



Press Release – for immediate release

San Sebastián

06.10.2026

The finalists gather in San Sebastián: the European Collective Housing Days open on 7 October, winners announced on the 8th

The nine finalist teams of the 2nd European Collective Housing Award will present their projects to the jury and the public over two days in San Sebastián, 7–8 October

The programme, open to the public, includes the finalist presentations, panel discussions and conversations with the jury and international experts, culminating in the announcement of the two category winners on the evening of 8 October

The event forms part of the Basque Architecture Institute's special programme inaugurating its new headquarters at Tabakalera, held during International Architecture Week

The finalists were selected from 192 submissions across 36 European countries – nearly double the geographic reach of the first edition in 2024

On 7 and 8 October, San Sebastián will host the European Collective Housing Days, a two-day public programme that brings the 2nd European Collective Housing Award to its conclusion. The nine finalist teams – selected from 192 projects submitted across 36 European countries – will present their work to the jury and the public, before the two winning

projects, one in new construction and one in renovation, are announced at the closing ceremony.

The event is part of the Basque Architecture Institute's special opening programme at its new headquarters in Tabakalera, held during International Architecture Week. Both days will take place there.

Organised by the Basque Architecture Institute (San Sebastián) and arc en rêve centre d'architecture (Bordeaux), with the support of the Basque Government's Department of Housing and Urban Agenda, the award recognises built works of collective housing that combine architectural quality, social impact, and a meaningful contribution to how Europe lives.

Housing as relationship: the nine finalists

The five finalists in the new construction category show how far collective housing has moved beyond the simple provision of units. In Masnou (Spain), a building breaks its own corner to lift a public square onto its roof, so residents cross a shared space to reach their homes. In Amersfoort (Netherlands), 56 houses sit among the trees of a forest left to flow through the site, with birds, insects and bats treated as stakeholders in the design. A Barcelona block organises itself entirely around community life and a gender perspective; a Paris building turns its shallow depth into a virtue, giving every flat two orientations, city on one side and garden on the other; and in Kortrijk (Belgium), a 1924 garden-city neighbourhood is quietly densified through "kangaroo" homes that pair dwellings for intergenerational living. The common thread is clear: new housing is increasingly judged not by what it contains, but by the relationships it makes possible.

The four finalists in the renovation category tell an even more striking story — one of buildings that were never meant to become homes. Three of the four are conversions of obsolete infrastructure: two former Paris garages, one a 1930s structure turned into 83 social homes without demolishing a wall or consuming new land, the other a 1957 landmark whose ramps give way to planted courtyards. In Antwerp (Belgium), a former nightclub becomes affordable housing knitted back into its street. And on the edge of a forest near Mérignac (France), a post-war estate built as temporary and inhabited for fifty years is transformed by treating its residents' own informal additions as the design itself. Renovation here is not restoration — it is

reinvention, and a direct answer to the question of how Europe builds without building anew.

Together, the nine finalists map a continent rethinking what housing is for: less about the dwelling as object, more about reuse, community and the long life of what already exists.

A public programme on the future of collective housing

The European Collective Housing Days are open to all, conceived not only as the final stage of the award but as a public forum on one of Europe's most pressing questions: how to house people well, affordably, and together. The programme will be held mainly in English, with simultaneous translation into Spanish and Basque.

7 October opens at 12.00 with the presentations of the four finalists in the renovation category: Woonwerk (Belgium), Atelier Téqui (France), NZI (France) and Christophe Hutin Architecture (France).

At 15.30, the five finalists in the new construction category present their projects: Ciertto Estudio (Spain), Maker Architecten (Belgium), Peris+Toral (Spain), Ignacio Prego Architectures with Thibaud Babled (France), and Space&Matter (Netherlands). The day closes at 18.30 with a panel discussion of the award's Advisory Board – Kristiaan Borret (Belgium) and Bernard Blanc (France) – moderated by Clara Blanchar (El País).

8 October begins at 18.00 with the panel discussion "Urban reconversion for housing development," bringing together housing experts Raquel Guerra, Acha Zaballa, Jelena Prokopljevic (Serbia) and Maria Topolčanska (Slovakia).

At 19.00, the award ceremony begins in the Sala Prisma, opened by Denis Itxaso, Basque Government Minister for Housing and Urban Agenda. The international jury will then share the conclusions of its deliberation in a conversation moderated by Fredy Massad, before the two winning projects are announced. The evening closes with a cocktail.

A high-profile international jury

The 2026 jury is chaired by Catalan architect Carme Pinós, recipient of the National Architecture Award of Spain in 2021. She is joined by Jing Liu (USA), architect and co-founder of SO-IL; Catherine Sabbah (France), Executive Director of IDHEAL and housing policy expert; David Madden (United Kingdom), urban sociologist and Director of the Cities Programme at the London School of Economics; and Lucia Tozzi (Italy), urban researcher and journalist.

"The quality of the submissions confirms the extraordinary vitality of collective housing in Europe, and the diversity of the responses it is offering to contemporary challenges."

"The deliberation process revealed architecture's capacity to generate social, urban and environmental value beyond the formal quality of the projects."

Carme

Pinós

About the European Collective Housing Award

The award recognises built works of collective housing that combine architectural quality, social impact, and a meaningful contribution to how Europe lives.

The award aims to become a reference for the field of collective housing in Europe, and the results of the second edition confirm this ambition: submissions rose from 170 to 192 projects, and national participation nearly doubled – from 19 to 36 European countries represented, extending the award's reach across the continent.

The finalist projects will feature in the award's forthcoming publication and in a travelling exhibition across European museums over the next two years.

The award is organized jointly by the Basque Architecture Institute and arc en rêve centre d'architecture, with the support of the Department of Housing and Urban Agenda of the Basque Government.

→ www.europeancollectivehousingaward.eu

High resolution images and descriptions

Pictures of finalist projects are available [here](#) (Google Drive).

Press Dossier with descriptions of finalist projects ([ENG](#), Google Drive).

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