

Gaza strip reconstruction - INTERNATIONAL DESIGN SUMMER SCHOOL

Hosted by the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, 48 Katowicka Str. 46-020 Opole

- **Timeframe:** 06 – 13.07.2025 (plus online meetings one or two week before)
- **Registration deadline:** 31.05.2025 (home university nomination sent to a.frajtag@po.edu.pl required)
- **Location:** Opole
- **Target group:** BSc, MA, PhD students of architecture, urban planning and landscape architecture
- **Credit:** 3 ECTS
- **Language:** English
- **Fee:** free of charge

OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

Faced with the current international crisis involving the Israeli and Palestinian governments, the situation in the Gaza Strip region is in alarming conditions. The consequences of the conflict, as information sources show, present a destroyed panorama, both humanly and physically. In the hope of a prompt and peaceful resolution of the conflict, the theme of reconstruction requires technical-disciplinary attention.

It is plausible to think, given the structural annihilation we are witnessing, that the first response of UNHCR (the UN agency for refugees) is pragmatic and emergency, that of the refugee camps. This response can be studied to define an urban evolution of the Gaza Strip considering the vernacular heritage, sustainability strategies, and economic and resource possibilities. As already demonstrated in the numerous debates on refugee camps, it is necessary to think about the city.

However, urban thinking in a context characterized by scarcity of resources, both energy and material, must be mediated by technological thinking. The ethics of sustainability, therefore, imposes a disciplinary reflection that starts from the concept of appropriate technologies applied to housing systems studied on local ways of living suited to the culture and climate of this region. It is important to carry forward this double reflection at the same time: a morphological study on living, focused on the development of open and collective spaces and vernacular references, and a constructive study starting from local resources: rubble and earth.

The development of unconventional technologies can lead to the definition of a system of hybrid solutions that are energy efficient and achievable with available resources.

The objectives of this project are as follows: to establish a robust cooperation and information exchange platform among partners focusing on sustainable reconstruction strategies; to foster collaborative efforts in addressing complex design challenges in emergency context; to accurately and comprehensively identify the difficulties and opportunities presented by emergency sites; and to explore potential solutions and scenarios for the future of emergency contexts.

METHODS AND OUTCOMES

Participants will collaborate in international groups comprising students from various universities and countries, supervised by international tutors from partner universities. The diverse composition of these groups will facilitate a rich exchange of experiences among students.

The design task entails conceptualizing architectural and spatial solutions/scenarios for residential cluster in the Gaza Strip. Following the guideline of UNCHR about refugee camps founding, considering the camp as the beginning of a new urban scenarios, the students will define some potential settlements systems focused on the quality of the common/empty areas. The planning activities will be accompanied by some reflections about constructive/building systems, considering the local resources and materials, in relation to

sustainability and self building strategies. Students will receive essential materials such as maps, planning guides, and an overview about the situation before the actual conflict.

Design activities will be complemented by interdisciplinary lectures covering topics such as sustainable development in contemporary cities, temporary city development, design activity in emergency situation, uncommon building technologies. These lectures will be delivered by faculty members from participating partner universities and guests with approximately 45-60 minutes allotted for each lecture daily.

The design process will be evaluated through a midterm critique and a final presentation. The midterm critique aims to assess the potential of proposed solutions, identify strengths, and suggest necessary improvements. The final presentation will facilitate the exchange of experiences among project groups, foster a deeper understanding of alternative solutions, and provide guidance on effectively presenting projects to a larger audience.

Students will present their proposed design solutions using architectural drawings, sketches, computer presentations, and physical models, which may be crafted from materials such as cardboard.

The expected outcomes of the project include the development of design proposals for a minimum residential settlement (900 persons) organized in clusters (14 persons) and a proposal for a architectural/technological solution to one living unit (or cluster).

FIELD OF EDUCATION

The BIP is aimed at students of architecture, urban planning and landscape architecture and technology of materials.

LEVEL OF STUDY

The BIP is tailored for undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students seeking to enhance their understanding of emergency cooperation architecture, temporary settlements and uncommon building technologies.

VIRTUAL COMPONENT TIMING

A virtual component refers to two online sessions scheduled for the week preceding the BIP. Each session is expected to last approximately 2 hours. The precise date and time of the virtual meetings will be confirmed following discussions with partners and the guest lecturer.

VIRTUAL COMPONENT DESCRIPTION

The virtual component will feature an introductory seminar with a distinguished guest lecturer with knowledge about architecture in emergency situations and uncommon technologies.

This session aims to provide participants with a deeper understanding of the topic, allowing them to recognize prior work in the field and serving as an introduction to the design activities scheduled for the workshop. The meeting format will include a lecture followed by a question-and-answer session.

The potential guests could be:

Margherita Moscardini, an artist that has realised important works inside the refugee camp of Zataari.

ARCò architecture and cooperation, a studio firm that has an important expertise in architecture in emergency contexts.

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BIP PARTNERS

Universita degli Studi di Pavia – Italy
Neapolis University of Pafos – Cyprus
KreativEU Alliance