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Design Policy Mapping in Europe Report

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This landmark European Design Policy Report offers a comprehensive mapping of design policies across 39 European countries. It highlights how design is embedded in national strategies spanning from cultural and creative industries, research and development, industrial competitiveness, circular economy, digitalisation to built environment.

The study reveals a significant shift in the policy landscape: design is moving from being addressed through dedicated design policies to becoming an integral part of broader policy frameworks. The analysis prompted the development of the **Design Policy Spectrum**—a new evaluation tool that maps the degree of integration into national policymaking.

The findings highlight strong integration in eco-design policies, driven by EU regulations, and frequent inclusion in creative strategies. However, design remains scarcely embedded in digital strategies, research and development, architecture and the built environment, signalling a critical gap that needs attention.

Regina Hanke, Project Lead MADres, points out those key findings that support the need for a revised approach to design policy:

- **Only two dedicated design policies remain in Europe** – Latvia and Iceland.
- **Design is more present than ever**, integrated across multiple policy domains.
- **From explicit to embedded** – design has shifted from stand-alone strategies to cross-cutting policy roles.
- **Different policy families, distinct roles** – design acts as a creative industry, an innovation method, a sustainability lever and a tool for user-centred public services.
- **Dedicated policies can provide coherence, if they are firmly integrated in the governmental arena** – where they exist, they can have the potential to connect agendas and strengthen visibility; where they don't, the design's role might be more fragmented and harder to sustain.

“The results of the study reveal a striking paradox. On the one hand, explicit design policies are rare. On the other hand, design is more visible and influential than ever.”

– Piotr Swiatek, Project Manager and Researcher in Design and Innovation Policy Team at PDR, BEDA Treasurer

Read the Full Report: <https://madres.beda.org/en/publications/design-policy-mapping-in-europe/>

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Press Contact: Evija Kraukle, evija.kraukle@beda.org

About MADres

MADres is a strategic initiative by BEDA and co-funded by the European Union. The initiative advances design as a key enabler of Europe’s transformation for sustainable growth and economic value.

MADres aims to strengthen the European design community and deepen expertise in three focus areas: AI competencies and digital ethics, planetary design and accessibility, and business cases and development.

To sustain this, MADres ensures long-term impact by developing a Living Design Policy Framework—a flexible, adaptive model equipping our governments and institutions to integrate design into national and EU-level policy agendas.

About BEDA

BEDA, the Bureau of European Design Associations, is a pan-European advocacy with 51 member organisations in nearly all European countries – representing millions of designers.

BEDA speaks for the design community and influences policy development among members and, in turn, their governments.

BEDA champions the role of designers in a business and a social context, promoting all organisations and governments to embrace design methodologies to solve complex problems and to lead innovative practices.