



Consolidated Report: Recommendations for Alternative Spaces of Learning in Art & Design Education



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1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this consolidated report is to serve as a comprehensive guide for the development and implementation of alternative spaces of learning in Art & Design Education, aligned with the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB). This report aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Provide Detailed Recommendations:** Provide a set of recommendations for creating alternative learning environments that support sustainable, inclusive, and innovative educational practices in alignment with NEB principles.
2. **Document Current Practices and Innovations:** Explore, observe, and document various potential sites for alternative learning spaces, including green spaces, public spaces, transdisciplinary spaces, cultural spaces, and online environments. This documentation includes best practices and successful implementations across Europe, with specific insights from Greece, Lithuania, Italy and Cyprus.
3. **Support Professional Development:** Highlight the opportunities that alternative learning spaces provide not only for current students but also for working professionals who seek to upskill or reskill. The report emphasises the flexibility and accessibility of these environments as solutions for continuous professional development.
4. **Promote Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Foster collaboration among educators, institutions, and policymakers by providing a consolidated resource that incorporates contributions from project partners.
5. **Facilitate the Digital Transition:** Outline the development and use of digital tools, such as e-learning platforms, to support the digital and green capabilities of Art & Design Education. The report provides strategies for integrating these tools into educational practices, enhancing the learning experience through technology.
6. **Enhance Learning Outcomes:** Demonstrate how alternative learning environments can strengthen learning outcomes by providing spaces that support behavioural changes in line with the green transition.

2. Introduction to Alternative Spaces of Learning and Connection to NEB

2.1 Brief Historical Overview in Europe - How it started and the Current Situation

The concept of learning environments has evolved significantly over the centuries, moving from traditional, rigid classrooms to more innovative and flexible spaces. This transformation has been influenced by various educational reform movements and societal changes. In the early stages of formal education in Europe, classrooms were often austere and uniform, reflecting a didactic approach to teaching. Education was teacher-centred, with a strong emphasis on rote memorization and strict discipline (Montessori, 1964).

The 20th century saw the emergence of progressive education movements that began to challenge the traditional model. Influential educators like Maria Montessori and John Dewey advocated for child-centred education, emphasising the importance of hands-on learning and the development of critical thinking skills. Montessori introduced the concept of prepared environments, where children could learn through exploration and interaction with their surroundings (Montessori, 1964). Dewey's work underscored the importance of experiential learning and the need for educational spaces that foster collaboration and creativity (Dewey, 1938).

After World War II, there was a significant push towards educational reform across Europe. The reconstruction period brought about new architectural designs for schools that incorporated more open spaces and natural light, reflecting a growing understanding of the impact of physical environments on learning (Alexander, 1977). The Open Classroom movement in the 1960s and 1970s further revolutionised learning environments by promoting flexible, student-centred spaces that could adapt to various teaching methods and learning styles (Bennett et al., 1980).

In recent decades, the integration of technology and a greater focus on sustainability have further transformed learning environments. The rise of digital learning platforms and the push for environmentally sustainable designs have led to the development of hybrid and alternative spaces of learning. These spaces often include green areas, public spaces, and online environments that support interactive and experiential learning (Dudek, 2000). The New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative, launched by the European Commission, aims to bridge the worlds of art, culture, and technology with sustainability at its core. It promotes the creation of beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive places, products, and ways of living. In the context of education, NEB emphasises the need for learning environments that are not only functional but also inspiring and conducive to holistic development (European Commission, 2021).

2.2. Impact on Art & Design Education & The Importance for Europe Today

In Art & Design Education, NEB principles translate into the creation of spaces that foster creativity and innovation while being mindful of environmental and social impacts. By adopting these principles, educational institutions can design learning environments that are flexible, inclusive, and sustainable, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience and outcomes for students (Hofstra, 2021). The significance of these principles is particularly pronounced in the current European context, where the convergence of sustainability, digital transformation, and inclusivity is seen as essential to the continent's future prosperity and resilience.

As Europe leads global efforts to address climate change, the integration of sustainable practices in all sectors, including education, is crucial. Alternative learning spaces that incorporate green design principles not only reduce the environmental footprint of educational institutions but also serve as living laboratories where students can engage with and learn about sustainability firsthand (European Commission, 2020). This hands-on experience is invaluable in cultivating the next generation of environmentally conscious designers and artists who can contribute to a greener future.

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has transformed the landscape of education, offering unprecedented opportunities for innovation in teaching and learning. The NEB's emphasis on integrating art, culture, and technology aligns with the broader European digital agenda, which aims to enhance digital skills and infrastructure across the continent (European Commission, 2021). By creating hybrid and online learning environments, Art & Design Education can become more accessible and adaptable, catering to diverse learning needs and preparing students for a digitalized world.

Inclusivity is a cornerstone of the NEB, reflecting Europe's commitment to social cohesion and equality. In the realm of education, this means designing spaces that are accessible to all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. Inclusive learning environments help to break down barriers and promote a culture of equity and respect, which is essential for fostering creativity and innovation (Hofstra, 2021). By ensuring that educational spaces are welcoming and accommodating, institutions can support a diverse student body and prepare graduates to thrive in a multicultural and inclusive society. Europe's rich cultural heritage is a source of inspiration and identity. Integrating this heritage into contemporary learning spaces can enhance educational experiences by connecting students with their cultural roots and fostering a sense of belonging (Council of Europe, 2019). At the same time, the NEB encourages the fusion of traditional and modern elements, promoting innovation while preserving cultural values. This approach is particularly relevant in Art & Design Education, where understanding historical context and pushing creative boundaries are both crucial.

The adoption of NEB principles in Art & Design Education is not only a response to contemporary challenges but also an opportunity to shape a future that is sustainable, digital, and inclusive. By

creating learning environments that embody these values, European educational institutions can play a pivotal role in driving the green transition, fostering innovation, and promoting social cohesion. This holistic approach ensures that education remains relevant and impactful in addressing the complex needs of today's world and future generations.

Recognizing this shift, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus, in collaboration with UNECE, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, and UNEP, hosted an influential forum on youth empowerment through entrepreneurship education. This event, held at the Parklane hotel in Limassol on June 27-28, 2024, aimed at integrating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) with entrepreneurship education to foster entrepreneurs committed to creating positive environmental, social, and economic impacts. The forum underscored the importance of alternative learning spaces in enhancing the educational experience, developing skills, and addressing student curiosity. In particular the following aspects were highlighted:

Redefining Learning Spaces for Enhanced Educational Outcomes

The forum emphasised the critical need to design learning environments that go beyond traditional classroom settings. The integration of technology, both inside and outside the classroom, is vital to meet the diverse needs of learners. Different groups of people require tailored educational approaches and technologies to support their learning goals and activities. This perspective underscores the importance of considering individual differences, such as metacognitive levels and self-regulation skills, when designing educational interventions.

The Role of Dialogue and Participatory Approaches

The concept of learning spaces was expanded beyond physical environments to include spaces for dialogue and participatory engagement. Representatives from the organisation RESET¹ highlighted their approach to educational interventions, which involves creating opportunities for dialogue among students, parents, and teachers. This method ensures that educational designs align with the needs and insights of all stakeholders, thereby enhancing engagement and learning effectiveness. An example discussed involved preparing students, parents, and teachers for digital readiness and resilience in virtual environments, demonstrating the importance of incorporating stakeholder feedback into educational design.

Innovative Classroom Designs and Flexible Learning Environments

The forum also brought attention to the implementation of flexible classroom designs that incorporate movable desks and various seating options. This approach, currently being applied in Albania and other regions, aims to create more engaging and adaptable learning environments. The need for avant-garde learning spaces that deviate from traditional models was emphasised, particularly to address the declining motivation among students to remain in school. Concepts

¹ <https://eudaynicosia.com/reset>

such as outdoor classrooms with gardens and nature integration, coupled with advanced technological tools, were proposed to make learning spaces more attractive and conducive to modern educational needs.

Teacher Training and Blended Learning

Another critical aspect discussed was the need to revamp teacher training methodologies. The forum suggested the adoption of blended learning methods to make teacher training more approachable and effective. This approach involves combining traditional in-person training with online learning, allowing for a more flexible and comprehensive training experience. By equipping educators with the skills to utilise new technologies and innovative teaching methods, the overall quality of education can be significantly improved.

3. Recommendations for Alternative Spaces of Learning

As educational paradigms shift towards more holistic and inclusive models, alternative spaces of learning have become increasingly important. These spaces—green spaces, public spaces, transdisciplinary spaces, cultural spaces, and online spaces—offer unique environments that foster creativity, collaboration, and practical engagement. By integrating these diverse learning environments into educational curricula, institutions can enhance student experiences, promote sustainability, and support the development of critical skills.

3.1 Green Spaces of Learning



Build your own shelter project: Photo Courtesy of Anna Merry Frederick University, Cyprus

Green spaces, such as gardens, parks, and other natural environments, provide unique and valuable opportunities for sustainable learning practices and eco-friendly projects. Integrating these spaces into educational curricula enhances students' connection to nature, promotes environmental stewardship, and supports experiential learning. Some examples and strategies for integration include:

1. **School Gardens:** Establishing school gardens where students can learn about sustainable agriculture, plant biology, and composting. For instance, students can grow vegetables, which can be used in school cafeterias, promoting a farm-to-table concept.

2. **Park-Based Learning:** Utilising local parks for field studies in subjects such as biology, environmental science, and geography. Parks can serve as living laboratories where students conduct experiments, observe wildlife, and study ecosystems.
3. **Outdoor Classrooms:** Creating outdoor classrooms within green spaces to facilitate a variety of subjects. These spaces can be equipped with seating and shade structures to provide a comfortable learning environment.
4. **Community Involvement Projects:** Partnering with local communities to maintain public gardens or parks. These projects can involve students in community service, teaching them the importance of civic engagement and environmental responsibility.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced Engagement: Green spaces provide a stimulating and dynamic environment that can increase student engagement and motivation. ● Hands-On Learning: These environments offer practical, hands-on learning experiences that can deepen understanding and retention of subject matter. ● Mental and Physical Health Benefits: Exposure to natural environments can reduce stress, improve mood, and encourage physical activity, benefiting overall student well-being. ● Environmental Awareness: Learning in green spaces fosters a sense of environmental stewardship and awareness of ecological issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weather Dependence: Outdoor learning activities are subject to weather conditions, which can disrupt schedules and limit year-round use. ● Resource Intensive: Establishing and maintaining green spaces may require significant resources, including funding, labour, and ongoing maintenance. ● Accessibility Issues: Not all students may have easy access to green spaces, particularly in urban areas where such spaces may be limited or non-existent. ● Safety Concerns: Ensuring the safety of students in outdoor environments can be challenging, requiring additional supervision and risk management.

Green spaces offer significant benefits for Art & Design Education by providing immersive, hands-on learning experiences that promote sustainability and environmental stewardship. While there are practical challenges to integrating green spaces into educational curricula, the pros outweigh the cons, particularly with thoughtful planning and resource allocation. By leveraging these natural environments, educational institutions can foster a deeper connection between students and the natural world, preparing them to become environmentally conscious and engaged citizens.

3.2 Public Spaces of Learning

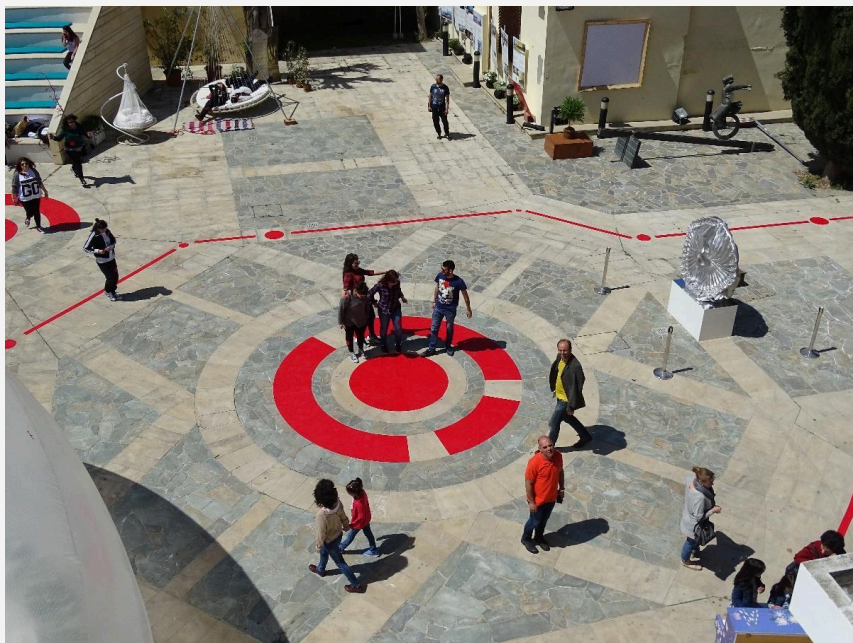


Photo Courtesy of Urban Gorillas, NGO. Pathway to the Bubble, Fuskopolis, Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus, 2014

Public spaces, including community centres, town squares, and other public areas, offer valuable opportunities for creating inclusive and accessible learning environments. These spaces can foster community engagement, support diverse learning activities, and enhance the visibility of educational initiatives. Some examples and strategies for integration include:

1. **Community Centers:** Utilising community centres for workshops, lectures, and collaborative projects. These centres often have the necessary infrastructure to support various learning activities and can be used outside regular school hours to accommodate different schedules.
2. **Town Squares and Plazas:** Organising public exhibitions, performances, and interactive installations in town squares and plazas. These events can engage the broader community and provide students with real-world experience in presenting their work.
3. **Public Libraries:** Leveraging public libraries as hubs for learning and collaboration. Libraries can host reading groups, research projects, and multimedia presentations, offering resources that support a wide range of subjects.

4. **Urban Spaces:** Transforming urban spaces, such as abandoned lots or underused areas, into temporary learning sites. Pop-up classrooms, outdoor lectures, and community art projects can revitalise these spaces and provide dynamic learning experiences.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accessibility and Inclusivity: Public spaces are often centrally located and accessible to a broad audience, making them ideal for inclusive educational initiatives. ● Community Engagement: Utilising public spaces for learning can strengthen ties between educational institutions and the community, fostering collaboration and mutual support. ● Real-World Experience: Public spaces provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings, enhancing their practical learning experience. ● Visibility and Awareness: Educational activities in public spaces can increase the visibility of educational programs and raise awareness about important issues among the general public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permitting and Regulations: Using public spaces often requires obtaining permits and adhering to local regulations, which can be time-consuming and complex. ● Resource Constraints: Public spaces may lack the specific resources and infrastructure needed for certain educational activities, requiring additional investment and planning. ● Environmental Factors: Like green spaces, public spaces are subject to weather conditions and other environmental factors that can impact the feasibility of outdoor activities. ● Safety and Security: Ensuring the safety and security of students and participants in public spaces can be challenging, necessitating careful planning and supervision.

Public spaces offer a wealth of opportunities for enhancing Art & Design Education through community engagement, real-world learning experiences, and increased accessibility. While there are challenges associated with utilising these spaces, such as regulatory requirements and environmental factors, the benefits of fostering inclusivity, engagement, and practical learning make public spaces a valuable component of alternative educational environments. By effectively integrating public spaces into educational programs, institutions can create dynamic, community-oriented learning experiences that enrich both students and the broader community.

3.3 Transdisciplinary Spaces of Learning

Transdisciplinary spaces, such as innovation hubs and maker spaces, provide environments that encourage collaboration across different fields of study. These spaces are designed to foster interdisciplinary learning, creativity, and innovation by bringing together diverse groups of students, educators, and professionals.



Photo Courtesy of Frederick University, Cyprus

Some examples and strategies for integration include:

1. **Innovation Hubs:** Establishing innovation hubs that serve as collaborative workspaces for students from various disciplines. These hubs can host hackathons, design sprints, and cross-disciplinary projects that encourage creative problem-solving and innovation.
2. **Maker Spaces:** Setting up maker spaces equipped with tools and materials for prototyping, fabrication, and experimentation. Maker spaces can be used for hands-on projects in subjects ranging from engineering and design to art and science, allowing students to build and test their ideas.
3. **Interdisciplinary Studios:** Creating interdisciplinary studios where students can work on projects that combine elements of art, technology, science, and humanities. These

studios can provide a flexible space for collaborative projects, workshops, and exhibitions.

4. **Collaborative Research Centers:** Developing research centres that bring together students, faculty, and industry professionals to work on joint research initiatives. These centres can focus on addressing real-world challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced Collaboration: Transdisciplinary spaces promote collaboration across different fields, leading to innovative solutions and a deeper understanding of complex problems. ● Hands-On Learning: These spaces provide opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts. ● Skill Development: Students can develop a broad range of skills, including technical, creative, and collaborative skills, which are highly valued in the modern workforce. ● Resource Sharing: Transdisciplinary spaces often have shared resources and equipment, making it easier for students to access the tools they need for their projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resource Intensive: Setting up and maintaining transdisciplinary spaces can be resource-intensive, requiring significant investment in equipment, materials, and staffing. ● Coordination Challenges: Coordinating activities and projects across multiple disciplines can be complex and may require careful planning and management. ● Space Constraints: Finding suitable space for innovation hubs and maker spaces can be challenging, particularly in institutions with limited physical infrastructure. ● Equity of Access: Ensuring that all students have equal access to these spaces and resources can be difficult, potentially leading to disparities in learning opportunities.

Transdisciplinary spaces offer significant benefits for Art & Design Education by fostering collaboration, creativity, and innovation. These environments enable students to engage in hands-on, experiential learning and develop a wide range of valuable skills. While there are challenges associated with establishing and maintaining these spaces, such as resource requirements and coordination efforts, the advantages of promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and practical skill development make them a vital component of modern educational strategies. By effectively integrating transdisciplinary spaces into their programs, educational institutions can prepare students to tackle complex, real-world problems and succeed in a rapidly changing world.

3.4 Cultural Spaces of Learning

Cultural spaces, such as libraries, museums, and galleries, provide rich and immersive environments for learning. These spaces are ideal for integrating cultural contexts into education, enhancing creativity, and offering students unique opportunities to engage with art, history, and society.



Photo Courtesy of Frederick University, Cyprus

Some examples and strategies for integration include:

1. **Libraries:** Utilising libraries as hubs for research, study, and collaboration. Libraries can host reading groups, special lectures, and multimedia presentations. They offer access to vast resources, including books, digital media, and archival materials, supporting a wide range of academic disciplines.
2. **Museums:** Partnering with museums to create interactive learning experiences. Museums can offer guided tours, workshops, and special exhibits tailored to educational curricula. These activities allow students to engage directly with historical artefacts, artworks, and scientific exhibits.

3. **Galleries:** Using art galleries as spaces for inspiration and creativity. Galleries can host student exhibitions, artist talks, and collaborative art projects. These events provide students with opportunities to present their work and engage with the artistic community.
4. **Cultural Centers:** Collaborating with cultural centres to provide a diverse range of programs and events. Cultural centres can offer language classes, cultural festivals, and performance arts, enriching the educational experience with a broad understanding of different cultures and artistic expressions.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced Learning Experiences: Cultural spaces provide immersive and engaging learning experiences that can deepen students' understanding and appreciation of various subjects. ● Access to Resources: These spaces offer access to unique resources and expertise that may not be available within traditional classroom settings. ● Community Engagement: Utilising cultural spaces fosters connections between educational institutions and the broader community, promoting cultural awareness and civic engagement. ● Inspiration and Creativity: Exposure to art, history, and culture in these spaces can inspire creativity and critical thinking among students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Logistical Challenges: Organizing trips and coordinating activities in cultural spaces can be logistically complex and time-consuming. ● Cost and Accessibility: Access to some cultural spaces may involve costs, and they may not be easily accessible to all students, particularly those in rural or underserved areas. ● Variable Quality and Relevance: The quality and relevance of exhibits and programs can vary, potentially limiting their educational value. ● Scheduling Conflicts: Aligning the schedules of cultural spaces with academic timetables can be challenging, requiring careful planning and flexibility.

Cultural spaces offer significant benefits for Art & Design Education by providing rich, immersive environments that enhance learning, creativity, and cultural awareness. While there are challenges related to logistics, cost, and accessibility, the advantages of utilising libraries, museums, galleries, and cultural centres as educational resources far outweigh these obstacles. By integrating cultural spaces into their curricula, educational institutions can offer students unique and engaging learning experiences that broaden their perspectives and inspire innovation. These spaces play a crucial role in connecting students with the cultural and artistic

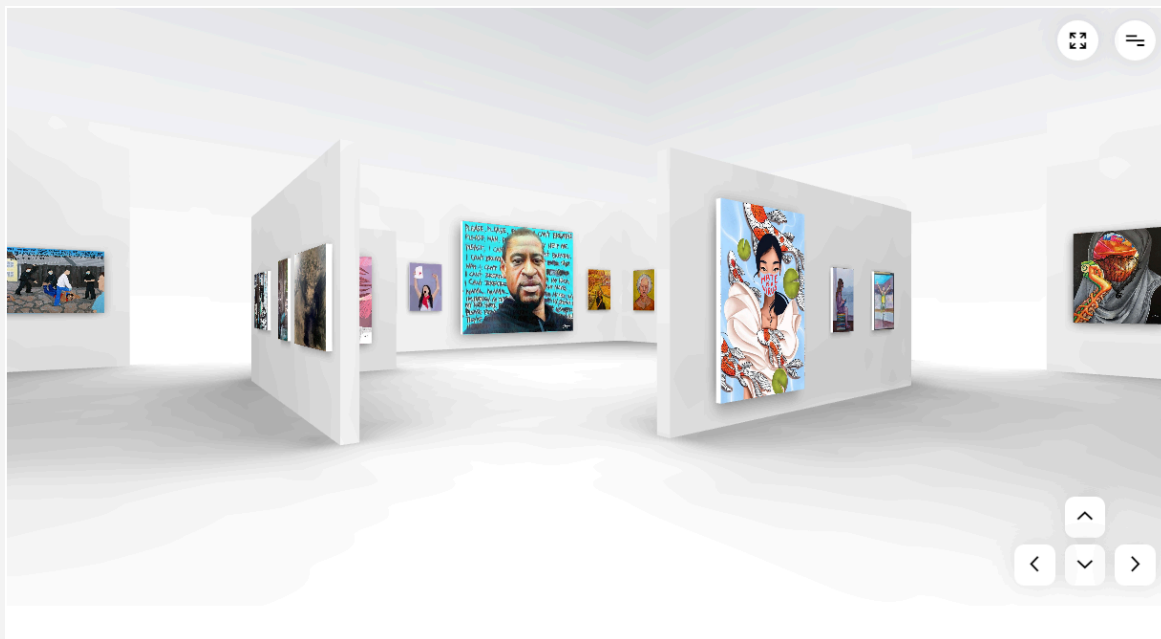
heritage of their communities, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the world around them.

3.5 Online Spaces of Learning

Online spaces, including virtual platforms and digital environments, offer flexible and accessible opportunities for remote learning. These spaces enable educational institutions to deliver content asynchronously, support diverse learning needs, and provide resources that can be accessed from anywhere.

Examples and Strategies for Integration include:

1. **Virtual Classrooms:** Utilising platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Google Classroom to conduct live classes, discussions, and group projects. Virtual classrooms can replicate many aspects of traditional classrooms while offering the flexibility of remote access.
2. **Learning Management Systems (LMS):** Implementing LMS platforms such as Moodle, Canvas, or Blackboard to host course materials, assignments, and assessments. These systems can support asynchronous learning, allowing students to access content and complete tasks at their own pace.
3. **Online Workshops and Webinars:** Organising online workshops, webinars, and guest lectures featuring experts from various fields. These events can be recorded and made available for later viewing, extending their reach and impact.
4. **Digital Libraries and Resources:** Providing access to digital libraries, databases, and other online resources. These tools can support research and learning across a wide range of subjects, offering students access to a vast array of information.
5. **Interactive Tools and Simulations:** Using interactive tools, simulations, and virtual labs to create engaging learning experiences. These tools can provide hands-on practice in subjects like science, engineering, and design without the need for physical materials.



Artit virtual exhibition on [Equal in Dignity & Rights](#)

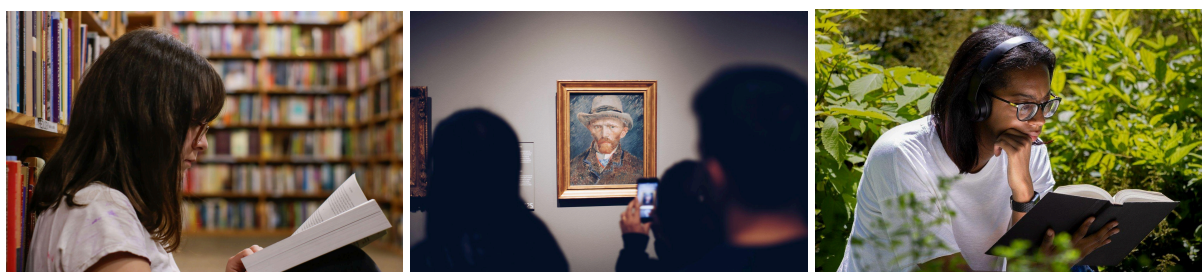
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flexibility and Accessibility: Online spaces allow students to learn at their own pace and access materials from anywhere, making education more flexible and inclusive. ● Cost-Effectiveness: Digital resources and virtual classrooms can reduce the costs associated with physical infrastructure and materials. ● Scalability: Online platforms can accommodate large numbers of students, making it easier to scale educational programs and reach a broader audience. ● Up-to-Date Content: Digital environments allow for the rapid updating and dissemination of educational content, ensuring that students have access to the latest information and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Digital Divide: Access to online learning can be limited by factors such as internet connectivity, availability of devices, and digital literacy, potentially exacerbating educational inequalities. ● Reduced Social Interaction: The lack of physical presence can reduce opportunities for social interaction and collaboration, which are important aspects of the learning experience. ● Technical Issues: Technical difficulties, such as software glitches or platform outages, can disrupt the learning process and cause frustration for both students and educators. ● Engagement Challenges: Maintaining student engagement in a virtual environment can be challenging, requiring innovative teaching methods and interactive tools to keep learners motivated.

Online spaces provide significant opportunities for Art & Design Education by offering flexible, accessible, and scalable learning environments. While there are challenges related to the digital divide, reduced social interaction, and technical issues, the benefits of integrating virtual classrooms, learning management systems, and digital resources into educational programs are substantial. These spaces enable institutions to reach a wider audience, provide up-to-date content, and support diverse learning needs. By leveraging the potential of online spaces, educational institutions can enhance their offerings and ensure that students have access to high-quality, flexible learning experiences that prepare them for a rapidly changing world.

The integration of alternative learning spaces into educational curricula represents a forward-thinking approach to education that aligns with the principles of the New European Bauhaus. By leveraging the unique strengths of green, public, transdisciplinary, cultural, and online spaces, educational institutions can create rich, diverse, and engaging learning environments. These spaces not only enhance educational outcomes but also prepare students to navigate and contribute to an increasingly complex and interconnected world. By addressing the practical challenges and maximising the benefits of each type of space, educators can foster a more inclusive, sustainable, and innovative educational landscape.

4. Overview of Successful Implementations of Alternative Learning Spaces Across Europe

Europe has seen numerous innovative implementations of alternative learning spaces that have significantly impacted educational outcomes. These spaces exemplify best practices in integrating sustainability, inclusivity, and technology into education. The following section provides 5 case studies highlighting innovative practices and their impact on learning outcomes.



Pictures retrieved from [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com)

1. **Rijksmuseum's Educational Program², Netherlands:** The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has developed an educational program that leverages its extensive art collection to teach students about history, culture, and art. The program includes guided tours, workshops, and interactive sessions that encourage students to engage with the exhibits.
 - Impact: The program has enhanced students' understanding of cultural heritage and historical context, fostering a deeper appreciation for the arts. It has also improved critical thinking and observational skills as students analyse and interpret artworks.
 - Lessons Learned: Incorporating cultural artefacts into learning experiences can make history and art more tangible and engaging for students. Hands-on interaction with exhibits fosters a deeper connection to the material.

2. **Forest Schools, Denmark³:** Denmark's forest schools use natural environments as classrooms, emphasising outdoor, experiential learning. These schools incorporate activities such as nature walks, wildlife observation, and ecological projects into their curriculum.
 - Impact: Forest schools have been shown to improve student well-being, social skills, and environmental awareness. Students develop a strong connection to nature and learn important life skills such as teamwork and problem-solving.
 - Lessons Learned: Learning in natural settings can significantly enhance student engagement and well-being. It also promotes environmental stewardship and practical skills that are beneficial beyond the classroom.

3. **Fablab Barcelona, Spain⁴:** Fablab Barcelona is a part of the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC). It provides a maker space equipped with digital fabrication tools, where students and the public can learn about and engage in innovative design and manufacturing processes.
 - Impact: Fablab Barcelona has facilitated numerous interdisciplinary projects, encouraging collaboration between architects, designers, engineers, and the local community. It has enhanced practical skills and fostered innovation.
 - Lessons Learned: Maker spaces equipped with advanced tools can inspire creativity and innovation by providing hands-on learning opportunities. These spaces are effective in fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and practical skill development.

² Learn more at: <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/education> (Accessed: 19 May 2024).

³ Learn more at: Warden, C. (2010). *The Nature of Learning: Using Forest Schools and Woodland Experiences to Enhance Learning in Children and Adults*. Routledge (Accessed: 19 May 2024).

⁴ Learn more at: <https://fablabbcn.org/about-us> (Accessed: 19 May 2024).

4. [Reggio Emilia Approach, Italy](#)⁵: The Reggio Emilia approach emphasises a child-centred educational philosophy, using the environment as the third teacher. Schools designed under this approach feature open, flexible spaces that encourage exploration and collaboration.
 - Impact: This approach has resulted in high levels of student engagement and creativity. Children learn through projects that integrate various disciplines, fostering a holistic understanding of concepts.
 - Lessons Learned: Flexible, open learning environments that prioritise student agency and exploration can lead to high levels of engagement and creativity. Integrating the physical environment into the learning process enriches educational experiences.

5. [The Green School, Slovenia](#)⁶: The Green School initiative in Slovenia incorporates sustainability into every aspect of the school environment. The school buildings use eco-friendly materials, and the curriculum includes extensive environmental education, with students participating in activities like gardening, recycling, and energy conservation projects.
 - Impact: Students at the Green School develop a strong sense of environmental responsibility and practical knowledge about sustainable living. The school has also seen improvements in student engagement and academic performance, attributed to the hands-on, integrated approach to learning.
 - Lessons Learned: Embedding sustainability into the fabric of educational institutions can have profound impacts on student attitudes and behaviours. Hands-on, practical experiences in sustainability can enhance student learning and foster a culture of environmental stewardship.

The best practices in alternative learning spaces across Europe highlight the significant impact that innovative environments can have on educational outcomes. By incorporating cultural, natural, and technologically advanced spaces into the learning process, these initiatives have enhanced student engagement, fostered creativity, and promoted interdisciplinary collaboration. The lessons learned from these case studies emphasise the importance of flexible, inclusive, and sustainable learning environments that prepare students for the challenges of the future. These successful implementations serve as valuable models for educational institutions seeking to innovate and improve their own learning spaces.

⁵ Learn more at: Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (2011). *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation*. Praeger.

⁶ Learn more at: Špes, T., & Šimenc, M. (2015). *Education for Sustainable Development in Slovenia: Green Schools as Learning Communities*. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 17(2), pp. 90-101.

5. Current State of Alternative Learning Spaces in Greece

Greece has been actively exploring the integration of alternative learning spaces into its educational framework to align with modern educational needs and sustainability goals. This section provides an overview of the current state of alternative learning spaces in Greece, including relevant policies, data, and case studies. It also evaluates the strengths of Greece and recommends which types of alternative learning spaces the country should capitalise on, given its unique geopolitical, historical, and cultural background. Greece has implemented several policies and initiatives to promote the integration of alternative learning spaces in education. Key policies include:

- **National Strategy for Education and Learning:** Emphasises digital transformation, sustainability, and inclusivity in education (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 2021).
- **Green Growth Strategy:** Includes educational components that promote environmental awareness and the use of green spaces in schools (Ministry of Environment and Energy, 2020).
- **Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Greece:** Aims to enhance digital skills among students and educators, supporting the use of digital learning platforms (European Commission, 2021).
- **Cultural Education Programs:** Supported by the Ministry of Culture and Sports, these programs encourage collaboration between schools and cultural institutions (Ministry of Culture and Sports, 2021).

5.1 Data and Current Implementations

Number of Initiatives: According to recent data, there are over 70 initiatives across Greece that incorporate alternative learning spaces, with a significant concentration in urban areas such as Athens and Thessaloniki (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 2021).

Student Engagement: Surveys indicate that 85% of students participating in these programs report higher engagement and satisfaction with their learning experiences (Gouscos, Meimaris, & Sofos, 2020).

Investment: The Greek government, along with private and EU funding, has invested approximately €50 million in developing and supporting alternative learning spaces over the past five years (European Commission, 2021).

The integration of alternative learning spaces into educational frameworks is gaining momentum globally, and Greece is no exception. These spaces—ranging from green and public areas to cultural and digital environments—provide diverse and innovative settings that foster enhanced learning experiences. This section presents a comprehensive spatial analysis of such initiatives in Greece, including observations, mapping, and a spatial review. The analysis is informed by a combination of site visits, educational program reports, and academic research on the effectiveness of alternative learning environments. The observations for this analysis are based on data collected from various schools and educational programs across Greece. Key sources include reports from the Ellinogermaniki Agogi School, Thessaloniki’s Open Schools initiative, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC).

Mapping

Mapping of alternative learning initiatives reveals a diverse distribution across Greece, with a concentration in major urban centres such as Athens, Thessaloniki, and Heraklion. These areas benefit from better infrastructure, funding, and access to cultural institutions, facilitating the implementation of innovative educational spaces.

5.2 Case Studies and Lessons Learned

Case Study 1. Ellinogermaniki Agogi School's Eco-School Program

Description: Ellinogermaniki Agogi is a private school in Greece that has embraced the Eco-School program, which integrates environmental education into its curriculum. The program is comprehensive, featuring various green spaces such as school gardens, outdoor classrooms, and recycling stations. Students are actively involved in sustainability projects that range from planting and maintaining gardens to conducting waste audits and recycling drives. The school also partners with local environmental organisations to enhance the educational experience.



Μελετήσαμε
τις ενεργειακές κλάσεις 10 συσκευών του ίδιου είδους και **συγκρίναμε** την κατανάλωση ενέργειας.

Επιλέγουμε συσκευές με ενεργειακή απόδοση ανώτερης κλάσης.

Κάνουμε οικονομία!
Προστατεύουμε τον πλανήτη μας!

Pictures retrieved from <https://www.ea.gr/ergasies/2021/dimotiko6.asp> (school's website presenting the students assignments)

Impact: The Eco-School program at Ellinogermaniki Agogi has had a profound impact on both students and the wider school community. Students have developed a strong sense of environmental stewardship and practical skills related to sustainability. Engagement levels have increased as students take a hands-on approach to learning about ecology and conservation. The program has also led to improvements in academic performance, particularly in science subjects, as students can apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings.

Lessons Learned:

- **Experiential Learning:** Hands-on projects in green spaces enhance student engagement and retention of knowledge.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Involving students in sustainability initiatives fosters a culture of responsibility and environmental consciousness.
- **Community Involvement:** Partnerships with local environmental groups can enrich the curriculum and provide additional resources and expertise.

Case Study 2. Thessaloniki's Open Schools Initiative

Description: The Open Schools initiative in Thessaloniki aims to transform school buildings into vibrant community hubs that are accessible to the public outside regular school hours. These hubs host a variety of educational and cultural activities, such as art exhibitions, music performances, and workshops. The initiative seeks to make schools a central part of community life, encouraging lifelong learning and social interaction.

Impact: The initiative has successfully strengthened the ties between schools and their surrounding communities. It has increased student participation in extracurricular activities, providing them with opportunities to explore interests beyond the standard curriculum. The initiative has also enhanced social skills and community engagement among students, as they interact with diverse groups in these public spaces. Moreover, it has opened new avenues for parental involvement in school activities, fostering a collaborative educational environment.



Photos retrieved from <https://www.behance.net/gallery/78963959/Open-Schools-Thessaloniki>

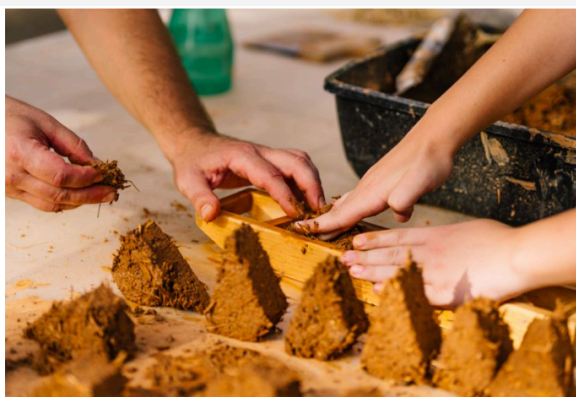
Lessons Learned:

- **Community Engagement:** Utilising school spaces for community activities fosters a sense of belonging and enhances educational experiences.
- **Social Cohesion:** Programs that encourage interaction between students and the broader community can improve social skills and community bonds.
- **Resource Utilisation:** Maximising the use of school facilities outside regular hours can provide additional learning opportunities and support community development.

Case Study 3. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC)

Description: The SNFCC in Athens is a state-of-the-art cultural complex that includes the National Library of Greece and the Greek National Opera. It offers a wide range of educational programs and workshops for students, utilising its green spaces and cutting-edge facilities. The centre is designed to be an inclusive space for learning and cultural exchange, providing resources for a variety of educational activities.

Impact: The SNFCC has become a cornerstone for arts and culture education in Athens. Its programs have promoted a deeper appreciation for the arts among students, offering high-quality cultural experiences that are both educational and inspiring. Students have access to resources such as performance spaces, extensive libraries, and interactive exhibits, which enhance their learning and creativity. The centre's inclusive approach ensures that these opportunities are available to students from diverse backgrounds.





Photos retrieved from <https://www.snfcc.org/en/snfcc/our-work> (SNFCC website, activities)

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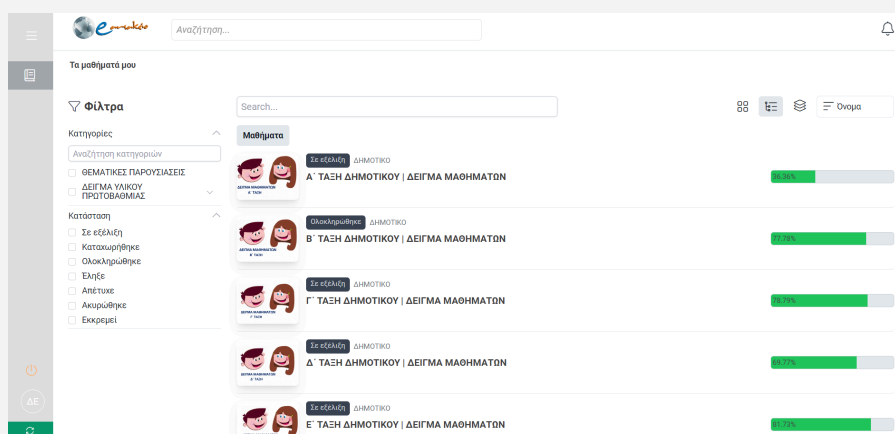
Lessons Learned:

- **Cultural Integration:** Embedding cultural institutions into the educational framework can provide rich, multidimensional learning experiences.
- **Resource Accessibility:** High-quality facilities and resources can significantly enhance educational outcomes.
- **Inclusivity:** Designing programs that are accessible to all students promotes equality and broadens educational reach.

Case Study 4. Arsakeio Tositseio School's Digital Learning Platform

Description: Arsakeio Tositseio School has developed a comprehensive digital learning platform to support its educational programs. This platform offers a wide range of online courses, digital resources, and interactive tools that cater to various learning needs. The platform is designed to be user-friendly and accessible, providing students with flexible learning opportunities that can be tailored to their individual schedules and preferences.

Impact: The digital learning platform has significantly improved digital literacy among students, equipping them with essential skills for the modern world. It has enhanced accessibility, allowing students to continue their education remotely and flexibly, which has been particularly beneficial during times of disruption, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The platform has also enabled personalised learning experiences, where students can progress at their own pace and access a wealth of resources tailored to their specific needs.



Picture retrieved from

[https://www.e-arsakeio.gr/start?type=courses&sort\[0\]\[field\]=name&sort\[0\]\[dir\]=asc&page=1&size=10&groupByCategory=false](https://www.e-arsakeio.gr/start?type=courses&sort[0][field]=name&sort[0][dir]=asc&page=1&size=10&groupByCategory=false) (digital learning platform, courses in progress page)

Lessons Learned:

- **Digital Literacy:** Implementing comprehensive digital learning platforms can enhance students' technological skills and prepare them for future challenges.
- **Flexibility:** Digital platforms provide flexible learning opportunities, making education more accessible and adaptable to individual needs.
- **Personalization:** Tailoring educational resources to individual students' needs can improve engagement and academic performance.

5.3 Evaluation and Recommendations

Greece's unique strengths position it well for the successful integration of alternative learning spaces into its educational framework. The country's strategic geopolitical position, acting as a bridge between Europe and Asia, provides an ideal backdrop for cross-cultural educational initiatives. This geographic advantage can facilitate diverse educational exchanges and collaborations, enriching the learning experience with a broad spectrum of cultural perspectives and practices (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 2021).

Moreover, Greece's rich historical and cultural heritage offers unparalleled opportunities to integrate cultural education into the learning process. By leveraging its museums, historical sites, and cultural centres, Greece can provide students with immersive learning experiences that connect them deeply with their cultural roots. These settings not only foster a deeper understanding of global history and arts but also inspire creativity and critical thinking. The integration of cultural spaces into the curriculum can help preserve and promote Greece's rich cultural legacy while educating future generations (Ministry of Culture and Sports, 2021).

The country's diverse natural landscapes also present significant opportunities for experiential learning through green spaces. Gardens, parks, and outdoor classrooms can be used to promote environmental education and sustainability. Such environments are ideal for hands-on learning, allowing students to engage directly with nature and develop practical skills in ecology and conservation. This approach not only enhances student engagement and learning outcomes but also instils a sense of environmental stewardship, which is crucial for addressing contemporary ecological challenges (Ministry of Environment and Energy, 2020).

Given the growing emphasis on digital transformation, Greece should continue to invest in digital learning platforms. These platforms can enhance accessibility and provide flexible learning opportunities, catering to the diverse needs of students. By expanding initiatives like Thessaloniki's Open Schools, which utilise community centres and public spaces, Greece can foster inclusivity and community engagement in education. Such initiatives promote lifelong learning and social cohesion by making educational resources more accessible to a broader audience. Emphasising digital spaces alongside green and cultural spaces will create a balanced and innovative educational framework that leverages Greece's unique strengths and aligns with contemporary educational goals (Gouscos, Meimaris, & Sofos, 2020; European Commission, 2021).

By focusing on these areas, Greece can build a robust and forward-thinking educational system that not only honours its historical and cultural heritage but also embraces the future. This holistic approach ensures that education in Greece is not only about academic excellence but also about fostering well-rounded individuals who are culturally aware, environmentally conscious, and digitally literate. Through strategic investment and thoughtful integration of these alternative learning spaces, Greece can set a benchmark for innovative and inclusive education in the 21st century.

6. Current State of Alternative Learning Spaces in Cyprus

Cyprus, a country known for its rich history, diverse culture, and evolving urban landscapes, is home to a growing network of alternative learning spaces that are reshaping the educational landscape for design, architecture, and the arts. These spaces, ranging from innovative public squares and cultural festivals to experimental urban gardens and temporary educational installations, provide fertile ground for experiential and community-driven learning. They foster an environment where creativity, sustainability, and social engagement intersect, creating vibrant hubs for cultural exchange and interdisciplinary collaboration.

In urban centres like Nicosia and Limassol, outdoor spaces such as **Eleftheria Square** and **Molos Promenade** have become living classrooms where urban design, public art, and social interaction come together. These public spaces are not only architectural landmarks but also active sites for alternative education, hosting workshops, public talks, exhibitions, and community events that encourage learning beyond traditional classroom walls. By integrating modern design with historical and cultural contexts, these spaces invite residents, students, and visitors to explore the possibilities of urban planning, sustainability, and inclusive design in a real-world setting.

The **Gardens of the Future** project in Nicosia exemplifies how urban gardens can serve as experiential learning environments, promoting sustainable practices and ecological awareness. These spaces offer hands-on experiences in sustainable design, permaculture, and community resilience, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Cyprus also embraces the concept of temporary and flexible learning environments, as seen in the **Pop Up Festival in Nicosia**, where the **Frederick University Pop-Up Campus** created a temporary educational space within a cultural festival setting. This initiative provided a unique platform for interdisciplinary learning and community engagement, emphasising the adaptability of educational practices and the importance of situating learning within the public sphere.

Additionally, institutions like the **Limassol Theatre Museum** offer a focused exploration of Cyprus's theatrical heritage, blending cultural preservation with educational programming to engage both students and the general public in understanding the evolution of performing arts.

These diverse and innovative spaces in Cyprus demonstrate the potential of reimagining public, cultural, and urban environments as dynamic learning platforms. They highlight the importance of inclusivity, sustainability, and community in education, showing how learning can be deeply embedded within the social and physical fabric of cities. Cyprus's alternative learning spaces offer a compelling model for how design, culture, and education can come together to foster creative, sustainable, and engaged communities.

More formally Cyprus, is embracing educational reform to align with contemporary educational needs, as well as sustainability goals, and the demand for digital transformation. Key policy documents that underpin Cyprus' commitment to educational reform include:

- **The Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027**, prepared by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth. The Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027 aspires to provide a long-term strategic framework for the development of a knowledge-based society, in which everyone citizens will development have learning opportunities for their knowledge, skills and attitudes, which will be facilitates their personal and social progress, professional development, social inclusion, resilience and their well-being. The CyLLLS 2021-2027 was approved by the Council of Ministers on September 30, 2022.
<https://digitalcoalition.gov.cy/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Cyprus-Lifelong-Learning-Strategy-2021-%E2%80%93-2027-1.pdf>
- **The Digital Strategy for Cyprus 2020-2025**, (adopted in June 2020) is the key policy document to accelerate Cyprus digital transformation. The implementation of the Digital Strategy is coordinated by the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy (DMRID). Digital Strategy for Cyprus 2020-2025 is grounded in a clear vision for change. The vision statement foresees that Cyprus will become a fit-for-the-future society and knowledge-based economy enabled by digital and emerging technologies that will drive sustainable economic growth, social prosperity and international competitiveness.
<https://dsf.dmid.gov.cy/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Digital-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf>
- **Strategy for Education and Sustainable Development and Green Transition 2030**. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. envisions a comprehensive and holistic approach to ESD, integrating formal, non-formal, informal education and lifelong learning. It also envisions the creation of sustainable education institutions, aligning with the social, pedagogical, and organisational aspects of sustainability. In line with these strategic directions, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute and the Ministry of Education have also taken several steps to foster the development of alternative learning spaces in the form of green spaces.
https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Item.4a_framework_ESD_implementation_2021-2030_A.Zachariou.pdf

6.1 Data and Current Implementation

Cyprus is one of the few countries that has integrated Educational Sustainable Development since 2008, through the National Action Plan for Education for Environment and Sustainable Development (NAPEESD). The National Action Plan established ESD is aimed at all levels of formal, informal and non-formal education in a systemic and concise way.

Lifelong Learning and Digital Transformation

In May 2022, the Cypriot Parliament passed amendments to the **Lifelong Learning Law**, which aims to expand access to continuing education and vocational training for adults. The law also

supports the development of digital learning platforms, allowing citizens of all ages to acquire new skills through alternative, flexible educational pathways.

The Ministry of Education launched the **"E-learning for All" initiative** in 2023, which promotes digital and blended learning in both primary and secondary schools. This initiative includes equipping schools with the necessary technological infrastructure, offering training programs for teachers, and encouraging the use of online resources and digital tools in the classroom.

Green and Public Spaces for Learning

Another important aspect of Cyprus' educational reform is the integration of green and public spaces into the learning process. Inspired by the country's **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** agenda, schools have begun to use parks, botanical gardens, and public squares as alternative learning environments. These spaces offer opportunities for outdoor learning, environmental education, and hands-on experiences related to sustainability.

In 2021, the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environment launched the **"Green Schools Initiative,"** which supports schools in transforming their outdoor areas into eco-friendly spaces where students can learn about biodiversity, agriculture, and sustainable practices. This initiative is part of a broader effort to promote experiential learning and environmental awareness among students.

Cultural Spaces and Community Engagement

Cyprus has a rich cultural heritage, and this is reflected in its approach to education. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth actively encourages the integration of cultural institutions such as museums, theatres, and historical sites into the educational framework. The **Cultural Education Program**, established in 2022, promotes partnerships between schools and cultural institutions, enabling students to engage with the arts, history, and heritage in meaningful ways.

The **"Learning through Heritage" initiative**, which began in 2020, focuses on using historical landmarks and archaeological sites as educational spaces. Schools participate in guided tours, workshops, and interactive activities that allow students to explore Cyprus' rich history and heritage, connecting their classroom learning with real-world experiences.

6.1 Case Studies and Lessons Learnt

Case Study 1. NiMAC (Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre)

Description: NiMAC is a significant art space in Nicosia that collaborates with both international and local artists, designers, and institutions. The centre provides a broad range of educational programs, workshops, and exhibitions, often incorporating elements of design, architecture, and

digital arts. It serves as a hub for creative learning and experimentation, bridging the gap between formal education and informal learning.



Photos Courtesy of NiMAC

Impact: NiMAC has had a profound impact on the local and regional art and design community by providing a dynamic platform for learning and exchange. It has facilitated a better understanding of contemporary design trends and practices among participants and the public. NiMAC's workshops and forums have inspired a generation of designers by exposing them to new ideas and international perspectives.

Lessons Learned: NiMAC shows the importance of collaboration with international institutions and artists to broaden the scope of local design education. It also highlights the effectiveness of integrating design with other art forms and disciplines, creating a more holistic learning experience. NiMAC's model demonstrates the benefits of providing a physical space where theory and practice intersect. <https://nimac.org.cy/>

Case Study 2. The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation

Description: The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation is a prominent institution dedicated to preserving and promoting Cyprus's cultural heritage. Located in Nicosia, the foundation houses a rich collection of artefacts, manuscripts, and artworks that span centuries of Cypriot history. It offers a range of educational programs, exhibitions, and research opportunities aimed at deepening the public's understanding of Cyprus's historical and cultural development. Through its various initiatives, the foundation plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between the past and present, offering insights into traditional crafts, historical events, and cultural practices.



Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Green Urban Lab Project, April 2015,
Photos Courtesy of Urban Gorillas.

Impact: The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation serves as a significant educational resource, providing interactive learning experiences through its exhibitions, workshops, and educational programs. It enables visitors, students, and researchers to engage with Cypriot history and culture in a hands-on manner, making the past accessible and relevant to contemporary audiences. The foundation's commitment to educational outreach fosters a greater appreciation for cultural heritage and encourages the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices.

In 2023, the BoCCF established the "Aisthiseis" (Senses) programme, emphasising the need for accessibility and inclusivity in museum spaces by integrating permanent adaptations such as sign language, and other, specialised tours, audio guides, tactile stations, artefacts replicas, and Braille guides. These changes facilitate the engagement of vulnerable groups within the museums but also offer a multisensory experience to its events. Specialised workshops were introduced in the Foundation's yearly programme for various groups reflecting the BoCCF's dedication to creating an inclusive and culturally enriching environment for all visitors. The aforementioned workshops, led by skilled professionals, consist of various topics including art therapy, museum education, clay therapy, experiential storytelling, and creative writing, among others.

Lessons Learned: The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation highlights the importance of integrating cultural preservation with educational programming. It demonstrates how museums and cultural institutions can serve as active learning environments that engage the public in

meaningful ways. The foundation shows that by offering interactive and educational experiences, cultural institutions can play a crucial role in both preserving history and fostering a deeper understanding of cultural heritage. It also underscores the value of collaborative approaches in education, where historical insight and modern learning methodologies converge to create enriching and impactful experiences. Collaborations and partnerships with national and international organisations through the BoCCF's programmes (Aisthiseis) and funded projects (such as ReInHerit and i-School) are proven to be of high importance as well.

<https://www.boccf.org/en-gb/>

Case Study 3. Eleftheria Square (Πλατεία Ελευθερίας), Nicosia

Description: Eleftheria Square is a major public space in Nicosia designed by Zaha Hadid Architects. It serves as a transformative urban area that merges the historical elements of the Venetian Walls with a modern, open design, creating a multifunctional space that encourages public interaction and learning. The square's design includes expansive pedestrian areas, green spaces, water features, and an innovative bridge that serves as both a practical pathway and a symbolic connector between the old and new parts of the city.



Frederick University and Nicosia Municipality co-organized a #BeActive event, September 25th, 2023. Photos Courtesy of Frederick University



Frederick University, Fashion Show, June, 2023. Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

Impact: Eleftheria Square has become a dynamic environment for alternative learning, where design, history, and urban planning intersect. It is used as an open classroom for architecture and design students who study its integration of modernist principles with historical context. Workshops, public lectures, and exhibitions are often held in the square, providing opportunities for informal learning about urban design, public art, and the socio-cultural dynamics of city spaces.

Lessons Learned: Eleftheria Square demonstrates the potential of public spaces to serve as interactive learning environments that go beyond traditional classrooms. It shows that well-designed urban spaces can foster community engagement and serve as a platform for public education about architecture, history, and design. This space also highlights the importance of accessibility and multifunctionality in creating inclusive learning environments in urban settings.

Case Study 4. Gardens of the Future

Description: Gardens of the Future is an innovative, community-driven initiative based in Nicosia, Cyprus, blending sustainable design, environmental art, and permaculture principles. Serving as both an experimental learning space and a living lab, the project reimagines urban gardening through collaboration between designers, artists, urban planners, architects, and local residents. With a focus on zero-waste, sustainability, and urban resilience, Gardens of the Future promotes a hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to learning, while fostering a deeper connection to nature and community well-being.

Impact: The initiative has transformed design education by integrating ecological awareness into practice. Beyond aesthetics, Gardens of the Future addresses pressing issues such as climate change, urban resilience, and sustainable development through collaborative projects. By involving the local community in workshops, public discussions, and participatory design processes, the project not only enhances green urban spaces but also nurtures a sense of ownership and stewardship. It emphasises the interconnectedness of the environment, design, and well-being, positioning itself as a model for conscious urban living.

Lessons Learned: Gardens of the Future demonstrates that integrating sustainability into education leads to meaningful social impact. The initiative highlights the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing complex challenges and proves that practical, eco-conscious approaches can empower communities. By fostering mental, physical, and emotional healing, the project also underscores the potential of alternative learning spaces to catalyse positive change in how we live, work, and relate to the environment.



Photos courtesy of Gardens of the Future



Photos courtesy of Gardens of the Future

6.3 Evaluation and Recommendations

Cyprus has made significant moves towards the development of alternative learning spaces in both formal and non formal learning. The evolving landscape of alternative learning spaces in Cyprus presents a compelling model for how education can adapt to the demands of the 21st century.

By reimagining public spaces, cultural institutions, and innovative hubs, Cyprus is creating environments that foster practical learning, community interaction, and creative exploration. They underscore the value of experiential learning, the synergy between tradition and innovation, and the role of community in shaping educational experiences.

Based on the country's unique geopolitical, historical, and cultural context, as well as the current actions and EU priorities, the following should be prioritised in the context of alternative spaces of learning:

1. **Expansion of Digital Learning Platforms:** Cyprus should continue to expand its digital learning offerings, ensuring equal access to digital tools will be crucial for future success.
2. **Increased Use of Green and Public Spaces:** Schools and Universities should collaborate with local municipalities to develop outdoor classrooms, community gardens, and eco-parks that can serve as year-round learning environments.
3. **Enhanced Cultural Partnerships:** Cyprus should further develop partnerships between schools and cultural institutions. By leveraging the country's archaeological sites, museums, and historical landmarks, students can gain a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage while engaging in interactive, experiential learning.

In conclusion, Cyprus is well-positioned to continue its progress in integrating alternative learning spaces thus fostering a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment that meets the needs of the 21st-century learner.

7. Current State of Alternative Learning Spaces in Lithuania

Like most countries, Lithuania is keenly aware of trends and needs, and is actively seeking opportunities to create the right conditions for science, art and innovation. In Lithuania, attempts to integrate alternative learning spaces into the education and creative ecosystem to meet contemporary educational needs and sustainability goals at some points have been too slow. This chapter provides an overview of the current situation of alternative learning spaces in Lithuania, including relevant policy, data and case studies. It also assesses Lithuania's strengths and recommends what types of alternative learning spaces the country should exploit, taking into account its unique geopolitical, historical and cultural situation.

Lithuania draws on the following strategic documents in implementing policies and initiatives to promote the integration of alternative learning spaces in education:

- The National Education Development Programme 2021-2030, prepared by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The aim of the strategic document is to improve educational outcomes and reduce the achievement gap; Increase the inclusiveness and accessibility of education, ensuring a safe environment for everyone; Adapt the education system for the smooth integration of returning Lithuanian citizens, persons of Lithuanian origin and foreigners and to improve the conditions for the mobility of learners; Improve the match between the competences acquired in the education system and those needed to adapt to the labour market and changing environment.

- Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy "Culture 2030". The fundamental objective of the Lithuanian Culture Policy Strategy "Culture 2030" is to ensure a significant contribution of culture to the creation of a harmonious Lithuanian society, a dignified national and European identity, social and economic well-being of the population, and international prestige and competitiveness of the state.

In this context, the Lithuanian Council for Culture and the Lithuanian Council for Science are actively involved, calling for the use of non-traditional methods to promote innovation, creativity and the integration of more diverse learning spaces into the education system.

7.1 Data and Current Implementation

In view of the changes and the current need to expand learning facilities, the May 2023 The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania [Parliament] adopted amendments to the Law on Non-formal Adult Education and Continuing Learning to expand lifelong learning in the country and to introduce a one-stop service system of Individual Learning Accounts (IMPs). The IMP system, one of the main projects of alternative education, is being developed within the framework of the ESF-funded project "Lifelong Learning!". The project is implemented by the European Social Fund Agency and the partners are the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions.

In order to develop and implement the IMP system, legislation and guidance documents were developed or updated in 2023:

- Law on Non-formal Adult Education and Continuing Learning of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Order No V-599 of 27 April 2023 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania "On the Approval of the Description of the Model of the Individual Learning Accounts System";
- Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No 819 of 25 October 2023 "On the Approval of the List of Ministries and the Measures of Financing Non-formal Adult Education and Continuing Learning Administered by Them to be Included in the Individual Learning Accounts System, the List of the Priority Areas of the State-funded Programmes Provided in the Individual

Learning Accounts System and the List of the Priority Groups of Persons Participating in the Individual Learning Accounts System";

- Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania No V-1218 of 18 September 2023 "On the Approval of the Quality Assurance Procedures for Non-formal Adult Education and Continuing Learning Programmes Published in the Individual Learning Accounts System";

- Order No V-1515 of 29 November 2023 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of the description of the procedure for the administration of the Individual Learning Accounts system and the financing of persons seeking to improve and/or acquire competences through this system, as well as for the organisation of the competition for the funding to participate in programmes of non-formal adult education and continuing learning".

The IMP system publishes non-formal adult education and continuing learning programmes that meet the quality assurance requirements laid down in the legislation. The IMP framework promotes the acquisition of high value-added qualifications and competences by people of working age. A website dedicated to the IMP system, www.kursuok.lt, has been developed and launched in December 2023. 852 courses are currently available. Up to €12 million is planned for the programme until 30 April 2026. The budget for funding training in the priority areas has been increased from €5.4 million to €7.4 million for 2024.

The programme is open to persons aged 18-65, employed or self-employed, with higher or vocational education, a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania or a foreigner with a residence permit in Lithuania. You must not have attended training or, if you have received funding, have not yet used the full €500 learning basket. If you have used the KURSUOK platform and used the full €500 basket, you will not be able to receive state funding for your learning programme again until 5 years later.

7.2 Case Studies and Lessons Learnt

Case study 1. The cultural ship "Nemunas7"

Description: Kaunas 2022, a public non-profit organisation, has transformed a forgotten ship [dredger] that has been unused for more than 10 years and ready for recycling into a vibrant creative hub and floating park. The process of designing and implementing the project involved river users, historians, artists, landscape design specialists and the community of Kaunas region, who remembered the ship well and had many stories to tell about it, as it had been a long-time worker on the rivers of Kaunas region. The storytelling fostered a strong sense of ownership, and the appearance of a new, European cultural object in a rural area fostered a sense of pride in the place. On the ship Nemunas7 you can find professional contemporary art, local pioneer-plants, participate in various sustainability workshops, temporary exhibitions and regular concerts. The

project has been running for three years now and has been extremely well received by both the architectural and design community.



Photo: Nemuno7



Photo: Nemuno7

Impact: Nemuno7 has significantly improved the quality of life of local residents, facilitating access to contemporary art and alternative music, introducing the diversity and value of local plants, and encouraging creativity in finding sustainable solutions. The project has also contributed to improving biodiversity and the quality of cultural services, as well as the positive economic influence on the village. In addition, the site has become a centre of attraction for tourists and locals, encouraging social interaction and cultural consumption.

Lessons learned: This case study shows that creativity and culture can serve businesses in finding sustainable solutions for new and promising projects. Involving the residents in the

storytelling is crucial to ensure the long-term success of the project and to preserve the local identity.



Photo: Nemuno7

Info: www.nemuno7.lt

Case study 2. Accessibility Guide

Description: Kaunas 2022, a public non-profit organisation, has been running workshops, meetings and training with the [visual, hearing, mobility] disabled and elderly communities for more than 2 years in various alternative public venues and spaces in Kaunas city. Individuals, associations of people with disabilities, consultancy organisations from Poland and a design agency were involved in the project process. The aim of the whole learning and cooperation process was to make the cultural sector aware of accessibility, universal design and the needs of society as a whole, and at the same time to develop an accessibility guide [rules, guidelines] for the cultural sector [institutions, event organisers, etc.]. The Accessibility signage system was created by the design agency Critical.

Impact: The project has joined a critical mass that creates a comfortable and happy city, based on recommendations from the public, interested communities, designers and environmental professionals. It is part of a process of learning to adapt the city for all, in order to develop a modern urban citizen and a city developer who takes into account the needs of all.

Lessons learnt: This case study shows that accessibility is a complex process, constantly confronted with different needs and technical possibilities [especially in heritage sites]. The case study highlighted that a sensitive and personal approach to each problem needs to be creative and coherent, listening to everyone's position and involving the community in the solutions.



Photo: kaunas2022



Photo: Martynas Plepys | Kaunas2022



Photo: kaunas2022

Link: https://kaunas2022.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/I_Kaunas-for-All.pdf

Case study 3. Contemporary Neighbourhoods

Description: In 2019, the Contemporary Neighbourhoods programme was launched in Kaunas district. The aim of the programme is to help communities and institutions to find their own identity, to connect fragmented communities and to work together to attract an audience - the local population. The project was developed in cooperation with official cultural and community entities operating in Kaunas district. Cultural institutions in Kaunas district expressed their willingness to participate in the project by submitting an application to the competition. Each of the participating neighbourhoods [15 in total], together with the coordinators [cultural producers, curators], undertook a search for their identity. To achieve this, local research was carried out, involving the local population, the cultural institutions participating in the project and their partners. This helped to better understand the history and traditions of the localities and the relationship of the inhabitants to their living environment, culture, community and art. The surveys also explored the challenges faced by the neighbourhoods, which have a significant impact on the local microclimate. The field research was carried out using interviews, survey methods and source analysis. The project involved Kaunas district municipality, the cultural sector, Kaunas district cultural/community centres, leisure halls, elders, partners, artists, community members, local art groups (choirs, dance troupes, etc.). After getting to know each neighbourhoods better, understanding the relationship of the population to art and culture, as well as taking into account the challenges, traditions and expectations, the directions of activities were clarified, allowing the neighbourhoods to develop creative community activities, involving local residents, representatives of cultural institutions and partners, Lithuanian and foreign artists. These activities were thematically linked in each commune and aimed at achieving a final result (product), which is presented to the public during the warm season. These include various concerts, festivals, contemporary circus performances or exhibition presentations initiated and implemented by the community. During the summer, Kaunas district has become a large event scene where local people celebrated their growing identity and community together with their guests.

Impact: Each participating neighbourhood has developed a cultural and creative project highlighting its identity, which it implements even without the participation of curators and project coordinators. The activities and projects that emerged became activities that brought the local community together. The project decentralised culture and involved the population in cultural activities. The works and ideas implemented were useful in creating a modern environment in Kaunas district based on a synthesis of past, present and future.



Martynas Plepys

Lessons learnt: The success of the project is determined by the fundamental goals set from the very beginning of the project - building and maintaining relationships between people, cultivating ideas from the bottom up, the periodicity of activities, the balance between artistic ambitions, listening to the community and decentralising the work, empowering the communities to sustain the creative activities themselves. It also shows that cultural initiatives based on local traditions can help to create a modern, sustainable environment where past, present and future merge.

Link: <https://kaunas2022.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Community-programme-met-hodology.pdf>



Martynas Plepys



Kaunas2022

Case study 4. Emerging Kaunas

Description: Organisation "Emerging Kaunas" is the legacy of "Kaunas - European Capital of Culture 2022. It is an organisation for young people, founded by young people.

The group of participants (young people aged 15-18) were selected from 2019 onwards, and grew each year and were educated, solving creative challenges and then, in 2022, initiating and implementing their own ideas.

The learning programme consisted of practical lectures, exploring the city and working in teams. Challenges, guest speakers and cultural activities helped them develop individually. Youth gained skills in time management, personal effectiveness, leadership, project management, had the opportunity to know culture leaders and get involved in cultural institutions and join a community of like-minded people.

The young people created something that did not exist in Kaunas before and would not have existed without their contribution. In 3-4 years, a community of young people was created, experimenting and making mistakes, creating the city itself. The youth programme for young people gave birth to long-lasting projects such as "Mass" magazine, audiovisual project "Puota", fashion project "Komoda", photography project "Randai", board game project "Žaidžiam Kauną", platform "Atspindžiai", educational platform "eNDė", channel "Serija-F", the series of events "MindfaQ evenings", the "Half Song Festival" (PDF), the "NFT" project and the biggest youth festival in Baltic states "Audra", which enrich the cultural life of the city every year.



Kylantis Kaunas photo



L.Žemgulis photo

Impact: The Rising Kaunas programme has had a significant impact on the cultural landscape of Kaunas, promoting youth engagement and empowerment. The youth-led organisation has created a platform for young people to actively and independently participate in cultural and artistic initiatives, fostering new perspectives and creativity without 'better uncles'. The programme strengthened the sense of responsibility and involvement of the young population, encouraging them to shape the future of their city. It has also allowed local talent to emerge, providing opportunities for skills development, collaboration and cultural innovation, helping to retain and attract young professionals to the city.

Lessons learnt: One of the most important lessons of Emerging Kaunas is the power of youth initiatives to create lasting cultural impact. By directly involving young people in decision-making and project implementation, the programme has shown that young people can be effective

leaders in cultural development. Another lesson is the importance of creating platforms for young people to express their identity, which fosters a deeper connection with the local environment and culture. The programme also highlighted the need to continuously support and empower young talents to ensure long-term sustainability and innovation in the cultural sector.



V.Sidabras photo

<https://www.kylantiskaunas.com/en>

<https://kaunas2022.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Youth-programme-methodology.pdf>

7.3 Evaluation and Recommendations

Lithuania has made progress in integrating alternative learning spaces into its education system, but the pace has been slow. The country has several strategic policies, such as the National Education Development Programme 2021-2030 and the Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy "Culture 2030", aimed at enhancing educational outcomes and inclusivity. Efforts like the Individual Learning Accounts (IMP) system, non-formal adult education programmes, and initiatives such as the School Educational Spaces Competition have been introduced to modernise learning environments. However, challenges remain, including limited time, experience, and a lack of a unified system to integrate alternative spaces into formal education.

Recommendations

Expand and formalise integration: Lithuania should create a more structured approach to integrating natural, indoor, and virtual learning spaces into formal education. This could involve better coordination among institutions and continuous investment in infrastructure.

Increase awareness and training: more efforts should be made to train educators and school communities in using outdoor and non-traditional spaces effectively to enhance learning outcomes.

Enhance policy support: existing policies should be strengthened to encourage the use of alternative learning environments more systematically, aligning them with evolving educational needs.

Leverage technology: virtual learning spaces should be expanded further to reach more learners and foster creative, critical thinking, particularly in remote areas or underserved communities.

8. Current State of Alternative Learning Spaces in Italy

Italy, a country deeply rooted in its cultural heritage and artistic traditions, is witnessing a burgeoning movement of Alternative Spaces of Learning, which serve as incubators for innovation, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and contributing to the revitalization of local communities. Italian ASLs are often:

- **Community-driven:** rooted in local needs and interests.
- **Interdisciplinary:** blending various subjects and disciplines.
- **Focused on experiential learning:** emphasising hands-on experience and project-based learning.
- **Innovative and creative:** at the forefront of new teaching methods and technologies.
- **Socially impactful:** contributing to community development and cohesion.

Here are a few prominent examples of Italy's rich tapestry of alternative spaces of learning, each with its unique character and focus:

- **Makerspaces:** spaces equipped with tools and technology for hands-on creation and innovation. Examples include FabLab Torino and FabLab Catania, which offer workshops, courses, and open access to digital fabrication equipment.
- **Community gardens:** These spaces cultivate not only plants but also community spirit and environmental awareness. Ortobene in Bari and the Floating Gardens of Venice are notable examples.
- **Cultural centres:** these spaces often host art exhibitions, performances, and educational programs. The MAXXI Museum in Rome and the Museo del Novecento in Milan are prominent cultural centres that also offer educational initiatives.
- **Social cooperatives:** these organisations provide training and employment opportunities for marginalised groups while offering services to the community. Examples include cooperatives focused on agriculture, recycling, or social care.

- **Coworking spaces:** while primarily designed for remote workers, many coworking spaces in Italy also host workshops, seminars, and networking events, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration.

8.1 Data and Current Implementations

While precise data on the number of ASLs in Italy is scarce, estimates suggest hundreds, if not thousands, are operating nationwide. These spaces are particularly concentrated in urban areas with a higher demand for alternative educational opportunities.

The Italian government has recognized the potential of ASLs and has implemented several policies and initiatives to support their development:

- **Law 107/2015:** This law introduced the concept of "third places" (*Terzi Luoghi*), which includes ASLs, as spaces for social innovation and community development.
- **Youth Guarantee:** This program provides training and employment opportunities for young people, often in collaboration with ASLs.
- **Regional Initiatives:** Many Italian regions have their own programs and funding opportunities for ASLs, such as the Lazio Region's "*Spazi Attivi*" project.

While these initiatives are promising, more comprehensive support and recognition from Municipalities and Regions for ASLs are needed to fully unleash their potential. They often emerge from grassroots initiatives, driven by local communities passionate about fostering knowledge exchange and skill development. Other ASLs are spearheaded by private actors, such as social enterprises or cultural institutions, bringing innovative approaches to education.

In Basilicata, home to Consorzio Materahub, a partner in the Futures Design Education project, ASLs often focus on rural development and cultural heritage, leveraging the region's unique landscapes and traditions. The Region of Basilicata's "Visioni Urbane" project, alongside the work done with the Open Design School during the Matera-Basilicata 2019 initiative, exemplifies the region's commitment to revitalising abandoned spaces into hubs for creativity and community engagement. This southern Italian region is demonstrating a growing commitment to fostering alternative learning environments. Projects like Heritage Smart Labs exemplify the collaborative nature of these spaces, combining public and private efforts to preserve cultural heritage through innovative learning experiences.

Puglia is another southern Italian region which, with its vibrant coastal towns and agricultural heartland, is home to numerous initiatives like "Luoghi Comuni", supporting youth-led social innovation projects in underutilised public spaces. Puglia is often taken as an exemplary Italian region under this point of view, fostering open innovation.

8.2 Case Studies and Lessons Learned

Case Study 1. Noi Ortadini community garden

Description: Noi Ortadini is a vibrant community garden located in the heart of Matera. Born from a grassroots initiative, it transformed an abandoned urban space into a thriving oasis. The garden cultivates a strong sense of community, bringing together residents of all ages and backgrounds to share knowledge, skills, and the joy of gardening. It offers workshops on organic farming, composting, and herbal remedies, promoting sustainable living practices.



Picture retrieved from: www.materahub.com

Impact: Noi Ortadini has had a profound impact on the local community. It has revitalised a neglected area, improving its aesthetic appeal and creating a green space for relaxation and recreation. The garden has fostered a strong sense of belonging and cooperation among residents, building social capital. Additionally, it has contributed to food security by providing fresh, organic produce to the community.

Lessons Learned: The success of Noi Ortadini highlights the power of community-led initiatives in transforming urban spaces. It demonstrates the importance of involving residents in the planning and management of such projects to ensure their long-term sustainability. The garden's focus on education and skill-sharing has proven essential in empowering community members and building capacity.

Useful links: linktr.ee/noiortadini

Case Study 2. Urban Center Spine Bianche

Description: Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche is a dynamic community hub located in the Spine Bianche neighbourhood of Matera. It occupies a renovated industrial building and offers a variety of spaces for creative work, social gatherings, and educational activities. The centre aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship by providing support services, mentorship, and networking opportunities for local residents and businesses.

Urban Center 'Spine Bianche' takes its name from one of the first neighbourhoods that were planned and built in the 50s to house people who moved away from the Sassi districts mainly due to hygiene.

Nevertheless, the Urban Center was built at a later stage and first was a kindergarten, then a centre for rehab of young people with deviant behaviours (such as school dropouts).

During the last few years, the Municipality of Matera turned it into an 'Urban Center' with the short-term objective of hosting participatory workshops and long-term objective to host a media library.

In the past it was a #pilotis building, with just the first floor.

In 2019, the year when Matera was #ECoC (#EuropeanCapitalofCulture), the local public administration launched the call 'Periferie' (peripheries) to refurbish this and other buildings in the city. They wanted to turn this one into a place read, study and consult the documents and volumes contained in the library collections of #LeonardoSacco and the Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti. Now it also hosts a foreground.

In December 2022, the new administration (in charge from 2020) called it an 'Urban Center' and made it available for free by booking through an online platform. Since then, many workshops by many local organisations have taken place.



Pictures retrieved from: [Spazio Spine Bianche - Laboratorio Urban Center \(huboutmatera.it\)](https://huboutmatera.it)

Impact: Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche has revitalised a previously underutilised area and created a vibrant community centre. It has supported the growth of local businesses and social enterprises, contributing to job creation and economic development. The centre has also played a crucial role in building social capital and fostering a sense of community among residents.

Lessons Learned: The success of Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche emphasises the importance of repurposing existing buildings to create vibrant community spaces. It highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that includes business support, education, and community engagement.

Some challenges:

- when the space belongs to the Municipality, the time frames become longer
- whenever the administrative mandates end, everything needs to be rebooted and this makes things even slower.

Further sources:

www.lecronachelucane.it/2022/06/07/presentato-il-nuovo-luc-di-spine-bianche/

Case Study 3. EcoVerticale

Description: EcoVerticale is a multifaceted venue located in Matera that combines hospitality with cultural and community engagement. The space offers accommodations, ranging from suites to hostel-style rooms, while also serving as a dynamic hub for events, including concerts, theatre performances, workshops, conferences, and cooking classes. EcoVerticale's unique design and architecture integrate seamlessly with the surrounding landscape, reflecting a commitment to sustainability and local heritage.

Impact: EcoVerticale has revitalised a previously underutilised space in Matera, transforming it into a thriving cultural and social hub. By offering a variety of services and experiences, the venue has attracted both tourists and locals, contributing to the city's economic growth and cultural vibrancy. EcoVerticale's commitment to sustainability and community engagement has positioned it as a model for responsible tourism and local development.

Lessons Learned: EcoVerticale's success demonstrates the potential of combining hospitality with cultural and community programming to create a unique and sustainable business model. The venue's ability to adapt to different needs and audiences has been key to its success. By focusing on local partnerships and collaborations, EcoVerticale has created a strong connection with the community and enhanced its overall impact.

Sources:

- EcoVerticale website: <https://www.ecoverticale.it/>
- Festival Duni: Eco Verticale: <https://festivalduni.it/luoghi/eco-verticale/>

Case Study 4. Officina Creativa by Materahub

Description: Officina Creativa is an innovative project by Materahub aimed at promoting creativity, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship among young people. It offers a range of workshops, courses, and mentorship programs focused on digital design, video production, and web development. The project also provides access to digital fabrication tools and equipment.

Impact: Officina Creativa has empowered young people with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the digital economy. It has fostered a culture of innovation and creativity within the community and has helped to bridge the digital divide. The project has also contributed to the development of a local talent pool for the creative industries.

Lessons Learned: Officina Creativa highlights the importance of investing in youth and providing them with opportunities to develop digital skills. Access to technology and equipment is essential for fostering creativity and innovation. Collaborations with schools and other educational institutions can help to reach a wider audience and maximise impact.

Sources:

- Materahub website: www.materahub.com

8.3 Evaluation and Recommendations

Italy has witnessed a growing movement towards alternative learning spaces (ASLs) in recent years. These spaces, often rooted in community initiatives or cultural institutions, offer innovative and experiential learning opportunities. From urban makerspaces to rural community gardens, ASLs are diversifying the educational landscape and addressing local needs. However, while the potential of ASLs is evident, challenges such as funding, recognition, and sustainability persist.

Matera, with its rich cultural heritage and recent urban regeneration, stands out as a prime example of how ASLs can contribute to a city's revitalization. The city's historic centre, with its intricate network of caves and alleys, offers a unique backdrop for experiential learning. Initiatives like the Open Design School and community gardens have demonstrated the potential of ASLs to foster innovation, creativity, and social cohesion. Matera's success in integrating ASLs into its

urban fabric provides valuable lessons for other Italian cities seeking to create more inclusive and dynamic learning environments. By building upon its achievements and addressing the existing challenges, Matera can solidify its position as a leading example of how to harness the power of ASLs for community development and educational excellence.

9. The Alternative Space of Learning - Assessment tool

Based upon the current data across the European Union as well as the case studies collected by the FuturesDesigned partners, the need for a comprehensive spatial analysis tool was recognised.

The Spatial Analysis Tool⁷ is designed to serve as a comprehensive guide for individuals, educational organisations, and cultural institutions looking to create and implement alternative learning spaces in Arts & Design Education, in alignment with the values of the New European Bauhaus (NEB). It evaluates these spaces using five key criteria to ensure they are effective, inclusive, and forward-thinking.

When assessing an alternative learning space, it is crucial for users to have a clear understanding of the type of learning activity they plan to conduct. While the criteria provided by the Spatial Analysis Tool address fundamental aspects, especially those aligned with New European Bauhaus (NEB) values, users must consider the nature of the space **in relation** to their objectives. For instance, choosing a forest for teaching digital tools might not be ideal. The space can come in a physical, digital or hybrid format and should align with the learning goals, ensuring both the overall learning environment and the intended activities are compatible.

The tool operates using a scoring system based on five criteria, which are:

1. Physical Environment
2. Educational Resources & Performance
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Pedagogical Considerations And,
5. Community & Social Aspects.

For each criterion, users are asked to evaluate specific features of the learning space, such as accessibility, engagement, and sustainability. Responses are typically rated on a scale, where each aspect is scored according to its effectiveness or presence. The total score provides an overall assessment of how well the space aligns with the goals of creating an inclusive, innovative, and sustainable learning environment. Spaces are considered adequate if they score 60 or above.

Criterion 1 - Physical Environment focuses on the accessibility and/or the navigability of the space, ensuring that it accommodates diverse needs. It examines factors such as safety, comfort, and the overall atmosphere, including seating arrangements and temperature control, to ensure

⁷ See [Annex 13](#) for the full spatial analysis tool

that the environment is not only functional but also fosters a positive and enjoyable learning experience for all users.

Criterion 2 - Educational Resources & Performance delves into the infrastructure and tools available for learning, such as materials, digital platforms, and the level of student engagement. This criterion evaluates the range and quality of interactive learning opportunities, ensuring that learners have access to the best possible resources to support their educational journey.

Criterion 3 - Environmental Sustainability addresses the ecological footprint of the space, with a focus on energy efficiency, waste management, and other eco-friendly practices. By promoting sustainability, this criterion helps create learning environments that reflect the values of environmental stewardship and long-term responsibility.

Criterion 4 - Pedagogical Considerations examines the ways in which the space supports collaborative learning and inclusivity. It considers how well the space fosters teamwork and diverse perspectives, while also encouraging creativity and innovation through resources that inspire experimentation and original thinking. This criterion ensures that the space is not only a site of learning but also a breeding ground for new ideas and inclusivity.

Criterion 5 - Community and Social Aspects assesses the space's connections with the broader community. It looks at how the space engages with local organisations and fosters social connections through events, networking, and collaborative projects. This criterion emphasises the role of the space in building strong community ties and encouraging social participation, ensuring that the learning space is an integral part of its surrounding environment.

10. Spatial Analysis Tool Review

The Futures Designed partners each assessed the tool on 3 alternative learning spaces within their representative countries. The detailed findings of the analysis can be found in Annexes.

10.1 Spatial Analysis in Greece

Artit assessed the Spatial Analysis Tool at three unique spaces: the Caserma of Herbs in Leros, the Artit Digital Exhibition space, and the Keros Surf Club in Limnos, each chosen for its alignment with specific learning activities. The Caserma was ideal for workshops on sustainability and herbal cultivation, the Artit platform for courses in digital art curation, and Keros Surf Club for nature-based learning through interactive, community based activities. These assessments provided insights into how the tool applies to diverse, innovative learning environments.

10.1.1 Caserma of Herbs⁸, Leros island

The Caserma of Herbs in Leros is a historical site repurposed as a unique cultural and educational space. Its blend of historical significance and modern adaptive use makes it an ideal location to assess with the Spatial Analysis Tool. By evaluating this space, we can explore how well it meets contemporary needs for accessibility, sustainability, and community engagement, while preserving its cultural heritage. This assessment offers insights into how alternative learning environments can thrive in repurposed historical sites.



Picture retrieved from Caserma's press office

⁸ <https://caserma.gr/en/home-english/>

The Caserma of Herbs in Leros achieved high scores in most areas, particularly in sustainability, pedagogy, and community engagement, each receiving 5/5. Its use of photovoltaic panels, strong recycling efforts, and minimal single-use plastic reflect a commitment to environmental sustainability. The space also excels in supporting inclusive learning activities, providing infrastructure for both individual and group work while accommodating people with special needs. Additionally, the strong involvement of local organisations and integration with community events demonstrates the space's social relevance and ability to foster engagement. However, the Caserma fell short in a few specific areas. Transportation options received a score of 3/5 due to the lack of public transport, making access more challenging for visitors without a car or bike. Similarly, educational facilities were rated 3/5, indicating that while the space is adequate for many activities, certain specialised resources for more complex learning might be lacking.



Picture retrieved from Caserma's press office



Pictures retrieved from Caserma's press office

After meeting with the Caserma of Herbs Board, it became clear that they are eager to expand their network and enhance their range of activities. They are particularly interested in developing new partnerships, both locally and internationally, to strengthen their educational and vocational programs. This expansion aims to further integrate community involvement, introduce new sustainable practices, and explore additional interdisciplinary collaborations. These efforts will allow them to continue their mission of combining environmental stewardship with social welfare, enhancing their role within the local and broader community.



Pictures retrieved from Caserma's press office

In summary, the Caserma of Herbs is a highly effective and multifunctional space, balancing education, vocational training, sustainability, and social integration. The few lower scores in transportation and learning facilities highlight areas for potential improvement, but overall, it remains an exemplary space.

Overall, Caserma scores 93/100 so it is considered an excellent alternative learning space.⁹

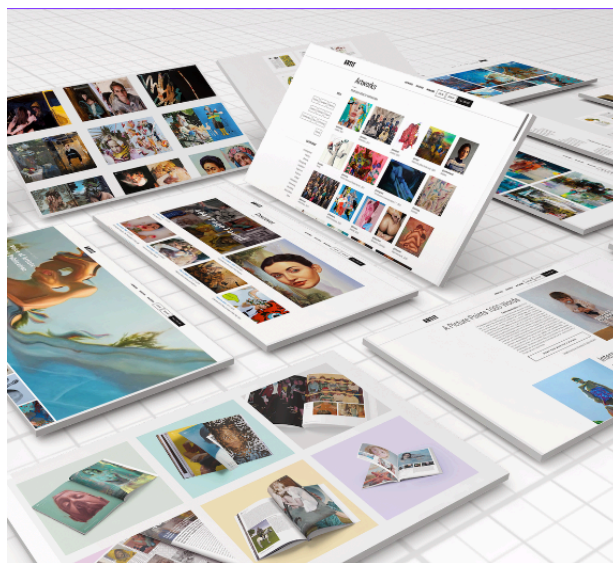
10.1.2 Artit, Digital Exhibition space¹⁰

The Artit Virtual Exhibition Space is an innovative digital platform designed to host and showcase a diverse range of artistic works. It offers artists and curators a flexible, accessible, and globally connected space for exhibitions. Assessing the Spatial Analysis Tool here has the aim to explore how well virtual environments can meet the needs of modern art and design education, particularly in terms of accessibility, user engagement, and community building. This evaluation

⁹ See [Annex 1](#) for the full analysis

¹⁰ <https://artit.net/exhibitions>

highlights the role of digital spaces in expanding the reach and impact of art and education globally.



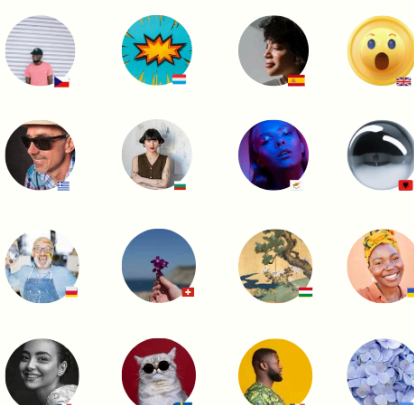
Pictures retrieved from [Artit website](#)

The assessment of the Artit digital platform reveals that it scores highly in several areas, particularly in terms of accessibility and user-friendliness. The platform is accessible through any computer and offers features that allow users to adjust content size and brightness, making it suitable for older users. However, it is not fully accessible to individuals who are completely blind. Since the platform is digital, transportation is not applicable; users can access it from anywhere, whether in a café or at home, as long as they have an internet connection. This flexibility in the learning environment enhances the user experience.

We bridge the art and business worlds together.

Artists of all levels and backgrounds **can participate in these opportunities quickly and at no cost**, fostering a dynamic and inclusive exchange between the creative community and industry.

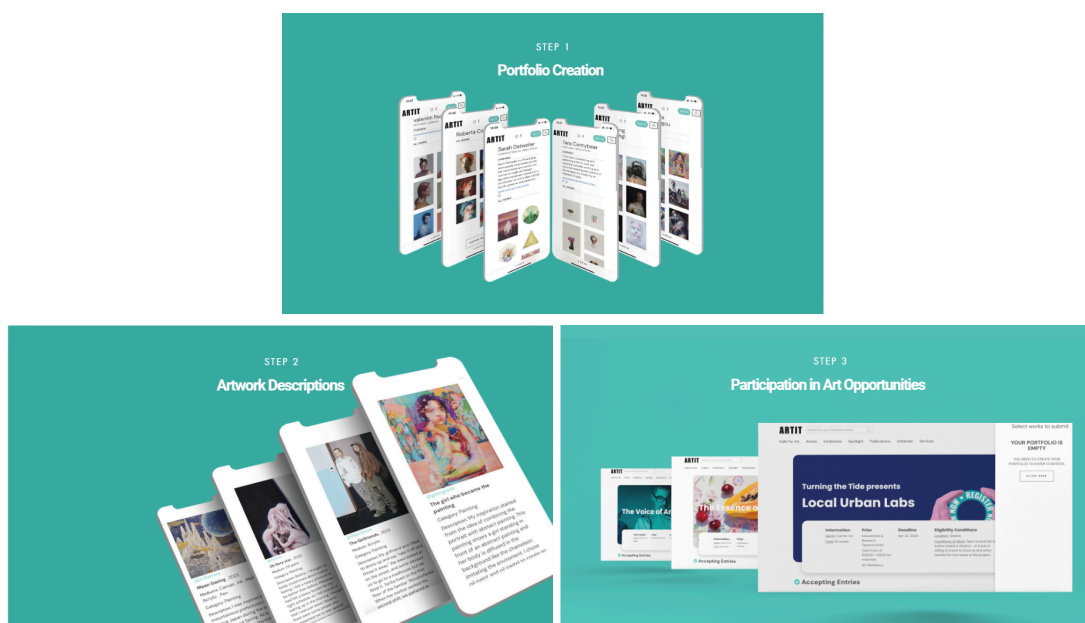
STEP 1. Portfolio Creation
STEP 2. Providing Artwork Descriptions
STEP 3. Participation in Art Opportunities



Pictures retrieved from [Artit website](#)

In terms of learning resources and opportunities, the platform performs well across the board, scoring 5/5 in areas such as content, engagement, and interaction. However, it faces some limitations in community engagement, with the platform being more global than local, which may

reduce opportunities for localised community involvement. The platform’s developers are working on enhancing the overall user experience, and while the virtual exhibitions are already available, further improvements are expected.



Pictures retrieved from [Artit website](https://www.artit.com/)

Overall, Artit digital platform scores 86/10 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹¹

10.1.3 Keros Surf Club¹², Limnos Island

The Keros Surf Club on Lemnos Island offers a range of activities that go beyond water sports, emphasising community engagement and nature-based learning. In addition to kitesurfing and windsurfing, the club is deeply involved in women’s empowerment programs and organises year-round camps for children and youth. These camps offer diverse activities centred on community building, environmental stewardship, and personal growth. The club also participates in Erasmus+ programs and operates under the motto "learning by doing," providing immersive, hands-on experiences that foster both skill development and environmental awareness. This assessment provides valuable insights into how educational principles can be applied to informal, outdoor learning environments.

The assessment of the Keros Surf Club demonstrates excellent performance across multiple criteria, especially in terms of accessibility for individuals with different abilities. The space is highly accessible for people with physical disabilities. However, it faces some challenges with

¹¹ See [Annex 2](#) for the full analysis

¹² <https://www.surfclubkeros.com/>

public transportation, as there is no direct access, and the location is a bit isolated. Despite this, the club remains accessible by private transport or other means.

In terms of facilities, learning opportunities, and sustainability, Keros Surf Club excels. The space provides a conducive environment for both individual and group activities, with ample hands-on learning opportunities related to water sports and eco-friendly practices. Additionally, the site's engagement with sustainability is noteworthy, with efforts to promote environmental awareness among participants. The strong community involvement and focus on inclusivity further contribute to the club's success, making it an exemplary space for both educational and recreational purposes.

Overall, Keros Surf Club scores 79/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space¹³.

10.2 Spatial Analysis in Cyprus

Frederick University assessed the Spatial Analysis Tool at three unique spaces: the Limassol Promenade (Molos), the Leventis Gallery in Nicosia, and the Limassol Theater Museum, each chosen for its alignment with specific learning activities.

Overall the Limassol Promenade (Molos) offers an open-air space for interactive learning, promoting well-being through art installations and community events. Leventis Gallery provides a rich educational platform for art appreciation, with exhibitions and workshops that bridge local and international art traditions. The Limassol Theatre Museum fosters hands-on learning about theatre history and production, offering immersive experiences in the island's rich theatrical heritage. These spaces highlight the diverse, innovative ways in which education can be integrated into public and cultural institutions.

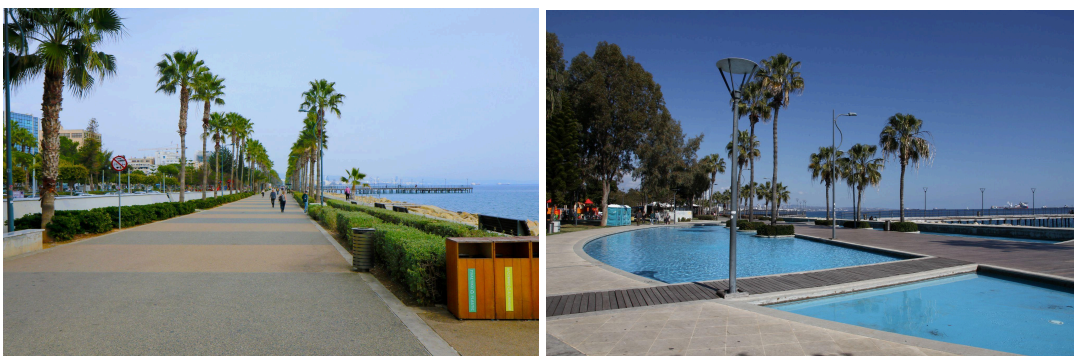
10.2.1 Limassol Promenade (Molos), Cyprus

Molos Promenade is a popular coastal park in Limassol that stretches along the city's seafront. It features wide walking paths, green areas, playgrounds, sculptures, and outdoor gyms. Designed to be an accessible and multi-use space, Molos Promenade is frequently used for leisure activities such as jogging, walking, cycling, and picnicking, as well as hosting various public events, from festivals to art installations.

The Limassol Promenade, also known as Molos, achieved high scores in most areas, particularly in physical environment, environmental sustainability, and community engagement, each receiving 4 and above. Molos Promenade has significantly impacted Limassol by creating a vital, inclusive, and accessible outdoor space that caters to people of all ages. It has revitalised the city's waterfront, making it a central location for community activities and outdoor learning. The

¹³ See [Annex 3](#) for the full analysis

promenade also serves as an open-air gallery, displaying sculptures and art installations that engage the public and promote local artists.



Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

However, the Molos area fell short in a few specific areas. As an outdoor public space, educational resources are low, the space is adequate for short workshops but not for long term activities. This is additionally impacted by the outdoor aspect of the varied weather conditions of Cyprus. Despite these shortcomings the space scored an overall score of 80/100, highlighting the space as a suitable and creative environment for a learning space of the future.

In summary the Molos area highlights the importance of creating multifunctional outdoor spaces that promote well-being, recreation, and cultural engagement. It shows how integrating art, nature, and physical activity can foster a sense of community and belonging.



Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

Overall, Molos scores 80/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁴

¹⁴ See [Annex 4](#) for the full analysis

10.2.2 Leventis Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus

Leventis Gallery highlights the significance of preserving and showcasing cultural heritage through art. It emphasises the role of galleries as educational spaces that foster artistic appreciation and cultural awareness. By curating both local and international artworks, the gallery promotes dialogue between diverse artistic traditions while offering a platform for creative learning, community engagement, and the exploration of art history.

Leventis gallery in Nicosia, achieved high scores in most areas, each receiving 4/5 and above except the last section of community and social aspects which scored 3.25/5. Leventis Gallery plays a pivotal role in arts education in Cyprus, offering immersive learning opportunities for students, artists, and the public. Through its exhibitions, art classes, and specialised workshops, the gallery creates a space for deep engagement with visual art, encouraging visitors to explore art history, technique, and cultural context. Its educational outreach programs, often designed in collaboration with schools and universities, aim to inspire the next generation of artists and art enthusiasts. The gallery also supports local artistic talent by offering a platform for contemporary Cypriot artists to display their work, thereby fostering a greater appreciation for the island's cultural identity.

Although there are specific events held that incorporate the community, and the gallery is open to the public, it was noted that engagement was on an invited level, rather than through community initiatives. Despite any shortcomings the space scored an overall score of 82/100, highlighting the space as a suitable and creative environment for a learning space of the future.



Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

In summary Leventis Gallery highlights the importance of cultural institutions in shaping artistic education and community engagement. It demonstrates that galleries can serve as powerful learning spaces, not just through the display of artworks but through interactive and participatory programs. The gallery shows that fostering dialogue between local and international art enriches cultural understanding and encourages critical thinking.



Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

Overall, Leventis Gallery scores 82/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁵

10.2.3 Limassol Theatre Museum, Cyprus

The Limassol Theatre Museum, located in Limassol, Cyprus, is a unique institution dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the island's theatrical heritage. The museum showcases costumes, scripts, set designs, props, and audiovisual materials from various productions, offering a detailed insight into the history of Cypriot theatre and performance arts. It serves not only as a cultural archive but also as an educational space where visitors can explore the evolution of theatre in Cyprus, from ancient performances to modern-day productions. Through its exhibitions and events, the museum fosters an understanding of the theatrical arts and their significance in Cypriot culture.

The Limassol Theatre Museum, achieved high scores in Educational Resources & Performance as well as Pedagogical Considerations, each receiving 4.5/5. This demonstrates the space as a well equipped learning environment. Overall the Limassol Theatre Museum plays a vital role in arts education by providing an immersive space for learning about theatre history and production. It offers a unique opportunity for students, actors, and theatre enthusiasts to delve into the craftsmanship behind the stage. Through workshops, guided tours, and educational programs, the museum bridges the gap between academic study and hands-on experience.

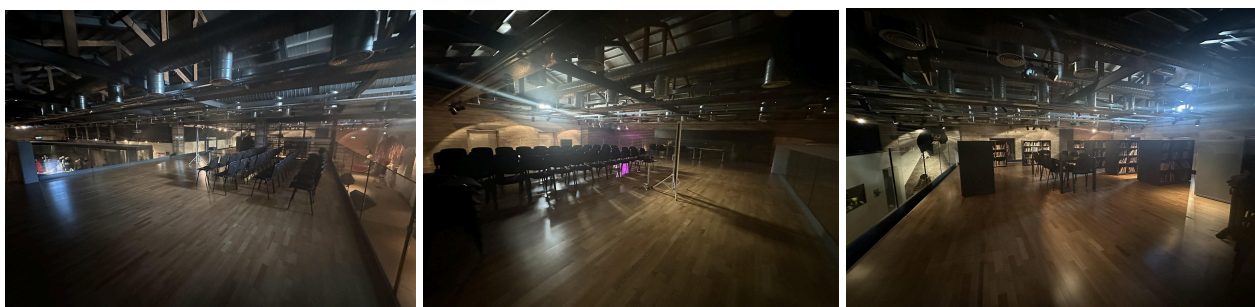
Environmental Sustainability was a difficult category to assess as the space does not encompass great energy resources, as such the evidence of alternative energy sources are not highlighted. Despite any shortcomings the space scored an overall score of 78/100, highlighting the space as a suitable and creative environment for a learning space of the future.

¹⁵ See [Annex 5](#) for the full analysis



Photos Courtesy of Frederick University

In summary the Limassol theatre museum demonstrates the value of specialised cultural institutions in preserving niche art forms while promoting education and engagement. It shows that museums can serve as active learning environments by providing interactive exhibits and workshops that immerse visitors in the creative process. The museum's success in promoting theatrical heritage underscores the importance of preserving cultural history while encouraging contemporary interpretations and practices. It also highlights the potential for museums to contribute to the broader cultural narrative by connecting the past and present, offering educational experiences that are both informative and inspirational.



Overall, Limassol Theatre scores 78/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁶

10.3 Spatial Analysis in Lithuania

Kauno Kolegija assessed the Spatial Analysis Tool at:

1. M. K. Čiurlionis Temporary Art Gallery
2. Kaunas Artists' House
3. Ažuolynas Library

¹⁶ See [Annex 6](#) for the full analysis

Each of these 3 spaces was chosen for its diversity in:

- Partnerships and ongoing non-traditional activities
- Ownership and management of the space

10.3.1. M. K. Čiurlionis Temporary Art Gallery

In Lithuania, few people need to introduce the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art dedicated to the most famous Lithuanian artist. The Temporary M. K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery is the lesser-known pioneer of the origins of this gallery, which is not located in the city centre, but on Owl Hill in Žaliakalnis. The building, long abandoned and used as a studio for young artists, will be reopened in 2025 after reconstruction as a space for research, exhibitions and creative activities.

Accessibility for people with mobility or visual impairments is currently inadequate. While the building is easily accessible from the street and offers a car park with designated spaces for wheelchair users, the overall accessibility inside the building is poor due to heritage preservation requirements. Additionally, the information signs are not accessible to individuals who are blind.

Public transport links present a challenge, as the nearest stop is 300 metres away at the bottom of a hill. However, the site is conveniently accessible on foot, by bicycle, or through a quiet residential area. In terms of safety, the site is quiet and well-monitored by residents, with adequate lighting in the evenings.



@ Martynas Plepys | Kaunas2022

The site offers a peaceful and clean environment, situated in a park with fresh air and excellent views of the city. The premises themselves are adequate for learning activities, though they have

primarily been used as an exhibition space, storage area, or studio for young artists due to the ample natural light.

Opportunities for practical learning are currently limited, as the building is undergoing renovation. While the building belongs to an educational institution and is primarily intended for exhibition purposes, conditions for practical learning will be available after the renovations are complete.

In terms of energy efficiency, there is significant room for improvement, and no renewable energy sources are currently in place. Recycling efforts are ongoing, with various materials being sorted and repurposed by students for creative projects.

The infrastructure for group work exists but is being improved. Currently, resources for creative activities are modest, but after renovations, the facilities are expected to be upgraded to meet these needs.

Overall, M. K. Čiurlionis Temporary Art Gallery scores 75/10 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁷

10.3.2. Kaunas Artists' House

KAH, which presents programmes of high artistic level, strives to keep up with the contemporary tendencies of culture and art. The institution organises its activity in the way that Kaunas inhabitants and city guests would be able to see the best programmes of professional Lithuanian and foreign artists, not forgetting the searches of young artists.

The organisation at this location works extensively with various social groups and people with disabilities. Conveniently situated in the city centre, it is accessible to all, with continuous improvements being made to better accommodate people with disabilities. The building is fully accessible, making it a suitable environment for a diverse range of visitors.

Public transport links, while not perfect, are manageable with a 300-400 metre walk to the nearest bus stops. The location is easily reachable via a town square, with well-maintained pavements that make the site accessible on foot and by bicycle.

In terms of security, the site is quiet and safe, with cameras monitoring both the establishment and neighbouring buildings. It is also well-lit in the evenings, adding to the overall sense of safety.

¹⁷ See [Annex 7](#) for the full analysis



Martynas Plepys | Kaunas2022

The site is busy but maintains a quiet atmosphere, with a courtyard facing a tree-covered slope that offers clean air and excellent views of both the city and the surrounding countryside. The facilities are more than adequate for learning activities, offering a wide range of options for various educational purposes.

There are ample opportunities for practical learning, with regular non-formal education lectures, workshops, and a variety of creative and social activities taking place on-site.

Energy efficiency has seen some improvements due to renovations, but there remains room for further enhancements. Renewable energy sources are not currently in use, though recycling efforts are well underway, with sorted materials being repurposed for creative projects and recycling purposes.

The infrastructure for group work is available and functional, and the resources for creative activities are sufficient, with additional resources readily available when needed.

Overall, Kaunas Artists' House scores 84/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁸

10.3.3. Culture ship Nemuno7

The dredger "Nemuno 7" opened to the public in the spring of 2022, will continue to enrich the banks of the river Nemunas with cultural initiatives. During the warm season, the unique object of

¹⁸ See [Annex 8](#) for the full analysis

river technology and landscape design will host events, artist residencies and exhibitions. Perhaps, it will become one more reason to bring culture lovers and art enthusiasts to Zapyškis.

Transport and accessibility are quite manageable for this site, located in the village of Zapyškis. It is accessible via public transport with a fairly convenient schedule. Additionally, the site can be reached by a cycle path that connects Kaunas to Zapyškis, making it accessible by bicycle as well.



Monika Kiaušaitė | Nemuno7

In terms of security, the site is located in a quiet countryside area and is equipped with security cameras on the ship, ensuring safety. It is well-lit during the evenings, further contributing to the secure environment.

Despite being close to a busy street, the location remains quiet due to its distance from the main road. It offers a peaceful environment in nature, near the river, with clean air and a great view of Lithuania's largest river, making it an ideal place for relaxation and focus.

The premises are suitable for learning activities, although they are somewhat small. There are three rooms on board the ship, and an amphitheatre is available on the shore, providing additional space for larger gatherings or events.

Opportunities for practical learning are excellent, with regular non-formal education lectures, workshops, and various creative and social activities. The only limitation is that the boat is only operational during the warmer months (April-October). Outside of this period, the ship is stored in the winter harbour in Kaunas.

Energy efficiency is quite limited, as the ship was built in 1965 and was not designed with high energy efficiency in mind. Renewable energy sources are not in use on the ship, but recycling efforts are ongoing, with sorted materials repurposed for creative projects and recycling.

The facilities for group work are available and functional. Resources for creative activities are sufficient, and additional materials can be provided if needed.

Overall, Culture ship Nemuno7 scores 69/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.¹⁹

10.4 Spatial analysis in Italy

Materahub assessed the Spatial Analysis Tool at:

1. Noi Ortadini Community Garden
2. Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche
3. Ecoverticale

Each of these 3 spaces was chosen for its diversity in:

- Types of learning activities carried out
- Ownership and management of the space

10.4.1 Noi Ortadini Community Garden

The urban community garden founded by the association Noi Ortadini in 2020 is a green space of ca. 4,000 square metres, a 20 minutes walk far from the city centre of Matera, so not really in the periphery but at a liminal position of the city, where a stunning view of the surrounding countryside can be admired.

Accessibility at the site is fairly good for individuals in wheelchairs, though there is still room for improvement. Additionally, the informative panels are currently in a prototype stage and are not yet accessible for blind individuals, highlighting a need for further development in this area.

Transportation options consist of city buses, though they are not very frequent. Moreover, information about local transport is not yet integrated into Google Maps, which is the most widely used app for navigation. However, this information can be found in the Moovit app, providing an alternative for users.

In terms of safety, the area is socially safe, but the terrain poses some challenges, with slopes and irregular surfaces that could affect physical safety, particularly for those with mobility issues. Comfort is generally good, with the area being fairly quiet except for occasional noise from local residents using grass-cutting machines. The seating is comfortable, though wooden without cushions, and the temperature depends heavily on the season as the space is open-air.

¹⁹ See [Annex 9](#) for the full analysis



Drone picture of the community garden seen from above, by Ivan Losacco.

The facilities are adequate for the learning activities carried out by Noi Ortadini, although access to water relies on a private source, and not all members currently have access to the equipment. Plans are in place to install a shed with password access to ensure more equitable access for all members, making the space more inclusive.

When it comes to hands-on learning opportunities, the site excels, offering a wealth of opportunities that would deserve a "6 out of 5" rating if possible. Energy efficiency has room for improvement, and while renewable energy sources are not yet in use, the organisation is actively working on incorporating them into their operations.

Recycling facilities are present, with hand-crafted bins, but they require a lot of maintenance, and the success of recycling efforts relies heavily on the cooperation of local residents.

The infrastructure for group work exists but is currently undergoing improvements. Plans include building a "natural amphitheatre" carved into the hill to enhance the space for group activities.

Resources for creative activities are available, though, as mentioned in point 2.1, they need to be made more accessible to all members. Currently, they are stored in a private space, but plans for shared access through a key system are being developed to improve accessibility for everyone.

Overall, Noi Ortadini Community Garden scores 87/10 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.²⁰

²⁰ See [Annex 10](#) for the full analysis

10.4.2 Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche

This space takes its name from one of the first neighbourhoods that were planned and built in the 50s to house people who moved away from the hashtag Sassi districts of Matera, mainly due to hygiene.

Nevertheless, the Urban Center was built at a later stage and first was a hashtag#kindergarten, then a centre for rehab of young people with deviant behaviours (such as drug addiction). During the last few years, the Municipality of Matera turned it into an UrbanCenter with the short-term objective of hosting participatory workshops and the long-term objective to host a media library.

In the past it was a pilot building, with just the first floor. In 2019, the year when Matera was European Capital of Culture, the local public administration, led by the Mayor Ruggieri, launched the call 'Periferie' (peripheries) to refurbish this and other buildings in the city. They wanted to turn this one into a place where to read, study and consult the documents and volumes from the collections of Leonardo Sacco and the Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti. Now it also hosts a foreground.

In December 2022, the new administration, led by the Mayor Bennardi, (in charge from 2020) called it an 'Urban Center' and made it available for free by booking through an online platform. Since then, many workshops by many local organisations have taken place.

For more info: <https://www.huboutmatera.it/spazio-spine-bianche/>

Accessibility of the building is sound in physical terms, but intangibly, there are challenges. The space belongs to the Municipality, and administrative inefficiencies, especially when mandates end, slow down the booking process. This makes it increasingly difficult for the community to access and use the space effectively.

In terms of safety, while the space is generally safe, it is poorly managed in some respects. For example, a local association has left a ceramic oven inside, which poses a potential hazard. Without clear instructions or guidelines on using the oven and electrical equipment, this creates a safety risk.

The adequacy of the facilities is limited. Associations using the space must bring smaller equipment and tools, such as pens, paper, and other materials, from their headquarters, as these are not provided on-site.

Hands-on learning opportunities vary, depending on which associations are using the space. The nature and quality of learning activities are not consistent, as different organisations bring their own tools and methods.

Recycling facilities are not clearly structured. Waste management depends largely on the initiative and responsibility of whoever is using the space at any given time. Similarly, efforts to minimise non-recyclable materials rely on individual users, and there is no consistent system in place to manage waste or promote recycling.

Resources for creative activities fluctuate depending on the event organisers. Those who plan activities must bring the necessary materials and resources, which means availability can vary

widely from event to event.

Community engagement and opportunities for involvement are lacking. The Municipality currently has no clear strategy to engage the community, unlike in the past when a proactive Assessor was in charge. Now, the use of the space is largely dependent on private contacts, and the community is not properly informed about if or how they can utilise the space.

Overall, Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche scores 84/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.²¹

10.4.3 Ecoverticale

This is a privately-owned space. It is a hotel hosting cultural events. More info here: www.ecoverticale.it

Accessibility at the hotel is challenging due to its location in the Sassi area, one of the most inaccessible parts of the town, characterised by a steep, vertical layout with many stairs. This makes it difficult to reach, particularly for people with mobility issues. However, the hotel management is making significant efforts to compensate for this physical inaccessibility. They have introduced devices to help blind individuals navigate the space, and they are committed to ensuring accessibility in a broader sense, especially during events.

In terms of transportation, a city bus stops near the hotel, providing a public transport option that helps to mitigate the challenges posed by the location's inaccessibility.



EcoVerticale, a cultural space and hotel in Matera

Overall, Ecoverticale scores 87/100 so it is considered an adequate alternative learning space.²²

²¹ See [Annex 11](#) for the full analysis

²² See [Annex 12](#) for the full analysis

Conclusion

In conclusion, this consolidated report serves as a comprehensive guide for the development and implementation of alternative learning spaces in Art & Design Education, firmly aligned with the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB). Through detailed recommendations and the documentation of current practices, the report outlines sustainable, inclusive, and innovative educational environments, drawing on insights from Greece, Lithuania, Italy, and Cyprus. The findings reinforce the importance of incorporating green spaces, public areas, cultural hubs, and, critically, digital spaces into the broader educational landscape. The transition to digital platforms presents a sustainable, inclusive, and scalable solution for education. It allows learners to engage in flexible and accessible environments, whether from home or in shared community spaces, underscoring the need to further explore digital platforms in the future of learning.

One of the key takeaways is the growing role of alternative learning environments in supporting both students and professionals seeking opportunities for upskilling and reskilling. These spaces offer flexibility and accessibility, making them ideal for continuous professional development. In addition, the report emphasises the importance of fostering collaboration among educators, institutions, and policymakers to ensure that knowledge is effectively shared and applied.

A prominent aspect of this report is the introduction of the Alternative Space of Learning – Assessment Tool. Based on data from across the European Union and case studies collected by FuturesDesigned partners, this tool offers a comprehensive method for assessing alternative learning spaces. The tool evaluates spaces across five criteria: Physical Environment, Educational Resources & Performance, Environmental Sustainability, Pedagogical Considerations, and Community & Social Aspects. It provides users with a structured way to score each space and ensure it meets the inclusive, innovative, and sustainable goals of the NEB.

In summary, alternative learning environments, whether physical or digital, are vital in addressing the evolving needs of Art & Design Education. By embracing both green and digital transitions, we can create more sustainable, inclusive, and effective learning spaces that contribute to a better future for education and society.

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Annexes

Annex 1 Spatial Analysis - Caserma of Herbs

Caserma of Herbs	
Description	The Caserma of Herbs in Leros is a historical site repurposed as a unique cultural and educational space. Its blend of historical significance and modern adaptive use makes it an ideal location to assess with the Spatial Analysis Tool. By evaluating this space, we can explore how well it meets contemporary needs for accessibility, sustainability, and community engagement, while preserving its cultural heritage. This assessment offers insights into how alternative learning environments can thrive in repurposed historical sites.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment Overall Score: 4/5	
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance Overall Score: 4,5/5	
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs	Score: 5/5

accommodations	
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 2 Spatial Analysis - Artit Virtual Exhibition Space

Artit Virtual Exhibition Space	
Description	The Artit Virtual Exhibition Space is an innovative digital platform designed to host and showcase a diverse range of artistic works. It offers artists and curators a flexible, accessible, and globally connected space for exhibitions. Assessing the Spatial Analysis Tool here has the aim to explore how well virtual environments can meet the needs of modern art and design education, particularly in terms of accessibility, user engagement, and community building. This evaluation highlights the role of digital spaces in expanding the reach and impact of art and education globally.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 5/5

Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 3 Spatial Analysis Keros Surf Club

Keros Surf Club	
Description	The Keros Surf Club on Lemnos Island offers a range of activities that go beyond water sports, emphasising community engagement and nature-based learning. In addition to kitesurfing and windsurfing, the club is deeply involved in women's empowerment programs and organises year-round camps for children and youth. These camps offer diverse activities centred on community building, environmental stewardship, and personal growth. The club also participates in Erasmus+ programs and operates under the motto "learning by doing,"

	providing immersive, hands-on experiences that foster both skill development and environmental awareness. This assessment provides valuable insights into how educational principles can be applied to informal, outdoor learning environments.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment Overall Score: 4.75/5	
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects Overall Score: 5/5	
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5

Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 4 Spatial Analysis - Molos Promenade

Molos, Limassol	
Description	Molos Promenade is a popular coastal park in Limassol that stretches along the city's seafront. It features wide walking paths, green areas, playgrounds, sculptures, and outdoor gyms. Designed to be an accessible and multi-use space, Molos Promenade is frequently used for leisure activities such as jogging, walking, cycling, and picnicking, as well as hosting various public events, from festivals to art installations.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5

Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 2/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 5 Spatial Analysis - Leventis Gallery

Leventis Gallery, Nicosia	
Description	Leventis Gallery highlights the significance of preserving and showcasing cultural heritage through art. It emphasises the role of galleries as educational spaces that foster artistic appreciation and cultural awareness. By curating both local and international artworks, the gallery promotes dialogue between diverse artistic traditions while offering a platform for creative learning, community engagement, and the exploration of art history.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 4/5

Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability		Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency		Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources		Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials		Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations		Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork		Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations		Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work		Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities		Score: 5/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects		Overall Score: 3.25/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement		Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations		Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events		Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement		Score: 3/5

Annex 6 Spatial Analysis - Limassol Theatre Museum

Limassol Theatre Museum	
Description	<p>The Limassol Theatre Museum, located in Limassol, Cyprus, is a unique institution dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the island's theatrical heritage. The museum showcases costumes, scripts, set designs, props, and audiovisual materials from various productions, offering a detailed insight into the history of Cypriot theatre and performance arts. It serves not only as a cultural archive but also as an educational space where visitors can explore the evolution of theatre in Cyprus, from ancient performances to modern-day productions. Through its exhibitions and events, the museum fosters an understanding of the theatrical arts and their significance in Cypriot culture.</p>
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	
Overall Score: 3.75/5	

Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3.25/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 2/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 3/5

Annex 7 Spatial Analysis - M. K. Čiurlionis Temporary Art Gallery

M. K. Čiurlionis Temporary Art Gallery	
Description	In Lithuania, few people need to introduce the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art dedicated to the most famous Lithuanian artist. The Temporary M. K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery is the lesser-known pioneer of the origins of this gallery, which is not located in the city centre, but on Owl Hill in Žaliakalnis. The building, long abandoned and used as a studio for young artists, will be reopened in 2025 after reconstruction as a space for research, exhibitions and creative activities.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 4/5

Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects		Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement		Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations		Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events		Score:3/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement		Score: 4/5

Annex 8 Spatial Analysis - Kaunas Artists' House

Kaunas Artists' House		
Description	KAH, which presents programmes of high artistic level, strives to keep up with the contemporary tendencies of culture and art. The institution organises its activity in the way that Kaunas inhabitants and city guests would be able to see the best programmes of professional Lithuanian and foreign artists, not forgetting the searches of young artists.	
Criterion 1 Physical Environment		Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility		Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options		Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety		Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance		Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning		Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability		Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency		Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources		Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials		Score: 4/5

Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations		Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork		Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations		Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work		Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects		Overall Score: 4.25/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement		Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations		Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events		Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement		Score: 4/5

Annex 9 Spatial Analysis - Nmeuno7

Nmeuno7		
Description	The dredger “Nemuno 7” opened to the public in the spring of 2022, will continue to enrich the banks of the river Nemunas with cultural initiatives. During the warm season, the unique object of river technology and landscape design will host events, artist residencies and exhibitions. Perhaps, it will become one more reason to bring culture lovers and art enthusiasts to Zapyškis.	
Criterion 1 Physical Environment		Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility		Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options		Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety		Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance		Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning		Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement		Score: 3/5

Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 2/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 3.5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 4/5

Annex 10 Spatial Analysis - Noi Ortadini Community Garden

Noi Ortadini Community Garden	
Description	The urban community garden founded by the association Noi Ortadini in 2020 is a green space of ca. 4,000 square metres, a 20 minutes walk far from the city centre of Matera, so not really in the periphery but at a liminal position of the city, where a stunning view of the surrounding countryside can be admired.
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5

Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 4.75/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3.75/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 11 Spatial Analysis - Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche

Laboratorio Urban Center Spine Bianche	
Description	<p>This space takes its name from one of the first neighbourhoods that were planned and built in the 50s to house people who moved away from the hashtag Sassi districts of Matera, mainly due to hygiene.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Urban Center was built at a later stage and first was a hashtag#kindergarten, then a centre for rehab of young people with deviant behaviours (such as drug addiction). During the last few years, the Municipality of Matera turned it into an UrbanCenter with the short-term objective of hosting participatory workshops and the long-term objective to host a media library.</p> <p>In the past it was a pilot building, with just the first floor. In 2019, the year when Matera was European Capital of Culture, the local public administration, led by the Mayor Ruggieri, launched the call 'Periferie' (peripheries) to refurbish this and other buildings in the city. They wanted to turn this one into a place where to read, study and consult the documents and volumes from the collections of Leonardo Sacco and the Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti. Now it also hosts a foreground.</p> <p>In December 2022, the new administration, led by the Mayor Bennardi, (in charge from 2020) called it an 'Urban Center' and made it available for free by booking through an online platform. Since then, many workshops by many local organisations have taken place.</p> <p>For more info: https://www.huboutmatera.it/spazio-spine-bianche/</p>
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	
Overall Score: 4.75/5	
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 5/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	
Overall Score: 4.25/5	
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 3/5

Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 3.25/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 3/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 4.75/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 3/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 3/5

Annex 12 Spatial Analysis - Ecoverticale

Ecoverticale	
Description	This is a privately-owned space. It is a hotel hosting cultural events. More info here: www.ecoverticale.it
Criterion 1 Physical Environment	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.1. Accessibility	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.2. Transportation options	Score: 3/5

Criterion 1.3. Safety	Score: 4/5
Criterion 1.4. Comfort (seating, lighting, temperature, noise)	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2 Educational Resources & Performance	Overall Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.1 Adequacy of facilities	Score: 3/5
Criterion 2.2 Spaces for group/individual learning	Score: 5/5
Criterion 2.3 Learner engagement	Score: 4/5
Criterion 2.4 Hands-on learning opportunities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3 Environmental Sustainability	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 3.1 Energy efficiency	Score: 5/5
Criterion 3.2 Renewable energy sources	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.3 Recycling facilities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 3.4 Minimising non-recyclable materials	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4 Pedagogical Considerations	Overall Score: 4.5/5
Criterion 4.1 Opportunities for teamwork	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.2 Inclusivity and special needs accommodations	Score: 4/5
Criterion 4.3 Infrastructure for group work	Score: 5/5
Criterion 4.4 Resources for creative activities	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5 Community and Social Aspects	Overall Score: 4.75/5
Criterion 5.1 Community engagement	Score: 4/5
Criterion 5.2 Partnerships with local organisations	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.3 Facilitation of community events	Score: 5/5
Criterion 5.4 Opportunities for community involvement	Score: 5/5

Annex 13 - Spatial Analysis Tool Criteria

Criterion 1 - Physical Environment

In this section, we are focusing on accessibility by exploring how easy it is to navigate and how well it accommodates everyone. Check safety measures and evaluate comfort—think about seating, temperature, and the overall vibe that makes learning enjoyable.

- How accessible is the learning space for individuals with different abilities?
- How adequate are the transportation options for reaching the learning space?
- How safe do you consider the learning space for all users?
- How comfortable is the learning space regarding seating, lighting, temperature, and noise levels?

Criterion 2 - Educational Resources & Performance

In this section, we are looking into the means of learning and engagement levels: infrastructure, materials, digital tools, participation in activities and interactive learning opportunities.

- How adequate are the facilities for supporting the specific learning activities?
- Are there appropriate spaces for both individual and group learning activities?
- How engaged are learners in this space?
- Are there interactive and hands-on learning opportunities available?

Criterion 3 - Environmental Sustainability

In this section we are considering energy efficiency, waste management practices, and eco-friendly initiatives.

- To what extent is the space energy efficient?
- Are there any renewable energy sources utilised in the learning space?
- Are sufficient recycling facilities available?
- Are efforts made to minimise single-use plastics and other non-recyclable materials?

Criterion 4 - Pedagogical Considerations

In this section we are focusing on collaborative opportunities by examining how the space facilitates teamwork and group projects, on inclusivity by considering how diverse perspectives and backgrounds are welcomed and supported, and on whether there is support for creativity and innovation by exploring the availability of resources and environments that encourage experimentation and new ideas.

- Are there opportunities for interdisciplinary projects and teamwork?
- Are there accommodations available for learners with special needs?
- Is there a designated infrastructure for group work and discussions?
- Are there resources and spaces for creative activities?

Criterion 5 - Community and Social Aspects

- How engaged is the local community with the learning space?
- Are there partnerships with local organisations and businesses?
- How well does the space facilitate community events and activities?
- Are there opportunities for community members to contribute to the learning space?

The [Full Spatial Analysis Tool](#) can be viewed on the futures designed website