

HOUSEEUROPE! MAKE IT COUNT



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In February 2025, station.plus will act as a Campaign Studio of HouseEurope!. A European Citizens' Initiative for EU-legislation that boosts the renovation of existing buildings and stops their demolition driven by speculation. Because the demolition of existing buildings is as outdated as food waste, animal testing and single-use plastics.

An ECI is a tool for direct democracy that enables citizens across the EU to propose new or improved legislation. If one million citizens from at least seven countries support a cause, the European Commission must consider the proposal. This process gives citizens a direct voice in shaping EU policy, influencing the lives of nearly half a billion people. HouseEurope!, initiated in 2023, enters its signature period in February 2025, which will run until February 2026. Beyond collecting signatures, HouseEurope! aims to bring the issue of the unsustainable building sector to the forefront of political agenda and public discourse. Europe demolishes existing buildings that could comfortably house more than 50 million people, while the harsh reality is that every year, countless people lose their homes due to demolition and new construction they then can't afford. Therefore, to combat not only the climate crisis but also the housing crisis, we must accelerate the transformation of existing buildings.

Join the Campaign Studio

This studio allows students to be part of an international movement while learning how to communicate their message effectively, expanding their reach outside the architecture world. Beyond time-based content production and dissemination, the studio delves into the theoretical considerations of the agency of architects. It treats design as a medium of knowledge transfer on architecture beyond the built. Instead of becoming powerless in view of the polycrises we are facing, it claims that architects must become activists, challenging and shaping the political framework they are practising in. Beyond the individual building, the studio will

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require students to think in systems and communication strategies. The iterative design skills of the architect will be expanded by an experimental trajectory, exploring how to (de)construct narratives that shape public perception of the built environment. The studio will offer students the chance to deepen their storytelling and visual production skills while gaining a comprehensive understanding of the sustainable renovation movement. The integrated seminar week provides students with the chance to encounter, strengthen, and leverage European networks with their peers.

Semester Structure

By joining the studio you will become part of the campaign team supporting HouseEurope!'s partners all over the EU collecting the first half of 1 million signatures to make renovation the new norm. While the studio strives towards this collective end, the production of each student (group) is iteratively experimental, only connected to the choice of a country and their own communication channels. The guiding principle is: which narrative and medium can reach the widest audience, spark interest in renovation, and encourage people to take action through exercising direct democracy?

Phase 1 (Week 1 – 4) Campaign Bootcamp

Democracy fails if citizens don't realize they have a stake in it. During an in-depth onboarding, students will explore the campaign's connection to both their personal experiences and the broader housing crisis. By addressing the lived realities of precarious housing conditions and exploring political agency, students will build a knowledge base that empowers them to advocate. Investigating and comparing European spatial production, their ability to assess contextual and urban-planning issues will grow. Whilst acquiring the necessary technical skills, they will choose a channel and a country for Phase 2.

with Giacomo Ardesio, Severin Bärenbold, Arno Brandlhuber, Alina Kolar, Maximilian Lewark, Josiane Schmidt and Alexander Throm

with inputs by Jonas Illigmann on Political Campaigning (APA European Parliament, architect), Felix Hergert on Documenting (Film maker, 'Brunaupark'), Federica Zambelletti on Trends (Founder KoozArch), Ludwig Engel on Storytelling (Futurologist), Severin Bärenbold (Technical Seminar on time-based media)

Phase 2 (during and after seminar week) Meet Europe

The integrated seminar week offers students the opportunity to 'swarm out'. In groups they will get on European ground and organize an event with student associations and unions in the respective member state. By presenting the campaign and documenting how votes and views are gathered, they will simultaneously develop a deeper sensitivity to architectural and design issues through firsthand engagement with diverse built environments. Most importantly however, they will connect with peers from various European universities, laying the foundations of a transnational chain reaction triggering more sustainable building practices.

Phase 3 (Week 7 – 14) Swamp the Vote

Based on the knowledge of Phase 1 and 2, students are asked to further compress the main arguments and to communicate them to the public. Design and presentation skills will be instrumental. The goal is to combine compelling storytelling with viable popular trends designed to encourage people to exercise their right to vote and drive engagement. This involves reviewing and tailoring content for specific platforms while understanding the architecture of social media, building movement and amplifying impact. Along all phases, students will get to produce and continuously publish popular media bringing together research and storytelling. In the process of a live experiment, the studio will always monitor and report the campaign progress while adapting strategies and leveraging online trends effectively. Pack your bags, let's bring

HouseEurope! to Europe!

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