

DO YOUR OWN EVALUATION

of how to reach quality goals in architecture and the built environment for everyone

- Are you a decision-maker or a member of an initiative who wants to implement a process that leads to high-quality buildings, public spaces and living environments?
- Are you looking for some guidance to ensure that you have considered all relevant points to ensure the quality of the outcome?

Then this checklist may be a good fit for you. Simply go through the questions on the other page and evaluate the extent to which each aspect has been considered in your intervention. For each criterion, mark on the diagram template the percentage that has been achieved. Fill out one spider diagram (radar chart) per project. The diagram will show how well each aspect has been taken into consideration. A lower value means that the criterion requires further attention, while a higher value means that the criterion has been sufficiently or fully considered.

While it is not necessary to consider all of the questions, going through them will help you to take relevant aspects into account. The questions represent a compact version of the checklist; the full version can be found in the report [Towards a Shared Culture of Architecture – Investing in high-quality living environments for everyone](#).

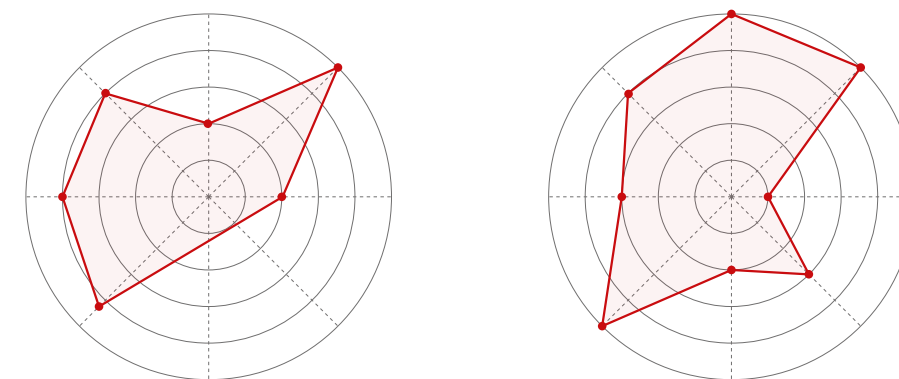
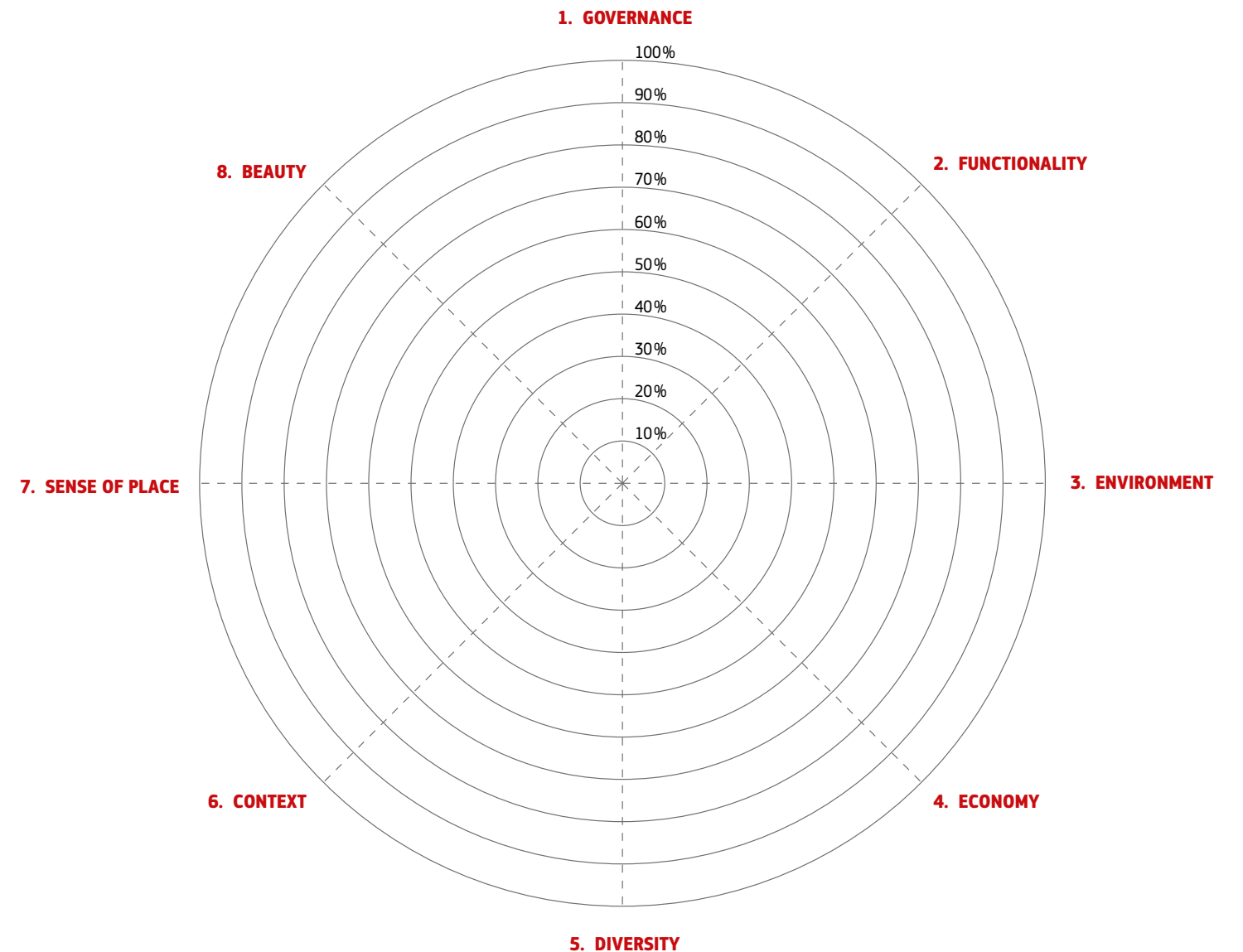


The public sector can demonstrate leadership by implementing a quality-assessment system in investments as part of planning processes – in weighing up investment and location alternatives, in property development and management, public procurement procedures, evaluation of funding proposals, preparing (e.g. spatial planning, design) briefs etc. Answering the quality-assessment questions can improve the sensibility and recognition of places with high-quality *Baukultur* among all societal groups (specialists and non-specialists) and build up knowledge and general awareness about quality issues relating to the built environment.

You can apply this quality-assessment system in many different scenarios and situations. For example, you can use it as a catalogue of quality when evaluating building and planning projects, but also for competitions, design advisory boards or as a guideline for citizens' workshops and in various consultations and debates. You can also use it to self-critically evaluate your own

finished projects or to document the success of planning processes for places. In all of these cases, the potential of the quality-assessment system lies in taking into account and making transparent the complete and balanced consideration of central qualitative issues relating to the built environment.

The assessment methods depend on the available data. **Quantitative assessment methods** consist of quantitative content analysis (data, structures, sources), standardised interviews, surveys, standardised observation, monitoring, mapping, observations, statistics, counts, estimates, etc. **Qualitative assessment methods** may include qualitative content analysis, interpretation, value judgements, individual interviews or focus groups, polls, monitoring, mapping, design competitions, etc. Survey and interview results in all of these various forms can support the assessment.



When you have filled it in, your spider diagram might look something like these.



1. GOVERNANCE

- Is the process knowledge based, following best practice?
- Are relevant *Baukultur* experts and authorities involved in each step of the process?
- Is the process led by interdisciplinary teams?
- Is it necessary to conduct a design competition? Are the procurement procedures value based (rather than solely cost based)?
- Does the process use design advisory boards / expert design review? Is the process driven by design research? Does it generate new knowledge and skills?
- Is the decision-making process participatory (including community participation and co-creation)? Is there a broad debate on the quality of the place?
- Is it part of an integrated sustainable development strategy?
- Have risk-assessment and mitigation studies been conducted together with *Baukultur* specialists?
- Will a monitoring system be in place to measure the achievement of quality goals?

2. FUNCTIONALITY

- Is the project fit for purpose and tailor-made for this particular use or reuse? Does the solution support the needs, aspirations and activities of all users?
- Does the design comply with planning, architectural and engineering rules and norms?
- Does it reflect regional/local particularities and call upon local materials and skills?
- Is the design flexible enough to be used for multiple purposes? Can it be adapted to changing conditions and needs, while preserving its core qualities and values?
- Are healthy urban open spaces, green spaces and easily accessible landscapes available?
- Does the design support and promote well-being and healthy lifestyles? Does it support a low level of traffic, and is it walkable and bikeable?
- Does the project improve security, including resilience to natural hazards?
- Have the proposed technical interventions been sufficiently well tested? Does the solution embrace experimental approaches?

3. ENVIRONMENT

- How will the project impact the environment?
- How have climate-change adaptation, climate protection and carbon neutrality been taken into consideration?
- How have residents and stakeholder communities been consulted and involved?
- Does the project take future maintenance into account?
- Is the design adaptable if its functionality changes in accordance with changing user needs?
- Is the intervention based on the concepts of responsible land use and high occupancy?
- Does it support maintaining and amplifying the values of nature?
- Does it promote biodiversity (genetic, species and ecosystem diversity)? Does it support sustainable mobility?
- Is it in line with the five Rs: refuse, reduce, repair, reuse, (and then) recycle?
- Does it avoid pollution?
- Are the materials used produced locally?

4. ECONOMY

- Is the intervention economically viable in the long run, versus a short-term gain?
- Does the project represent high-quality construction, increasing the value of the place?
- Are lifecycle costs reasonable without making concessions to spatial quality?
- Has a renovation cycle been appropriately considered?
- Has a cumulative view of as many cost groups as possible been considered?
- Have all relevant collaborative methods that support quality and efficiency been considered in the early stages of design?
- Does the solution improve the proximity to diverse facilities, commodities, amenities and public services?
- Does the project take advantage of and improve access to green and open spaces?
- Does the economy of design, construction and operation add to the affordability of the place? How does the project contribute to property values (e.g. indicated by willingness to pay)?

5. DIVERSITY

- Does the intervention prevent segregation, gentrification and ghettoisation in the area?
- Do ownership/investment models contribute to vibrant and mixed-use neighbourhoods?
- Does the intervention create user-friendly spaces and promote a mix of uses and users?
- Does it provide diverse, attractive and comfortable private and public spaces to connect people?
- Are green and public spaces for diverse uses sufficiently available?
- Does the project demonstrate shared responsibility for private and public spaces (e.g. through participatory processes, etc.)?
- Does the intervention promote sustainable living conditions and strengthen social resilience by creating high-quality, available, affordable and accessible living spaces?
- Is the intervention based on universal design – accessibility for all – principles? Does it make appropriate use of barrier-free design?
- Have post-occupancy studies been planned to measure and monitor user satisfaction and interaction with the place?

6. CONTEXT

- Has the context of the place been studied and thoroughly analysed before this intervention?
- Does the project explicitly recognise cultural heritage as a common good and promote shared responsibility?
- How does the intervention meet (inter)national cultural heritage standards and principles?
- Will future generations continue to have access to the full richness of heritage, or will some features be lost? If so, how will it be perceived by future generations?
- Has the authenticity and integrity of heritage/landscape been upheld, and possibly enhanced?
- Does the intervention correlate at all scales with the surrounding urban grain, open landscape, architectural composition, colour and materiality?
- Is there a balance, harmony and/or controlled dialogue between heritage and the new elements? Are new buildings well integrated into the (historic) fabric of nearby developments?
- Is the continued use / adaptive reuse and good maintenance of the existing building stock and built heritage preferred over new construction?

7. SENSE OF PLACE

- Does the intervention promote identity and place attachment and therefore contribute to a sense of belonging?
- Is the use compatible with the capacity of the place, maintaining or improving the quality of space and the integrity of human life and biodiversity within it?
- Does the intervention enhance opportunities for social interaction, reinforcing a shared vision of different identities and civic pride?
- Does the project create and support aspects of self-identity?
- Does the intervention enhance place attachment through a connection with nature and the landscape?
- Do the immediate surroundings of the place contain green spaces that are easily accessible and of high quality?
- Is the project focused on repair and conservation rather than heavy transformation?
- Can the authenticity of the place be preserved, in particular when the project includes contemporary new design to accommodate (new) uses?

8. BEAUTY

- What would be the aesthetic spatial and atmospheric impact on the beholder? Have the aesthetics of public spaces been carefully considered?
- Does the project reflect the designers' understanding of high quality in the built environment while also highlighting their creativity to find balanced solutions, their knowledge of materials and an attention to detail in their design?
- Does the intervention show sensible design and skilled construction?
- Does the design solution have an artistic dimension?
- Does the design enhance the relationship between place, surroundings and people?
- Does the intervention make people feel at ease?
- Have the sensory (including the visual, acoustic, tactile and olfactory) perception and the aesthetic values of the place been carefully considered (including balance, proportion, composition, rhythm, movement, emphasis/contrast, articulation, alignment, materials, scale, transparency/opacity, openness/closedness and authenticity)?