

HouseEurope! Learning from Italy

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houseeurope.eu



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Organizzato da

Dipartimento di Architettura e Design (DAD), Università degli Studi di Genova,

Fondazione dell'Ordine degli Architetti di Genova (FOA)

Ospiti

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L'evento è disponibile sia in presenza che in webinar
Iscrizioni su formagenova.it

Sinossi

Arno Brandlhuber è partner di *bplus.xyz (b+)* e professore ordinario all'ETH di Zurigo dove ha fondato la piattaforma di insegnamento e ricerca *station.plus (s+)*.

Il 7 giugno presso la sala S. Salvatore (DAD) verrà presentata *HouseEurope! (2022)*, un'iniziativa di cui Brandlhuber ed il suo studio (*bplus.xyz*) sono autori. L'iniziativa è volta a coinvolgere i cittadini europei con l'obiettivo di arrestare il processo per cui la demolizione a finalità speculative ed il relativo mercato delle nuove costruzioni sono preferibili al riuso del patrimonio edilizio esistente.

Con l'impegno di affrontare la crisi ambientale e le intricate dinamiche socio-economiche, *HouseEurope!* è in prima linea nel sostegno di conservazione, adattamento, ristrutturazione e trasformazione degli edifici esistenti proponendo un nuovo quadro legislativo europeo che mutua dalle normative esistenti di tutti i 27 Stati membri.

L'iniziativa segna un cambiamento significativo nella concezione dello sviluppo edilizio, promuovendo l'allontanamento dalle pratiche contemporanee di demolizione per avvicinarsi ad un approccio sostenibile del mercato edilizio, più attento alla comunità ed al profondo impatto che le pratiche speculative immobiliari hanno sulle nostre vite. L'etica di *HouseEurope!* è sostenuta dalla necessità di un cambiamento legislativo, che prevede un impegno pubblico e la rivalutazione del nostro ambiente costruito, volto a bilanciare la sostenibilità ecologica con l'equità sociale e la redditività economica.

La presentazione includerà la proiezione di *"The Demolition Drama"*, un film prodotto da *s+* che illustra come l'industria immobiliare danneggi le nostre comunità affidandosi a pratiche che privilegiano il profitto rispetto all'individuo escludendo da queste la "ristrutturazione e il riuso", come alternativa socialmente sostenibile ed economicamente vantaggiosa.

Arno Brandlhuber

Arno Brandlhuber (DE, 1964) è architetto e urbanista presso *bplus.xyz (b+)* (Berlino), uno studio associato nato a Berlino da *Brandlhuber+*, e professore ordinario all'ETH di Zurigo. Nella sua produzione architettonica, dagli edifici alla ricerca dell'uso dei media, si occupa del patrimonio edilizio esistente con particolare attenzione alla legislazione. Brandlhuber intende la normativa non come una restrizione, ma piuttosto come uno strumento di progettazione attiva per sfidare le regole. Questo approccio ha portato alla realizzazione di diversi edifici tra cui *Brunnenstrasse 9, Antivilla o St. Agnes*, e di tre film: *Legislating Architecture (2016)*, *The Property Drama (2017)* e *Architecting after Politics (2018)*, insieme al regista *Christopher Roth*. L'impegno di Brandlhuber con il mezzo cinematografico e il suo potenziale politico e spaziale ha portato nel 2017 a fondare *station+* all'ETH di Zurigo, una collaborazione che ha portato a *2038 - The New Serenity*, il padiglione tedesco alla *17a Biennale di Venezia*, insieme a Olaf Grawert, Nikolaus Hirsch e Christopher Roth.

bplus.xyz (b+) è uno studio di architettura collaborativa che opera all'intersezione tra teoria e prassi, attraverso diversi media e format. La pratica cerca di affrontare le sfide contemporanee del nostro tempo, in particolare quelle legate alla trasformazione socio-ecologica e al riuso adattivo degli edifici esistenti, con risposte ecologicamente ed economicamente sostenibili.

Giacomo Ardesio

Giacomo Ardesio (IT, 1987) è architetto e co-fondatore di Fosbury Architecture (FA), collettivo con sede a Milano dal 2013. Con FA è stato curatore di *Spaziale, Everyone belongs to everyone else*, il Padiglione Italia alla *18° Biennale di Venezia*. Nel corso degli anni e attraverso una serie di collaborazioni tra cui *2050+* a Milano e *OMA/AMO* a Rotterdam, Ardesio ha costruito un profilo professionale multidisciplinare che beneficia della contaminazione di un'ampia gamma di esperienze che spaziano dalle installazioni temporanee, alla moda, alle mostre, alla ricerca e alla conservazione.

Dal 2023 insegna con *station+* all'ETH di Zurigo.

Join, Support, Sign

You rent an apartment? You own a building? You care about the environment? You work in the building sector? Almost everyone is or will be affected by speculative real estate practices and the harm they cause. Because here's the deal: every building is up for demolition, you just don't know yet! In fact, speculation fuels demolition and new construction. This comes with a loss of homes, a loss of jobs, and a loss of energy.

You can make a difference – put an end to this practice and make a change in reality! With your support, your voice, and your signature we can push for regulations that recognize and protect the value of existing buildings. But this is not just about materials and energy; it is also about the values we hold as a society. By activating buildings that have been abandoned, we will pave the way for a livable future – for ourselves, our children and all future generations.



House Europe!

HouseEurope.eu

We are a growing team of citizens that brings together diverse perspectives and expertise from the fields of architecture, labour and politics, to our initiative. Together, we are committed to creating precedents for the social-ecological transformation of how we live together.

S+ [station.plus]

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DARCH [Department of Architecture]
ETH [Swiss Federal Institute of Technology]

The Speculation Issue

Today, buildings are treated as investments rather than as spaces for people to live. Due to financial speculation, millions of square metres sit empty and ruin, whilst others are just being demolished and replaced: from functioning family homes to abandoned industrial and office spaces.

This practice has negative impacts on both society and the environment. It leads to a shortage of livable spaces for people, while also draining resources that could have been put to better use. Despite the public's focus on issues such as transportation and energy, the building sector is a major contributor to the problems we face today. In fact, it is responsible for 38% of global CO2 emissions. From real estate companies to architects and builders, everyone involved in the building industry has a significant impact on our environment and society.

We are witnessing the relentless destruction of our environment and the wasting of valuable resources. Yet, we maintain a system where it is cheaper to buy something new than caring about the old. We maintain a system that prioritises financial profit over the well-being of the people and the planet. In this system, renovation and adaptation are often neglected in favour of demolition and new construction, with little to no regard for the significant social, economic, and environmental consequences.

Public awareness, our value system, and existing legislation make it possible to sustain this society's lifestyle.

Awareness, Value, Legislation

In Western markets, buildings have not only become an investment but a focal point for financial speculation. Many investors buy properties, not to inhabit or rent them out, but rather in anticipation of financial appreciation. This speculative drive is intensified by various factors, and the ripple effects can be profound.

Our system is designed to tear down and

build anew. This worked in the past when resources seemed in endless supply and new construction was cheaper, faster, and easier than dealing with the constraints of existing buildings. The current material and energy shortages show us that this system no longer works and that resources are limited.

The role of the building industry in the problems we face today must become part of our daily conversations because its impact on our lives is dramatic.

The Demolition Drama

By 2050, we will have demolished 2 billion square metres of existing space in Europe. From Amsterdam to Athens, from Riga to Rome, we will have demolished the equivalent of half of Germany's building stock, which is all of Paris or Berlin. Instead, we will have built billions of square metres of new space to replace what was already there. This leads to three main issues:

Home Loss, Job Loss, Energy Loss

Social Issue = Home Loss

We demolish existing buildings that could comfortably house more than 50 million people, while the harsh reality is that every year, countless individuals lose their homes due to demolition and the soaring costs of new construction.

Economical Issue = Job Loss

In the building industry, mainly big players benefit from demolition and new construction. Small and medium-sized businesses have the opportunity to thrive through renovation and adaptation projects.

Ecological Issue = Energy Loss

Our built environment carries a substantial embodied energy, encompassing countless tons of CO2. With each building we tear down, we waste all of the energy already invested in its construction.

Let's fix this!

The Renovation Story

The answer is that we need a social-ecological transformation of the existing building stock. This means we need to change our attitudes and practices by recognizing the value of existing buildings and supporting their renovation. Renovation is a great answer to ensuring affordable living spaces and supporting small and medium-scale businesses in the construction sector, all while massively reducing CO2 emissions. The renovation wave, initiated by the European Union as part of the European Green New Deal, can help people to live in much better conditions, and even be economically preferable in the long run. This transformation takes time, but we came up with a simple yet detailed roadmap.

HouseEurope! advocates for EU-laws to make renovation more affordable, easy and social. Because the demolition of existing buildings is as outdated as food waste, fast fashion and single-use plastics. To achieve the social-ecological transformation of the existing building stock we must activate what is already there, through measures focused on building preservation, adaptation, renovation, and transformation.

Preservation: Reuse, don't demolish!

We call for the preservation of existing buildings and the energy already invested in them. By doing so, we can save valuable resources and maintain social and cultural values. We aim to prioritize reuse over demolition, taking the first step towards achieving affordable living spaces for all.

Adaptation: Adapt, don't abandon!

We call for the adaptation of existing structures and underused spaces. In doing so, we can give Europe's building stock a new purpose and narrative, reframing the perception of value in what already exists. We aim to adapt buildings that have fallen out of use, thereby invigorating the potential of the existing building stock.

Renovation: Build for the future!

We call for the renovation, repair, and

care of existing buildings. This reduces waste and CO2 emissions. We aim to renovate in a future-proof way, meaning we need to (re)build in a long-lasting way, limiting the unnecessary use of additional material and new construction now, and in the future.

Transformation: Shift the Value!

We call for the transformation of existing structures in a social, environmental, and economic sense. We aim to implement policies that ensure equity, resilience, and community-building. We need new cultural narratives: from viewing spaces as commodities to seeing them as necessities.

From knowledge to action: HouseEurope! the European Citizens' Initiative

There are already many people, groups, initiatives, and investors out there making a difference by advocating for a social-ecological transformation of the existing building stock. We support these efforts and bring our expertise and tools to the table. In more than fifteen years of developing adaptive reuse and renovation projects, we have built a practice that considers legislation, advocacy, and storytelling as active design tools.

This is why we decided to launch a European Citizens' Initiative called HouseEurope! Simply put, a European Citizens' Initiative, or ECI, is a great tool for direct democracy. If one million EU citizens from at least seven countries support the cause, the European Commission must consider the proposal and dedicate a working group. This gives citizens a direct say in the EU policy-making process and helps raise awareness of important issues.

Together, we aim for an alternative to the current legislation that favours demolition and reconstruction over renovation and adaptation. But to make this happen, we need everyone to understand, join in and support the call.

We need each other!