



public space  
2024

# europaean prize for urban public space 2024

## minutes of the jury's deliberations for the general category

In the headquarters of the **Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona**, the Jury constituted by Ms. **Beth Galí**, architect, landscape and urban designer (Barcelona), who acts as president; Ms. **Sonia Curnier**, architect (Lausanne); Mr. **Fabrizio Gallanti**, architect and curator (Bordeaux); Ms. **Žaklina Gligorjević**, urban planner (Belgrade); Ms. **Beate Hølmebakk**, architect (Oslo); Ms. **Manon Mollard**, architect and editor (London); Mr. **Francesco Musco**, architect and urban planner (Venice); and Mr. **Lluís Ortega**, architect (Barcelona), who acts as secretary and prepares the minutes.

## statement

The jury acknowledges the complex challenges presented in today's debate on public space. The diversity of situations across Europe highlights the urgent need for commitment and confidence in public space as a cornerstone of the European project, and as a generator of the social and environmental quality of cities. This debate on public space shines a light on designers' capacity to transform cities, while also revealing the pressing needs that still require our full attention. The climate emergency, rapid social and demographic shifts, global capitalisation, and intense political struggles are just some of the issues that public space must address, inviting all of us, as a community, to reflect and act.

With this ambition in mind, the jury carefully reviewed all submissions for this year's award. The best evidence that public space is the arena where the complexity of urban life unfolds lies in the fact that the jury's assessments were neither conclusive nor definitive. Although provisional, they seek to provide meaningful contributions to the ongoing evolution of European cities.

The jury values the diversity of the projects submitted and highlights the quality and ambition of the finalists:

“We recognise the diversity of economic and social conditions across Europe and the distinct challenges faced by teams delivering meaningful civic projects within the context of both limited resources and what appears to be a lower appreciation of the value of urban public space. The finalists succeeded in responding to multiple challenges, while demonstrating an excellent command of the design of these spaces, from the large scale down to the construction detail.”

Overall, the jury also wishes to celebrate the “varied civic actors who are undertaking the work of promoting the creation and ongoing care of inclusive urban spaces”.



## procedure and assessment

The Jury meets on three occasions.

The first meeting is online and discusses the system for analysing and selecting possible prize winners from among the 253 projects presented for this year's award within the period established in the rules. The jury members individually evaluate each project presented.

In a second meeting, this time in person in Barcelona, all the votes are considered and, after detailed assessment and debate on the projects, 25 of them are chosen to be included in the Prize Archive and the five finalists are also selected.

At the third meeting, the finalists are invited to Barcelona, where there is a public presentation of the projects by their authors and discussion of questions raised by the jury members. The jury then proceeds to deliberate, and finally decides which project will be awarded First Prize in the general category of the **2024 European Prize for Urban Public Space**.

The Jury of the 2024 European Prize for Urban Public Space awards the **First Prize** to:

**Park at the Warsaw Uprising Mound**  
**Warsaw (Poland), 2023**  
**Developer: Zarząd Zieleni m.st. Warszawy**  
**Authors: topoScape, Archigrest**

The Park at the Warsaw Uprising Mound provides a public space that innovatively connects with the site's memory, reviving an urban area in a way that honours and highlights its history. It reuses rubble from the destruction of World War II and, with a forward-looking approach, offers a space that is both accessible to and enjoyable for citizens. The design employs strategies that respect the ecological needs of the area, creating a unique integration of memory and leisure with the local ecosystem.

Due to the complex terrain and invasive vegetation, the architects intervened in the entire area of the mound. To increase biodiversity, they introduced several species of native plants, including herbs and shrubs. To accommodate all users, they created footbridges and artificial ravines, working in collaboration with specialists to develop a new type of rubble concrete. The slopes of the ravines mimic the geological layers of an anthropogenic hill, transmitting traces of the manual labour of those who cleared Warsaw's rubble after the war. Recreational amenities are enhanced with rest areas, walking paths, and a playground.



The jury especially values the project's ability to embrace the site's memory with an experimental approach to its materialisation. The design acknowledges that space and the citizens' experience become part of collective memory, approaching history not by means of monumentalism but through a material, ecological, and pedagogical lens. The park becomes a memorial. The project stands out for recognising the complexity of public space, which has multiple layers of meaning and interaction. By reconfiguring the traditional aesthetics of an urban park, it reimagines the mound as a deep ecological entity, accepting invasive vegetal species, and embracing an attitude of "unfinished" imagination that encourages user engagement and reveals a new aesthetic for urban parks.

## **finalist projects**

The Jury of the 2024 European Prize for Urban Public Space highlights the finalist status of the following four projects:

### **Seven interventions in Monte Castel San Pietro (Switzerland), 2022 Developer: Comune di Castel San Pietro Authors: StudioSer**

This project is the outcome of a detailed study of several peripheral regions in Ticino, identifying the everyday needs of and challenges faced by the elderly population as key issues to be addressed. The method consisted in recording the memories, needs, and aspirations of the local community, and identifying specific areas of common space to feed into the design process. Based on these insights, the designers produced a proposal which, through meticulous and refined architectural craftsmanship, transformed the town into a more accessible, inclusive, and supportive environment.

The jury commends the project's confidence in using small, targeted interventions to enhance the quality of life for the local population and attractiveness for visitors. By focusing on the needs of elderly residents but also children, the design shows deep care for the local community – recognising its diversity – and emphasising the positive impact of public space activation through intergenerational relationships.

### **Palais des Expositions Charleroi (Belgium), 2024 Developer: Ville de Charleroi Igretec Authors: AM architecten jan de vylder inge vinck – AgwA**



This large structure in Charleroi illustrates how post-industrial sites can be reintegrated into the urban landscape and public life. It accomplishes this by harnessing the potential of the unused structure and embracing an open-ended approach. This optimistic intervention honours the existing site and building, uncovering new possibilities through architectural insight and employing minimal resources to maximise urban impact. It creates an infrastructure that is ready to be inhabited and transformed.

The jury wishes to acknowledge the designers' skill in revealing the latent potential of pre-existing, large, constructed elements in the city, while also redefining the original brief for the project. The intervention reopens a previously finished structure, offering it to the city as a resource to be appropriated. The incremental design process supports a novel type of public space, whose use would respond to changing city needs. There is bold confidence in the role of architecture as an agent of change, transforming what was once an enclosed, unused obstacle in the urban fabric. The project redefines public space by creating a framework for an infrastructure of public quality, and proposing an innovative vision to transform large inherited structures into essential public assets. It is a highly valuable contribution to the ongoing discussion about the future of dormant architectural spaces as potential public infrastructure in European cities.

**Boca de la Mina Promenade**  
**Reus (Spain), 2022**  
**Developer: Ajuntament de Reus**  
**Authors: Batlleiroig Arquitectura**

The Boca de la Mina intervention, in the northeast of Reus, exemplifies seamless integration of functional and ecological needs with recreational activities through thoughtful design. The use of handmade brick establishes a cohesive character for the site, while a clear water management strategy enhances the permeability between landscape and urban areas. This approach supports open-air activities for the citizens of Reus and its surroundings, providing both ecological and recreational benefits.

The jury commends the design excellence of this proposal and its capacity to merge landscape solutions, climate resilience strategies, and a profound understanding of the site's history. The resulting project is a welcoming public space that reinterprets the historical legacy, thus turning it into a contemporary urban asset through an ecosystem-based design strategy.



**Urban forest**  
**Tbilisi (Georgia), 2023**  
**Developer: Tbilisi City Hall, Cartu Foundation**  
**Authors: Ruderal**

Mtatsminda Mountain in Tbilisi is the site of a 700-hectare project conceived to address the shortcomings of a flawed plantation strategy from the 1920s, which involved the exclusive planting of pines. This aging pine forest has suffered significant die-off due to pests and fungi, creating both a fire hazard and a risk to public safety. The project therefore serves not only as a restoration strategy but also as a model for developing new tools for urban ecological interventions. It emphasises the urban forest as a means to restrict the expansion of unchecked urban development, and to improve the environmental conditions and urban resiliency.

The jury highlights the significance of this proposal, which reimagines climate as a form of public space and recognises the role of design as an environmental agent. The project acknowledges the improvement of air quality and the increase in biodiversity as key goals for public space performance, offering a methodology that can be applied in other contexts.



Beth Galí, President of the Jury



Beate Hølmebakk



Sonia Curnier



Manon Mollard



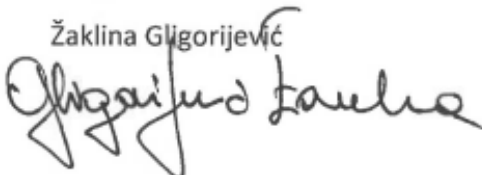
Fabrizio Gallanti



Francesco Musco



Žaklina Gligorijević



Lluís Ortega, Secretary of the Jury

