scenarios: a) client picks ideas not only from first prize and excludes winners from the implementation stage, b) the client assigns the implementation studies to other professionals, ignoring quality and cultural property issues, c) in the best case, the winners are hired as the client's consultants, with a significantly lower fee. At the same time, ideas competitions require less preparation, providing less in-depth information on the project's complexities, and while the combination of architects' availability and lower submission requirements and costs (e.g., no architectural model required) increased participation, it did not necessarily increase the quality of proposals. Some even claim that it had generated more unrealizable proposals. Nevertheless, public competitions have offered architects, and not just the experienced ones, possibilities to remain creatively engaged. In this respect, the primary motive for participating seems to be the competition topic and the design challenges it offers, while the prestige and the (low) prize money appear as complementary.

The recent economic crisis has impacted the state and the local governments' operation through employees' releases and lack of public spending. However, not all problems are explained by the ongoing financial crisis, as these existed well before. Moreover, architectural, urban, and landscape competitions were never a high priority, as infrastructural projects prevailed in public spending. The fragmentary competition landscape was made even worse by the often conflicting agendas of key professional associations, which agree on promoting architectural quality through public competitions but do not always coordinate their actions towards such goals.

Although the increased numbers of competitions organized in recent years might present a positive sign for Greek competition culture, it does not really reflect the transitional nature of this period, which has challenged the Greek state's authority in promoting architectural and spatial production, both in its positive and negative aspects. In effect, it has also given way to the rise of a multiplicity of private actors (local or international), but also regional and local authorities, who are setting up synergies with the central governments and, in turn, shape architectural and urban agendas. The 2011-framework offered, until recently, a standard competition procedure, which despite its shortcomings, was proven enough to generate more architectural competitions. Recently passed legislation for public procurements (Law 4412/2016) might lead to amendments to the previous framework and its improvement, or it might signal a yet another period in the Greek competition culture.



# Competition Culture in Europe: Ireland



### Main portal:

The RIAI is both professional advocacy and registration body for architects in Ireland. It aims to protect the title architect and by extension, architecture and would claim to have a strong remit in ensuring quality in the built environment. It works for and with clients in public and private sectors to manage and deliver one and two stage competitions. <http://www.riai.ie>

### Case studies:

- 1/ Urban Primary Schools: [www.riai.ie/competitions/](http://www.riai.ie/competitions/)
- 2/ Yeats 2015 Competition: [yeats2015-architecture-competition.com](http://yeats2015-architecture-competition.com)
- 3/ PlayPark Ballyfermot: [architectureireland.ie/play-park-competition](http://architectureireland.ie/play-park-competition)

### Critical voices:

**Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF)**, [www.architecturefoundation.ie](http://www.architecturefoundation.ie). Independent group that aims to support the public to engage with and participate in architectural processes and discourses. IAF is also an initiator and facilitator of competitions for architects and has recently successfully delivered a competition for the Ballyfermot Play Park, which is the first community-led architectural competition in Ireland.

**Architectural Association of Ireland (AAI)**, [www.architecturefoundation.ie](http://www.architecturefoundation.ie). The AAI is run as a voluntary group. It has an impressive annual lecture program and the most significant awards scheme for built projects. Arguably this is Irish architects first introduction to competition culture in Ireland.

Neither specifically leads a discourse on quality in architecture or has been seen to query, rally or champion any discussion on competition. This is possibly politically difficult and in both cases their remit on quality is possibly more action based – through delivering high quality initiatives and programs for public and architects – rather than critiquing the system.

## Brief analysis of Irish competition culture

The majority of competitions in Ireland are managed for private and public sector clients by the RIAI (Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland). As the RIAI is also the registration body in Ireland (and therefore a mix of the RIBA and ARB in the UK), they market competitions to their registered architects via their website and newsletters. When an architectural competition is announced this news would typically also be carried on websites and social media pages of the Architectural Association of Ireland and the Irish Architecture Foundation. In recent years all three groups have increased and improved their online presence and offer. Competitions supported and managed by RIAI would, anecdotally, be considered as competitions in which there is the best chance of a project being realized, and competitions in which the architect will be treated fairly and well – simply because the professional body is endorsing them.

However, the RIAI performs poorly with regard to making the results of competitions publicly available, and so, while the running of the competitions can be well known and publicized, there are not always opportunities to view winning or other entries online or in exhibitions. To find results one often has to look at websites of individual architects. Given the range and quality of architectural work in Ireland, it is remarkable that Ireland has such a poor critical and intellectual infrastructure to discuss, debate, and question what happens here. There is no real architecture critic in Ireland, and the country also has a limited independent

infrastructure for architecture.

In order to provide some up-to-date data for this document, an online and telephone survey was carried out, and the comments here relate to this. Some of its conclusions:

The word competition is perhaps, in the first instance, confusing and needs clarification or a context when used. There has been a real increase in limited, private competitions in Ireland, forms of competitions that are not clearly or transparently regulated. These appear to be more common (there is no data available apart from anecdotal discussion) than 'traditional' open architectural competitions, so practitioners may be feeling excluded from competition 'culture' in Ireland.

The second point here is the emergence of limited competitions between architects to carry out work on behalf of the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA, <https://www.nama.ie>). Feedback from peers would indicate that the criteria of appointment, engagement, and submission of such work is unclear. There is evidence that some architects make work over and above what might be required in order to secure a project and, in the absence of level-playing field criteria, this is being passively supported by the commissioners.

Some architects said that very often in open competitions a broad variety of practitioners enter their work and it is useful for this work to be publicly displayed so a discussion can be had in and around

the work. In some cases when work has been publicly announced, for example, at conferences, a discussion on quality, risk taking and opening work to emerging practitioners has developed, but this is not typically followed through.

Some comments indicate a desire for more public work to be awarded via open competition.



# Competition Culture in Europe: Italy



## Main portal:

[www.professionearchitetto.it](http://www.professionearchitetto.it), [www.europaconcorsi.com](http://www.europaconcorsi.com), [www.concorrimi.it](http://www.concorrimi.it)  
[www.archiportale.com](http://www.archiportale.com), [www.architetti.com](http://www.architetti.com), [www.edilportale.com](http://www.edilportale.com)

## Case studies:

- 1/ Progetto Flaminio (Rome, 2014), [www.progettoflaminio.it](http://www.progettoflaminio.it)
- 2/ Open Taranto (Taranto, 2016), [www.opentaranto.initalia.it](http://www.opentaranto.initalia.it)
- 3/ Bologna Shoah memorial (Bologna, 2014), [www.concorsiarchibo.eu](http://www.concorsiarchibo.eu)

## Critical voices:

**CNAPPC**, [www.awn.it/news/cnapcc-informa](http://www.awn.it/news/cnapcc-informa) is founded by the Italian Ministry of Justice. Its activities focus on the interpretation and application of new laws in the building sector and on the competition market. It promotes awards, meetings, exhibitions, meeting and discussions.  
[www.architetturaecritica.it](http://www.architetturaecritica.it)

**AIAC - Italian Association of Architecture and Criticism** founded by Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi organizes debates, competitions, exhibitions and publications. Since 2006 it launches competitions for architects and critics under 35 in order to promote young Italian talent.  
[www.architetturae-critica.it](http://www.architetturae-critica.it)

**NIB - New Italian Blood**, founded by Luigi Centola, is a website specialized in the conception, management and promotion of competitions and prizes. It is experienced in the development and organization of competitions and prizes for both public Administrations and private companies.  
[www.newitalianblood.com](http://www.newitalianblood.com), [info@centolaassociati.com](mailto:info@centolaassociati.com)

**Progetti e Concorsi – Magazine**, edited by Giorgio Santilli, published weekly between 2006 and 2015. It informed all Italian architects about new contests, supervised what happened, followed the results and the realizations process or the critical situations. [www.facebook.com/Progetti-e-concorsi-115171908516906](http://www.facebook.com/Progetti-e-concorsi-115171908516906), [giorgio.santilli@ilssole24ore.com](mailto:giorgio.santilli@ilssole24ore.com)

## Brief analysis of Italian competition culture

The Italian state of competition culture is critical. On one hand the numbers tell us we have a large amount of new contests every year, with many different characteristics. But only few of them end up with concrete realizations. To better understand this peculiar panorama, we can outline some issues that are common in Italy.

The first problem is that too many ideas competitions are difficult to realize. Above all because of the continuous political changes and lack of economic stability. Secondly, the biggest and most important contests are not freely accessible to all the architects. Especially the ones with large investments ask for economic guarantees (sales volume) that, de facto, exclude the access to younger practices. Thirdly, when the competitions are open to all, they do not provide for refunds to the finalists, because of the limited amount of resources available. Finally, just a few contests are organized in order to guarantee a clear selection at the first stage (avoiding waste of time and resources). Thus, just a small amount of new buildings results from an equal and transparent process of competition, with an upcoming generations of designers that will not find the right space and occasions to come to light as a consequence.

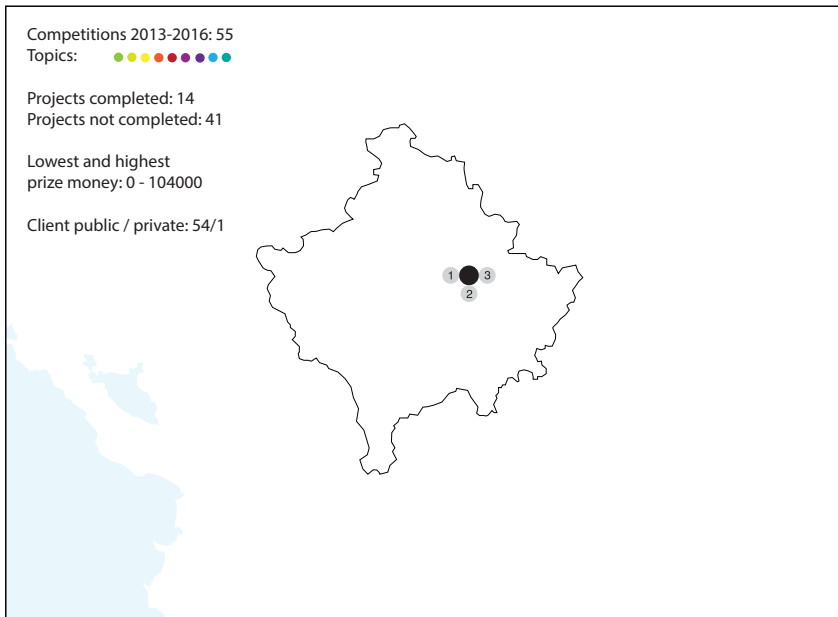
Furthermore, this ineffective system of too many ideas competitions with no budget and hundreds of winning proposals that are never realized, leads to the practice of established firms taking advantage of the

younger architects (who are not paid for months).

All these elements result in a critical opinion regarding the way competitions are organized in Italy. In short, a waste of time, resources, talents, and opportunities. The only chance for a real change in this situation can come from a new law which can better regulate all the phases of the competitions process, and by doing so, raising the quality of the proposals and, consequently, the level of the built environment.



# Competition Culture in Europe: Kosovo



## Main portal:

National competitions, [www.krpp.rks-gov.net](http://www.krpp.rks-gov.net)  
 International competitions, [www.bustler.net](http://www.bustler.net) and [www.competitions.org](http://www.competitions.org)

## Case studies:

- 1/ Redesign of the public space in 'Kurriz' Dardania neighbourhood (2014)
- 2/ Competition to design the Central Mosque of Prishtina (2012-2013)  
[www.cmprcompetition.com](http://www.cmprcompetition.com) –contents removed
- 3/ Open call for designing the masterplan of 'Kodrina' complex in Prishtina, Kosovo(2015)

## Critical voices:

**Kosovo Architecture Foundation**, an NGO founded in early 2012 by Bekim Ramku, organizes Prishtina Architecture Week – annual event, hosting lectures, workshops, exhibitions with the intentions of bringing contemporary theories and methodologies in the field of architecture and urban planning from well known architects, in Kosovo.

**Eliza Hoxha** architect and urban planner, critical about ill doings in the field of architecture and especially those affecting the public realm. Published a book 'City and love', a collection of articles published over the years.

**Arbër Sadiki-architect**, also critical and opinionated about developments in the field of architecture.

## Brief analysis of Kosovar competition culture

The competition culture in Kosovo is poor and unregulated. In the majority of cases, design contests are administered as any other tendering procedure, through the Public Procurement system. They are organized by public institutions and can be categorized as 'national competitions'. In these competitions the client is the organizer, the programmer prepares the project brief, and public servants of the respective institutions are appointed members of the jury. This has an adverse effect on the competition results: selected designs more often reflect the lack of professional capability of the jury members, while the project brief, in many cases, is unprofessional, poorly defined, and lacking important information. The evaluation formula is drafted in such a way that the design criteria are never more decisive than the design fee or eligibility criteria. Additionally, these competitions are highly demanding regarding the eligibility criteria, making it very difficult for new practices and young architects to enter.

The project evaluation process is not transparent, as the jury members are not made public, and they do not deliver a report. It is unfortunate that this is a requirement stipulated by the Kosovar Law on Public procurement (article 80), seeking confidentiality of the jury deliberations and opinions of the members of the jury. This goes against the EU principles for transparency, and more distinctly, it is not in line with the EU directive 2004/17/EC (article 66). Also, the prize money is usually very low, and sometimes there are no awards for the runners-up. These are just some of the

reasons why the number of entries is so low, and continues to be so.

On the other hand, several 'international competitions' were organized over the years, which attempted to duplicate competition models from other countries, thus attracting international, well-known, and prestigious architecture studios. In general there were positive changes: the jury members were known and, in most cases, they were competent professionals; an exhibition of the proposals was part of the process; there were less requirements regarding eligibility and a bigger prize budget, all leading to a lot of entries and better quality of the proposals. However, despite these efforts, out of all international competitions, not one has been finalized with a built project.

In fact, less than a quarter of all competitions announced in the past four years were realized. The reasons are many, but more often it is because a) the budget allocated for the realization of the project isn't sufficient, b) overall bad project planning, c) the project brief contains mistakes or lacks information, d) there is a low number of entries, e) the detailed design has flaws and is unprofessional, or f) the competition was annulled after an official complaint and then never announced again.

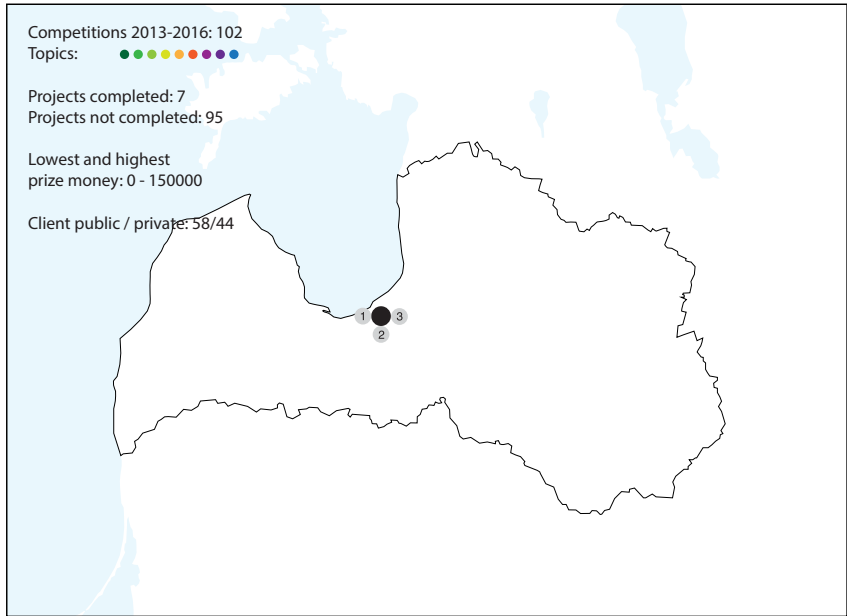
In Kosovo there is no organization or individual responsible for the quality of the competitions. The Association of the Architects of Kosovo (established in 1956) was never active in drafting a regulatory framework for competitions, nor as a regulating body, orga-

nizer, or advisor of competitions. To add to this, even though the professional community in social media and informal discussion more or less show their dissatisfaction with subject in question, they remain silent; it is hard to name even one professional who could be considered as a critical voice regarding competitions.

When analysing the competition culture in the country, the prize money, or the contract value for architectural services, one cannot overlook the fact that the value of good design is still mostly absent in our society. There are many reasons why most developments since after the war are unappealing, but an important one is the low valuation of the work of an architect and urbanist, even by the public client. In conclusion, design competitions in Kosovo are thus far not utilized as a practice that ensures high quality contemporary design solutions, finalized with a built project. Hence, there is an immediate need to develop the legal framework that can provide the foundation for well-regulated competitions; draft other rules and regulations, such as the architect's fee and standards for service provision, which additionally benefit the quality of competitions; establish or reinforce by law an organization that will be responsible for the quality of the competitions, like the Association of the Architects of Kosovo; and implement an active campaign to promote the use of competitions for public and private clients.



# Competition Culture in Europe: Latvia



### Main portal:

IUB – Procurement Monitoring Bureau, [www.iub.gov.lv](http://www.iub.gov.lv) providing access to all public procurement notices regarding contracts that exceed the limit of EUR 10 000. The majority of work is related to the construction industries making 36% of all public procurement in Latvia.  
 The Union of Latvian Architects (LAS), [www.latarh.lv/](http://www.latarh.lv/)  
 Local / regional: Riga, [www.riga.lv/lv](http://www.riga.lv/lv), Jurmala, <https://www.jurmala.lv>  
 Liepaja, [www.varti.liepaja.lv](http://www.varti.liepaja.lv), Ventspils, [www.ventspils.lv](http://www.ventspils.lv)

### Case studies:

- 1/ LMoCA – The Latvian Museum of Contemporary Art in Riga (2016), [www.malcolmreading.co.uk](http://www.malcolmreading.co.uk)
- 2/ Rail Baltica Transport Hub in Riga (2016), [www.edzl.lv/lv/aktualitates/metu-konkurss](http://www.edzl.lv/lv/aktualitates/metu-konkurss)
- 3/ Masterplan for Zakusala island in Riga (2016), [www.latarh.lv/fi/konkursi/Zakusala/Brief%20ENG\\_approved.pdf](http://www.latarh.lv/fi/konkursi/Zakusala/Brief%20ENG_approved.pdf)

### Critical voices:

**The Union of Latvian Architects.** [latarh.lv](http://latarh.lv), [latarh@latarh.lv](mailto:latarh@latarh.lv). Having issued the Good Competition Practice Guide, the Union of Latvian Architects is an active lobby for good competitions practice.  
**Linda Leitane-Smidberga**, architect, PhD candidate, [instagram.com/leitanelinda](https://www.instagram.com/leitanelinda), [leitane.linda@gmail.com](mailto:leitane.linda@gmail.com)  
 Most data used in this survey comes from Linda Leitane-Smidberga, a PhD candidate at Riga Technical University, currently researching architecture competitions in Latvia.  
**A4D.** [www.a4d.lv](http://www.a4d.lv), [a4d@a4d.lv](mailto:a4d@a4d.lv) A4D is an alternative architecture news portal run by AVF architecture foundation. Alongside new project galleries, it publishes competition reviews written by its editor Artis Zvirgzdins.  
**Social media** – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram  
 Unlike organisations, architects and architecture critics tend to write in English offering fast insight of happenings in Latvian architecture.

## Brief analysis of Latvian competition culture

Competitions have been vital part of architectural expression in Latvia since the middle of the 19th century. From those times to nowadays, through becoming an independent state and surviving occupation regimes, hundreds of well-known buildings – churches, theatres, banks, hospitals, monuments, and other landmarks – have been created as a result of a contest of architectural ideas. Up to this day competitions in Latvia are seen as democratic tools to get the best ideas for different situations as well as to offer a getaway from young to established for all professionals.

Yet, competition culture these days has moved away from artistic and often utopian exercise to become a highly formalized procedure. The many recent competitions, open or invited, have attracted foreign participants for buildings such as the Great Amber concert hall in Liepaja by Giencke & Company Architects (AT) and the Latvian National Museum of Art in Riga by Processoffice (LT), but the competition scene in Latvia is rather marginal, if not provincial, and different in quality. Competitions of high standard are seldom, most suffer from chaotic procedures, unclear brief, ineffective juries, poor prize money, and bad publicity as a result. Many end without a winner, and some never evolve into a built structure. With a few exceptions, competition budgets are small, thus attracting only young, local practices ready to invest their resources in order to get their first large-scale built work. These circumstances, however, have sometimes

proved to be successful, as some of the award-winning projects have been created by young architects.

Life after competitions and, in case of the client representing the public sector, the whole design and building process can often be ruthless, exhausting, and ,have a detrimental impact on the architects' businesses. In order to meet and understand the regulations, a foreign practice would have to engage a local partner – it is best to have at least a consultant before entering a competition, as local building regulations are often tough and complicated due to highly protected heritage that covers, for example, most of Riga city. A typical client in Latvia is rarely a visionary person: moreover the state or local government would be represented by a bunch of bureaucrats – the architect behind a competition entry must not only have the talent, but also charm and stamina to take it from the first sketch to the opening party.

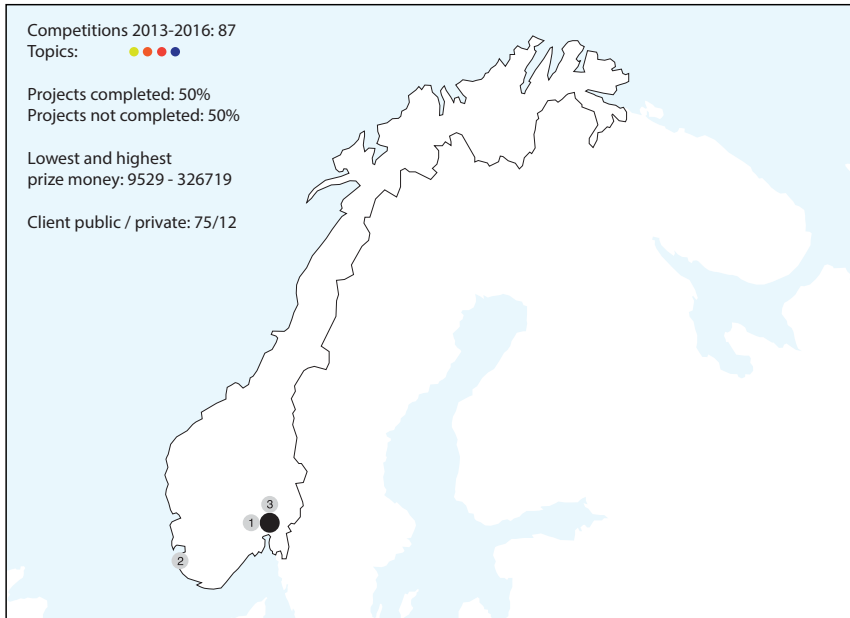
All in all, things are not so bad. Latvian architecture being part of the EU and the European architecture system is slowly opening its borders. Most of the younger generation of architects have studied in European architecture schools, and for many years now there is a system of national architecture awards given by an international jury. David Adjaye is working on the next important cultural project here – The Latvian Museum of Contemporary Art –. Some really good competitions have been organized, and most national, award-winning buildings have been created as a result of competitions.







# Competition Culture in Europe: Norway



**Main portal:**  
[www.arkitektur.no](http://www.arkitektur.no)  
[www.doffin.no](http://www.doffin.no)  
[www.mersell.no](http://www.mersell.no)

**Case studies:**  
 1/ Maritimt Vitensenter Randaberg, [www.maritimtvitensenter.no/](http://www.maritimtvitensenter.no/)  
 2/ Kistefosdammen kindergarten, [www.asker.kommune.no/samfunnsutvikling/futurebuilt/kistefosdammen-barnehage/](http://www.asker.kommune.no/samfunnsutvikling/futurebuilt/kistefosdammen-barnehage/)  
 3/ New Government Quarter in Oslo, [www.statsbygg.no](http://www.statsbygg.no)

**Critical voices:**  
**NAL, Norwegian association of Architects.** Gisle Nataas is competition leader: [gna@arkitektur.no](mailto:gna@arkitektur.no). The Norwegian Architects Association (NAL) has a competition office that supervises competition briefs and contributes jury members in a step to professionalize and increase the quality of the judgment situation in competitions. Most important player in developing how competitions are organized.  
**AiN, the Association of Consulting Architects in Norway.** Founded in 1980 and changed name in 2005 to: Arkitektbedriftene i Norge. (Architect firms in Norway.) Alessandra Kossberg is both in the board of AiN and leader of the competition committee, [ako@jva.no](mailto:ako@jva.no)

**Statsbygg Entra** is the manager of all state property that are a part of the real estate market, and Statsbygg manages for instance cultural buildings, schools, care centres, hospitals and other state financed organizations. Head of building: Synnove Lyssand Sandberg, [synnove.sandberg@statsbygg.no](mailto:synnove.sandberg@statsbygg.no)

## Brief analysis of Norwegian competition culture

Architectural competitions have been a very important part of the Norwegian architectural culture and an instrumental tool for the development and building of most of the important cultural, religious, and political buildings in the country. From churches and town halls to theatres and museums, the architectural competition has been seen as the way to guarantee both a democratic process and high quality in the proposed and built architecture. The results of these competitions are often subjects of heated public debates. The architecture competition has been seen as a way of making the process public, and also to get the best results in projects of importance and with high ambitions. It is a way of opening up the professional field for new offices as well. Snøhetta is probably the most known example in recent years that built their office on open competitions, but there also many other more local examples.

What has changed in recent years is that the field of architecture has expanded and has become more global. Open competitions have received a high number of proposals, many from the neighboring countries in Scandinavia, but also from Europe in general. In many of the high-profile competitions in recent years the winners have been from outside Norway - especially Danish architects, but also Spanish architects have won several competitions. In addition to this general globalization there have been the effects of the European market that, to some extent, also led to European offices taking part in pre-qualified

processes to participate in competitions.

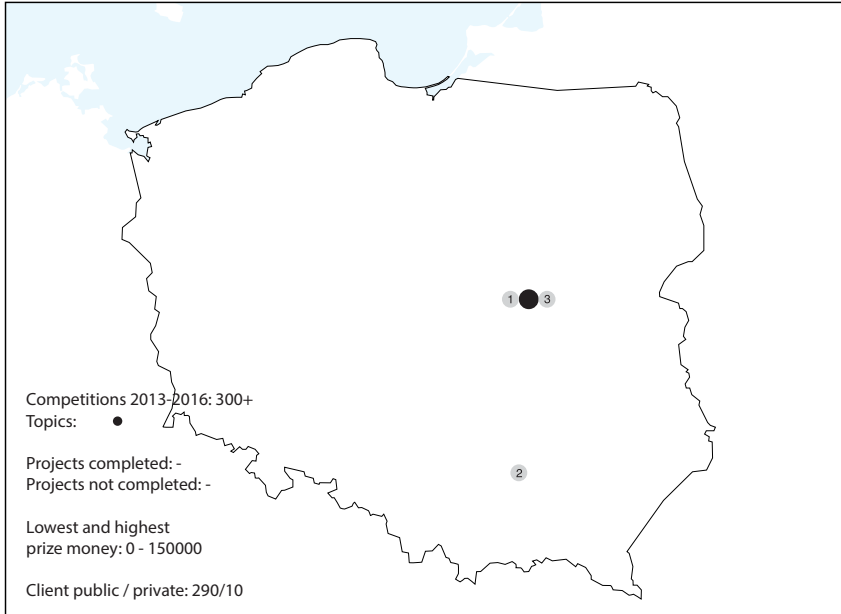
We have the feeling that some attempts to restrict the openness of competitions in recent years are an effect of this situation. Examples of this include: requirements for Norwegian or Scandinavian language, competition documents and websites only in Norwegian, higher requirements for qualification and experience prior to the competition, etc.

The most important debate on competitions in recent years has been between NAL and Statsbygg, regarding if and how competitions should be arranged. Statsbygg, who builds many of the public buildings, seeks to minimize risk in their projects by using architects they know and pre-qualified models where prior experience and portfolio are more important than the competition proposal. They do this by designing a more narrow process in advance of the competition, as well as a negotiating phase after the jury has finished its work. Potentially, this could lead to a different architect than the competition winner being hired. NAL emphasizes that the winner should be asked first.

In conclusion, the role of the competition is well established in Norway, both as a way to find the right architect and the right project for high-profile tasks.



## Competition Culture in Europe: Poland



### Main portal:

Association of Polish Architects, [www.sarp.org.pl](http://www.sarp.org.pl) and also on the websites of the numerous local branches of the Association of Polish Architects: [www.kielce.sarp.org.pl](http://www.kielce.sarp.org.pl), [www.hszzecin.sarp.org.pl/konkursy](http://www.hszzecin.sarp.org.pl/konkursy), [www.wroclaw.sarp.org.pl/pl/news/konkursy?page=1](http://www.wroclaw.sarp.org.pl/pl/news/konkursy?page=1), [www.sarp.katowice.pl/konkursy/konkursy\\_realizacyjne\\_sarp\\_katowice](http://www.sarp.katowice.pl/konkursy/konkursy_realizacyjne_sarp_katowice), [www.sarp.warszawa.pl/konkurs\\_stan/biezace](http://www.sarp.warszawa.pl/konkurs_stan/biezace), [www.sarp.krakow.pl/konkursy](http://www.sarp.krakow.pl/konkursy), [www.gdansk.sarp.org.pl/pokaz\\_kat.php?kat=2](http://www.gdansk.sarp.org.pl/pokaz_kat.php?kat=2), [Architektura-murator monthly: \[www.architektura.muratorplus.pl/konkursy/\]\(http://www.architektura.muratorplus.pl/konkursy/\)](http://Architektura-murator.monthly:www.architektura.muratorplus.pl/konkursy/) Sometimes there are special websites of the competitions. In rare cases bilingual e.g.: [www.konkurs.sinfoniavarsovia.org](http://www.konkurs.sinfoniavarsovia.org) The [www.a-ronet.pl](http://www.a-ronet.pl) website announces the majority of the competition results. They announce also new competitions but not many of them. The competitions are also announced in the European Union bulletins.

### Case studies:

1/ Sinfonia Varsovia Music Center 2010 [www.konkurs.sinfoniavarsovia.org](http://www.konkurs.sinfoniavarsovia.org)  
2/ Creative, educational and cultural programme with urban and architectural design of Education Park 'The Academy of Fairytale' in Pacanów [www.akademiabajki.pacanow.eu/?page\\_id=16](http://www.akademiabajki.pacanow.eu/?page_id=16)  
3/ Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge over Vistula River in Warsaw, [www.architektura.um.warszawa.pl/mostdlapieszch](http://www.architektura.um.warszawa.pl/mostdlapieszch)  
In most cases the websites are closed down after the competition phase.

### Critical voices:

Wojciech Kaczura, architect  
Wojciech Gwizdak, architect  
Jerzy Szczepanik-Dzikowski, architect  
Marlena Happach, architect  
Jacek Lenart, architect  
Piotr Bujas, architect

### Brief analysis of Polish competition culture

The 2015 Mies van der Rohe Award for the Philharmonic Hall in Szczecin by Barcelona-based Estudio Barozzi Veiga is not an exception, but the highlight of the Polish competition reality in the last fifteen years. Just a few years before the acceptance of Poland to the European Union the country began building the biggest number of public objects and spaces in its history. The number of architectural competitions is also unprecedented. In the years 2005-2016 more than 900 architectural competitions have been organized in Poland. This is more than during the whole period of communism (1945-1989, numbering slightly more than 700). The EU-membership has accelerated that process, and also meant increasing openness of Polish competitions for foreign parties as part of the opening of the market. Over a dozen objects have been built in Poland by foreign offices after winning competitions, construction of which nearly always takes place in cooperation with Polish architectural offices. The participation of foreign architectural teams in competitions in Poland is a common thing. Especially two-stage competitions often have a larger number of foreign participants. In the case of the UJA Competition for the Museum of the History of Poland in Warsaw in 2009 and Sinfonia Varsovia Music Center with the Concert Hall in Warsaw in 2010 there were many participants from all over the world.

Competition culture in Poland is very diverse. There are many well-prepared competitions with clear

information about the plans of the investor and availability of materials provided for the participants including CAD maps, analysis of the determinants, and different elaborations. In many cases public consultation is organized before the competition starts. In some cases the rules are too strict concerning following the competition brief, which disrupts good solutions and often forces juries to choose between the best project, which does not fully follow the details of the brief, and the project which is not the best but follows the details of the brief.

A big problem is not guaranteeing the rights of the participants. There are even cases where organizers do not guarantee payment of the awards and reserve the right to cancel the competition. In many cases architects are forced to guarantee the elements of the schedule which are independent of them (e.g., the date of receiving the building permit). There is a legal case between the capital city of Warsaw and the architectural competition winner, Swiss architect Christian Kerez, who did not get the building permit for the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw in time. He did not submit the project for which he could not get the building permit because the city authorities, who were also the investor, did not have the rights to the entire plot of the museum. There are also big differences in openness of access to competitions. In some cases it is restricted to experienced offices, reducing the circle of participants to the parties who have delivered the building permit design for a similar kind of investment within last three years. The commercial investors quite often issue closed competitions without any special rules. They

just ask few offices to prepare concept designs for them for free.

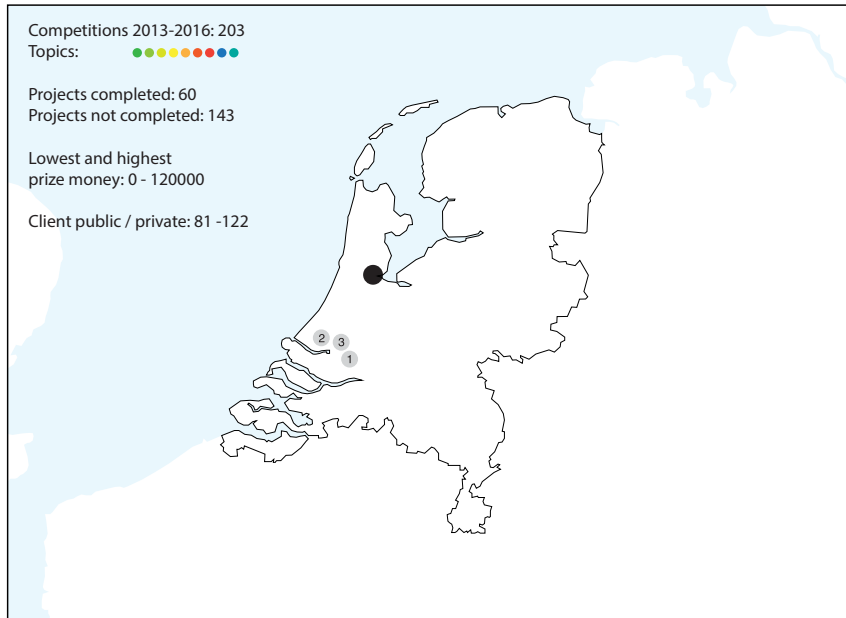
Polish law prevents public institutions from organizing closed competitions, but there are some rare attempts to act against it. In case of the competition for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, which is the effect of a public private partnership, the competition and project were financed by a non-governmental organization, which allowed the possibility of pre-selection. Eleven teams were pre-selected based on their portfolios and information about skills and experiences of their members. Following the fiasco of the cooperation with Christian Kerez, the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, together with the Theatre Rozmaitości which share the seat with them organized a procedure called the competitive dialogue. Here teams were chosen after points were given for the quantitative parameters of former projects, such as the number of seats in the designed theatre or auditorium halls, or the total space of designed buildings without a regard on quality.

In some competitions, including the big ones (e.g., Sinfonia Varsovia Music Centre in Warsaw, with a concert hall with a capacity of 1800 people, and the Museum of History of Poland in Warsaw), every adult citizen had the possibility to participate. The requirement of having the licensed architects, structural engineers, and other specialists on the team that are required according to Polish law was postponed until the moment the commission was negotiated with the winner.





# Competition Culture in Europe: Netherlands



## Main portal:

[www.ontwerpwedstrijden.nl](http://www.ontwerpwedstrijden.nl)  
[www.tenderned.nl](http://www.tenderned.nl)  
[www.aanbestedingskalender.nl](http://www.aanbestedingskalender.nl)

## Case studies:

1/ Prins Clausbrug, Dordrecht, [www.arch-lokaal.nl/prins-clausbrug-dordrecht/](http://www.arch-lokaal.nl/prins-clausbrug-dordrecht/)  
 2/ Family apartments, Rotterdam, [www.arch-lokaal.nl/open-oproep-gezinsappartementen/Visitor's center](http://www.arch-lokaal.nl/open-oproep-gezinsappartementen/Visitor's center),  
 3/ UNESCO World Heritage Kinderdijk, [www.arch-lokaal.nl/open-oproep-werelderfgoed-kinderdijk/](http://www.arch-lokaal.nl/open-oproep-werelderfgoed-kinderdijk/)

## Critical voices:

[www.ontwerpwedstrijden.nl](http://www.ontwerpwedstrijden.nl) advises public and private clients about (European) procurement procedures and competitions since 1997. KOMPAS light is a free digital manual compiled on the initiative of the government architect and is widely endorsed by various ministries, designers' groups, corporations, developers, and the Association of Dutch Municipalities, [cilly.jansen@arch-lokaal.nl](mailto:cilly.jansen@arch-lokaal.nl)  
**Architectuur Lokaal** is an independent, non-commercial center of expertise devoted to building culture since 1993. The foundation connects cultural policy, architectural policy and construction policy. It advances client expertise on spatial planning, urban and architectural design, and art in public space by organizing design ateliers, masterclasses, excursions and tailored advice to (public) commissioners. [www.arch-lokaal.nl](http://www.arch-lokaal.nl), [cilly.jansen@arch-lokaal.nl](mailto:cilly.jansen@arch-lokaal.nl)  
**www.archined.nl** is a critical online platform for architecture in the Netherlands

## Brief analysis of Dutch competition culture

One of the best-known buildings that has been realized in the Netherlands as a result of a design competition is the Peace Palace (Vredespaleis) in The Hague. This competition took place in 1905. The winner from among the 216 participating international architectural firms was the French architect Louis Cordonnier. Interestingly, the Dutch architect Eduard Cuypers provided four completely different designs, together with so many detail drawings that an entire train wagon was needed to transport the entries to The Hague. The costs incurred by the architectural firm were significantly higher than the design fee. Design contests in the Netherlands are not a recent phenomenon, but even back then there was no question of what one could call a competition culture. Competitions were regularly organized and, prior to publication, their briefs were submitted to the Permanent Competition Commission (PPC) of the architects' organization known as BNA (Branchevereniging Nederlandse Architectenbureaus). In the 1990s discussions on proportionality at such architect selection processes, like in Cuypers's time, intensified among architects. This must be seen in the light of the emerging European directives, which made it impossible for municipalities, for example, to work with lists of favourite local architects.

The Chief Government Architect, a 200-year-old institution, took the lead in investigating possibilities for a structured competition culture, in collaboration with all concerned parties: ministries, municipalities, architects, project developers, and housing corporations.

This resulted in instruction manuals with the title KOMPAS light, to be used for competitions and multiple assignments. By request of the involved parties, in 1997 Architectuur Lokaal, as an independent and non-profit organization, founded Steunpunt Architectuuroprachten & Ontwerpwedstrijden (Help desk for Architectural Commissions & Design Competitions) for such selections among architects, as a result of which the PPC at BNA was abolished.

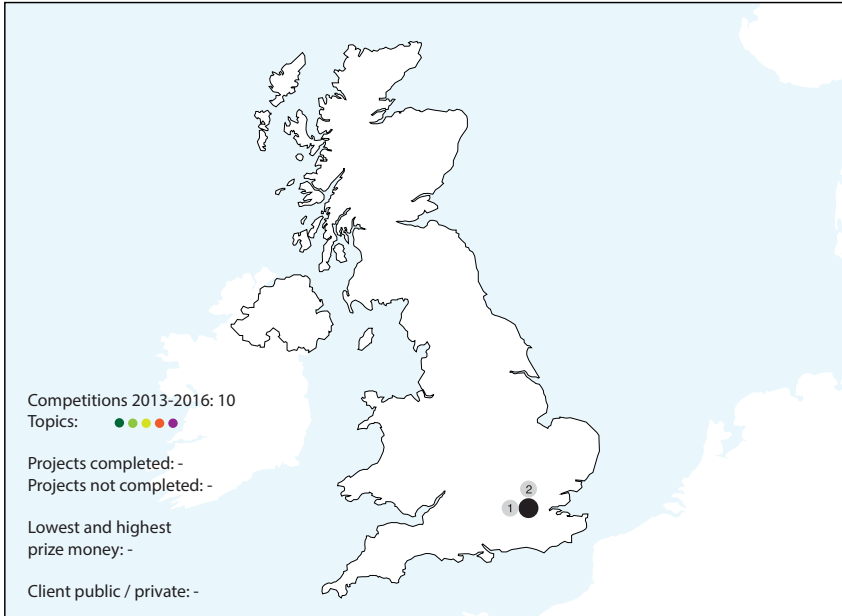
Architectuur Lokaal aims to provide full transparency and access to procedures for all parties. Mapping design competition culture is far from easy. There is no central registration of design competitions (tenders for architecture and design contests) in the Netherlands, nor is this the case in neighbouring countries. Tenders electronic daily (TED) at [ted.europa.eu](http://ted.europa.eu), the electronic supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union, is a valuable resource for selection procedures that fall under the European Public Procurement Directives, but as a repository it has its shortcomings. So the Steunpunt started mapping the procedures and developed a digital database. Nowadays, the online database of the Steunpunt is the best available resource for mapping the geography of Dutch design competition culture. All public procurement procedures for architectural commissions and all design competitions since July 2005 (when the national decrees for implementation of the European Public Procurement Directives were formally adopted) are collected on the website. Independency and continuity are the key in developing a healthy competition culture. In addition, between 1995 and 2017 the KOMPAS light

manuals have been (re)developed and digitalized for design contests, development competitions, procurement of architectural assignments, and integrated contracts – all according to EU and national legislation. The digital formats allow for customization: each contest is different. The BNA control system from the 1980s has been replaced by a self-certification system. Between 2008 and 2013 the Steunpunt submitted daily letters with recommendations for improvement of procedure. The Steunpunt not only registers notices for procedures, but also monitors the proceedings of these procedures and publishes best practices. Thus, the Steunpunt offers unique information about design competition culture in the Netherlands.

Together these instruments do not necessarily result in a healthy competition culture. The rise in the number of competitions in the Netherlands may have to do with recent, new issues in society for which new solutions must be found. For this reason, design contests have proven to be an effective means. In order to make them accessible for new generations of architects, Architectuur Lokaal developed a two-round contest procedure, which has become very popular with both public and private clients. The first round takes the character of an open 'ideas' contest, with participants submitting a concise project concept. An independent jury selects a limited number of submissions, and the designers of these are then invited to elaborate their concepts further, for a fee, in a second round. All entries from both rounds are published online, and every winning design from recent design competitions will be realized.



# Competition Culture in Europe: UNITED KINGDOM



## Main portal:

The Architects Journal, Building Design along with other magazines and online providers provide competitions notifications services and dedicated outlets. Website providers include: e-Architects, Archdaily, Bustler, Death by architecture, Divisare, TheArchitectureRoom. Agencies include the RIBA Competitions Service, Collander and Malcolm Reading Associates. Generally it is immaterial to these services whether the competitions are in the private or public sector. Notably however few private competitions are announced this way. Project Compass; Contracts Finder; eSourcing NI; Public Contracts Scotland; Sell2Wales; London Tenders Portal; South East Business Portal; Tenders Direct; In Tender; Bravo Solutions; Delta e-sourcing; MyTenders and Supplying the South West.

## Case studies:

- 1/ A 'Design' competition for a national Holocaust Memorial organized by Malcolm Reading Associates (and won by them through a completion procedure for a reputed fee in excess of £1m) recently announced its shortlist
- 2/ Thames Garden Bridge, [www.gardenbridge.london](http://www.gardenbridge.london)

## Critical voices:

The Architects Journal (AJ), Merlin Fulcher and Will Hurst.  
 Project Compass CIC, a voluntary procurement Intelligence Service that aims to improve architectural competition culture. Since commencement it has now intervened to achieve better outcomes in approximately 18 key competition procedures, published and campaigned on key competition issues (Education Funding Agency and Thames Garden Bridge), publishes guidance, reports and academic papers and undertakes speaking roles on the subject, encompassing conferences, CPD's and lecturing.  
 Walter Menteth, Russell Curtis and Bridget Sawyers.  
 The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), Linda Stevens.  
 The Architecture Foundation

## Brief analysis of British competition culture

Given the scale and size of the UK, it has an apparently impoverished architectural competitions culture. There are few promoters of innovation. Young and emergent practices obtain little access to work through UK competitions, and are required to develop their expertise largely through the private sector before being capable of engaging. Access to work below thresholds reputedly is better, but there is no evidence to verify this. Many architects continue to enter in the hope of progression. UK talent might have more and better opportunity to compete if key parameters could be reformed.

The levels set for the services thresholds is far too low, making competitions uneconomic while precluding talent from accessing the market and incentivizing market aggregation in times of fiscal austerity. The UK/EU should seek, from WTO negotiations, a significant increase in the threshold values for service appointments or, like Japan, seek special dispensation for the services of an architect.

A diminution in quality and professionalism has been highlighted in the UK recently by two significant incidents. In Edinburgh, Scotland, the PFI schools program was shown to be deficient when walls collapsed and a number of other serious defects emerged in 2016, requiring that a large number of schools be closed for prolonged periods. A lack of due site construction supervision was blamed, despite this being an occurrence across a number of schools. It is

the author's inescapable view that some cause must inevitably be attributable to the process, when there are such multiple occurrences, and that the financial motivations underpinning such contracts, having a lack of professionalism are potential liabilities. In Southwark London an inquiry reporting in February 2017 again found that, in the case of high-rise flats which caught fire killing a significant number, the cause was poor-quality construction and a lack of supervision, the works having been entrusted to a contractor without due diligence. The apparent, now common, severance between design and construction, and its lack of supervision by independent professionals, is now being shown to have impacts.

Moreover, the UK government and its civil service are fully engaged in Brexit and appear to have no capacity for significant, meaningful reform beyond this all-consuming objective. Brexit, however, throws up a number of further risks for existing UK competition practices. Without access to OJEU and e-certis, and a breakdown in trade agreements, the UK system for Public Contracts breaks down. UK clients and architects would need to rely upon Contracts Finder and the other national portals. Yet, relative to OJEU and e-certis, this is a deficient immature system that is poorly resourced, has little transparency, and is in need of significant reform.

A number of other Brexit issues emerge at the interface between the UK and the EU. However, if the UK should end with trading agreements, then this could provide significant opportunity for the expansion

in the UK use of Design Contests, because this is one of the few procurement procedures largely set by the WTO GPA. Given the inclination this would maintain UK open market access globally, but does not operate in reverse.

UK cultural and ethical values may be seen to underpin much of the UK professions disengagement from competition culture, and this remains a big challenge. Yet there are many positive signs including the move towards more open competition procedures, and the expansion in the use of smaller and more numerous lots that herald a step change. The opportunity for significant digital disruption to reposition UK competition approaches along with work implementation platforms remains, yet is incapable of achieving interest from funders.





## **Case Studies**



Vlora - Vlora Waterfront: winning proposal: Xaveer De Geyter Architects (Brussels, Belgium) and MetroPOLIS architecture & planning (Tirana, Albania) [www.xdga.be](http://www.xdga.be); [www.metroplis.al](http://www.metroplis.al)

# ALBANIA

## Vlora - Waterfront Competiton (2014)

**Why:** The Vlora Waterfront Competition was the first major competition announced publicly to the community of architects in Albania and abroad since 2012.

**What:** The competition brief accepted direct submissions without a requirement to register. The brief provided a series of indicators and key projects that participants should consider in the development of their proposals, but there were no strict requirements, which gave more freedom for experimental interventions or pragmatic approaches. The focus was on urban design and infrastructural solutions, as the waterfront is part of the national highway through the Albanian Riviera linking Vlora and central Albania with other cities south-west of the country. All submitted projects were reviewed by the competition jury. They selected a longlist of fifteen projects for further and more extensive review, resulting a shortlist of five international projects and one local project. The five international participants publicly presented their proposals to the jury.

**Winner:** The two winning proposals, from Xaveer De Geyter Architects (BE) and MetroPOLIS architecture and planning (AL), were asked to collaborate in order to implement a joint proposal principally based on their ideas submitted for the competition.

**When:** Until today the project is not yet realized, although the original deadline was set one year after the announcement of the competition winner. This delay is due to problems in the implementation of the project and, in particular, infrastructural details.





Winner Lot 1: international architect: PIOVENEFABI (Milan, Italy), YellowOffice - Landscape Urbanism and Design (Milan, Italy); local architect: ArchiSpace Studio (Tirana, Albania)

Winner Lot 2: international architect: Dogma (Brussels, Belgium), local architect: Studio B&L (Tirana, Albania), designer: Andrea Branzi (Florence, Italy)

Winner Lot 3: international architect: l'AUC (Paris, France), local architect: DEA Studio (Tirana, Albania)



## Durana - Atelier Albania (2014)

**Why:** Two parallel competitions, one in the Albanian Riviera region and the other taking in account the relationship between Tirana and Durres, the two most important cities in Albania, strategically speaking. This new approach to spatial planning was based on research and experimentation, addressing the emerging need to study this particular corridor, which is the main economic axis where the country's industry and services are located.

**What:** The official website of the Territorial Planning Agency announced the competition of Durana.

Registration via the Agency of Public Procurement was required to formalize the process. Participants were asked to form interdisciplinary teams between international and local practices. These teams had to present their curriculum vitae and portfolio. A vision statement was required from each team, presenting ideas and a methodology of intervention regarding the improvement of the public space in the economic axis between the cities of Tirana and Durres. In the second phase of the competition, two competitors for each of the three lots per competition were selected, thereby allowing the provision of an award to each shortlisted team, as well as a commission contract for the winning proposals. The Durana competition site was divided into three lots, in order to provide a more appropriate size and allowing participants to apply for one or more lots.

**Winner:** Lot 1, international architect: PIOVENEFABI (IT), YellowOffice - Landscape Urbanism and Design (IT); local architect: ArchiSpace Studio (AL); Lot 2, international architect: Dogma (BE); local architect: Studio B&L (AL); designer: Andrea Branzi (IT); Lot 3, international architect l'AUC (FR); local architect: DEA Studio (AL).

**When:** Only several smaller projects that were part of the winning proposals are being implemented in reduced scale.



Tirana - Cultural Quartet: winning proposal: Casanova + Hernandez architects (Rotterdam, Netherlands) and SON Engineering and Construction (Tirana, Albania) [www.casanova-hernandez.com](http://www.casanova-hernandez.com)

## Tirana - Cultural Quartet (2015)

**Why:** The jury took part in the process of drafting the brief, giving continuous comments and suggestions, and making it quite specific in terms of the questions posed to participants.

**What:** The aim is to give the opportunity to create a network of spaces and programmes dedicated to cultural production and consumption in Tirana, as well as possible futures to find a space of expression in Tirana's art scene. The competition was announced by the National Territorial Planning Agency in 2015 and included the following areas: the Palace of Brigades, the National Historic Museum, the Villa of the ex-communist party leader, and the former League of Writers and Artists. The requested interventions were of a smaller scale and more architectural in nature than previous competitions, but the character of the Cultural Quartet and the intention of reusing these buildings introduced a more curatorial and experimental approach. Due to the fact that several competitions were announced simultaneously, the number of participants was quite small for each of the sites.

**Winner:** Both remaining sites of the Palace of Brigades and the National Historic Museum were won by the team of Casanova & Hernandez architects (NL) and SON Engineering and Construction (AL).

**When:** In the end the competition for the sites of the Villa of the ex-communist party leader and the former League of Writers and Artists was cancelled by jury decision. The winning projects for the two sites have not yet been realized.



Innsbruck - Campagne Areal: winning proposal competitive dialogue:  
Rüdiger Lainer (Vienna, Austria), Spath Arquitectos (Vienna, Austria),  
Futurafrosch (Zürich, Switzerland), Mat Architektur (Zürich, Switzerland),  
Stadt:Labor (Innsbruck, Austria), and Stratum (Ljubljana, Slovenia).

# AUSTRIA

## Innsbruck - Campagne Areal (2016)

**Why:** An important aspect for the success of this competitive dialogue was the quality of moderation, which was enabled by the organizational process. The fact that the selected teams were interested in collaboration and dialogue during the workshops, and the diversity of design approaches from experimental to participative, were additional success factors.

**What:** Innsbruck decided to carry out a competitive dialogue for the development of an urban area of 8.5 ha. located in Reichenau, a district in the east of Innsbruck (12,133 inhabitants). The plan will create 1,000 new apartments, green spaces, and social facilities, together with the spatial restructuring of the existing sports facilities. Three planning teams have jointly developed a role model together with expert committees and citizen participation. The client is IIG, the municipal real estate company of the city of Innsbruck. Architects and spatial planners from the EU, the EEA, and Switzerland were able to apply for participation in an initial, anonymous procedure. From sixteen applications, ten teams were selected by a jury and invited for a hearing. Three teams were ultimately selected for participation and directly assigned. During a total of four workshops and several additional meetings, the planning teams worked together with a dedicated steering group of experts. At each workshop the planning teams presented their drafts, discussing these in committees. The aim was to determine the best concept, or a synthesis for realization, and elaborate it as a guiding principle.

**Winner:** Rüdiger Lainer (AT), Spath Arquitectos (AT), Futurafrosch (CH), Mat Architektur (CH), Stadt:Labor (AT) and Stratum (SI); together they did the masterplan for the area.

**When:** The competitive dialogue has been completed and the project competition for the first site has been announced.



Vienna - Vienna Museum: winning proposal: Winkler + Ruck Architekten (Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Austria) with architect Ferdinand Certov (Graz, Austria) [www.winkler-ruck.com](http://www.winkler-ruck.com)



## Vienna - Vienna Museum (2015–2016)

**Why:** The design proposals of both stages were publicly exhibited and the process is well documented, both on the website of the Federal Chamber and of the museum itself. The Federal Chamber also organized a follow-up public discussion, as the process of the competition highlighted critical issues about how to run competitions.

**What:** The Vienna Museum announced an anonymous, open, two-stage architectural design competition in 2015, followed by a negotiated procedure. The goal was to redesign and extend the existing museum building, dating from the 1950s and under monument protection, as well as to redefine its presence in the surrounding public space. The competition was open to WTO citizens. The anonymous, open, two-stage project competition included an urban design ideas part followed by a negotiated procedure; in terms of its contract value, this is a major contract award procedure, according to BVerG 2006 and in the version presently in force. In stage one of the competition, based on preliminary design concepts focused on urban design and the assessment criteria as per competition brief, the jury selected fourteen participants to compete in stage two. In stage two, the jury selected the prizewinners based on the elaboration of the preliminary design concepts from stage one. Subsequent to the competition procedure, a negotiated procedure will be conducted with the winner of the competition. The brief included several feasibility studies which made clear that several strategic options about how to achieve extra surface area for the museum had been discussed. In the competition a large amount of freedom was given with regard to where the additional space could be gained. As many as 274 practices from 26 countries submitted proposals for the first stage. The fourteen selected practices, almost exclusively from German-speaking contexts, included acknowledged Vienna based design-oriented practices (such as Querkraft and Dietrich/Untertrifaller Architekten). Further critical rethinking was considered necessary regarding the fact that, by taking part in the competition, architects committed to many possible forms of project development (including PPP procedures) and to the way criteria concerning monument protection and technical feasibility, for example, are applied in the proposal selection process.

**Winner:** The commission was eventually awarded to a cooperation between two perhaps lesser-known practices from other regions, which submitted a restrained proposal maximizing the existing building. The winning project is focused on the old building and, considering the urban challenges defined in the brief, somehow surprisingly proposes only very minimal elements to change the square in itself.

**Winner:** Winkler + Ruck Architekten and architect Ferdinand Certov (AT)

**When:** It is not clear when the project will start. This has to do with financial aspects and the decision about the neighbouring building, which has not yet been realized.



Höchst - Volksschule Höchst: winning proposal: Dietrich/Untertrifaller  
Architekten (Bregenz, Austria)  
[www.dietrich.untertrifaller.com](http://www.dietrich.untertrifaller.com)



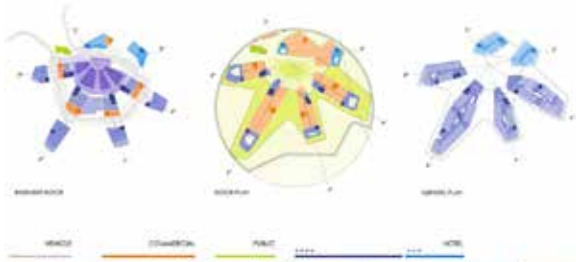
## Höchst - Volksschule Höchst (2016–2017)

**Why:** This competition procedure and its task is very typical for small municipalities in Austria. The competition was outstanding because of its well-prepared brief.

**What:** The task for this competition was to design a primary school for the municipality of Höchst, a small community with around 8,000 inhabitants in Vorarlberg, in the western part of Austria, and the also client of this competition. Höchst has an existing primary school, which had to be extended or built anew with at least ten new classrooms, a new sports hall, offices, and additional rooms. The client asked for a design with both a very high ecological standard and a new teaching concept. The competition was above the EU threshold, so it was announced in the Official Journal of the European Union as an restricted competition. The submission of a reference project was requested in the first stage. The competition brief was prepared in agreement with the local Chamber of Architects, Kammer der Architekten und Ingenieurkonsulenten für Tirol und Vorarlberg. For the second phase, 30 architectural teams were selected. The municipality of Höchst sought an innovative school layout for a new teaching concept that included a much larger spatial possibility.

**Winner:** The winning project by Dietrich/Untertrifaller Architekten (AT) is characterized by high-quality spaces in the inner and exterior areas.

**When:** The project was finished in April 2017.



Mt. Klekovaca - Urban Zone of the Klekovaca Tourist Centre: winning proposal (second prize): nodo17 (Madrid, Spain)  
[www.nodo17.com](http://www.nodo17.com)

## BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

### Mt. Klekovaca - Urban Zone of the Klekovaca Tourist Centre (2014)

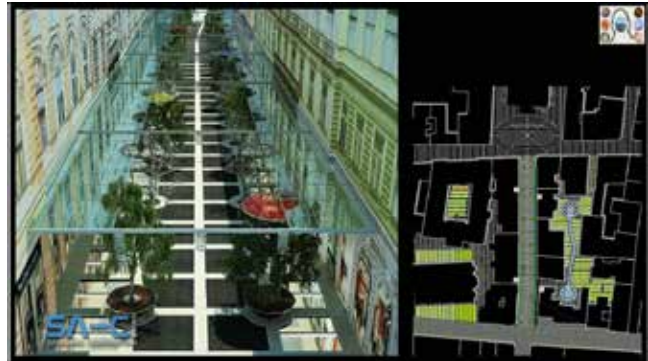
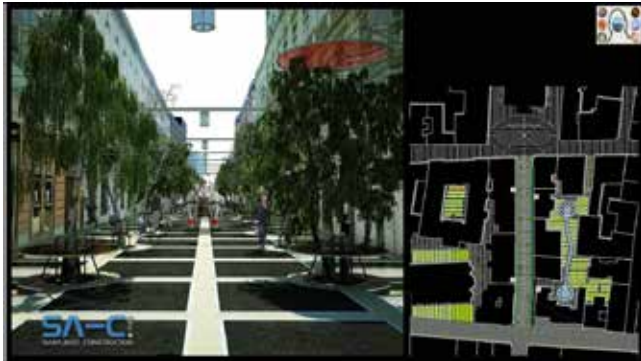
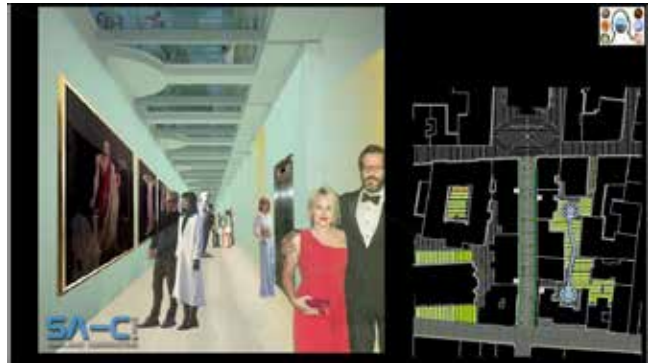
**Why:** Open, one-stage international competition by a private party, good procedure and presentation of submitted works (the exhibition of award-winning submissions was organized in the Republika Srpska Museum of Modern Art, with detailed explanations provided by the selection committee), and a significant investment in natural heritage.

**What:** Mt. Klekovaca is situated in the western part of the country. Plans have been made for construction of a sport and recreation centre at its foot that would offer activities throughout the year. The topic for the published competition covered only the construction of the tourist complex site, with a planned capacity of 15,000 beds. The competition was open for five months and published by investor GB IMMO, a real estate development company. Five European architectural bureaus were invited (ARGE Baumschlager Hutter Partners & Amann Architects, Lacaton & Vassal, MVRDV, Sauerbruch Hutton, Herreros Arquitectos). Three prizes (30,000 EUR, 20,000 EUR and 10,000 EUR) and three acquisition of authorship rights (5,000 EUR) were planned. All teams represented by at least one licensed architect/urban planner holding a license from his/her country's authorized professional body qualified for participation.

**Winner:** The seven-member international selection committee failed to award the first prize, because none of the submissions fully and completely responded to the competition assignment. Consequently, only the following awards were issued: second prize, nodo17 (ES); third prize, Gordana Spasic & Associates (RS); and three acquisition of authorship rights for MVRDV (NL), Herreros Arquitectos (ES), and LABICS (IT).

**When:** The project will not be realized.





Sarajevo - The Arrangement of Strossmayer Street: winning proposals:  
Mirza Hrustemović, Tihomir Krajtmajer, Sabin Babić, and Emir Kalamujic  
(Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

## Sarajevo - The Arrangement of Strossmayer Street (2015)

**Why:** An example of a competition with inadequately defined terms of reference, graphic documentation insufficient for the completing the design, an excessive number of required annexes, a very brief deadline for preparing submissions (one month), only one award offered (worth 5,000 BAM), and substantial public debate.

**What:** Strossmayer Street is among the best-known pedestrian streets in the historical heart of the city, but it lacks any urban furniture. The competition for its upgrade was published and administered by the Old Town Municipality. The selection committee included representatives of public institutions from the fields of architecture, town planning, and cultural heritage. There were eleven submissions to the competition, of which eight were rejected for failing to meet formal and legal requirements. When the winning submission was announced, it was not accompanied by an explanation of the selection committee or an analysis of other submissions. The exhibition of submitted designs lasted only a couple of hours on one day, while the award-winning submission was presented on a different day. The public was also informed about the winning design through local web portals, which led to a broad and intensive debate about its lack of creativity and rationality. The competition was assessed with an extreme lack of objectivity, because the municipality was both the tendering authority and the organizer. Combined with the great haste for an assignment of this importance and scope, and complemented by inexact instructions for its preparation, this resulted in an unrealistic design.

**Winner:** Mirza Hrustemović, Tihomir Krajtmajer, Sabin Babić, and Emir Kalamujić (BA).

**When:** The awarded project is still awaiting execution.



Sarajevo - The Salvation Tunnel Memorial Complex: winning proposal  
(second prize): Sabina Tanovic (Delft, Netherlands)

## Sarajevo - The Salvation Tunnel Memorial Complex (2016)

**Why:** The competition is an exemplary procedure on a sensitive topic, with the participation of mostly young architects and having a good and transparent procedure (it organized both a visit to the location and a presentation for all interested candidates), professional presentation of the submitted works (a seven-day presentation of the award-winning designs, as well as an exhibition of all submissions), and cooperation between the Association of Architects of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Canton Sarajevo.

**What:** The 720-metre-long Salvation Tunnel was excavated during the war in the 1990s to connect the besieged city of Sarajevo with unoccupied territories. After the war the entrance/exit segment of the tunnel was repurposed as an improvised museum that attracts more visitors with each passing year. The site itself became an essential place of collective memory. A few years ago the need was felt to erect a modern memorial centre with a museum on the site. In 2015 the Canton Sarajevo Memorial Fund published two architectural competitions (1st prize, 15,000 BAM; 2nd prize, 7,000 BAM; 3rd prize, 3,000 BAM). Both were annulled, because none of the very few submissions met the quality terms of the competition. All physical and legal persons were eligible to participate, free of charge. A third competition, published at the end of 2016, was organized with the support of the Association of Architects of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which helped to ensure professionalism and organization according to the Association's Rule Book on Architectural Competitions. The competition was open for two months; sixteen submissions were received. A selection committee consisting of five architects (from public institutions and the association) explained all procedures and decisions in detail.

**Winner:** No first prize was awarded, but instead a second prize (Sabina Tanovic, NL), third prize (Zeid Kobilica and Jasmin Sirco), and a special award (Vernes Causevic). Sabina Tanovic received the assignment to build it.

**When:** The awarded design, with certain modifications, will be implemented in the immediate future.





Sofia - Sveta Nedelya Square: two winners: Konkurent 90 (Sofia, Bulgaria)  
and CityArch (Sofia, Bulgaria)  
[www.konkurent90.com](http://www.konkurent90.com); [www.cityarch.bg](http://www.cityarch.bg)



# BULGARIA

## Sofia - Sveta Nedelya Square (2013)

**Why:** Despite having proper information, the competition brief is badly presented, with an unappealing general overview of the documentation as a whole.

**What:** The Sveta Nedelya Square competition brief is a typical example of a competition with an administrative and a bureaucratic character. It is presented online and only in Bulgarian (although it was also available in English in 2013, because of the formally international nature of the competition). The brief provides a list of the problems that competition entries should solve, divided into seven groups, and ends with entry format and submission requirements, aside from a description of the historical and cultural situation of the area (26 pages in total). A huge number of additional resources are provided as appendixes. The problem, however, is that it is so user-unfriendly: written in a complicated, bureaucratic manner, the information is hard to grasp at first, and difficult to quickly analyse. The competition tasks are very general, not clearly explained, and not specific. There are no specially designed schemes, charts, or any visual material whatsoever to explain the situation quickly and clearly to architects unfamiliar with the area. All the additional resources are not incorporated in the brief, but must be separately downloaded as a number of different files. Even the file names are not unified. The competition brief lacks any attempt at contemporary graphic design and accessibility. As a result we have proper information, badly presented, with an unappealing general overview of the documentation as a whole.

**Winner:** Two winners were named, Konkurent 90 (BG) and CityArch (BG).

**When:** There is no intention to build the winning entry. Another competition for the same area is currently under preparation.



Varna - Varna Library: winning proposal: Architects for Urbanity  
(Rotterdam, Netherlands) [www.architectsforurbanity.com](http://www.architectsforurbanity.com)

## Varna - Varna Library (2015)

**Why:** The brief of the Varna Library competition, issued by the Varna Municipality and the Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria, is a clear and user-friendly document. It presents a general overview and introduction, a description of the urban context, and a short history of Varna and the Varna Regional Library.

**What:** Included are documents comprising planning and other competition project information (competition tasks, competition area, urban planning restrictions, transportation and access, functional programme of the new building, and special requirements), the method of registration, and the required documents. The information is accompanied by rich visual material, with photos, schemes, charts, infographics, and 3D visualizations of the task, area, and so on. All the information is organized and written in accessible language so that foreign architects not acquainted with Bulgarian legislation, can also get a clear idea of building restrictions, the competition's legal framework, and many other details. The functional programme is represented in a visually friendly style as well. Special attention was paid to the graphic design, fonts, photography, and layout. This same attitude can also be seen in the competition's website.

**Winner:** Architects for Urbanity (NL).

**When:** The winning project is currently being realized and has just passed its design development phase.



Sofia - Borisova Gradina: winning proposal: Kovachev Architects (Sofia, Bulgaria)

## Sofia - Borisova Gradina (2015)

**Why:** Borisova Gradina competition brief is another typical example of a competition with an administrative and bureaucratic character. It lacks a clear and understandable presentation of information, as well as accessible organization of project resources and clear definitions of tasks and evaluation criteria.

**What:** The competition brief (26 pages) begins with a general overview of the competition's intentions and area. It provides a couple of maps plus thorough information about boundaries, active regulation plans, and more. Then follows a brief historical overview (which leads to Appendixes 1 and 2) and a very long and detailed explanation of the regulation plans, because of the urban development character of the competition. The competition brief continues with account for the approaches and accessibility of the area, vegetation, park furniture, and existing buildings within the park. It then poses the five objectives and names six methods to achieve them. However, the brief lacks a clear overview of evaluation criteria, the proposed entry format, and submission requirements, because these are explained in detail in the legal framework of the competition – included a separate file named 'competition programme'. The language of both documents is clumsy, difficult to read and understand, and burdened with legal terms and definitions.

**Winner:** Kovachev Architects (BG).

**When:** The Municipality of Sofia signed a contract with the winner and the design development is presently under way.





Prague - Prague 7 District new town hall: winning proposal: atelier bod architekti (Prague, Czech Republic)  
[www.bodarchitekti.cz](http://www.bodarchitekti.cz)

## CZECH REPUBLIC

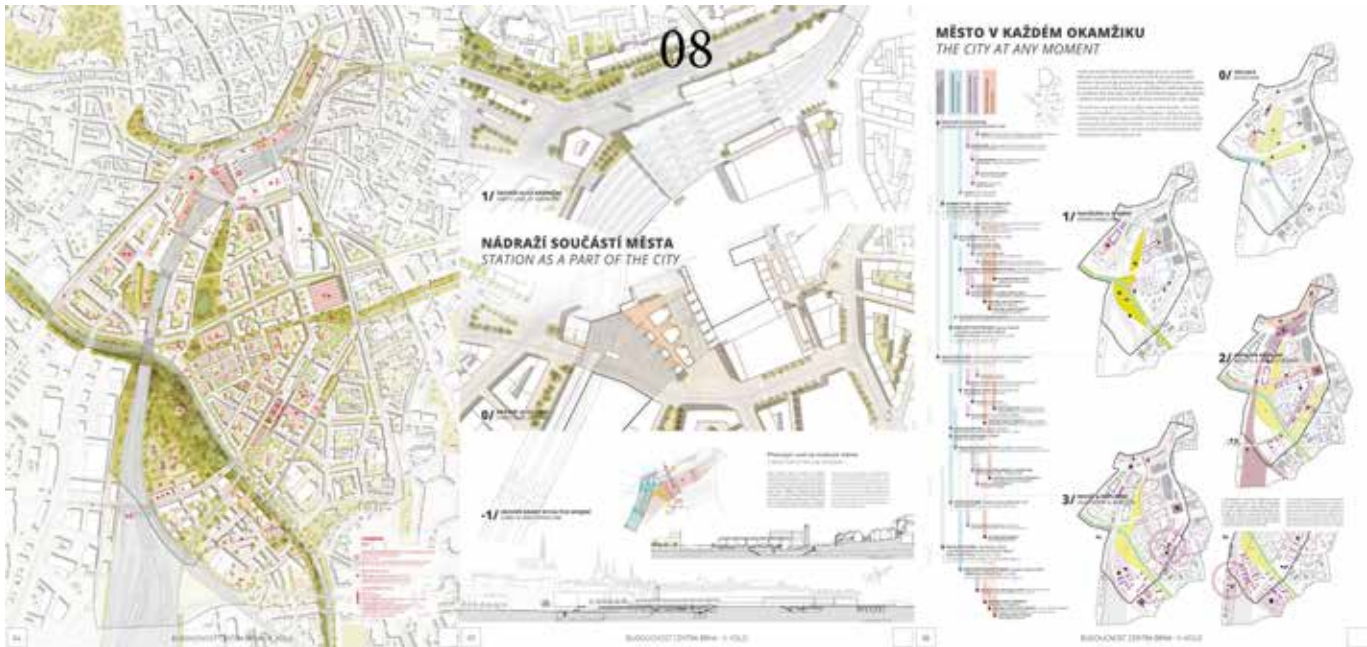
### Prague - Prague 7 District new town hall (2016)

**Why:** A good example of an international design competition in two stages. The competition was conducted by the Centre for Central European Architecture.

**What:** Required was a design for the reconstruction and the interior of the building at U Průhonu 1338/38 for the seat of the Municipal Office of Prague 7 District. The question was how to use the existing structure to create a building that is representative, user-friendly, and above all able to age and maintain its dignity for 50 years or more. Its reconstruction had to include a complete rethinking of the building envelope and all the technology, and should lead to a durable building in the highest energy class with reasonable operating costs. The purpose and aim of the competition was to find and reward the most suitable and interesting solution to the subject of the competition (i.e., the most suitable competition design), which fulfils the requirements of the announcer as stated in the present competition conditions and assignment. The competition itself was organized in two stages. In the first stage, participants were asked for a design concept, A2 format poster, and portfolio (in English or Czech); in the second stage, around eight architects (teams) were selected with a secured fee to finalize their proposals in detail. This approach was applied in order to reduce the amount of unpaid work for dozens of participating architects. In the second stage, the first, second, and third prizes were distributed.

**Winner:** atelier bod architekti (CZ) was invited to the negotiation procedures without public notification.

**When:** The application for the construction permit is in progress.



Brno - Future of the City Centre: winning proposal: UNIT architekti  
(Prague, Czech Republic)  
[www.unitarch.eu](http://www.unitarch.eu)



## Brno - Future of the City Centre (2016)

**Why:** A good example of an open international urban competition for the new Brno railway station in two stages.

**What:** The competition was organized by the Centre for Central European Architecture. Its subject is the urban planning and transport solution for a new main railway station in Brno, situated in the locality below Petrov Hill, and simultaneously also the formulation of a strategy for the emergence of a viable urban district corresponding to the needs and realities of the 21st and 22nd centuries. The competition approaches the development area in the centre of Brno as an opportunity for a reconceptualizing of the city. The goal is to find a solution that will be resilient, adaptable, sustainable, and aesthetically satisfying, whether from the standpoint of architecture, urban planning, or transport. The competition was organized in two stages: in the first, participants were asked for a design concept, 4x B1 poster, CD and portfolio (in English or Czech); in the second round, eight architects (teams) were selected with a secured fee to finalize their proposals in detail. This approach was applied in order to reduce the amount of unpaid work for dozens of participating architects. Awards were distributed in the second stage, and on 10 May, 2016, the City Council of Brno approved the results of the open international urban competition for the new Brno railway station.

**Winner:** UNIT architekti (CZ) won the competition for its realistic concept of gradually built growth with an attractive central park, placing emphasis on diversity and living quality, with respect for the character of the surrounding areas.

**When:** The winning team was contracted for further analysis and an elaboration of partial feasibility study, but not yet the regulation plan. The future commission of the regulation plan depends on a political decision as to whether or not the new main railway station will remain in its current location.



Helsinki - Guggenheim museum: winning proposal: Moreau Kusunoki  
Architectes (Paris, France)  
[www.moreaukusunoki.com](http://www.moreaukusunoki.com)

## FINLAND

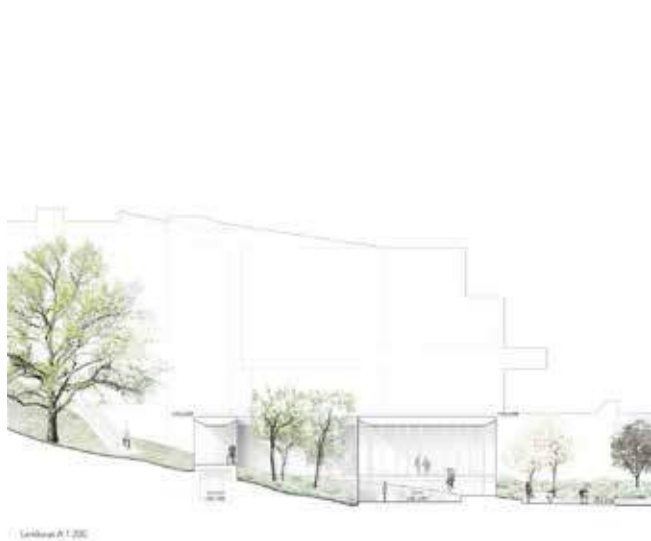
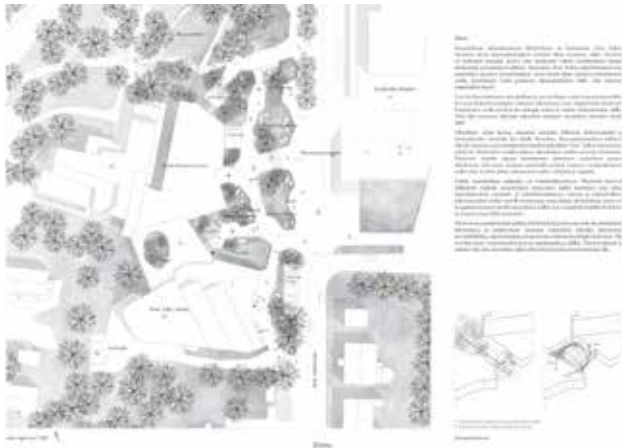
### Helsinki - Guggenheim museum (2014)

**Why:** A bad example of a two-stage international design competition.

**What:** In 2014 the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation launched its first anonymous international design competition for a proposed Guggenheim museum in Helsinki. Out of 1,715 submissions in stage one, the eleven-member jury selected six finalists. The competition was organized and programmed by Malcolm Reading, a British consulting company, because the Guggenheim Foundation did not agree to collaborate with the Finnish Association of Architects (SAFA). Money for this privately organized competition was raised through donations to the foundation by private donors. The first phase was programmed to be very lightweight in terms of the required competition material. The aim was to maximize the amount of entries and thus create a large amount of international media visibility. The first-stage entries were also presented online for 'voting'. A great majority of the entries seemed to have been done by teams that had never even visited Helsinki. The first phase was also strangely programmed to take place during the European summer holiday months. This hasty timing was heavily criticized by Finnish competition experts and experienced architects alike. For the second phase, six offices were invited to elaborate upon their initial proposal.

**Winner:** Following the public exhibition of stage two, the jury chose the design 'Art in the City' by Paris-based office Moreau Kusunoki Architectes (FR) as winner. The prizes were considered too low, compared to competitions of a similar size organized by SAFA.

**When:** The project has been cancelled.



Jyväskylä - Extension between the Alvar Aalto Museum and the Museum of Central Finland: winning proposal: Sini Rahikainen, Hannele Cederström, Inka Norros, Kirsti Paloheimo, Maria Kleimola (Finland)

## **Jyväskylä - Extension between the Alvar Aalto Museum and the Museum of Central Finland (2015)**

**Why:** The extension was to be a relatively small building, but in a very delicate and demanding environment. Even so, the competition attracted wide international interest.

**What:** The international architectural competition for an extension between the Alvar Aalto Museum and the Museum of Central Finland was organized by the City of Jyväskylä and the Alvar Aalto Foundation. Interesting about the competition was the challenge of creating a 21st-century building in-between existing buildings by the studio of Alvar Aalto, an internationally acclaimed architectural genius. Jyväskylä is a small city, but it is also the place where Aalto established his first studio. Jyväskylä has many Aalto buildings and hosts annual events related to the architect. Designing the new building, even if only 280 square metres in size, would be a highly demanding task. For this reason the competition attracted almost 700 entries.

**Winner:** The competition was won by a previously unknown group of young Finnish women architects: Sini Rahikainen, Hannele Cederström, Inka Norros, Kirsti Paloheimo, and Maria Kleimola.

**When:** The building is still in the design process.



Mänttä - Open competition for the Serlachius Gösta Art Museum: winning proposal: MX\_SI architectural studio (Barcelona, Spain)  
[www.mx-si.net](http://www.mx-si.net)

### **Mänttä - Open competition for the Serlachius Gösta Art Museum (2010–2011)**

**Why:** Successful example of international open competition.

**What:** With their project for the Gösta Serlachius Museum, MX\_SI won the Spanish International Architecture Award 2013 in the International Project Competition category, awarded by the Higher Council of the Associations of Architects in Spain.

**Winner:** MX\_SI architectural studio (ES) won first prize, and was also given the chance to choose its partner office in Finland. The landscape architect was also chosen on the basis of solid competence.

**When:** The built result is a small, world-class, pavilion-like building, a privately funded and active high-quality art museum in a park, with a restaurant and working spaces for the staff.





Berlin - Neue Landesbibliothek: winning proposal: Miebach Oberholzer  
Architekten (MOA) (Zürich, Switzerland) and Kohlmeier Oberst (Stuttgart,  
Germany)  
[www.moa.ch](http://www.moa.ch)  
[www.kohlmeier-oberst-architekten.de](http://www.kohlmeier-oberst-architekten.de)



## GERMANY

### Berlin - Neue Landesbibliothek (2013)

**Why:** One of the most ambitious and controversial competitions in Berlin, with an interesting system and result, even though nothing will be built.

**What:** The competition for a new library on the Tempelhof was commissioned by the city of Berlin, with an interesting system that explicitly aimed to include younger, less experienced offices for a large commission. The first phase included an open ideas competition for 'young' architects, and was followed by a second phase with a limited competition according to the RPW (Directive for planning competitions). Eight teams were selected from the first phase out of 55 teams of young architects and landscape planners. In the second phase, the selected teams had to participate in the design competition with 32 invited offices, all experienced or prestigious. This second phase ended with two joint winners; one (Miebach Oberholzer Architekten) came from the first phase. One could almost say that the idea of offering a small 'window' for young offices and their ideas was worth the gigantic effort of this entire procedure for the organizers, jury, and participants.

**Winner:** Miebach Oberholzer Architekten (CH) and Kohlmayer Oberst (DE).

**When:** The entire competition was subsequently cancelled when Berliners, in a citywide poll in May 2014, opposed any development on the Tempelhofer field, and thus also voted against the library. Of course it would have been better to wait for the results of the public vote first, before asking 100 offices for a lot of work.



Dessau - Bauhaus Museum: winning proposal: addenda architects  
(Barcelona, Spain)  
[www.addendaarchitects.com](http://www.addendaarchitects.com)

## Dessau - Bauhaus Museum (2015)

**Why:** Asking for a new Bauhaus building in direct connection to the historic buildings in Dessau is a very delicate task. It was quite bold to turn this into an open international competition, instead of just inviting the 'usual suspects'.

**What:** This open, two-stage competition according to the RPW (Directive for planning competitions) was commissioned by Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau. Just as Helsinki had the open competition for the new Guggenheim Museum, so did Germany for the Bauhaus Museum in Dessau. It resulted in 831 entries from all over the world, making those who have always called for open competitions as a good opportunity for young offices rethink their position. How can you examine 831 entries in a reasonable way? The jury selected 30 entries from the first open round for a second phase in which the work on the design was paid. The jury, which was prominent and with very different 'tastes', could obviously not agree on one entry, and instead awarded two first prizes to two utterly different designs: a clear and relatively simple box-in-a-box by addenda architects (Gonzalez Hinz Zabala, ES) and a totally experimental blob design by Young & Ayata (US). Both were asked to 'adjust' their designs in one final round, even though it was actually quite foreseeable – because of the relatively small budget and the mad schedule (the museum must be completed and officially be opened in time for the Bauhaus centenary in 2019) – that the daring, experimental design of Ayata & Young would be too risky to be built. It was no surprise that addenda architects was finally announced as the winner in December 2015.

**Winner:** addenda architects (ES).

**When:** Under construction until 2019.



Erfurt - Wohnen am Dom: winning proposal: Worschech Architects (Erfurt, Germany)  
[www.worschecharchitects.com](http://www.worschecharchitects.com)

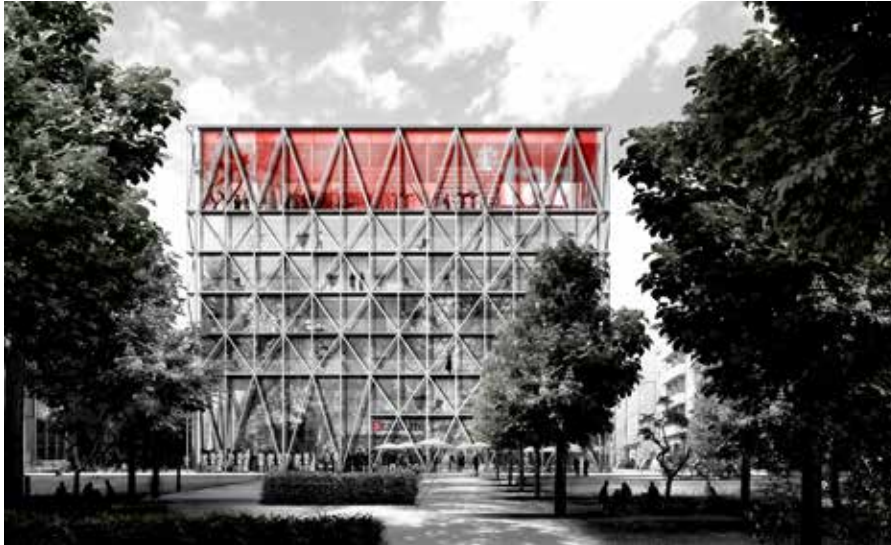
## **Erfurt - Wohnen am Dom (2014)**

**Why:** A very good small competition in a small city with a really nice result.

**What:** This open competition included the prospect of construction according to the RPW (Directive for planning competitions). For the building culture in Germany, the majority of these small, 'normal' competitions seems even more important than the big, hotly debated ones (e.g., Springer Campus, M20, Landesbibliothek, or the Bauhaus Museum). Here, private developer Domplatz EF GmbH was looking for a mixed-use, modern building at the historic Domplatz in the very centre of Erfurt, which had to fit within the historic environment. Won by a lesser-known local office, the entire competition was very well done, well prepared and carried out, and publicly presented and discussed, which certainly contributed to a broader understanding of how architecture works and connecting the old and the new.

**Winner:** Worschech Architects (DE).

**When:** The project was nearing completion in early 2017.



Berlin - New building for the Die Tageszeitung, publishing cooperative:  
winning proposal: E2A Architects (Zürich, Switzerland)  
[www.e2a.ch](http://www.e2a.ch)



## **Berlin - New building for the Die Tageszeitung, publishing cooperative (2014)**

**Why:** A calm and very focused competition with a strict selection procedure and very good results.

**What:** This closed competition with an application procedure according to RPW was commissioned by Die Tageszeitung. For participation in this competition, eighteen offices with a lot of experience and seven young offices were invited in an advanced application procedure. The selection was explicitly limited in order to not produce too much work in too many offices, and to keep the final number of entries manageable for both jury and organizers. The selection was made by external experts and representatives of the selection board. It was a very calm process, without the excitement of gathering only 'starchitects' (of which only Bjarke Ingels made it into the selection). Instead, all 25 final entries were very well-executed and hands-on designs for the given task.

**Winner:** E2A Architects, Piet and Wim Eckert (CH).

**When:** Under construction.



Berlin - Extension of the Bauhaus Archive: winning proposal: Staab  
Architekten (Berlin, Germany)  
[www.staab-architekten.com](http://www.staab-architekten.com)



## Berlin - Extension of the Bauhaus Archive (2015)

**Why:** Another good example of including young architects in competitions.

**What:** This limited competition with the prospect of construction according to RPW was commissioned by Land Berlin. It entailed a quite successful procedure for a great competition and a complicated task, instead of a totally open competition (like Bauhaus Dessau) or an application procedure with excessive hurdles. Offices were able to apply in the first round with comparably few references (at least one similar realized project; at least one built museum; demonstrable experience with protected monuments; and once awarded in a public competition). About twenty-six teams applied and fifteen internationally experienced offices were invited. Also interesting was the fact that there were only German-speaking offices left among the five awards and four acknowledgments in the end.

**Winner:** Staab Architekten (DE).

**When:** Construction in preparation.



Western Macedonia - Regeneration and Reuse of Former Lignite Extractive Zones: winning proposal: topio7 (Athens, Greece)  
[www.facebook.com/topio7architects](http://www.facebook.com/topio7architects)

## GREECE

### Western Macedonia - Regeneration and Reuse of Former Lignite Extractive Zones (2015–2016)

**Why:** This competition was a unique, open, one-stage ideas contest organized by the Public Power Corporation S.A. Hellas between 2015 and 2016. The uniqueness lies firstly in the fact it was held not by the state or local government (like most public competitions), but by a public corporation that has no tradition in organizing competitions. Secondly, because it was one of the few competitions, if not the first, solely dedicated to landscape design.

**What:** The brief described the client's intentions in a clear way, which manifested a progressive agenda with regards to social and environmental dimensions. According to the brief, the key goal should be 'the articulation of architectural tools, rules and strategy and formulating logics within a landscape design approach, focusing on the redevelopment and reuse of the former extractive zones and not just to their restoration.' The competition was announced in September 2015, and participants submitted proposals five months later. The evaluation process followed three stages, as specified by the existing legal framework. In the first phase the jury checked the submissions' legibility; in the second they performed an evaluation of the proposals. In the third and final stage, the jury determined the awards and revealed the identity of the winners while performing a last eligibility check on the awarded finalists. Typically, submissions consisted of a statement of 1,500 words and three A0 prints mounted on foam board, as well as a CD-ROM/DVD with digital copies of all the deliverables in various resolutions and formats, including drawings, photographs, etc. Like most recently organized competitions, the brief did not request the submission of an architectural model and relied on renderings, collages, and perspectives to present an overview of the proposal.

**Winner:** topio7, K. Andritsou, P. Karamanea, Th. Polyzoidis (GR).

**When:** Although the results are positive, the time frame and framework remain unclear.



Athens - 'Landmark-Structure' for the Central Faliro Bay Pier: winning proposal: Point Supreme (Athens, Greece)  
[www.pointsupreme.com](http://www.pointsupreme.com)

## Athens - 'Landmark-Structure' for the Central Faliro Bay Pier (2012–2013)

**Why:** A bad competition example that involved disproportionate work to be done by applicants and heated debate regarding the winning project's aesthetics.

**What:** The Study of a 'Landmark-Structure' for the Central Faliro Bay Pier was an open, one-stage preliminary designs competition organized at the end of 2012 by the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change and funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Following plans for the redevelopment of the major seafront area of Faliro into a Metropolitan Park, complemented with a major cultural centre for the National Library and the National Opera (a 500-million-euro project by Renzo Piano, entirely funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation), this competition asked for a small-scale but symbolic project. The brief called for designs for a new urban and coastal landmark on the park's central pier, a site that did not yet exist. Although the competition asked for 'preliminary plans', it was in fact expected for the proposals to provide ideas for this structure's use, which according to the brief 'was not defined but could be explored through the competition'. At the same time, the brief requested collaborations between architects, civil and mechanical engineers, and a significant production of presentation material. The work requested was substantial, but the award money was not, as the first prize was just below 10,000 EUR.

**Winner:** Point Supreme, K. Pantazis, M. Rentzou, et al. (GR).

**When:** The support of the competition by the grant-making private foundation appeared as a way to bypass the lengthy and often inconsistent state implementation procedures, however, the future of the project is subject to the Ministry, and thus state's priorities and time frames. While the redevelopment of the area appears to be under way, it will be interesting to see if this small-scale structure will be included in the implementation of the Metropolitan Park. Will the state consider this as an unnecessary 'luxury' project, and how much will the winning prize's aesthetics, which were heavily criticized, affect this decision?





new city centre 56 ha



Athens - Re-think Athens: winning proposal: OKRA Landschapsarchitecten (Utrecht, Netherlands) with Studio 75 (Athens, Greece)  
[www.okra.nl](http://www.okra.nl); [www.studio75.gr](http://www.studio75.gr)

## Athens - Rethink Athens (2010)

**Why:** The European design competition 'Rethink Athens' offers another example of private/public partnership for holding a two-stage European competition; it involved an emblematic intervention in the Athens city centre.

**What:** The project aspired to transform Panepistimiou Street, an important urban and traffic axis, into a pedestrian and public transport 'boulevard', and generated a heated debate after it was publicly announced in 2010. The debate escalated right after the Onassis Foundation took the lead on behalf of the state in organizing and sponsoring the architectural competition under the ambitious title 'Rethink Athens: the creation of a new city centre'. The competition had two stages: the first was an open ideas competition, which attracted 71 proposals, and the second was a closed stage for a 'preliminary drawings competition' between nine selected teams. Anticipating more criticism, the brief and the entire process, including the jury and even the winning prize, communicated the need for achieving wider consensus in order to avoid stirring up the debate even more. This strategy was also reflected in the selection of the first prize. The winning team's investment in technocratic and feasible aspects of design presented a city centre that would be predominantly green, peaceful, and enjoyable, aiming to offer an 'integrated proposal, creating a resilient, accessible and vibrant city' that would ultimately become 'a catalyst for the whole city'.

**Winner:** OKRA Landschapsarchitecten (NL) and Studio 75 (GR).

**When:** While the intention for the project's implementation was initially quite high, with many public and private actors supporting its realization in line with their agendas, the application for EU funding was blocked. It is unclear if it was the Greek state or the EU funding agencies that considered this project as a low priority, but in the end the outcome suggests that this project will probably never materialize.





Ireland - C1 - Urban Primary Schools: winning proposal: Tún Architecture + Design (Dublin, Ireland)  
[www.tun.ie](http://www.tun.ie)

## IRELAND

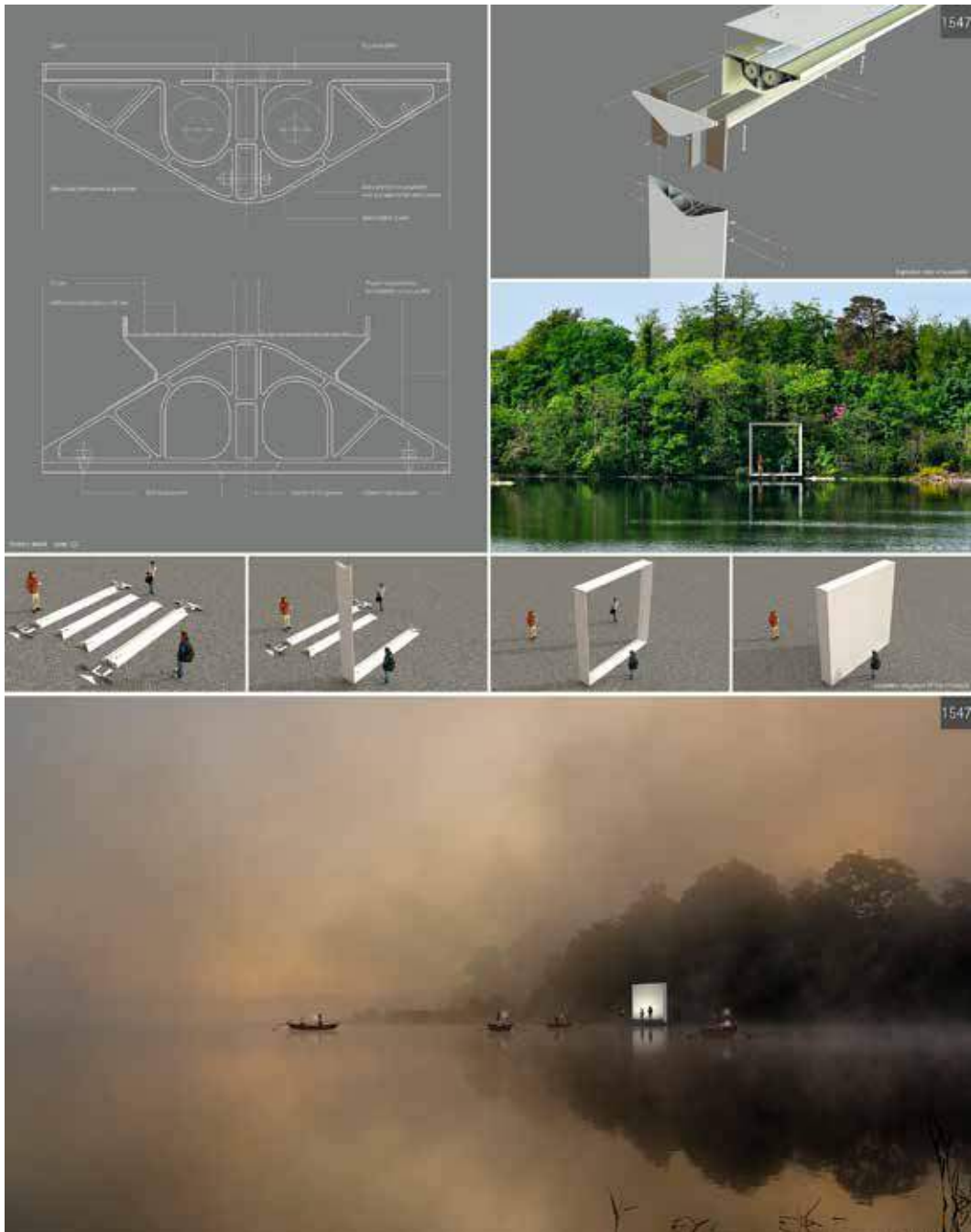
### Ireland - C1 - Urban Primary Schools (2015)

**Why:** This is a very typical brief and competition structure run by the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI).

**What:** It is a two-stage competition for a real school on a real site in Dublin city. It was open to all architects and designers to submit one A1 board of ideas for the first stage. A registration fee of 123 EUR is payable, and it is required that the team also consists of an architect that is on the Architects Register. A shortlist of five is drawn up and an honorarium of 5,000 EUR is paid to each on the shortlist when they complete their Stage 2 submissions. This fee goes no way to cover the amount of work involved. The fee, should an architect win and be appointed, for the duration of the project is also set in this competition brief at 11.5% of construction cost (ex. VAT). In the event the project does not process, the winning architect will be awarded 20,000 EUR. This sum is awarded to the architect upon winning the competition, but is to be 'subsumed' into the fees if the project proceeds. This means the architect gets no specific fee for winning the competition. The project is complex and the brief detailed, and the requirements so specific and limiting that considerable time and ingenuity are required to make an interesting architectural solution out of such a brief. This competition process is challenging and time-consuming, and there is not a real guarantee of a project. The RIAI also offers no acceptable archive of competitions they manage and run, and it is difficult to track outcomes and results of their competitions.

**Winner:** Tún Architecture + Design (IR).

**When:** Ongoing.



v

## Sligo - B - Yeats I will Arise and Go Now, and Go to Innisfree (2015)

**Why:** This open (typically one-stage) competition for a building not managed by RIAI is another form of competition in Ireland which is becoming more popular, and which has seen smaller or younger practices being successful and work being built. It is not a form of competition employed by the RIAI.

**What:** The client is the Institute of Technology Sligo with the Model Arts Centre Sligo, Hazelwood Demense Ltd, and Sligo County Council. It is a model of competition that perhaps emerges from visual or public art practice in that it sets a brief, set of requirements, and a fixed budget from the start, from which (as opposed to in addition to) the architects' fees will be drawn. While, on the one hand, this is clear and upfront from the initial stages, on the other, feedback from architects involved in the realization of these projects indicates that budgets are low, ambition is high, and their fees become squeezed. In this particular competition the architect's fee is set at 5,005 EUR. It is not clear how this is derived. The competition process itself is interesting, in that it tends to attract younger practices (who can risk working for low fees) and also a strong international showing.

**Winner:** shin design works (KR).

**When:** Ongoing.





**INTERACTION WITH ANIMALS**  
 The primary intention here is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for the birds while also providing a natural habitat for the birds to live in.



**INTERACTION WITH VEGETATION**  
 Think of the garden as a natural habitat for the birds, but also as a place where children can learn about the natural world.



**INTERACTION WITH WATER**  
 The water feature is designed to be a safe and enjoyable environment for children to play in, while also providing a natural habitat for the birds.



**INTERACTION WITH LIGHT**  
 The light is designed to be a safe and enjoyable environment for children to play in, while also providing a natural habitat for the birds.



**INTERACTION WITH LIGHT**  
 The light is designed to be a safe and enjoyable environment for children to play in, while also providing a natural habitat for the birds.



**INTERACTION WITH TOYS**  
 The toys are designed to be a safe and enjoyable environment for children to play in, while also providing a natural habitat for the birds.



Dublin - PlayPark Ballyfermot: winning proposal: Relational Urbanism (London, United Kingdom) [www.relationalurbanism.com](http://www.relationalurbanism.com)

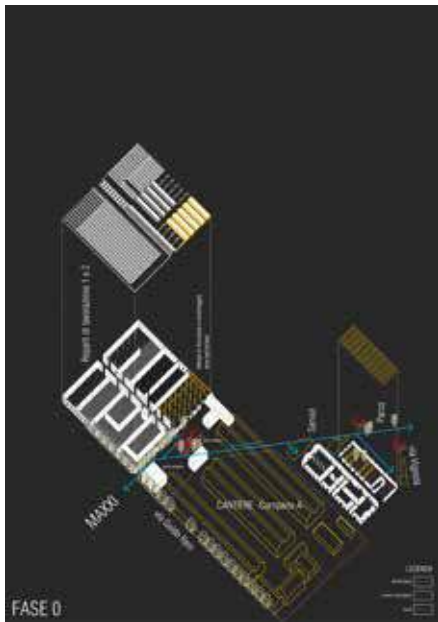
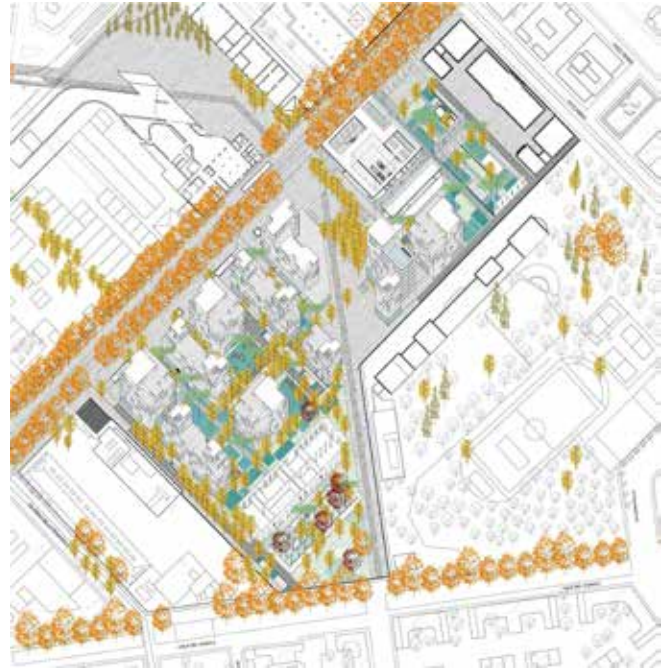
## Dublin - PlayPark Ballyfermot (2016)

**Why:** A combined public (Dublin City Council) / private (The Matheson Foundation) and resource organization (Irish Architecture Foundation, IAF) led project in partnership with a community group that wishes to deliver a project in a very specific and inclusive way.

**What:** The process is structured to enable a more direct connection between competition participants and the end users of the project, and this is reflected in the general tone of the brief. In stage two, shortlisted competitors must provide videos and more engaging methods of communicating their schemes to the jury. The jury is composed of a range of people involved in the project with differing interests and ranges of experience. This is a more complex and diverse jury than is typical, and representatives of the user groups are most welcome. As a model of competition it is worth considering because it is, on paper at least, more socially engaged than usual. The independence of the IAF is also interesting to observe. While the brief does cite the usual architectural registration criteria, they can also take a more open view of what might constitute a team for a project such as this. This means teams comprised of architects, social workers, artists, psychologists, engineers, etc. are as valid as the traditionally requested team of architect, engineer, QS, and services engineer.

**Winner:** Relational Urbanism (UK).

**When:** Ongoing in development, with planning granted.



Rome - Progetto Flaminio: winning proposal: Studio 015, Paola Viganò  
(Milan, Italy)  
[www.studiopaolavigano.eu](http://www.studiopaolavigano.eu)



## ITALY

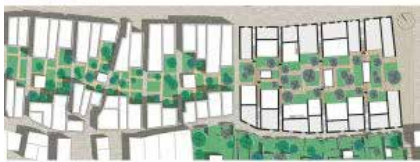
### Rome - Progetto Flaminio (2014)

**Why:** A bad example of both competition process and brief.

**What:** The competition was organized for a central area of the capital city (just in front of the MAXXI). Required was a masterplan for the creation of a neighbourhood. It included housing, commercial, and leisure facilities, together with public spaces and facilities and the City of Science (object of a successive competition, still not launched). After the first phase the jury selected six submissions (three Italian and three foreign). Moreover, the City of Science, after months of indecision, has now been put aside. After two years the result is that, if the project will go on, it would be just another example of housing speculation.

**Winner:** Studio 015/Paola Viganò (IT) won the assignment to design the overall masterplan without knowing who will design each volume/function of the neighbourhood.

**When:** Uncertain.



Taranto - Open Taranto: winning proposal: MATE Engineering (Bologna, Italy)  
[www.mateng.it](http://www.mateng.it)

## Taranto - Open Taranto (2016)

**Why:** This competition is one of the few in the south of Italy that also has an international echo. It reflects a typical Italian attitude: talking without doing.

**What:** New ideas/visions are sought in the regeneration of the Old Town. The competition was launched by Invitalia, the National Agency for inward investment and economic development, owned by the Italian Ministry of Economy. It is an ideas competition that is open to all, provided participants meet the requirements of the new Italian Public Procurement Code (article 46 para. 1). The total amount of prizes (115,000 EUR) attracted big but few practices, numbering only 46. Despite the high investment, the results are just ideas. The municipality of Taranto can take them as advice in order to build a future 'plan of restoration'. In the meantime they will organize an exhibition and meeting to discuss the themes and the projects of the competition.

**Winner:** MATE Engineering (IT).

**When:** Unknown.



Bologna - Shoah Memorial: winning proposal : SET Architects (Rome, Italy)  
[www.set-architects.com](http://www.set-architects.com)

### **Bologna - Shoah Memorial (2014)**

**Why:** This international competition is perhaps one of the most outstanding examples of a good competition held in Italy between 2013 and 2016.

**What:** The competition consisted of realizing a monument that evokes the Shoah (Holocaust); a monument as a piece of architecture, art and/or urban installation located on a significant site in the city of Bologna. It was a big success, with 284 submissions, and the chair of the jury was Peter Eisenmann. This is a remarkable competition, just by looking at the timing: January 2015, competition announcement; April 2015, selected projects announced (with anonymous lists); July 2015, announcement of results and winner.

**Winner:** SET Architects (IT).

**When:** In January 2016, only one year after the competition launch, the memorial was opened to the public.

IN PROGRESS

## KOSOVO

### Prishtina - Central Mosque (2012–2013)

**Why:** The international competition for the design of the central mosque in the capital Prishtina was widely debated. It was one of the first competitions that had a well-prepared brief, a competition online portal, a timeline of the process, and the prize money was substantial (50,000 EUR).

**What:** The competition was announced in December 2012 as an open, one-stage competition on many international web portals. It drew a lot of attention, had 81 submissions, with some being from 'starchitects' like Zaha Hadid. The brief stated that 'the jury is expected to be composed of international and local experts', yet it was revealed during the process that two members of the jury were not experts, but the head of the Islamic Community of the Republic of Kosovo and another high-ranking leader. This was the drawback of this competition, as the client did not put its trust in the hands of the professionals, which affected the whole process. With the announcement of the results, it was said that the two winners were given extra time to improve their designs based on recommendations from the jury, but that never happened.

**Winner:** No first-prize winner was selected, as there was no consensus between the members of the jury. Instead there were two second-prize winners, showing very clearly the opposing positions of the professional jury members and the client.

**When:** The project is still debated in the media, but nothing has been realized so far.





Prishtina - Redesign of public space in the Kurriz Dardania neighbourhood:  
winning proposal: Smart Project (Prishtina, Kosovo)  
[www.smartproject-ks.com](http://www.smartproject-ks.com)  
[www.smartproject-ks.combania](http://www.smartproject-ks.combania)) [www.xdga.be](http://www.xdga.be); [www.metropolis.al](http://www.metropolis.al)

## **Prishtina - Redesign of public space in the Kurriz Dardania neighbourhood (2014)**

**Why:** The subject of this competition is very important, because it encompasses a large pedestrian area that serves as a connecting pathway for several neighborhoods, and was in desperate need of renewal. The competition is a common example of how most design contests are organized.

**What:** The competition was administered, like any other tendering procedure, through the Public Procurement system. The content of the main document is generally the same as other tenders. Only a small part of it comprises the design task, and it offers general information about the location of the project, the programme, and basic requirements regarding the submission of the project concept and a detailed construction project. The competition was highly demanding in terms of the eligibility criteria. Additionally, the evaluation of the proposal is divided between the conceptual project (60%) and the financial offer (40%). There were only two submissions, and the process of selecting the winning proposal lasted three months. Despite the long and demanding selection process, the project had to be corrected during implementation as there were major complaints coming from the construction company about the accuracy of the project.

**Winner:** Smart Project (XK).

**When:** The works contract was awarded in May 2015, but since then the project realization faced a series of setbacks. Today the project is still not implemented.



Prishtina - Open call for designing the masterplan of Kodrina complex:  
winning proposal: Studio Libeskind with !melk and Buro Happold  
Engineering (New York, USA)  
[www.libeskind.com](http://www.libeskind.com)

## Prishtina - Open call for designing the masterplan of Kodrina complex (2015)

**Why:** This competition is not the usual type of competition in Kosovo. It is the first time a two-stage, open competition from a private client (the developer) has been organized. There are many positive outcomes from this competition. It was the first time that a high-quality, contemporary and comprehensive solution was judged a winner of the competition, and there was a general consent about the decision. However, there was also a lack of transparency throughout the process.

**What:** The municipality wanted an urban solution that is innovative, comprehensive, and an implementation example of the urban regulatory plans (URP). So far, new developments in Prishtina, even though they have been based in URP, are implemented in fragments, lacking a comprehensive solution of a wider area and leading to many problems, such as poor access for vehicles and pedestrians, insufficient free open spaces, scarce insolation and also visually unharmonious and unappealing neighborhoods. NTN 'Tregtia' was the contracting authority, while the Municipality of Prishtina was the supporter of this process. According to the brief, a first-phase jury (presumably the client and the municipality) would select three to seven competing teams. After the evaluations, out of 27 entries, seven were shortlisted. In the second phase the teams delivered a masterplan solution (written and graphic parts). After the second-phase jury (design professionals, the mayor, etc.) evaluation, the public presentation of the projects was done, and the decision of the jury was announced. The shortlisted teams were compensated by 7,000 EUR each, two mentioned prizes were awarded 10,000 EUR, and the first-prize winner was awarded 45,000 EUR.

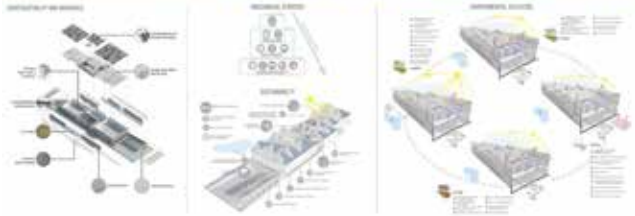
**Winner:** Studio Libeskind, in collaboration with Imelk and Buro Happold Engineering (US).

**When:** Almost a year has passed and nothing has been made public so far regarding the project implementation.





LATVIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE, CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALITY



LATVIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM OPERATIONS



LATVIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART UNDERSTANDING, APPROACH & CONCEPT



LATVIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY



Riga - LmoCA: Latvian Museum of Contemporary Art: winning proposal:  
 Adjaye Associates (London, UK) and AB3D (Riga, Latvia)  
[www.adjaye.com](http://www.adjaye.com); [www.ab3d.lv](http://www.ab3d.lv)

## LATVIA

### Riga - LmoCA: Latvian Museum of Contemporary Art (2016)

**Why:** The success of the new 30-million-euro museum building competition lies in hiring the highly influential Malcolm Reading Consultants from London to cover all steps of the competition, from the brief and selection of invited practices, to the results and publicity. Overcoming the initial criticism from the local architecture community of only having foreign offices on the list of invited names, the final agreement included a rule that each office should find a local partner.

**What:** This invited competition (25 international practices, seven shortlisted) was commissioned by two private foundations (ABLV Charitable Foundation and Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation) in collaboration with the the Ministry of Culture. This later turned into another element of added value, facilitating the healthy internationalization of a rather secluded local architecture community and the provision of valuable local knowledge resources for international practices not familiar with the region. After final the presentations of the seven shortlisted practices, in which architects presented their proposals to the international jury, members of the press, and general public in Riga, the competition was praised both by the participants and media for its openness and clarity. Due to the clear communication and a resourceful competition website, as well as public events, this is now considered to be a good example of how competitions should be organized.

**Winner:** Adjaye Associates (UK) and AB3D (LV).

**When:** 2021.



Riga - Rail Baltica Transport Hub: two second prizes: PLH Arkitekter (Copenhagen, Denmark) with COWI (Kongens Lyngby, Denmark), and O+R+V+E+L: OUTOFBOX, RUUME arhitekti, Vektors T, Elmāra Daniševska birojs, Landshape (Riga, Latvia)  
[www.plh.dk](http://www.plh.dk) and [www.cowi.dk](http://www.cowi.dk); [www.facebook.com/ruumearkitekti](https://www.facebook.com/ruumearkitekti);  
[www.outofbox.lv](http://www.outofbox.lv)



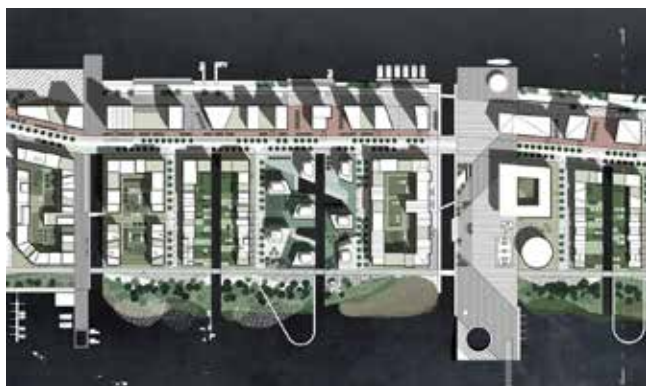
## Riga - Rail Baltica Transport Hub (2016)

**Why:** Co-financed by the European Union, this competition is one of a few organized in countries in conjunction with the new Rail Baltica railroad connecting Helsinki, Tallinn, Parnu, Riga, Panevezys, Kaunas, Vilnius, and Warsaw with the rest of Europe. Being a project of international significance, this is also one of the most important projects for the city of Riga, directly and daily affecting its citizens.

**What:** More than 200 practices from 37 countries expressed interest and eleven proposals were received for this open international competition commissioned by SIA Eiropas dzelzceļa līnijas (European Railroad Lines Ltd). The transport hub competition covered a fourteen-hectare area, including the Riga Central Railway station and a bridge over the River Daugava. In that context the competition results created a clash between the local architecture community, which supported O+R+V+E+L, one of two second-prize winners, and the competition organizers, who were seen as being immune to the needs of the city by choosing a proposal that is far too formal. The competition has also received criticism for its chaotic PR. Until the last publicity event in March 2017, for example, participants who received special recognition were not even properly named, and were previously referred to as 'Spanish architects', etc.

**Winner:** No first prize awarded; two second prizes: PLH Arkitekter with COWI (DK) and O+R+V+E+L: OUTOFBOX, RUUME arhitekti, Vektors T, Elmāra Daniševska birojs, Landshape (LV). PLH Arkitekter and COWI have been chosen for future collaboration.

**When:** 2025.



Riga - Masterplan for Zakusala Island: winning proposal: RUUME arhitekti  
(Riga, Latvia)  
[www.facebook.com/ruume.arhitekti](http://www.facebook.com/ruume.arhitekti)

## Riga - Masterplan for Zakusala Island (2016)

**Why:** This typical example of smaller competitions appearing on regular basis shows a good mix of everything. Here one can see both 'open' and 'invited' concepts, as well as a good selection of architects: young and more established, local and foreign, all coming from the Baltic Sea region, which includes the whole of Scandinavia, Poland, and Germany.

**What:** The open competition was commissioned by SIA Zakusala Estates. In this case five practices – one from Latvia, two from Estonia, one from Norway, and one from Poland – were invited. In addition, whoever else was interested could participate, as long as the requirements of the brief are covered. The winner is a young practice, reminding us once again that a competition can often become a bridge to further development and success, and can lead to the first important built commission.

**Winner:** RUUME arhitekti (LV), an entrant from the open call.

**When:** 2022 (first stage).



Vilnius - A multifunctional complex at Konstitucijos Avenue 18B: winning proposal: Studio Libeskind (New York, USA)  
[www.libeskind.com](http://www.libeskind.com)

## LITHUANIA

### Vilnius – A multifunctional complex at Konstitucijos Avenue 18B (2016)

**Why:** The architectural-urban competition was initiated by a private Lithuanian company, organized by the Architects Association of Lithuania (AAL), and supported by the Municipality of Vilnius (partner). Ten architectural offices were invited to participate (five local and five foreign).

**What:** The task was to design a 18,000 m<sup>2</sup> complex of hotel and offices in the New Downtown of Vilnius. Due to the topography of Vilnius, the silhouette of its downtown can be seen from many viewpoints and is featured in many valuable panoramas of the Vilnius Old City (a UNESCO site). The new structure should act as a landmark and not disturb these valuable views of the city. During the discussion with various experts (including the Experts Board from the AAL) it was concluded that the height of the new structure could be higher than 35 metres, in order to form a harmonious composition of high-rises. One of the missions of the competition was to discover the best solution for the height of the building. As it was not anonymous, the competition featured an unusual public presentation when all ten participants were invited to make a public presentation to the jury, the experts (without a right to vote), and the wide public, as well as answer questions. The winning competition entry suggested a building of eighteen storeys. Later, the height of the building proposed in the project (six and twenty-one storeys) received approval by the City Council as an exceptional case, so the General Plan of Vilnius will be altered, allowing buildings more than 35 metres in height. The competition was organized according to the Regulation of the Competition organization process approved by the AAL, however, some rules were disregarded during the negotiation process with the investor. Some of these proved to be decisive in terms of the competition transparency and results, and therefore raised public controversy. Also, the voting system discarded the principle of reaching the jury's final joint decision through discussion.

**Winner:** Studio Libeskind (US).

**When:** 2018–2019.



Vilnius - Study campus of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre:  
winning proposal: Paleko ARCH studio (Vilnius, Lithuania)  
[www.palekas.lt](http://www.palekas.lt)

## Vilnius - Study Campus of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (2015)

**Why:** An open, anonymous architectural competition was initiated by a public client (Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, LAMT) and organized by the Architects Association of Lithuania in conformity with the Public Procurement Law of Lithuania, Regulation of the Architectural competition organization (AAL) and Rules of Simplified Public Procurement (LAMT).

**What:** The new study campus (ca. 16,00 m<sup>2</sup> in total) will be built in the derelict area (ca. 4.75 ha) of the war museum, therefore giving a totally new quality, content, and image to this part of the Old Town. The competition participants are expected to suggest urban, functional solutions, and a representative but respectful approach to the historical and natural context in the architectural image of the new campus. As a preparatory stage for this open architectural competition, an architectural workshop was held in 2014, organized by AAL, in order to specify the programme and set the architectural requirements. Five local architectural teams were invited to participate. Also, a general poll of the academy was done, presenting the expectations of the students, artists, professors, and the administration. The results of the workshop were integrated in the competition brief. Young architects and SMEs were able to access the competition due to the relatively low requirements. Three groups of evaluation criteria were used: urban design (33.33%), functionality, sustainability, rationality (33.33%), and architecture (33.33%).

**Winner:** Paleko ARCH studio (LT).

**When:** After 2020.



IN PROGRESS

## **Anykščiai - Panoramic View Space and Pedestrian Bicycle Path (2016)**

**Why:** This open competition was quite accessible for young architects and SMEs. The competition was aborted because zero submissions were received before the deadline.

**What:** The Anyksciai Region Municipality initiated and organized the open anonymous architectural competition in conformity with the Public Procurement Law of Lithuania. The object is a public space with panoramic view, info-terminal, and pedestrian and bicycle path on the right bank of the river Šventoji. The new architectural elements should be inserted with a great care, keeping the spaces around the Šventoji intact. The new spaces should be safe, comfortable, and high quality. The municipality had the right to abort the competition in case of unpredictable circumstances (e.g., no money to implement the project, the need for the object is no longer valid, etc.). This case indicates a common situation for competitions in Lithuania, especially in the public sector. In many cases there is no guaranteed money for the implementation of the project, or there is no clear determination of the client to continue with the project after the competition. Zero entries were received, possibly because of the fact that the competition was initiated by the Chief Architect of the Anyksciai Region Municipality, who, directly following the preparation of the brief, was assigned to work in another town and had to leave Anyksciai. This case accentuates the role of the coordinator in the competition: despite the decent quality of the competition brief and procedures, the input of an active and competent administrator is crucial for the success of a competition.

**Winner:** None.

**When:** The project will not be realized.



Dordrecht - Open Call Prins Clausbrug: winning proposal: René van Zuuk  
Architekten (Almere, Netherlands) with ABT and Ingenieursbureau Boorsma  
[www.renevanzuuk.nl](http://www.renevanzuuk.nl)

## THE NETHERLANDS

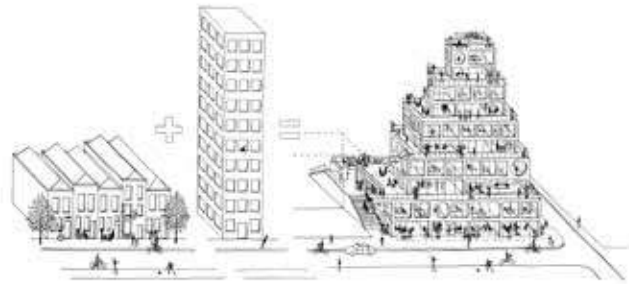
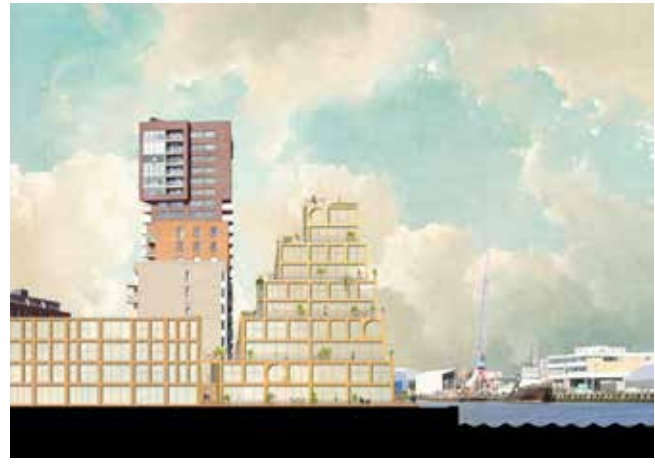
### Dordrecht - Open Call Prins Clausbrug (2014)

**Why:** The municipality consciously choose for a design contest and not a procurement procedure, to offer opportunities for (young) designers without experience in bridge building. The two-stage competition form was innovative within the Dutch context at the time.

**What:** The municipality of Dordrecht wanted to connect the development site to the Staart/Stadswerven and the historic city centre by means of a slow traffic bridge over the river Wantij. The 120-metre-long bridge must enhance the quality of residence and public space on both sides of the bridge. Architectuur Lokaal was asked to organize the procedure. The competition was an open call, based on a concept, and started with a public information meeting. From the 127 entries in the first round, an independent jury selected five entries (anonymously). The teams were from the Netherlands, Belgium, Croatia, and Germany. In the second round, which also started with an information meeting (between municipality and participants), participants made a preliminary design. Before the jury's decision, an exposition was held with the five plans (excluding the financial documents), where visitors could leave reactions. This was not a democratic process, and no votes were cast. The result was handed over to the jury, which could involve the reactions in making its decision. The four teams that were not selected each received a compensation of 12,500 EUR (excl. VAT) for the incurred costs. All documents are published online (127 concepts from the first round, five plans from the second round, and the jury report including public reactions).

**Winner:** René van Zuuk (René van Zuuk Architecten) in collaboration with Wiljan Houweling (ABT) and Christian Nederpelt (Ingenieursbureau Boorsma)

**When:** Under construction.



Rotterdam - Open Call Family Apartments: winning proposal: Laurens Boodt (Rotterdam, Netherlands) with AM  
[www.laurensboodt.com](http://www.laurensboodt.com)

## Rotterdam - Open Call Family Apartments (2015–2016)

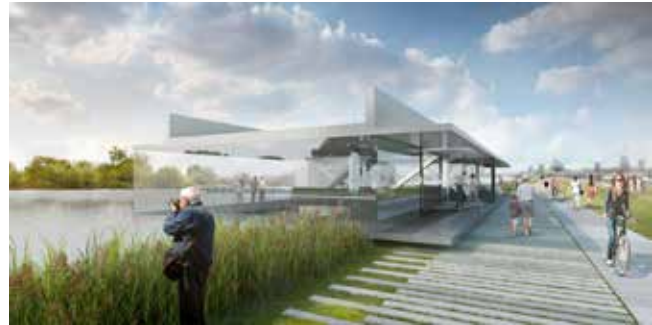
**Why:** In order to meet the demands of families, the Municipality of Rotterdam launched the Open Call of Family Apartments.

**What:** The municipality was looking for a new typology and therefore for a vision. The procedure of a development contest in two stages was innovative. The municipality invited architects, construction companies, project developers, and (groups of) individuals to come up with ideas and plans for apartments for families. The winner was given the opportunity to realize the plan on a central location in a Rotterdam residential area, with a view on the Meuse skyline and in a mix of high-rise buildings, land-based housing, and urban facilities. The first (anonymous) round participants were asked to submit a concise concept for the new residential typology of the family apartment that would be developed. From the 149 entries, an independent jury selected five. The teams gave their development concept for a new residential typology for family apartments in a complex of six to ten floors, including private parking, which could actually be realized. The selected participants were invited for the second round, in which they elaborated their vision into a business case, with the design for the reserved lot to be announced in the second round. The teams could be expanded in the second round. The participant with the best-rated submission in the second round won exclusive development rights to realize the winning concept. Participation in the contest was only possible with advance registration and by submitting the required documents. The four teams that were not selected each received a compensation of 5,000 EUR (excl. VAT) for the incurred costs. All documents and entries (excluding the budget) are published online by Architectuur Lokaal, organizer of the competition. Information meetings were organized at the start of the first and second rounds.

**Winner:** Laurens Boodt (NL), a young architect who expanded his team in the second round with AM project development (which could guarantee the financial demands) and Ingenieursbureau Boorsma.

**When:** In progress, but the apartments are already for sale.





Kinderdijk - Visitor's centre, UNESCO World Heritage: winning proposal:  
M&DB Architecten (The Hague, Netherlands)  
[www.m-db.nl](http://www.m-db.nl)

## Kinderdijk - Visitor's centre, UNESCO World Heritage (2014)

**Why:** The focus was on young architects in this small-scale design contest, with the aim of generating financial resources to build it.

**What:** Stichting Werelderfgoed Kinderdijk (SWEK) was the organizer of a two-stage competition.

with the demand for a draft proposal for a high-quality establishment plan for the entrance area of Kinderdijk, with a new building to be realized. For the first round, a brief overview of the assignment was requested, resulting in 132 entries. The jury selected five concepts to be elaborated upon in a preliminary plan and budget. The four teams that were not selected each received a compensation of 5,000 EUR (excl. VAT) for the incurred costs. All documents (excluding the budget) are published online by Architectuur Lokaal, organizer of the competition. Information meetings were organized at the start of the first and second rounds. Public reactions were implemented in the process.

**Winner:** Dorus Meurs and Michael Daane Bolier (M&DB Architecten) in collaboration with ARUP, (NL). The Water Board provided an additional assignment.

**When:** In progress.



Oslo - Kistefosdammen kindergarten: winning proposal: Christensen & Co  
(Copenhagen, Denmark)  
[www.christensenco.dk](http://www.christensenco.dk)

## NORWAY

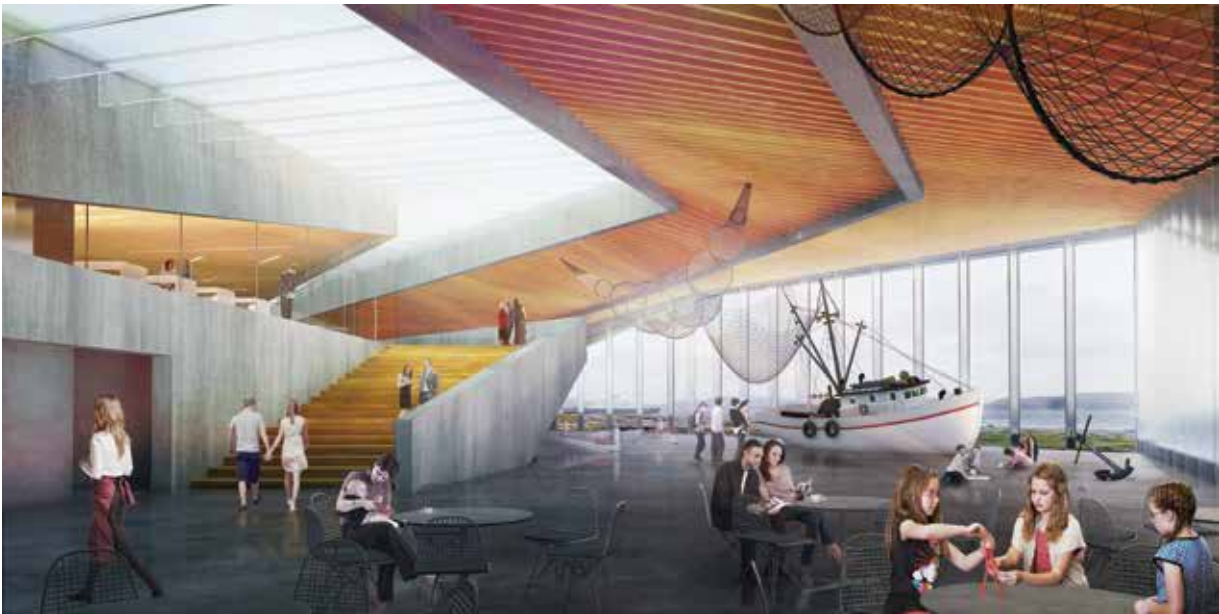
### Oslo - Kistefosdammen kindergarten (2015)

**Why:** The kindergarten in Kistefosdammen was a limited competition with prequalification and a 'wild card' office. The client was the local municipality together with Future Built, an organization for environmentally friendly and experimental architecture.

**What:** The main group of offices should qualify for the competition with certain criteria, including competence in designing kindergartens, integrated energy design, and knowledge about the environment, climate, and energy. The other evaluation criterion is a written part, detailing how the office understands the given task. The client wanted to include one team of young architects (formerly listed as the 'wild card'). For the regular offices, the competence and the letter of understanding of the task count for 50% each. For wild card offices, the competence only counts 30% and the letter counts 70%. Every team must participate in a team of different disciplines (architecture, landscape architecture, engineers, or consultants.) The building should be a PlusEnergy house that generates more energy than it consumes, and each group needs to deliver a technical concept of energy consumption and harvesting. The client's intention is to give the winner the contract of realization, but it is not obliged to do that. After the initial phase, four or five teams are selected. They receive the programme and further information, and are obliged to deliver an architectural project with climate calculations.

**Winner:** Christensen & Co (DK) will realize the first PlusEnergy kindergarten in Norway as part of FutureBuilt (a ten-year programme, 2010–2020), with a vision of developing carbon-neutral urban areas and high-quality architecture.

**When:** 2017.



Randaberg - Maritimt Vitensenter Randaberg, a new maritime science centre: winning proposal: Rørbæk and Møller Architects (Copenhagen, Denmark)  
[www.r-m.dk](http://www.r-m.dk)



## **Randaberg - Maritimt Vitensenter Randaberg, a new maritime science centre (2014)**

**Why:** The competition for a new Maritime Science Centre was organized as an open competition. There was no advance process of qualification, but potential winners should be able to document architectural qualifications on a level that is described in the EU architecture directive.

**What:** The competition was announced on several websites (Norwegian Architects Association, local municipal website, Norwegian tender website Doffin, and the TED website). The competition documents and website were written in Norwegian. Competition proposals were accepted in Norwegian as well as Swedish or Danish language. The brief of the competition was a 35-page document that included all the necessary information to take part in the competition, including brief descriptions of the local municipality, background for the competition, competition organizers, and the group of organizations that will use the future building. A chapter describing the overall philosophy and goals of the institution is followed by a chapter on planning restrictions and infrastructure. The spatial requirements are described as a list of spaces with necessary sizes. In the end the brief describes guidelines for what the competition proposal should include, as well as the rules of the competition regarding judging of proposals, copyrights, language, necessary qualifications, and deadlines. With an accessible brief and the limitation of six A2 sheets, this proved to be a popular competition in the Nordic sphere. If the documents would have been translated in English, it could possibly have been even more popular. In the end there were 137 accepted proposals.

**Winner:** Rørbæk and Møller Architects (DK).

**When:** Unknown.





Oslo - New Government Quarter: winning proposals: two winning teams: Team Urbis (Nordic – Office of Architecture, Rambøll, SLA, Bjørbekk & Lindheim, Asplan Viak, COWI, Aas-Jakobsen, Per Rasmussen, Haptic Architects, Scenario, and NIKU) and Team G8+ (LPO arkitekter, A-Lab, Ratio arkitekter, IARK, Gullik Gulliksen AS, Sweco, Norconsult, and Dr. Techn. Olav Olsen AS)

## Oslo - New Government Quarter (2016–2017)

**Why:** One of few competitions in recent decades that was not announced in the EU or internationally, as strict demands for security clearance made it difficult for international, or even local offices with many international employees, to take part.

**What:** The competition for a new government quarter in Oslo was made public in the fall of 2016, and the competition will be held during 2017. The background for the competition is the terrorist attack in 2011. After the attack it was decided to rebuild the government quarter as part of a larger development that would provide enough space for all the ministries. The process, which started not long after the attacks, has included a series of commissions for architects and planners. The companies with overall responsibility for the planning process have been selected through a tender process, not a competition. In addition, there is a parallel commission for strategic plans that was internationally published. Among the prequalified teams were offices from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom, United States, and the Netherlands. Internationally recognized architects such as Snøhetta, BIG, MVRDV, and Arup were among those selected. Based on the parallel commission and a state zoning plan, a competition was announced in 2016. The process for selecting the new government headquarters in Oslo is quite telling of the current development of competition processes in Norway at the moment. Architectural production is increasingly becoming part of an international market, with Scandinavian firms establishing themselves in Norway on the one hand, and international firms taking part in open competitions and processes on the other. Moreover, large clients like the governmental Statsbygg are trying to minimize some of the risk that open competitions pose for process, costs, and security.

**Postscript:** The closed competition was held in 2017, with teams consisting of only Norwegian architects. Two teams were selected as winners and, after negotiations with Statsbygg, the governmental construction agency, a winner will be named in the fall of 2017.

**Winner:** Team Urbis (Nordic – Office of Architecture, Rambøll, SLA, Bjørbekk & Lindheim, Asplan Viak, COWI, Aas-Jakobsen, Per Rasmussen, Haptic Architects, Scenario, and NIKU) and Team G8+ (LPO arkitekter, A-Lab, Ratio arkitekter, IARK, Gullik Gulliksen AS, Sweco, Norconsult, and Dr. Techn. Olav Olsen AS).



Warsaw - Concept of the 21st Century Garden with exhibition pavilion, revitalization of the Royal Łazienki Park Museum: winning proposal: Mecanoo International, Michael R. van Gessel, and DELVA Landscape Architects (Netherlands) and Jojko+Nawrocki Architects (Katowice, Poland) [www.mecanoo.nl](http://www.mecanoo.nl)

## POLAND

### **Warsaw - Concept of the 21st Century Garden with exhibition pavilion, revitalization of the Royal Łazienki Park Museum (2013)**

**Why:** A competition with an English-language version is a rather rare phenomenon in Poland. The two-stage competition is also unlikely in Poland, but most of the competitions that provide an English version of materials are these two-stage competitions.

**What:** The Royal Łazienki Park Museum in Warsaw, in cooperation with Warsaw Branch of the Association of Polish Architects, was the organizer of this two-stage competition. As part of the team, a minimum of one licensed architect (with a minimum of experience in one building permit design of a public utility building with a floor area not smaller than 2500 m<sup>2</sup>), one landscape architect (with a university diploma and a minimum of experience in one building permit design of landscape architecture for a public park or garden with an area not smaller than 0.5 ha), and one art historian with a university diploma were required. The competition required a kind of extension of the museum park (18th-century royal park with park architecture and numerous small buildings). An English-language version of the rules and competition brief and map of the direct neighbourhood were available. Part of the material was in Polish, and participants had to submit all the material in Polish or with Polish translations. The evaluation criteria in both stages are connected with percentages of points. The jury consisted of only Polish architects and experts from cultural institutions.

**Winner:** Mecanoo International, Michael R. van Gessel, and DELVA Landscape Architects (NL) and Jojko+Nawrocki Architects (PL).

**When:** Unknown.





Pacanów - Educational and cultural programme with urban and architectural design of the Academy of Fairytale: winning proposal: DOMINO Grupa Architektoniczna, Wojciech Dunaj (Szczecin, Poland)  
[www.grupadomino.pl](http://www.grupadomino.pl)

## **Pacanów - Educational and cultural programme with urban and architectural design of the Academy of Fairytale (2015)**

**Why:** Interesting topic and international scope.

**What:** The client was Matolek the Billy Goat European Fairytale Centre in Pacanów, together with the participation of the Kielce Branch of the Association of Polish Architects. The team had to consist of at least of one licensed architect and a minimum of one landscape architect with a university diploma. The competition asked for the creation of an educational park, the 'Academy of Fairytale' (13,000 m<sup>2</sup>) with a multimedia installation, as a supplement to the existing complex of Matolek the Billy Goat European Fairytale Centre and its surrounding garden. An English-language version of the rules, competition brief, and part of the informational material were provided. Part of the publicity material was in Polish only, and participants had to submit all the material in Polish or with Polish translations. The evaluation criteria in both stages are connected with percentages of points. The jury consisted of only Polish architects and experts from cultural institutions.

**Winner:** DOMINO Grupa Architektoniczna, Wojciech Dunaj (PL).

**When:** Unknown.

IN PROGRESS



## **Warsaw - Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge over Vistula River (2016–2017)**

**Why:** One of the most recent competitions in Poland.

**What:** For the competition, an English-language version of the rules, competition brief, and answers to questions were provided. Part of the publicity material was in Polish only, and participants had to submit all the material in Polish or with Polish translations. The competition was organized by the City of Warsaw. The announcement of the competition was in December 2016, and the deadline for the submission of entries was in May 2017. The team had to have a minimum of one licensed architect, and provide proof of not being charged with a criminal offense, paying taxes on time, and paying social insurance on time. The evaluation criteria are connected with percentages of points. The jury consists of sixteen persons.

**Winner:** Undetermined.

**When:** Unknown.

IN PROGRESS

## UNITED KINGDOM

### London - National Holocaust Memorial

**Why:** This is a high-profile example of a recent British international design competition.

**What:** This competition for the National Holocaust Memorial in Great Britain was not open and required a first stage 'Expression of Interest'. It was held in two stages, resulting in teams of architects with consultants progressing to shortlisting who were largely well-known practice names, with no outsiders emerging to bring fresh thinking into the competition process. Of the fourteen declared members of the jury assessing this competition, only one is known to be an architect. Considering the space available, the programme, concept, and brief have been severely criticized for being too large, and hence inappropriate. Each memorial proposal is largely buried, yet their volumes require the occupation of a high proportion of park area, significant intervention, and the loss of many mature trees during construction – all matters which critics argue might have been expected to be better addressed prior to the call. The competition was organized by Malcolm Reading Associates; it recently announced its shortlist from almost 100 entries (Holocaust Museum 2017). The memorial site is a small triangular park beside the Thames, adjacent to the Palace of Westminster and ringed with trees. The park is venerated and listed. It currently contains small, well-placed monuments, including the magnificent Burgers of Calais by Rodin and a statue by Elizabeth Fink.

**Winner:** To be announced in autumn 2017; ten designs are shortlisted.

**When:** Unknown.



**Conference on Competition  
Culture in Europe**

# Day 1: September 28, 2017

## Venue: IJ-kantine, Amsterdam-Noord

- 9.00**            **Welcome, coffee**
- 9.30**            **Opening** by **Cilly Jansen** (director of Architectuur Lokaal), the results of the EU-base line survey on competition culture in Europe by Architectuur Lokaal and A10 new European architecture Cooperative. Moderator: **Indira van 't Klooster** (Architectuur Lokaal/A10)
- 10.00**            **Who commissions competitions?**  
3 short presentations (10 mins) and debate
- 10.00            Czech Republic - **Osamu Okamura** (A10)  
10.10            The Netherlands - **Cilly Jansen** (Architectuur Lokaal)  
10.20            Latvia - **Ieva Zibarte** (A10)  
10.30            Q&A
- 10.45**            **How are procedures organized and (how) are the results published?**  
3 short presentations (10 mins) and debate
- 10.45            Italy - **Zaira Magliozzi** (A10)  
10.55            Poland - **Hubert Trammer** (A10)  
11.05            Lithuania - **Ruta Leitaneite** (A10)  
11.15            Q&A
- 11.30**            **Reflections on the debate with panel and audience:**  
The Netherlands - **Paco Bunnik**, chief urban planner Zuidas, at the municipality of Amsterdam  
Sweden - **Jonas Andersson**, associate professor School of Architecture and the Environment, Royal Institute of Technology, KTH Stockholm  
Built Kosovo - **Astrit Nixha**, president Architectural Association Kosovo (AAK); owner of Anarch Architects
- 12.30**            **Lunch**
- 13.30**            **Access – Who can participate?**  
3 short presentations (10 mins) and debate



- 13.30 Greece – **Olga Ioannou** (A10)  
 13.40 Albania – **Saimir Kristo** (A10)  
 13.50 Ireland – **Emmett Scanlon** (A10)  
 14.00 Q&A
- 14.15 Critical Voices – Who reflects on procedures, results and implementation?**  
 4 short presentations (10 mins) and debate
- 14.15 Bulgaria - **Aneta Vasileva** (A10)  
 14.25 United Kingdom - **Walter Menteth** (Project Compass CIC)  
 14.35 Finland - **Tarja Nurmi** (A10)  
 14.45 Austria - **Anne Isopp** (A10)  
 14.55 Q&A
- 15.15 Teabreak**
- 16.00 Book presentation, Antigoni Katsakou**, London-based architect, author and co-editor (together with Dr. Maria Theodorou) of *The Competition Grid: Experimenting With and Within Architecture Competitions* is a comprehensive review of architectural competitions, exploring them as a tool for public policy planning, as well as an effective device that a variety of civic advocates can use to experiment with the formation of the built environment.
- 16.15 Reflections on the debate with panel and audience**
- Norway - **Birgitte Sauge**, senior curator of the Architecture Department of the National Museum  
 Latvia - **Linda Leitane**, Riga Technical University; advisor to the Union of Latvian Architects  
 Albania - **Besnik Aliaj**, co-founder and rector of POLIS University of Tirana
- 16.45 Closing words Day 1, Cilly Jansen**  
 Reflections on Competition Culture in Europe
- 17.30 Optional walkabout through the neighbourhood, guided by De Gebouwendigs**
- 19.00 You are cordially invited to join us for dinner at Noorderlicht, Amsterdam-Noord**
- 21.00 End of Day 1**



## Day 2: September 29, 2017      WORKSHOPS

Venue: IJ-kantine, Amsterdam-Noord

- 9.30**                    **Workshops - pan-European sessions in subgroups**  
Bilateral discussions on Access/Critical Voices/Procedures/  
Briefs/Good clientship/ Best practices/
- Office hour** - Introduction to The Fulcrum  
Inventory of possibilities for structural European collaboration  
(**Walter Menteth** and **Cilly Jansen**)
- 12.00**                    **Lunch break**
- 13.00**                    **Closing session - moderated by Indira van 't Klooster**
- Lessons learned (everybody)  
Possible future collaborations (everybody)  
Next steps (everybody)
- Reflections on the debate with panel and audience**  
Sweden - **Magnus Rönn**, professor School of Architecture and  
the Built Environment, Royal Institute of Technology, KTH  
Stockholm  
Czech Republic - **Igor Kovačević**, architect and founding  
member of the Centre for Central European Architecture (CCEA)  
Greece - **Tzina Sotiropoulou**, architect, founding partner of  
architectones02, architecture and design editor of Kathimerini  
newspaper  
The Netherlands - **Cilly Jansen**, director Architectuur Lokaal
- 14.00**                    **The Competition**, the movie
- 15.30**                    Q&A with **Angel Borrego Cubero**, director of  
"The Competition"
- 16.00**                    **Architecture walk to Tolhuistuin (30 mins), Amsterdam-  
Noord for drinks**
- 17.30**                    **End of Conference**

Saimir Kristo	<b>Albania</b>
Besnik Aliaj	<b>Albania</b>
Anne Isopp	<b>Austria</b>
Aneta Vasileva	<b>Bulgaria</b>
Lina Stergiou	<b>China</b>
Osamu Okamura	<b>Czech Republic</b>
Igor Kovačević	<b>Czech Republic</b>
Tarja Nurmi	<b>Finland</b>
Mari Koskinen	<b>Finland</b>
Anna Yudina	<b>France</b>
Sylvain Tegroeg	<b>France</b>
Florian Heilmeyer	<b>Germany</b>
Tzina Sotiropoulou	<b>Greece</b>
Antigoni Katsakou	<b>Greece</b>
Olga Ioannou	<b>Greece</b>
Emmett Scanlon	<b>Ireland</b>
Zaira Magliozzi	<b>Italy</b>
Luigi Prestinzenza Puglisi	<b>Italy</b>
Silvio Carta	<b>Italy/UK</b>
Astrit Nixha	<b>KOSOVO</b>
Ieva Zibarte	<b>Latvia</b>
Linda Leitane-Smidberga	<b>Latvia</b>
Ruta Leitanaite	<b>Lithuania</b>
Paco Bunnik	<b>Netherlands</b>
Bram Talman	<b>Netherlands</b>
Cilly Jansen	<b>Netherlands</b>
Indira van 't Klooster	<b>Netherlands</b>
Margot de Jager	<b>Netherlands</b>
Michel Geertse	<b>Netherlands</b>
Birgitte Sauge	<b>Norway</b>
Hubert Trammer	<b>Poland</b>
Angel Borrego Cubero	<b>Spain</b>
Jonas Andersson	<b>Sweden</b>
Magnus Rönn	<b>Sweden</b>
Walter Menteth	<b>United Kingdom</b>

## Conference on Competition Culture in Europe: Invitees

A10 correspondent

Co-founder and rector of POLIS University of Tirana

A10 correspondent

A10 correspondent

Associate Professor of Architecture at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

A10 correspondent

Architect, founding member of the Centre for Central European Architecture (CCEA)

A10 correspondent

Architect, Finnish Association of Architects (SAFA), competition specialist

A10 graphic designer

A10 correspondent

A10 correspondent

Architect at architectones02

Architect and author at Independent Architecture

A10 correspondent

A10 correspondent

A10 correspondent

President at Associazione Italiana di Architettura e Critica, editor in chief of PresS Tletter

A10 correspondent

Architect and founder of Anarch, president of Architectural Association of Kosova (AAK)

A10 correspondent

Architect, PhD studies at Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Riga Technical University

A10 correspondent

Senior urban designer at the municipality of Amsterdam (Zuidas Amsterdam Development Office)

A10 correspondent

Architectuur Lokaal

Architectuur Lokaal/A10

Architectuur Lokaal

Policy Officer Legal Affairs, BNA

Senior Curator of the Architecture Department of the National Museum

A10 correspondent

Architect and director of the documentary *The Competition* (2013)

Associate professor School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Stockholm, Sweden

Professor School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Stockholm, Sweden

Director of Project Compass CIC, senior Lecturer at Portsmouth School of Architecture





## **Authors, editors, graphic design**

Dutton R. Hauhart (USA, A10) is a freelance editor and studied art history and cultural theory at the University of Amsterdam. He specializes in editing and improving texts translated into English or written by non-native speakers. The activities of his company, Reitz Ink, also include proofreading, reviewing, and (copy)writing. Among his clients are the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Idea Books.

Florian Heilmeyer (Germany, A10) has been living and working in Berlin since 1978. As author, editor, and curator he focuses on making visible the political and economical forces, as well as the cultural and social reasons, that make architecture come into form. He regularly contributes to various European magazines (MARK, Werk Bauen Wohnen, Arch+), exhibitions, books, and conferences.

Anne Isopp (Austria, A10) is an architecture journalist based in Vienna. She studied architecture at TU Graz and journalism at Danube University Krems. She writes for various newspapers, architectural journals, and magazines. She is also editor-in-chief of Zuschnitt ([www.zuschnitt.at](http://www.zuschnitt.at)) magazine, which presents current trends in timber building.

Margot de Jager (Netherlands, Architectuur Lokaal) studied Dutch language and literature at the University of Amsterdam, and followed a course in painting and graphics at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. In addition to her visual activities, she works as project assistant at Architectuur Lokaal, in which role she supports project leaders in the implementation of various projects.

Cilly Jansen (Netherlands, Architectuur Lokaal) studied architectural history at the University of Amsterdam. She has worked for visual

arts organizations and after that as policy manager for architecture and design at the Fonds voor beeldende kunsten, vormgeving en bouwkunst (BKVB). Since its inception in 1993, she has been the director of Architectuur Lokaal, where for 20 years she served as editor-in-chief for the eponymous magazine Architectuur Lokaal. In 1997 she founded the Steunpunt Architectuuroopdrachten & Ontwerpwedstrijden. She is involved in the organization and assessment of various selection procedures for architectural commissions.

Indira van 't Klooster (Netherlands, Architectuur Lokaal/A10) works for Architectuur Lokaal and is the founder and editor-in-chief of A10 new European architecture Cooperative. Her books include *Forty and Famous – 10 interviews with successful young European architects* (Amilcar Publishers, 2016) and *Reactivate! Innovators of Dutch architecture* (Trancity/Valiz, 2013). She has participated in many events and juries throughout Europe, and has been a guest lecturer at the Academy of Architecture Amsterdam since 2003.

Saimir Kristo (Albania, A10 board member) is vice-dean and lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture and Design and lecturer of architecture at POLIS University. He is also an active member of civil society in Albania, engaging communities and developing a common platform for discussion in the field of architecture and urban planning. He directed Tirana Design Week 2015, 'Design NOW!', and is currently the Albanian coordinator of Future Architecture Platform.

Ruta Leitanaite (Lithuania, A10 board member) is an architecture critic, publicist, and writer. In 2017 she was appointed director of the Architects Association of Lithuania (AAL). She has organized various architecture exhibitions, lectures, workshops, and architectural competitions, as well as collaborated in many books and publications. She hosts a biweekly radio programme on Ziniu radijas.

Vjollca Limani-Xhemaj (Kosovo, A10) is an architect based in Prishtina. After graduating from the University of Prishtina in 2005, she began her professional work experience in the architecture office Urban Plus. In 2008 she co-founded XL Architects, developing urban planning projects with a focus on sustainable community planning and design. Currently she is also engaged as municipal advisor for GIZ-Kosovo.

Zaira Magliozzi (Italy, A10) is an architect, editor, and critic. In 2016 she co-founded Superficial Studio to research and develop projects focused on communication, image, culture, events, and branding. She is a member of the IN/ARCH steering committee to promote the architectural debate through conferences and events. She is also an active collaborator of the creative laboratory presS/Tfactory, part of the Italian Association of Architecture and Criticism (AIAC).

Walter Menteth (United Kingdom, Project Compass CIC) founded Walter Menteth Architects and is senior lecturer at the Portsmouth School of Architecture. He is one of the directors of Project Compass, a British platform that provides online interactive procurement advice and guidance services for clients and design professionals. The platform was founded in cooperation with Architectuur Lokaal.

Tarja Nurmi (Finland, A10) is a Helsinki-based architect, architecture writer, and critic. She has worked in several architecture studios, appeared on TV programmes and documentaries, and curated architecture exhibitions. She has also been very active in the Finnish Architecture Association (SAFA). She has her own blog, 'Arkkivahti', something that might translate as 'Architecture watchdog'.

Osamu Okamura (Czech Republic, A10) is an architect and the programme director of reSITE, and also lectures at universities and institutes in the United States, Japan, Thailand, Turkey, Germany, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine,

and Czech Republic. Between 2005–2012 he was editor-in-chief of ERA21. He is also the official nominator of the Mies van der Rohe Award for the Czech Republic.

Petros Phokaides (Greece/Cyprus, A10) is an architect and a PhD candidate at the National Technical University of Athens, as well as a researcher at Mesarch Lab at the University of Cyprus. His research focuses on transnational architecture and planning of the 1960s and '70s. His research has been presented at international conferences and published in *Docomomo Journal*, *Journal of Architecture* (2011), *MIT:Thresholds* and *MONU Magazine*.

Emmett Scanlon (Ireland, A10) is an Ireland-based architect focused on the social purpose of architecture. His practice includes the design of buildings, academic research, architectural education, policy development, curation, and criticism. He is a lecturer at UCD Architecture, adviser to the Arts Council, and a PhD candidate at the School of Architecture, University of Sheffield.

Joakim Skaaja (Norway, A10) is an architect educated at the Bergen School of Architecture. He is also a certified meteorologist and landscape ecologist. He has served two years on the Board of the Oslo Architects Association, and was responsible for the association's contribution to the Oslo Architecture Triennale, 'Behind the Green Door' (2013). He is co-editor of the magazine *Pollen*. He is also a partner in the architectural office Eriksen Skajaa Arkitekter.

Bram Talman (Netherlands, Architectuur Lokaal) reports from the Netherlands. As part of Architectuur Lokaal, since 2010 he has been analysing tenders and competitions (general statistics) and tender and competition briefs for the Steunpunt Ontwerpwedstrijden (part of Architectuur Lokaal).

Sylvain Tegroeg (France, A10) is graphic designer. He graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in 2013, after which he started his

career as a multifunctional design professional. He is best known for creating highly detailed illustrations applied to product design, games, architecture, and graphic design. Hidden Folks, a hand-drawn, interactive game of miniature landscapes, designed together with Adriaan de Jongh, was released in 2017.

Hubert Trammer (Poland, A10) teaches at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture of the Lublin University of Technology. He was the nominator for the Mies van der Rohe Award 2015, and has been a member of juries for various architectural competitions in Poland and abroad. He also writes for the Polish architectural monthly Architektura-murator.

Elša Turkušić Jurić (Bosnia and Herzegovina, A10) studied at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo and at the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona. She holds a Master of Science (2010) and a PhD (2014) in architecture and urbanism. She has worked for the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and collaborated with the Institute for Architecture and Urbanism (Sarajevo). She is a voting member of ICOMOS and an independent expert on the Mies van der Rohe Award for Architecture.

Aneta Vasileva (Bulgaria, A10) is co-founder and blogger at WhAT Association, an independent organization dedicated to architecture criticism, journalism, and the organization and evaluation of competitions. She is also co-author and editor of several books. She is currently a teaching PhD researcher and works on Bulgarian architecture since World War II and the preservation of architectural heritage.

Ieva Zibarte (Latvia, A10 board member) began her career writing as a correspondent from London for the Latvian national daily newspaper. Since then she has established a rich portfolio of architectural and design writing for national dailies, current affairs media, and business magazines. She has also curated and directed architecture exhibitions, and her work has been recognized by being awarded the Latvian National Architecture Prize.



## Colophon

Competition Culture in Europe is a project of Architectuur Lokaal. This publication shows the state of affairs in the field of competition culture in Europe, based on a baseline survey executed by A10 new European architecture Cooperative, Project Compass CIC and Architectuur Lokaal.

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## Competition Culture in Europe 2013 - 2016

To address the competition culture in Europe, Architectuur Lokaal developed the programme *The power of knowledge islands* for the period 2017–2020. This programme, supported by the Creative Industries Fund, aims to increase access to international competitions for (Dutch) architects by making them digitally available through the establishment of a structured European network, for the purpose of improving the quality and accessibility of design competitions, and through an examination of competition procedures in Europe; foster interdisciplinary collaboration and design research internationally; and revitalize the competition culture, both within and outside the Netherlands.

The pan-European survey by A10 new European architecture Cooperative that started this project focused on seven questions in seventeen countries in Europe:

- 1) How many competitions have been organized between 2013 and 2016?
- 2) What are the competitions about (topics)?
- 3) How many of the competition-winning designs are actually built, or are in the process of realization?
- 4) What is the lowest and highest prize money in one competition?
- 5) How do you assess the competition culture in your country?
- 6) In which languages are competition briefs available?
- 7) How many competitions are publicly commissioned, and how many privately?

During a two-day conference in September 2017 experts from all countries involved have compared case studies, exchanged experiences, filled in the gaps and formulated lessons learnt and next steps, with the aim to launch a European-wide debate on competition culture and how we can improve it.

