



# The New European Bauhaus: Learning, Sharing and Applying NEB Tools

**UrbACTivistas Event – 28 November 2025**  
**Polytechnic University of Cartagena, CIM Building**

## **1. AccesS (Enhancing Accessibility and Sustainability in Smart Cities and Smart Buildings: The Universal Accessibility Suite Initiative) Piloto: Mercado de Verónicas. NEB Checklist / Compass**

After understanding how the Compass and Checklist work, we move to a practical case: how we applied both tools in Verónicas Market through the AccesS European project.

These tools have helped us better understand what we were already doing and to explain it in a clear, structured way.

## **2. VERÓNICAS PILOT: A STRATEGIC AND INTEGRATED PROJECT**

Three mutually reinforcing lines of work converge in Verónicas:

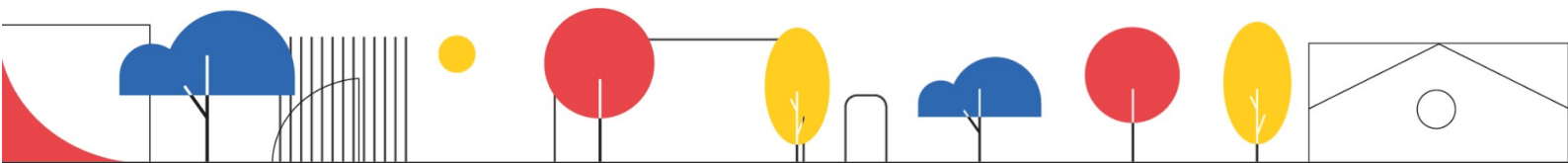
- the PIREP-funded energy and heritage rehabilitation;
- the digital innovation brought by the AccesS project;
- and the functional reorganisation foreseen in Phase 2.

Together, they form a coherent intervention from the architectural scale to day-to-day management.

## **3. WHAT IS THE HORIZON ACCESS PROJECT?**

AccesS proposes a new way of understanding accessibility: not as an isolated requirement, but as a principle that shapes the design and management of buildings.

It combines technology, data, human-centred design and social criteria.





#### 4. Towards a European framework to evaluate and certify accessibility

A key contribution of the project is the development of a European framework for accessibility assessment and certification, allowing comparison, scaling and replication across countries.

#### 5. Consortium and European Pilots

The consortium brings together 20 partners from 8 countries and works across six pilots located in very different contexts: heritage buildings, care facilities and public service buildings in Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain.

This diversity helps contrast results and validate solutions in real scenarios.

#### 6. MURCIA PILOT: VERÓNICAS MARKET

In Murcia, the pilot takes place in a building closely tied to daily life. Real experiences from vendors, older adults, visitors and disability organisations have helped identify very specific challenges: disorientation, insufficient lighting, confusing routes, or cognitive barriers.

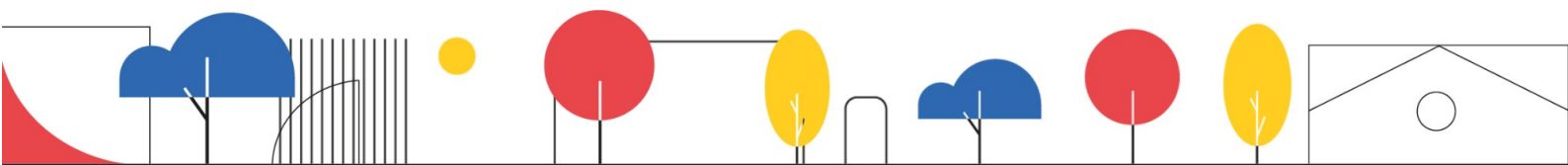
Participatory processes have been continuous: sessions, walkthroughs and validations informing the analysis.

The AccesS Suite has enabled assessment from energy, digital, sensorial and spatial perspectives, translating data into practical decisions.

#### 7. PIREP Architectural Project

The PIREP-funded intervention improves the thermal envelope, lighting and energy efficiency, while recovering heritage elements.

This foundation allows AccesS solutions to build on a renovated, prepared building.





## 8. Phase 2 Architectural Project

Phase 2 reorganises spaces, updates installations and enhances the market's functionality, respecting its historic identity while adapting it to current needs.

## 9. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – BEAUTY

For the value of beauty, the project sits at Level II. Engagement with associations, vendors and frequent users identified issues of orientation, lighting and legibility, validated through walkthroughs and listening sessions. Virtual user models showed how different profiles experience the space, guiding improvements that will be integrated into Phase 2.

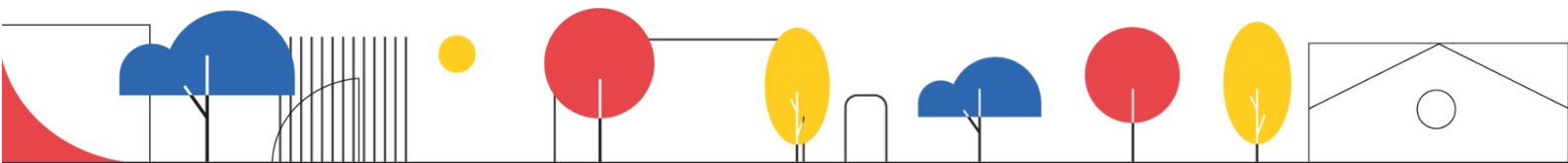
## 10. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – SUSTAINABILITY

For sustainability, the combination of PIREP and AccesS places the project at Level II.

PIREP improves the building's energy efficiency, while AccesS incorporates real-time data-based management of consumption, comfort and everyday use. The building learns from itself and adjusts operations, forming an operational circularity model aligned with Level II.

## 11. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – INCLUSION

For inclusion, continuous engagement with associations and users has enabled identification of barriers from diverse perspectives, adjustment of solutions and consolidation of Level II.





## 12. NEB COMPASS – PRINCIPLES – PARTICIPATION

In participation, AccesS integrates users continuously, not occasionally. Inputs directly influence project decisions, justifying a Level II.

## 13. NEB COMPASS – PRINCIPLES – MULTILEVEL

The multilevel approach is particularly strong.

We work at local scale in the pilots, at national level with standardisation bodies, and at European scale through networks like Built4People. This situates the project at Level III.

## 14. NEB COMPASS – PRINCIPLES – TRANSDISCIPLINARY

AccesS integrates energy engineering, architecture, ergonomics, digitalisation, mobility and human-centred design.

This interaction generates new shared knowledge, placing the project at a Level II transdisciplinary maturity.

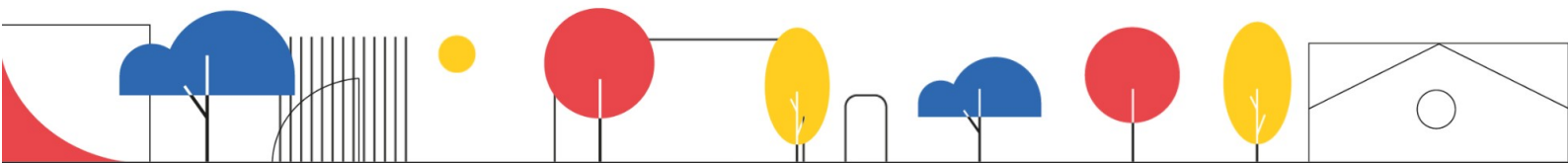
## 15. NEB CHECKLIST

The NEB Checklist has been applied by reviewing the 90 questions covering values and principles. Each question requires concrete evidence, allowing a precise evaluation.

The analysis confirms clear progress.

Examples:

- In Beauty: "Does the project improve spatial legibility and experience quality?" This is demonstrated through lighting improvements and continuity of routes.





- In Sustainability: "Are resources optimised through data-based management?" AccesS proves this with real-time monitoring and intelligent adjustment of consumption.

For the principles, the questions focus on decision-making processes, responsibility and transparency, and how the user is placed at the centre.

## 16. NEB CHECKLIST – RESULTS

The results show high performance in beauty and inclusion, with clear evidence in legibility, spatial quality and accessibility.

In sustainability, performance is solid in energy efficiency and data-driven management, with room for improvement in broader environmental aspects. For the principles, the answers reflect traceable processes, technical coordination and consistent decisions.

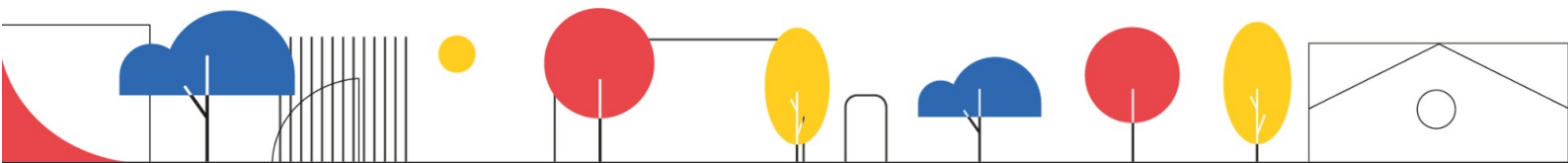
Overall, the 90 responses offer a precise diagnosis of the project's NEB alignment.

## 17. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, AccesS, PIREP and Phase 2 already formed a solid project. The contribution of the NEB Compass and NEB Checklist has not been to change what we do, but to change how we understand it, explain it and evaluate it.

These tools have clarified ambition, identified evidence and strengthened coherence.

Thanks to this structured assessment, Verónicas is not presented as a sum of isolated actions but as a NEB urban project with a shared vision integrating rehabilitation, accessibility, innovation and participation.





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## 1. Introduction to the NEB Compass and NEB Checklist tools

Today we will focus on two fundamental tools of the New European Bauhaus: the NEB Compass and the NEB Checklist.

My aim is to show how these tools connect vision with verification and how they help reinforce NEB quality from early ideas to final evaluation.

## 2. NEB TOOLS: WHY THEY EXIST AND HOW THEY RELATE

Before going into detail, it is helpful to situate the Compass and Checklist within the wider NEB ecosystem.

The European Commission has developed a broad set of tools organised into four families that allow NEB values to be put into practice. Understanding this ecosystem helps us identify where each tool fits and how they complement one another.

## 3. NEB TOOLS – First Family: Meta-tools (NEB Compass)

The first family includes meta-tools.

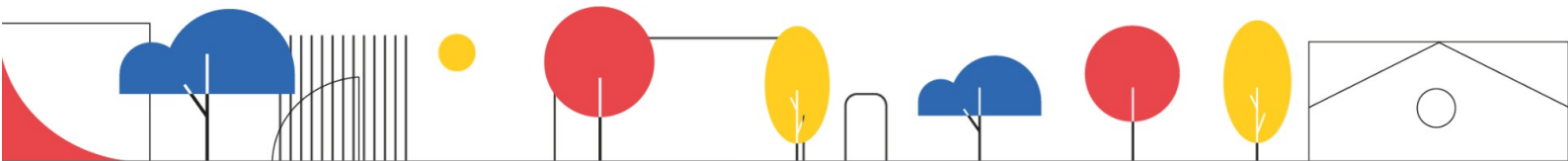
Here we find the NEB Compass: a strategic framework defining NEB ambitions, working principles and guiding questions that orient any project aiming to be beautiful, sustainable and inclusive.

The Compass structures vision from the earliest phases.

## 4. NEB TOOLS – Second Family: Operational and Verification Tools

The second family includes operational and verification tools.

The first is the NEB Checklist, based on closed questions that quickly and uniformly assess real projects, particularly small and medium interventions. Alongside it is the NEB Self-Assessment, the most comprehensive tool, with more than 200 indicators and a manual exceeding 400 pages — designed for complex, large-scale projects.







## 5. NEB TOOLS – Third Family: Financial and Implementation Tools

This group includes the NEB Investment Guidelines, which translate NEB values into financial criteria for public and private investments. For municipalities and European consortia, they ensure coherence between design, execution and investment.

## 6. NEB TOOLS – Fourth Family: Reference and Content Tools

The NEB Toolbox serves as a practical catalogue of methodologies and real cases showing how NEB values have been applied in different contexts and scales.

It is very useful for comparing and learning from tested experiences

## 7. NEB COMPASS + NEB CHECKLIST

This slide shows the position of each tool in the process: the Compass orients; the Checklist verifies.

Two distinct but complementary functions.

## 8. TWO LENSES, ONE PURPOSE

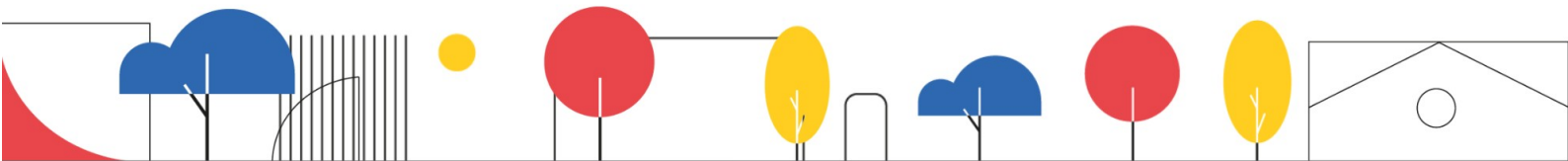
We can think of them as two lenses applied to the same project. One encourages reflection—the Compass; the other enables evaluation—the Checklist.

Together, they balance vision and evidence.

## 9. A COMMON LANGUAGE

Both tools share the same language: NEB values and working principles. This acts like a barcode—a structure everyone can interpret, from administrations to citizens.

Using this shared conceptual code, the Compass invites us to imagine possibilities, and the Checklist verifies what truly occurs.





## 10. TWO PERSPECTIVES ON A SINGLE PROJECT

The Compass provides a first perspective based on three levels of ambition—minimum, intermediate and advanced—for each value and principle. These open questions prompt reflection rather than scoring, making the Compass ideal for early phases and team alignment.

## 11. NEB COMPASS – VALUES

The Compass organises the three NEB values—beauty, sustainability and inclusion—into ambition levels, helping us identify how far we aim to go.

## 12. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – BEAUTY

In beauty, the path moves from the essential to the transformative:

- Level I: comfort and materiality of the environment;
- Level II: connection and shared experiences;
- Level III: transforming habits and reimagining everyday life.

An itinerary from the physical to the experiential, and from there to cultural impact.

## 13. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – SUSTAINABILITY

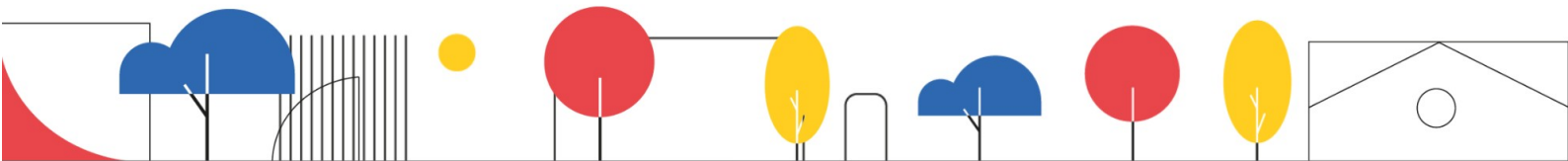
In sustainability:

- Level I: responsible use of resources;
- Level II: circularity and zero pollution;
- Level III: regenerating ecosystems and giving back more than is consumed.

## 14. NEB COMPASS – VALUES – INCLUSION

In inclusion:

- basic access;
- equality of opportunities;







- and in the advanced level, new forms of coexistence and social change.

## 15. NEB COMPASS – PRINCIPLES

Values define ambition.

Principles show how that ambition is put into practice.

Again, the Compass proposes maturity levels for participation, collaboration and disciplinary integration

## 16. NEB COMPASS – PARTICIPATION

In participation:

- Level I: inform and collect inputs;
- Level II: integrate those inputs into design;
- Level III: empower the community to sustain and, where possible, lead initiatives.

## 17. NEB COMPASS – MULTILEVEL

The multilevel approach moves from the immediate territory to broader scales, and in the advanced level connects the local with global challenges.

## 18. NEB COMPASS – TRANSDISCIPLINARY PRINCIPLE

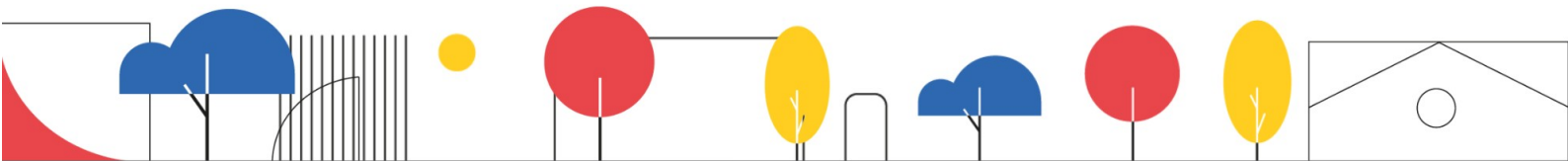
The transdisciplinary principle evolves from collaboration between disciplines to real integration of formal and informal knowledge, treated equally.

This leads to more complete and coherent results.

## 19. TWO PERSPECTIVES ON THE SAME PROJECT

The Checklist offers a second perspective.

It works with closed questions and verifiable criteria to measure NEB alignment. It is particularly useful during development and closing phases.





## 20. NEB CHECKLIST

Its content is organised into four sections—values and principles—each divided into three subsections, totalling 90 closed questions.

Based on responses, the tool calculates compliance levels and places the project within a NEB category.

## 21. NEB CHECKLIST – SCORING SYSTEM

Each question scores 0, 5 or 10, and some have double weight. Importantly, excelling in one value is not enough: if one section scores insufficiently, the overall project is placed in “Needs improvement.” NEB requires balance.

## 22. TWO TOOLS, ONE PURPOSE – COMPASS + TOTAL STATION

Their relationship is clear through a topographic metaphor:

The Compass is the orientation tool: it sets direction and ambition.

The Checklist is the total station: it provides precise data and verifies whether intentions materialise.

They are not redundant: one defines the path, the other measures progress.

