

# REFILL MAGAZINE #5

June 2017



**refill**

TEMPORARY USE • DYNAMICS FOR LIFE

**TRANSITIONAL OR  
TRANSFORMATIVE  
TEMPORARY USE**



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund





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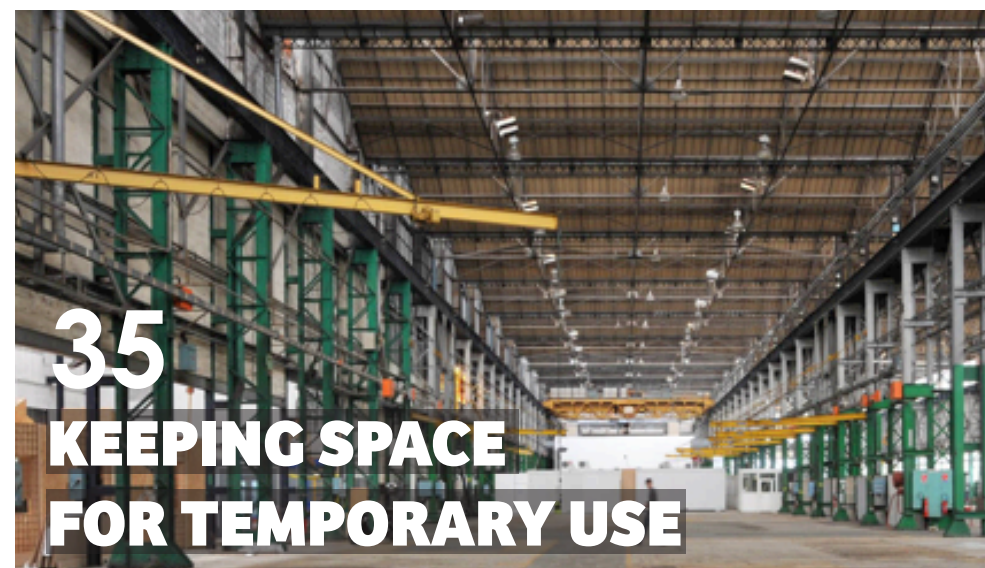
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Photo by Cluj-Napoca.*

*Cover Picture:  
Somes Delivery Festival in Cluj (Romania).  
Photo by Cluj-Napoca.*

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It was compiled based on the inputs of the REFILL partners, consolidated after the discussion of their first drafts during the first Transnational meeting in Amersfoort (Netherlands) on 22-24 June 2016.



# FROM THE ART OF BEING TEMPORARY USER AND TEMPORARY HOST...

By François Jégou, Strategic Design Scenarios

In the country where I live, Belgium there is an expression to describe its inhabitants: it is said that the Belgians have “a brick in the belly”. Beyond what could be a cultural trait, this expression describes a deep human need to feel sheltered, at home and protected. From the very earliest days, the history of architecture shows a discipline that has ceased only “to inscribe in the stone” the security of individuals, the stability of homes and the permanence of institutions. In other words, the temporary use of spaces is not inscribed in our genes: the Homo sapiens, who we are, is seeking to nest and that without any temporal limit. This natural inclination to stability explains the tendency of any temporary user of a space to secretly hope that he/she will not be dislodged from the place where one is installed. Paradoxically, it is questionable what the temporary user undertakes to occupy a space temporarily, and if the person worries more - or is more affected by his aspiration to the permanence - of what will happen once the period of temporary use terminated?

This edition of the thematic magazine REFILL explores the notion of transitional or transformative temporary use. In other words, how initiatives accommodated under temporary condi-

tions can anticipate what will happen next, how they can rebound after the period of temporary use and how to conserve or transform their gains and the social, ecological, economic, etc. benefits produced?

## TRANSPARENT DEALS

A first part of the magazine looks at how cities are more transparent to actors to avoid any inconvenience after the period of temporary use? The cities of Amersfoort, Nantes and Helsinki compare their experiences and their respective postures with regard to temporary use. Clarity, objectives, mutual intentions declared and formal contracts established between the parties can only serve this need for transparency in the implementation of temporary use. However, what the three experiments ask each in their own way is the question of the posture between the actors: beyond a clear contract they all call for forms of closer collaboration and convergence in the search for common objectives. Cities on the one hand and space-seeking initiatives on the other must not be seen first as “potential conflicts to be avoided” but as common projects to be invented. The city of Nantes, for example, asks how to become a better “temporary guest”, how to better support initiatives accommodated



REFILL preparation phase city visits in Ghent (Belgium).  
Photo by Ariana Tabaku and Emma Tytgadt.

in temporary spaces to increase with them the creation of value for the whole city?

## FORWARD-LOOKING USERS

In the second part of the magazine, 3 case studies investigate how temporary use initiatives can integrate their transition, transformation or transposition after the temporary period.

A first article reports two experiences of temporary use in Athens. While the first, Traces of Commerce, is well conceived at the base as an event, this incubator of new shops business models and the success that it gains by revitalizing a historical passage of the city lets hope of the renewal of the experience. The second example, the Kypsil market, taking advantage of





the experience of the former, is immediately thought of as an original value creation model based on the temporary use of an old neighbourhood market and its activation through its management by Impact Hub Athens. These two promising initiatives for the city of Athens clearly demonstrate the close intertwining between experimentation - which can lead to the emergence of new uses - and anticipation - which does not leave to serendipity only the future of initiatives undertaken in a process Temporary use.

A second article reflects the peregrinations of PLATO, a contemporary art platform of the city of Ostrava. Initially housed in one of the cultural institutions of the city, PLATO is destined to invest the old slaughterhouses of the city once they are redeveloped. During the construction period, the city of Ostrava imagines temporarily housing the platform in the unoccupied building of a former do-it-yourself store. But this one proves itself unfit for temporary use asking for some work before being usable. The city then offers a second alternative by investing a former clothing store creating a temporary of the temporary. But beyond this anecdote what emerges from this example is certainly mutual benevolence: that of the PLATO platform that seems to be inspired by this multiple temporary roaming. But also that of the city of Ostrava which does not become discouraged and take care of its "temporary hosts" via solutions of temporary occupation of vacant spaces.

A third article reports the special experience of the Alstom Factory Halls on the island of Nantes. Aware of the importance of having temporary vacant spaces as levers to activate the city SAMOA, the development agency of the island of Nantes explains how it has sought to restructure the 7 buildings of the Alstom Factory Halls in the heart of the island while maintaining a certain openness: "open source" spaces, without predefined use, redeveloped like outdoor spaces in a robust and frugal style, etc.: an alternative still difficult to get approved by the decision makers but much more promising than expen-

sive multifunctional spaces.

In conclusion, let us return to this notion of transitional or transformative temporary use. What emerges from these different testimonies is the perspective of a dialogue between "temporary users" and "temporary hosts", a benevolent dialogue for good collaboration and mutual benefit. Temporary uses are emerging initiatives, social or cultural start-ups, and like start-ups developing a business plans that propose different strategies according to different profitability scenarios, they must make an effort to project their value creation model on a short- and medium-term future and also to imagine different scenarios below and beyond the period of temporary use granted: they must propose a genuine "temporary use plan" including relocation scenarios in another location that may or may not be in temporary use and scenarios of temporary or even longer extension in current temporary use.

Reciprocally, "temporary hosts" must also project beyond the defined temporary period. First, they must generate as much as possible a vision of the desired evolution of the site by the community in the short, medium and long term. This vision allows temporary users to be seamlessly located, but also gives them the opportunity to collaborate in this vision and, if necessary, to find a place there. Finally, "temporary hosts" can help initiatives to build these "temporary use plans" by providing the necessary engineering.

# HOW CAN CITIES GET MORE TRANSPARENCY BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS TO PREVENT DISAGREEMENT AFTER THE TEMPORARY USE PERIOD?

Madalina, Poznan (Poland).  
Photo by City of Poznan.





# MORE AGREEMENT BY TRANSPARENCY IN TEMPORARY USE

By Maija Bergström, Helsinki (Finland), Marieke Zeegers, Nantes (France), Arno Goossens, Amersfoort (Netherlands)

A pop-up bike repair initiative settled for 2 years in a former library space in Amersfoort. After 2 years, the temporary use of the place finished without provoking conflict. "We should be very clear and transparent about the time limit in order to avoid any deception..." says Bertien Houwing, Vice-Mayor responsible for Social Innovation, Participation & Communication in Amersfoort.

The SAMOA in Nantes as an urban development agency has the power to decide when to buy real estate and when the redevelopment should take place. It sets in between series of temporary use contracts with precise beginnings and ends.

On the one hand temporary users benefit from a clear deal from the owner side (whether public or private) in order to be able to organise their activities in the best possible way within the time period allocated. On the other hand, lack of transparency may also come from the users' side

when their hidden agenda is to "force" the transformation of a temporary use into a permanent use. In Helsinki, a cultural centre hosting already more than 70 artists' studios settled early 2016 for a 2 years temporary use in the former Lapinlahti hospital. The users were very clear about their interest to stay for a longer period. The step-by-step start was a way to start

**Many successful temporary users tend to stay.**

doing something while negotiating at the same time with the city. This is a strategy that is often used by initiatives. It is an example of trying to prove temporary use's value to the City through actions.

The organizers are rushing to reopen the hospital kitchen, to create a restaurant in the park around and to organize as many cultural activities as possible. Their hidden agenda is to get popular success within 2 years in or-

der to become a project impossible to remove.

In many temporary use cases there rises a conflict between a user and an owner when the user wants to stay permanently. Long-term rent periods create more opportunities for investments than short term. But long term contracts create legal rights for the temporary users. Many successful

temporary users tend to stay. In some cases the users don't want to leave the spaces when the period is finished. But then the question arises how to get agreement and trust between the users and the owner for the conditions of the temporary period.

In this article three cases show different ways of handling the temporary uses. The agreements made at the beginning are essential, as also the contact between a user and a renter during the temporary period.



The Bike Repairshop, Amersfoort (Netherlands).  
Photo by The Bike Repairshop.



The Lapinlahti hospital, Helsinki (Finland).  
Photo by City of Helsinki.

The Karting temporary use, Nantes (France).  
Photo by SAMOA.





## Setting a clear temporary period: former library: popup bike repair shop in a former library, Amersfoort (Netherlands)

The story of the Bike repairshop repeats itself. They have to move for the third time in less than five years. The Bikerepairshop started in 2013 as a project of a recycling shop. They started to repair old bikes that could be sold again. The people who work there have an employment restriction or are not able to find a job. They hope to be able to find a job again thanks to the experience they achieve at the bike repair shop.

In the past years they have had to move three times. They started in an old school, from there they moved in oktober 2014 to a former library. In June 2015 this library was sold to the salvation army that wanted to start a church in the former library.

In renting the former library the city contracted a real estate manager as intermediary between the owner (the city) and the users. This intermediary helped in searching initiatives for the library and also helped in finding alternative places for the users when the period ended.

The municipality offered them a new location, with the help of the intermediary: the former social centre "De Drietand". In this former social centre there were also creative clubs housed that give courses on sculpturing. Now the former social centre is sold to a project developer that will develop an Aldi supermarket on this space. The planning is that this supermarket will be built in the end of

2017. The bike repairshop has no alternative housing at this moment. These moves are a hell of a job for the bikerepair shop, because they have a lot storage of old bikes and it is a huge effort for the people who work there. For them there is a limit to how many times they can/want to move.

**This intermediary helped in searching initiatives for the library and also helped in finding alternative places for the users when the period ended.**

So now they are searching for a place that has a more permanent period to stay. At this moment there is no alternative space available for temporary use that they could rent.

### Lessons learnt

- Social initiatives and startups need spaces that are not too expensive to rent. Most of the times the consequence is that these spaces are not available for a long period and with less security and certainty.
- There is a limit to the times an organization can/wants to move.





## Looking for a common agenda: Lapinlahti Hospital cultural centre, Helsinki (Finland)

The Lapinlahti hospital was one of Europe's oldest psychiatric hospitals, a beautiful neoclassical building built in 1841 and designed by a well-known architect C.L. Engel. The hospital is surrounded by a big park and it's located on the seaside, just 2 kilometres away from the central railway station. The hospital was closed in 2008, and during the next years its condition degraded as it was not kept up. The hospital is owned by the City of Helsinki, which had plans to sell the estate to a private owner, instead of renovating it.

The Finnish Association for Mental Health under the project name Lapinlahden Lähde ("Lapinlahti Spring") started using the building for its events in 2014, but they had to apply for a new permission for each event, and with one permission they only got to use the building for couple of hours. In 2015 they rented the hospital auditorium and spaces for a cafe, and during that year they negotiated a deal for renting half of the building. From the beginning of 2016 they have been renting 3000m<sup>2</sup> of space in the building. The other half was rented to another TU project, co-operative Lapinlahden Tilajakamo ("Lapinlahti Spaceshare") that rents the spaces out mostly as workrooms and studios. In Lapinlahti, in addition to workrooms there is also a gallery, cafe, sauna, shop and a flea-market. The idea is to run the hospital as an innovation platform for mental health, and the project funding is shared with e.g. academic partners and other third sector actors. The project funding for Lapinlahden

Lähde comes mostly from European Social Fund.

The two projects are the only ones who have the contract towards the owner, City of Helsinki. They sublet some of the spaces to projects that relate to their aims.

**The interests of different city departments might sometimes be very far from each other, so negotiating with all of them at the same time is difficult.**

Negotiations were a long process, starting in 2014 together with Pro Lapinlahti movement. The temporary users have a 6 months notice. The city renovates the outsides of the building, and the temporary users take care of the insides. They have the responsibility to pay the costs and do the renovation in occasion of a sudden water damage or similar. The temporary users planned the concept aiming to turn it permanent. They would be interested in buying the property, if the costs were affordable, or having a much longer lease.

They see the project very beneficial for the city: it saves costs by investing in preventive mental health care and creating jobs for those rehabilitating to work life and driving innovation on health care business too. They would like to develop the area also as a touristic attraction, but they see the short

contract as an obstacle for developing the area holistically.

The City has given several acknowledgements for the TU's of the Hospital: Lapinlahti spring got a price on their way of running voluntary work

- both TU's got a 1st price for renovating the buildings (Rakentajan ruusu)
- TU's share a price for best cultural achievement in 2016 (Vuoden kulttuuriteko)

They see their project being very much in line with the strategy of the city, but the interests of different city departments might sometimes be very far from each

other, so negotiating with all of them at the same time is difficult. They hope that total benefits for the City should be taken into account, when making decisions about the hospital area and its development.

### Lessons learnt:

- Make the decisions based on the city strategy – it's very good!
- Look at the total benefits that accumulate for the city
- Give permission to do: support citizen activity!
- Collaborate, don't create opposite sides
- Support longer term planning, they make the investments profitable.



The Lapinlahti hospital, Helsinki (Finland).  
Photo by City of Helsinki.





## Precarious Occupation Contracts: Karting site of SAMOA, Nantes (France)

The Karting is an old go-cart race circuit that is located on the south-west point of the island of Nantes. It will eventually disappear to give way to the final urban development projects, but these will not begin to take shape before 2025 at best. It is currently owned by the SAMOA until its more permanent function is planned and carried out.

The building is not so much of interest in itself and it had been vacant for some time when the SAMOA decided to rehabilitate the building and to relocate the businesses that were accommodated in the Alstom Factory Halls (which were closing for refurbishing) in the Karting.

The building went through a light renovation (roof and siding repairs, electricity, plumbing and sanitary were installed) and a "box in the box" concept was deployed to build office spaces. A total of twelve prefabricated wooden "boxes" (see pictures) were installed, composed of various sizes of office space ranging between 12 and 96 m<sup>2</sup>. A total of 1200m<sup>2</sup> of office space is available in the Karting, allowing the SAMOA to house on average 40 small businesses working in the sectors of the creative and cultural industries. It was inaugurated in January 2012 and has been running for 5 years now. It is quite a successful infrastructure, with a waiting list of small young companies and start-ups that are looking for an office space in the building.

As the local development agency of the island of Nantes, the SAMOA, has used the "precarious occupation

contracts" for the past 5 years in the Karting as the legal framework used between the occupants and the SAMOA. The "convention d'occupation précaire" as it is called in French is the simplest legal framework available for the SAMOA as a local development agency and one that satisfies all parties (owner and occupier). It can be translated into English as a precarious occupation contract. Precarious in the sense of uncertain, unstable, insecure.

For the owner the contract, or rather agreement for it is not a contract in French legal terms, ensures that the occupier does not stay put too long in the building since the maximum length of the contract is 23 months, renewable once for a length of 12 months. It also stipulates clearly that the SAMOA will only be able to rent out the office space until the demolition of the building. The SAMOA asks for a "compensation" (not mentioned as rent in the contract) which amounts to 150€/m<sup>2</sup>/year including electricity and Internet. The amount of the compensation has been fixed at a price that will allow the SAMOA to have a return on investment in 10 years' time.

The contract entails several conditions for the occupier. The occupier is responsible for the upkeep of the office space he or she rents, and has to keep it in good condition (a walk through is organized before the occupier enters the office and when he/she leaves). They need to produce proof of insurance and all responsibility for the office space lies with them during the period of occupation, but they are exempt from paying a



The "box in the box" in the Karting Site in Nantes (France).  
Photo by Valéry Joncheray, Jean-Dominique Billaud - SAMOA.



The "box in the box" in the Karting Site in Nantes (France).  
Photo by Valéry Joncheray, Jean-Dominique Billaud - SAMOA.





deposit fee. Parking is free and subletting or office sharing is allowed with permission from the SAMOA.

#### Lessons learnt:

- It is a pretty flexible system, with a natural turn-over of occupants. Most small companies or startups move on to more comfortable office space at the end of the 23-month period. Those that do ask for an extension are mostly companies that have not found their business model or that are and will mostly keep on struggling financially.
- The synergy on-site between the companies can be improved, the SAMOA has since developed shared spaces allowing for more and easier interactions between occupants
- The Karting has pushed the SAMOA to rethink the way they are connected to the occupants. In the beginning the only link existed through the office space with a total disconnection from the projects or types of companies that are working in the Karting. In the newer temporary use buildings the SAMOA has added co-working spaces and more collaborative spaces in order to have a better understanding of and closer relationship with those occupying the buildings.

#### In a nutshell

The three cases show different approaches and different angles to work with the temporary users. In Amersfoort the renter communicates clearly with the TU that there is a limited period, but also offers another space when the period is finished. In Helsinki. The TU gets the chance to show their quality for society, but it is not yet clear if the temporariness will be transformed in permanent use. In Nantes they use a clear contract for a limited period. Temporary Use can be a breeding place for startups that need to be supported.

This can be a strategy /policy of the city. If so, then Temporary Use needs to have incubator places for these startups, where growing rates of rent can be used to make the rent accessible for the startups. The startups need to have clarity on the renting period that should be between 3 till 5 years. At the end of this period the rent should be at market level. If the startup is not able to pay rent at market level after this period, it will probably not be a successful startup.

Coach the Temporary user in becoming a successful/professional partner. In Amersfoort the ngo "Matchpoint" will coach the Temporary users by making matches between these initiatives and professional business in the city. The coaching should be on showing and visualising the benefits (social and financial) of the initiatives to the owners and to the wright department of the city. For some buildings and spaces it is at the beginning not clear for how long they will be vacant or open for temporary use. The coaching should also give the temporary users scenarios on the use of the empty spaces. What if we can stay only for two years, what if we can stay 5 years or longer? What is the exit strategy of the temporary user?

Comparing the three cases there is one significant difference between them. In Nantes, the SAMOA can offer the most clarity by giving one building on an island for temporary use. It's clear for everyone that in this building you can stay for 23 months and then it is finished. It is also clear that the building will be demolished in 2025, so it's definitely temporary. In Amersfoort and Helsinki the buildings will remain but that the function of the buildings is not certain and the initiatives try to prove their value for society. Because the future is not yet fixed (will it be sold to private development, cultural initiatives or what) setting up a very clear and transparent system as in SAMOA might not be an option. Transparency in the temporary peri-

od is not always sufficient to help the TU. If the TU is successful they often want to stay permanent as shown in the 2 cases of Amersfoort and Helsinki.

The contract used in Nantes depends on the legal possibilities in each country. In the Netherlands there is a risk of protection of the renter, when money is paid over a longer period for the use of space. This protection gives the renter the right to stay as a renter, despite the wish of the owner to stop the rent.

In some cases it is also not clear what the policy is of the city in what is possible and what is not. Sometimes the board or city council of the city creates exceptions for an individual case. These exceptions can also create hope for new initiatives.

In some cases temporary use can give a competition with local entrepreneurs that is not fair, because of the possible low rent of temporary use. To create a more equal playing field a city can ask "social return" actions from the temporary use.

## INSIGHTS FOR CITIES

From these cases we have three do's:

- 1.** Use a temporary contract and stick to it.
- 2.** Coach the initiatives in getting/being a professional partner to the owner.
- 3.** The city needs to know what to do with its empty buildings/spaces. Try to have other places/spaces for initiatives when they have to move.

# HOW CAN TEMPORARY USE INITIATIVES INTEGRATE THEIR TRANSITION, TRANSFORMATION OR TRANSPOSITION AFTER TEMPORARY PERIOD?





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# TEMPORARY USE AND DIY URBANISM IN ATHENS' EMPTY BUILDINGS

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*By Vassilis Stamogiannis and Nicholas  
Karachalis, Athens (Greece)*

Athens, a historic city and modern metropolis of roughly 4 million inhabitants, is heavily affected by the financial crisis: unemployment and a brain drain phenomenon and the difficulties are visible in the city's everyday life. On the other hand this has led to an emergence of citizens' initiatives and the need for more effective approaches to current issues, e.g. the refugee issue. Trying out solutions based on temporary use in empty buildings is therefore a major opportunity – the Traces of Commerce<sup>1</sup> and the Kypseli Market are two characteristic examples. Both cases are connected to topic "How can temporary use initiatives integrate their transition, transformation or transposition after temporary period". The Traces of Com-

merce have already been implemented while the Kypseli Market project has just been launched.

## Traces of Commerce

The so-called "Gallery of Merchants" (Stoa Emporon) is a vacant shopping passage in the city centre of Athens, just two blocks away from Syntagma Square. For the past few years its shops were closed and the arcade was abandoned as a direct consequence of the crisis. The initiative "Traces of Commerce" focused on revitalising the arcade within a temporary use context. It was designed as a participative project with a strong element of reciprocity. The users, in order to be eligible to use a shop, had to organise events (open to the



*Traces of Commerce, Athens (Greece).  
Photo by Babis Giannikakis.*





public), such as workshops and seminars, instead of paying a rent. An open call was published directed to artists, creative entrepreneurs, media operators, etc giving them the chance to use the empty shops of the arcade for a short period of 4 months. The open call attracted many young entrepreneurs (individually or in groups) that were thinking of starting a business but they couldn't afford to rent a space. In total more than 300 applicants showed their interest from which only 12 for the first period and another 12 for the second period were selected. A fab lab, a hat designer, fanzine editors/collectors, graphic designers and others were hosted for periods of 8 months in total in the vacant shops, where they showcased their activities and organized workshops and talks, open to the public. One of the main conditions is that the users could not earn any money during this period (this was a pre-condition the owner asked for since there was no rent).

The main stakeholders were the owner of the building (a state-run pension fund), the City of Athens, the temporary users, the different communities which used the space and eventually people from the surrounding businesses.

The impact of Traces of Commerce as a project was important on triggering the conversation regarding the empty arcades of Athens (according to architect G. Tzirtzilakis the arcades are the "most charming secret of Athens"). It was one of the most well documented projects on both mass and alternative media. Its various activities (gigs, workshops, performances, projections, speed dating nights etc.) attracted many visitors. It's impressive that many visitors of the arcade didn't know its existence and its history before this project. The owners of the nearby shops, cafes and bars, also, claimed that they were affected as well in a very positive way.

Its operation as an incubator was con-



*Traces of Commerce, Athens (Greece).  
Photo by Babis Giannikakis.*







*Kypseli Market after its re-launch in 2016 , Athens (Greece).  
Photo by Stathis Mamalakis.*

sidered successful. This is linked to the fact that some of the initiatives were able to experiment for this short period of time; after the period of experimentation, two participants opened permanent shops to develop their commercial activities in other areas in Athens ( a 3d printing lab ). This kind of short term lease temporary use is being considered for other similar spaces as well. Also, the second cycle of Traces of Commerce created a small network of young, creative and talented entrepreneurs; many of them are continuing common projects. Synergastirion (which operated as a common space for graphic designers, artists and high quality print-

ing services) was awarded during Greece design awards, “EBGE”.

### **Organisational Issues, the role of the Athens Development Agency and next steps**

Both the Municipal Authorities and the Athens Development Agency played a crucial role in the process. The Athens Development Agency is responsible for the implementation of different policies of the Municipality (e.g. refugees’ housing, tourism promotion, city branding, also operates as a contact point for social entrepreneurship. In

the case of the Traces of Commerce and other projects it offers support, financial advice, media promotion, etc. The concrete next steps have not been decided yet and the arcade has remained empty for the past months. Still, the owner of the building has been convinced that hosting temporary use is an excellent way to maintain the arcade. The continuation of the project is the main challenge, as there is a danger that the passage will go back to its previous –abandoned – status. For the initiators the first challenge considered persuading the owners who were skeptical about the idea, but the most important difficulty is to find the necessary

funding in order to turn the arcade into a space that will be visited on a daily basis not only by the users but also by other groups of citizens. The important, next step, are ideas or a method that will ensure its financial sustainability (sponsors, mix of commercial and non-commercial uses). In general for the City of Athens this project proved to be a good experiment of a non-commercial temporary use in a very characteristic type of building in Athens and the starting point for the open call and the legal process of “granting” the building of Kypseli Market to social entrepreneurs. Apart from that there are plans to continue with a new round of the

Traces of Commerce project in 2017 as the owner of the building is willing to grant the space until a solution for the building is crystallized; the owner is even willing to pay all the overheads for the users.

### **The Kypseli Market relaunch in 2016**

The Kypseli Municipal Market was a market of vegetables and fish, built in the 1930’s, in a time that similar markets were built in many European cities. It operated as a market until the early 1990s in a middle class neighborhood. Suburbanization, the decline of the area

and the proliferation of super-markets in the neighborhood led to a lack of demand for its services. The market gradually lost its popularity and the small vegetable, fish and meat businesses started closing down one by one. More recently, for almost ten years, the building was managed by local groups and neighborhood organizations. Still, operational problems and the need to refurbish the building created the need for the municipality to take action. After 2011 for a period the building was closed in order to be refurbished -with European funding-. In 2016 the works were completed and a plan for the future activities of the



building and a management model that could ensure its sustainability was discussed. The model chosen is based on the collaboration of three sectors: civil society, social entrepreneurs and municipal services. This model has been chosen because it allows the municipality to collaborate with local society, small organizations and the local community, in order to achieve the goal of integrating the market in the community and make it available to the creative people who are active in this area. But this time, with a well organized system and in collaboration with the municipality in order to better implement this model of “social economy”.

Following an open call for proposals launched in the summer of 2016 for the management of the project, a committee evaluated the proposals and short-listed four candidates. Finally, Impact Hub Athens was assigned with the management of the Kypseli Market starting in April 2017. According to the Impact Hub Athens submitted proposal, “The Kypseli Municipal Market will not only act as an emblematic building telling the story of the people and the neighbourhood of Kypseli, but also as a platform that will give the opportunity to co-create a plethora of stakeholders- an active community which will innovate and create while reviving the urban landscape.”

In order to relaunch the Market to the neighborhood, a series of activities took place in the building in November and December 2016. The activities included photo exhibitions, concerts, DIY workshops, Christmas family activities etc. The activities managed to bring attention to the building and spread the news about the market to the area of Kypseli. In April 2017, Impact Hub Athens will officially be responsible for running the Kypseli Municipal Market. Strategic planning took into consideration modern trends in urban development such as resilience, social design, bottom up urban engagement, community led development, makers movement, neigh-

bourhood loyalty and ownership of public spaces. According to the business plan, there will be three main fields of activity:

- Urban Labs: urban development programs focusing on social innovation and entrepreneurship. According to the proposed methodology, market needs and the local community are studied and programs and solution plans that can help solve challenges and exploit market opportunities will be developed. The aim is to inspire, educate, mobilize and connect, individuals and organizations around specific issues or economic sectors.

- ConsciousMall: actions to strengthen local economy with emphasis on ethical and fair trade and innovative entrepreneurship (always with respect to existing commercial initiatives of the region). Innovative small businesses that will attract customers from other areas and abroad will be chosen.

- Culture Hive - cultural and educational actions: culture and education are two important elements that allow for the enhancement of multiculturalism in the region as a lever for social cohesion and peer-to-peer learning. The goal is to turn the Kypseli Municipal Market into a learning and entertainment hub both for local residents and Athenians in general.

### Ideas that can be transferred to other buildings

Both for Athens and for other cities in Greece the experimentation connected with these two projects and its outcomes serves as paradigms. Vacant buildings whose owners are looking for a solution based on temporary use is quite common. The publicity of the Traces of Commerce project has created the conditions for further discussion, mostly in Athens but also in other cities.

So what are these two projects bringing into the discussion on temporary use in Athens? The Traces of Commerce are seen as a successful initiative mostly because it allows experimentation, it brought life into an abandoned arcade and it can serve as a model for other public-owned empty buildings. The Kypseli Market Project is following a similar model as the Traces of Commerce; to some extent the Traces of Commerce project served as a testing pilot for similar initiatives in other parts of Athens. Now there are some thoughts to expand this to other buildings as well. The evaluation of the initiative is generally positive, although a general argument connected to these kind of initiatives is that a tool that will measure social impacts is necessary.

### In a nutshell

Although temporary use as a tool for urban regeneration is still not as popular in Athens as in other European cities, it seems to receive more attention after it has become a main element in the re-use of arcades, buildings etc. within a social innovation context. The Traces of Commerce and the Kypseli Market are two characteristic examples, where sustainability is a major issue: ensuring the continuation or a next stage after the temporary use is mostly connected to trust among the different users and the owners, but also to the visibility of these efforts. Public consultation and media promotion are two elements that seem to play a critical role. Integrating the abandoned buildings (or in this case, arcades) into the urban dynamic has many positive side effects; being able to assess –and maybe quantify and demonstrate – these effects is therefore of vital importance.

<sup>1</sup> [www.tracesofcommerce.com/](http://www.tracesofcommerce.com/)

# Insights For cities

1. Allowing experimentation and new ideas to develop is a key element that makes the difference

2. An open call for the users of the space, followed by clear selection criteria that will also take into account social impacts play a main role in the process and the acceptance of temporary use. Obviously these are also important elements for any future plans.

3. It is important to create conditions of trust among the community, the users and the owner of the building. A main stakeholder such as the City of Athens can guarantee that this is going to happen.

4. Visibility through the media and open events seem to be key elements for temporary users to be acknowledged and accepted by the community.

5. One point that led to complaints was the fact that for some of the temporary users it would be helpful if they could charge their services or products – without an income they faced issues of sustainability.

6. The next steps after temporary use seem to occur spontaneously if the experience is evaluated as positive from all the stakeholders. This is happening in the case of the Traces of Commerce project where the owner is now asking for a new round and is willing to contribute by paying the overheads this time.





# “ In the meantime of the meantime ”

By Katerina Bonito and Martina Pilarova,  
City of Ostrava (Czech Republic)

## The story of a “floating” gallery

PLATO is a platform for contemporary art, an art gallery based in Ostrava, provides opportunities to encounter a diverse range of contemporary art forms and amplifies discussions on its themes, subjects, contributions and possibilities. The platform used to have a stable base even though they were always flexible enough to exhibit on various places in the city. Due to some changes and new challenges coming along, the platform recently moved to an

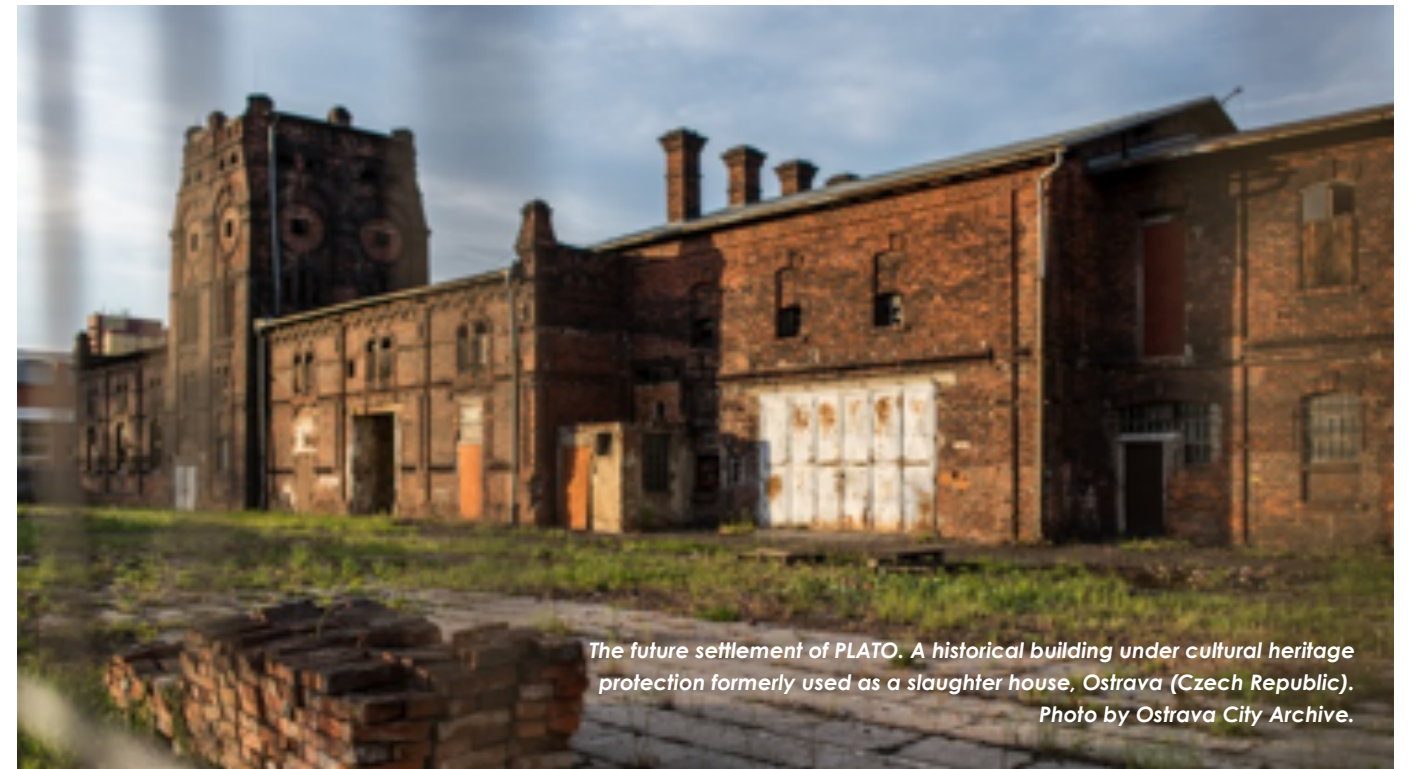
abandoned building to stay there until the new space is recovered and ready to be used. The current building is small not sufficient for large exhibitions so the platform in order to adjust to new conditions turned into an “Office for Art” with a new temporary concept.

Ostrava has a very rich heavy industry history, mainly steel and coal mining related, leaving marks on the land and plenty of empty industrial buildings and brownfields. Nowadays, this old image, sometimes called “Black Ostrava” due to its past, is slowly disappearing, with a great help of numerous cultural activities and projects emerging in the city.

PLATO as a platform for contemporary art in Ostrava has originally started as a 3 year long project in 2013 reflecting the demand of local community asking for contemporary art gallery. Project activities were carried out thanks to subsidies from the City of Ostrava and other 2 local parties with financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic operated by a third party.

PLATO was rather an imaginary space, which, in its physical and structural meaning, availed of the project called “Gallery of the Ostrava City” and it could be therefore trans-

“Isn’t it a pity to lose  
such a great space where the platform  
was situated in and switch into  
an abandoned shop?  
Nope, a pity is to lose a good person not  
a space. No need to be nostalgic and  
sentimental about leaving good address  
while there is something new, hopefully  
better, waiting for us in the future.”  
By Marek Pokorný, director of PLATO.



The future settlement of PLATO. A historical building under cultural heritage protection formerly used as a slaughter house, Ostrava (Czech Republic).  
Photo by Ostrava City Archive.



GONG, formerly known as PLATO, an old gas holder located within the industrial heritage site in Ostrava (Czech Republic).  
Photo by Ostrava City Archive.







*A large open space of the DIY store which will become the next temporary home to PLATO, Ostrava (Czech Republic). Photo by PLATO.*

ferred to any place in the city according to its needs, and many of its secondary activities were, however, the platform settled in the multifunctional auditorium Gong located in the national site of industrial heritage of Lower Vítkovice (abbreviated as DOV<sup>1</sup>).

The rent wasn't the cheapest but it was affordable as long the project was running thanks to external funding. Once the project ended, PLATO became, upon political decision of retaining such successful project up and running, municipality owned organisation fully operating as of 1st January 2017. Due to several aspects, PLATO moved out from their existing premises. The main reasons were: high monthly rent, clash of events which was not uncommon practice, location outside the city centre and

absence of a restaurant or a pub near the gallery. Since Gong operates as a multifunctional centre including the congress tourism, large congress events often overlapped with PLATO additional program (workshops, concerts, video projection, etc.

In parallel, City bought a DIY store along with a historical building of an old slaughter house called "Jatka" located right next to each other as well as in the wide city centre area with an idea of redeveloping the historical building into a cultural centre accommodating the future "Contemporary Art Gallery" PLATO will become. The reconstruction of the slaughter house will be extensive due to a very poor current technical condition of the building and demanding large proportions of financial resources which might take few years. It was clear

from a very beginning that PLATO will need a temporary home in the meantime.

The plan was to move PLATO into the second building the DIY store while the redevelopment is in progress. The DIY store is a large glassy building with high ceilings and enormous part of an open space, just a perfect fit for a gallery to settle in.

A problem had arisen soon after acknowledging that the building did not meet the basic technical standards secure for a new tenant either even though short term and small scale reconstruction is required. Besides, the administrative process and the existing legislation put obstacles to temporary use, mainly the process behind the change of the original purpose of the DIY store use. PLATO will be moving to the DIY store approxi-

mately in autumn 2017 if all goes according to the schedule. Furthermore, moving PLATO to its final destination, Jatka, as a Contemporary Art Gallery will take about 3 years' time. Another place for PLATO had to be found due to unexpected complication with DIY store building. Another place for temporary, short term stay. City owns just few buildings in the city centre and many more outside. Due to the urban sprawl, demographic decline and brain drain causing shrinking of the city, Ostrava has been focused on "reviving the city centre" and therefore pays more attention to locating activities to its centre rather than focusing on abandoned sites on the peripheral areas of the city.

As a result, PLATO is now settled in very small and limited space owned by the municipality. It was previously

used as a shop selling clothes located close to the city centre. There cover a very symbolic monthly rent and energy bills.

Due to the character of the new space PLATO will no longer be able to provide standard offer and programme of usual exhibitions as it used to be anymore. In fact, this change is perceived very positively by PLATO. The current "base" opens the door to rather more creative approach due to which several innovative exhibition projects that break intellectual stereotypes about what traditional art exhibition look like should will take place there. Besides, they will focus on ideas of revitalisation of urban space in the meantime, e.g. how to reduce the "visual smog" - other words a never-ending track of tacky billboards lining up the streets and

walls of buildings, how to improve the quality of the showrooms and artistic interventions in urban space etc. The plan is to organize workshops, debates and lectures, screenings and concerts. They will implement new ideas and small projects. The symbiosis of two roles: an office and an art gallery all in one open space of a downgraded building for temporary period sounds quite challenging and will certainly bring fruits. The biggest challenge so far is the communication. Many people still haven't noticed that PLATO changed location even though their PR department have been feeding social media with news about all the changes. And another location change will come in autumn.

On the other hand, since they have been focus more on the accompany-







Current temporary location of PLATO, alias the Office for Art, a former clothes shop nearby, Ostrava (Czech Republic). Photo by PLATO.

ing program rather than exhibitions, they receive more visitors since they moved as university buildings and high schools are located at the city centre so the circulation of students and other target groups are much higher than on the previous address. Revival of older premises gave PLATO a lot of inspiration for their further activities. Light repairs gradually exposed the layers left by previous tenants. Because it was originally a textile shop, PLATO decided to dedicate their first exhibition to things made of textile being on the boundary between art and applied design. The story does not try to tell about new ideas for temporary use of empty spaces in the city, the philosophy goes deeper into the heart of the ongoing creative projects which with a good portion of open mind need to adapt to new conditions and make the best out of it “in the meantime time” as this short experience might have a great positive impact on the entire future development of PLATO and move platform mentally forward.

## Insights for cities

1. Sufficient time is required to test any initiative.
2. The 3 year duration helped to justify the value of PLATO's activities as well as draw public attention.
3. Not to be afraid to make temporary shifts in temporary use even if a project runs for couple of years, not to fear to move it to temporary use.
4. Not to be afraid of the change, be prepared to adapt to new conditions. Be creative.
5. Trust responsible people that have demonstrated solid performance.
6. Transformative temporary use can be considered as a strategy to keep people in the city (City of Ostrava has been shrinking).
7. Location can play a key role. Some cities focus on reviving the city centre and other cities push for initiatives (funds) in the periphery.
8. Adaptation to different conditions is necessary even if it brings challenges it also brings new experience.
9. Story of PLATO is a reversed example from stable conditions to temporary.
10. Temporary initiatives that run for a long time and create value can lead to the provision of permanent locations.
11. Consider whether a good T.U. loses their DNA in a permanent place.
12. Knowing that there will be another place for the initiate makes them more willing to be flexible.
13. If a municipality promotes T.U. they have to consider permanent solutions too.

<sup>1</sup> DOV is an industrial complex transformed into a unique educational, social and cultural centre of a significance reaching beyond the region ([www.dolnivitkovice.cz/o-nas](http://www.dolnivitkovice.cz/o-nas))

# KEEPING SPACE FOR TEMPORARY USE

The example of the rehabilitation of the Alstom Factory Halls on the Island of Nantes (France).

By Virginie Barré and Marieke Zeegers, SAMOA (France)

Facing the historical center of the city, the 30 000 m<sup>2</sup> Alstom Factory Halls are at the heart of the urban renewal plans of the Island of Nantes. The end of the industrial activity of the Alstom Factory allows the Samoa to install its offices in the building to be itself in the center of the urban project. The capacity of the building (large volumes, the types of spaces available, the materials that are sturdy enough with do-it-yourself activities, impacts or collisions, frequent passage...) enables many different uses and functions for a few years while the urban development project evolves and takes on a more definite project for the building.

From the moment the building was opened in 2003 the first entrepreneurs of the creative and cultural industries quickly seized the opportunity to use the Alstom Factory in many different ways. Underground artistic installations, cultural events, electronical music festival, experimenting and prototyping are a few of the ways in which the space was used. It multiplied the creative potential already present in the area and encouraged several singular cultural projects (the Elephant, Les Machines, Estuaire, and finally the establishment of the Voyage à Nantes) contributing to the vibrant cultural scene of Nantes.

In 2008 the decision was taken to move the Fine-Arts School into part of the Alstom Factory which gives the building a crucial role on this part of the island which then rapidly becomes the creative district. The physical proximity of the different stakeholders of the creative and cultural industries supports the appearance of a collaborative dynamic. The goal of the rehabilitation project is to redevelop the site in such a way that it can be the driving force of the development of the creative district and its network. The site will combine higher education and research, business incubation, prototyping and experimentation spaces...

Starting in 2011 the building was gradually “emptied” from its remaining more permanent occupants to be able to start the rehabilitation process. Most the occupants



A comparison of the Alstom Factory Halls site with before (or rather during construction) and after pictures, Nantes (France). Photo by Valéry Joncheray-Spectrum-Samoa.







The Alstom Factory around 2010, Neantes (France).  
Photo by Jean-Dominique Billaud – Samoa.

were relocated on another old industrial site, the Karting, redeveloped for this purpose by the Samoa using an office space concept that was prototyped and tested in the Alstom Factory Halls. This transition phase and the progressive relocation of the occupants elsewhere were extensively supported by the Samoa to find a solution for all occupants. Some were relocated in the Karting, others in the Solilab, both also temporary though, some were put into contact with other local organizations or public institutions capable of offering affordable solutions. The occupants that presented the most difficulty to relocate were the artists who have very different needs depending on their activity and for whom a personalized solution had to be found. In several cases the Samoa was not able to relocate them but offered different kinds of support such

as the benefit of materials of the Alstom Factory Halls that the artists could recuperate before the demolition or by means of professional skills development or project support.

One of the first major changes that took place on the site was the demolition of 2 of the 7 factory halls to create 3 distinct blocks of buildings. Within each block more demolition has taken place so that the final project contains 5 different entities within a definitive program:

- The Fine Arts School: 9 382 m<sup>2</sup> (floor space = surface de plancher in French)
- A University pole regrouping the digital humanities: 3 200 m<sup>2</sup>
- A business incubator: 6 115 m<sup>2</sup>
- A locally sourced restaurant: 1 565 m<sup>2</sup>

- A creative “third space” (working, collaborating, prototyping, testing, sharing, learning, showing...): 3 300 m<sup>2</sup>

The current challenge is designing new buildings with temporary uses, it is no longer a matter of occupying empty spaces. Because of the progress of urbanization, the vitality of the Metropolitan Area and the habit and desire for temporary uses, there are less and less possibilities of vacant and empty spaces. In a sense, victims of our success, we suffer from a lack of those empty spaces and must rethink them within new buildings.

The notion of temporary use is very present the definition of the functions in the architectural program, especially in the creative third space. Three different ways of incorporating temporary uses in the nevertheless very permanent structure.

The first can be considered to be the occasional overflow on the newly created public spaces. The demolition of 2 large factory halls not only allowed for the creation of distinct entities, it also created large “streets” that are considered as public space. These “streets” are not accessible to any motorized vehicles except for the fire department, which means they can be used in many different settings. A temporary exhibit in the Fine Art school can for example partly occupy this public space. The facades of the third space, but also those of the Fine Arts School, have been designed in such a way that the limits of public and private space are blurred and it easily allows for the installation of an event. The differentiation of private and public space is deliberately vague in such a way that it might disappear depending on the use of the site.





Short term use is still very present in the project, and could be considered in a sense the second type of temporary use. The Samoa will most likely continue using the precarious occupation contract (see synthesis paper topic 5 with the example of the Karting) for the creative business and other occupants in the creative third space. The exhibit gallery will only host temporary exhibits, a great number of events will be organized, etc., etc. But the most innovative way the Samoa has thought about adapting temporary use in the creative Third Space is the fact that some of space is programmed without any defined use. The idea here is to have possibility, a capacity to be flexible, and to stop anticipating the future and any unknown functions and uses of the building. Uses and functions evolve at a much faster rate than any administrative decision process, building code or public procurement procedure and it seems pointless to try to anticipate and freeze the possibilities of the building. One of the ways this is reflected in the architectural program is the presence of a principal function for a given space, and taking into account the current building restrictions, to see what other functions could be programmed in this space. The following table illustrates the primary function of each space and its potential evolutions. But it is also, and mainly, reflected in the presence of undefined spaces. These are spaces within the building that resemble outer space in the sense that they are robust and left with a rough finish. The 250m<sup>2</sup> entrance hall of the Third Space is an example, or the 2 “atriums” in the business incubator, 2 “winter gardens” ... Several large spaces are thus left open and will allow temporary use within a permanent building depending on the needs of the occupants or different stakeholders.

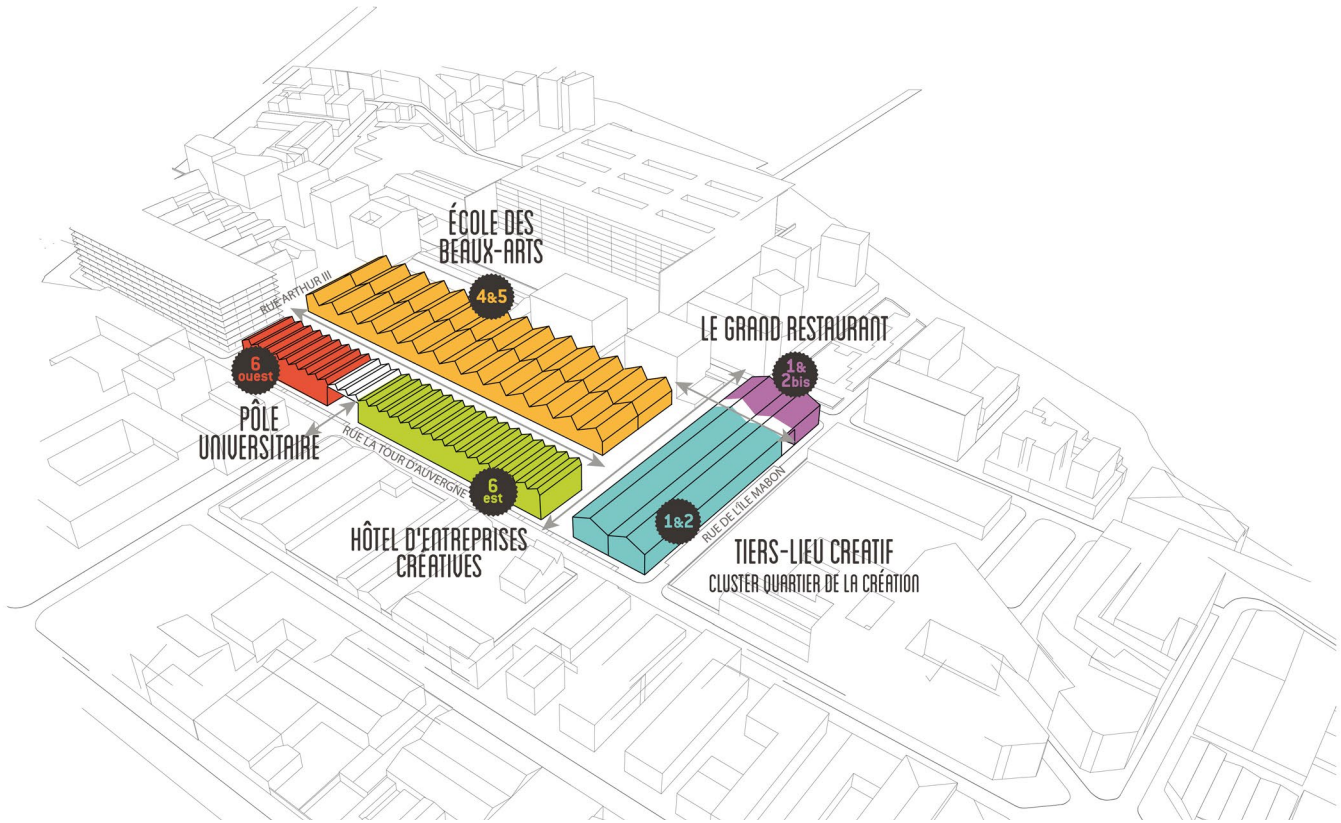
Examples of temporary use in the Alstom Factory Halls, Nantes (France). Photo by Samoa.





The primary function of each space and its potential evolutions

Space	Defined use	Other potential uses
Creativity rooms	Cdt (meeting rooms) R (Teaching & learning)	Cdt (artist working atelier) M (boutique, stores) Y (exhibit) L (shared public meeting room) (congress, conferences, any large type of event) are excluded
Production Hall	Cdt (office space) R (Teaching & learning)	Cdt (artist atelier) Cdt (meeting rooms) Y (exhibit)
Shared meeting rooms	CdT [meeting rooms] R [ transmission de savoirs ]	CdT [office space]
Small Galleries	Y [exhibit]	CdT [artist working atelier] L [shared public meeting room] M [boutique] N [sit-down dining] T [commercial venue for congres and event type activités] Activities of type L other than a shared public meeting room (congress, conferences, any large type of event) are excluded
Large Gallery [180 m <sup>2</sup> ]	Y [exhibit]	CdT [artist working atelier] L [shared public meeting room] N [sit-down dining] T [commercial venue for congres and event type activités]
Large Gallery [300 m <sup>2</sup> ]	Y [exhibit]	CdT [artist working atelier] N [sit-down dining] Activities of type L or T other than a shared public meeting room are excluded



An overview of the different entities in the architectural program of the Alstom factory Halls, Nantes (France).  
Photo by Amélie Grosselin - Ema Duval - Samoa.

INSIGHTS  
FOR CITIES

- 1.** Do not confuse adjustability with adaptability. Adjusting a building is complicated as walls and supporting pillars are harder to change whereas people and uses are easier to adjust. So, the building must be adaptable in the sense of being able to host whatever function is possible. However, convincing politicians, stakeholders or investors that they should support a project that has no 100% pre-defined uses, that can be perceived as “empty” while still representing a large sum of money has proven quite complicated.

**2.** Avoid the concept of “who can do the most can always do less” for the adaptability of a building. This often results in very high costs. Knowing to be frugal and efficient at the same time is a challenge, but can also be a convincing argument for political support.
- 3.** Always keep in mind that “temporary” can turn “forever”. As soon as you open a right of occupation, even temporary, this right will be claimed over the long term.

**4.** As the rules are often different between permanent and temporary uses, working with open minded civil servants, firemen, even the legislators, could allow pushing everyone on the border of the interpretation of the law. Working on toleration law or even grey zones even on new building project could really help.





# Do you want to know more about Refill?

## Check out the issue #6 of the REFILL MAGAZINE!

By Marcelline Bonneau, Strategic Design Scenarios

Temporary use can be a tool for bottom-up urban planning, experimentation in city development and a laboratory to invent and incubate the city of the tomorrow. One of way of approaching it is to develop ways of going through a passive temporary use (demand-driven) to an active temporary use (as a requalification instrument). This is was a synthesis led by the City of Ostrava (Czech Republic) will present based on the examples of De Site in Ghent (Belgium), “Dirty Jobs”, Ledeberg doet het zelf in Ghent as well, The “Living Ostrava Differently” and “The Square Belongs to Everyone” in Ostrava, the Green Island 1 & 2 in Nantes (France) and the identification of the future forms of creativity in the urban cracks by SAMOA in Nantes as well.

Another way of approaching it is to take advantage of temporary use as an experimentation tool in urban planning and development. For that purpose, a few cases are presented:

- The Somes Delivery projet in Cluj (Romania);
- The Hlubina Cultural District, in Ostrava;
- The Open Zone for Cuture Lazarz district, in Poznan (Poland)
- The Creative District Cluster, in Nantes

Finally, another approach is to see how temporary use works as a “city lab” to invent, experiment and develop the future of the city. A synthesis led by the City of Helsinki will provide transversal insights into a variety of REFILL city partners’ cases:

- The Living Streets, Ghent;
- The Urban Experimentation Zone, De War, Amersfoort;
- from Traces of Commerce to Kypsil market, Athens;
- Smart Kalatasama, Helsinki; and,
- Delloyd Hof Shopping Centre CityLab, Bremen.

Do you want to know more about these? Check out the issue #6 of the REFILL magazine!







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