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TEMPORARY USE • DYNAMICS FOR LIFE

SUPPORTING TEMPORARY USE



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*Teurostamo area in Helsinki (Finland).
Photo by Martins Ozers.*

Cover Picture:
*Teurostamo area in Helsinki (Finland).
Photo by Martins Ozers.*

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SUPPORTING TEMPORARY USE

By François Jégou, Strategic Design Scenarios

Temporary use is a win-win strategy for cities to catch many birds with one stone: urban vacancy, accommodation of grassroots initiatives, revitalisation of the urban fabric, experimentation in urban planning, etc. But to benefit from this win-win strategy a city must ensure to get successful temporary use and for that, temporary use requires supports: how to provide practical support to temporary use? It is the focus on the third edition of the REFILL Thematic Magazine.

TEMPORARY USE INCUBATOR

In the previous edition of the REFILL Magazine, Marcis Rubenis from Free Riga was pointing to the huge cultural gap between property owner and temporary users. Oliver Hasemann and Daniel Schnier with the seven years of experience of ZZZ supporting temporary users in Bremen also acknowledge here that most of the social and cultural initiatives that knock at their door to find a temporary use have

weak competences in the very setting-up and management of their project and no time or money to invest in it. In their article, they underline therefore the need to offer a wide range of supports to candidate for temporary use ranging from contract templates, advice safety checks, support to deal with fire inspections, development of exit strategies after the temporary use, etc. These supports should also often include much broader coaching in the way initiatives should manage their project: ZZZ seems to work as an incubator of project starting from the accommodation in the space rather than from the business plan. Providing practical supports to temporary users means not to strictly focus on temporary use issues but also to care about the conditions of success of the initiatives. They explain therefore why this tailor-made advice require a very flexible, open administrations equipped to reach out to each single initiative as they explain the city of Ghent is doing. Or cities should

externalize this function to third parties flexible and open enough or even emerged from the temporary use movement as it the case for Bremen and the ZZZ.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITATION

Providing supports to foster temporary use can be an ambivalent issue: setting a formal framework helps to institutionalize the emerging practice of temporary use but also risks closing it into a rigid process. Agnieszka Osipiuk and Natalia Madajczyk from the municipality of Poznan explore in their article the questions of temporary use charters and codes of conduct. According to their experience and to the practices in Ghent and Bremen a flexible mediation capacity from the city or from a third party is needed first. Temporary use often clashes into building and security strict regulations and any attempts to interpret the rules or search for exemptions are crucial. On top of this mediation capacity an informal





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

knowledge repository would be welcome: they call for instance for a checklist of all steps that need to be taken to set-up a temporary use project; a catalogue of tips, successful mediation solutions and social agreements; a contact list of local intermediaries, mediators and peers; a template with guidelines of conduct when settling in a new place; etc. These elements could be of a great help for candidates to temporary use and mediators as long as they stay informal, flexible, that they are not taken for granted but just as food to feed the negotiation.

TEMPORARY USE PLAN

Last but not least, we intended in this edition of the REFILL

magazine, to investigate a little further what it means to be a temporary user in our contemporary society. In a last article, I try to question both our common tendency to prefer stable and secured accommodations and the new standards of our more and more transforming and fluid society. In the light of testimonies of Gaetan Bourdin who create the street art company Les Badauds Associés in Nantes, of Diana Wildschut and Harmen Zijp initiators of De War mixed community of artists and scientists and Egbert van triestmanager of Pop-up Pallet company the article tries to capture what are the assets of being temporary in a fluid world. All of them have a long experience of settling of

moving from temporary use to temporary use and advocate for sharing experiences and advices of positive and fruitful “place-sensitive” temporary use attitude; for settling mobile and transferable installations in other places, etc. This vision of temporality as an asset ends up with the proposal for supporting initiatives to develop their “temporary use plan” or in other words a “business plan” with place-related scenarios, anticipating strategies for after the temporary use period (i.e. affording a permanent place or moving to another temporary use or staying if current temporary use period is prolonged or etc.).



A group of people are gathered around a white table in a meeting room. On the table, there is a calendar, some papers, and a yellow folder. A man in a white lab coat is looking at a document. A woman in a black jacket is looking at the calendar. A man in a blue beanie is standing in the background. The room has a white door and a window with a yellow frame. The text "HOW CAN CITIES PROVIDE PRACTICAL SUPPORT TO TEMPORARY USE?" is overlaid in large, pink, bold letters.

HOW CAN CITIES PROVIDE PRACTICAL SUPPORT TO TEMPORARY USE?

WITH JUST A LITTLE HELP OF A FRIEND

By Oliver Hasemann & Daniel Schnier, ZZZ (Germany)

Temporary use can generate numerous effects on the liveability of cities, on the participation of its inhabitants and on economic effects. The variety, range and professionalism of the projects are wide and include cultural and social projects as well as economic start-ups and events. Since many projects are rather small and the involved persons can often only spend a certain amount of time on them, they lack the ability to be professional in all the fields connected to their projects and do not have the money to pay for consultation.

Cities can provide temporary use on different levels with different efforts. A lot of the support is on the level of giving advice, permissions and making regulations that support temporary use projects. To implement the support it is important to have somebody who is close to the people, well connected and got street credibility. This can be someone external who is working for the city, like the ZZZ in Bremen (Germany), or like the neighbourhood managers in Ghent (Belgium). Beside of being close to the people the support has to be easy accessible.

FOCUS

The assistance of temporary use projects is helpful to achieve certain aims of city development, for example culture, vitality, liveability and economy.

The support of temporary use is the chance to equip creative and social responsible people with space and money for projects, which generates subcultural life and a positive social output from which the cities innovations, reputation and liveability directly benefits. It can lead to a condition in which people take responsibility for their direct environment. To achieve those aims it is important to find the right instrument to address the temporary users and it is important to support them with the proper tools. This means to identify whether the assistance should only be organised within the city's administration structure or by a figure, which includes somebody external and it is essential to decide, which kind of projects are supported in which way. In all circumstances the practical support has to be smart and accessible.

JOURNEY

Based on the experience the city made by not being as effective in addressing temporary users as an independent unit, they decided to contract an independent office

Equipping creative and social responsible people with space and money for projects will generate subcultural life and a positive social output from which cities innovations, reputation and liveability directly benefits.



for organizing the temporary use in Bremen. The structural stiffness of public administrations is lacking the needed flexibility for temporary users they realized. Hence an intermediate between the city and the users could support the users on the one hand and communicate with city administration on the other hand to find appropriate solutions and manage the temporary use. Therefore, the city contracted the independent office AAA (autonomous architecture ateliers) for the “temporary use agency” ZZZ. The project is supported by three different departments (finances, economy, construction), which have different aims and interests concerning the ZZZ. The ZZZ is supposed to support all temporary use projects within the whole area of Bremen, especially those that do not have the capability to manage these processes by themselves. Furthermore the ZZZ is supposed to support small scale and start-up businesses with affordable space to establish their own business. A steering group of the involved departments is meet-

ing with the ZZZ every 6 weeks to discuss the working process and the achievement of the aims.

The ZwischenZeitZentrale is run by former temporary users of the AAA. Being temporary users themselves, the ZZZ owns a lot of street credibility within the sub culture of Bremen and is well connected with artists, initiatives, social art projects and other potential users or groups. From the very first, this fact was important to have the opportunity to address and find the right people, connect them among each other, find adequate spaces and start projects. Over the past seven years the ZZZ became one of the most important contacts for social and cultural initiatives seeking for space and for entrepreneurs who want to start businesses in part time and beside regular work conditions. The involved projects lasted over a short period of time like a few month as well as projects, which ran some years and became permanent. For the financial



*Blumenbank temporary use, Bremen (Germany).
Photo by Daniel Schnier.*



support of temporary use projects the ZZZ has a fund, which can be useful for small investments like money for survey or permissions.

The support of a temporary use project often starts with a meeting in the office of the ZZZ. Here the ideas to use an empty space which are exchanged are presented and the ZZZ is giving advice to sharpen them. In many cases the ZZZ is directly involved in the implementation and helps with contract templates for the temporary use projects. The ZZZ would maybe make first contact with the owner of a building and make a site visit with the possible user. In the further process the ZZZ supports and organises the fire inspections and is giving advice how to fulfil the constraints to the buildings. The ZZZ keeps contact to local politicians and stakeholders to support users that are not able to do this themselves from the beginning on. In some cases the ZZZ is as well supporting in sponsorship and financial matters.

The experience in recent years has shown that the work of the ZZZ is crucial for the initial and the management of initiatives and start-ups which have ideas but no chances to afford a suitable space for their projects. Besides finding adequate location, the biggest obstacle for potential users is the bureaucratic barrier in complex administration processes. Especially the fulfilling and understanding of all terms and requirements wanted by the administration for the initiation of a project is a complicated process. Therefore, the ZZZ is helping those people by explaining and advising them. On the other hand the ZZZ communicates directly with the authorities. With the steering group they determine the wishes and needs of the city.

“I know somebody who might help you” - to be part of a large network is the key for the ZZZ to form a sustainable cooperation between different players in the city and make temporary uses such a success. In many cases the ZZZ is direct-

ly involved in the implementation and keeps contact to local politicians and stakeholders.

The Policy Participatory Unit in Ghent is responsible for the improvement of participation processes in the city of Ghent. Through this process the city has neighbourhood managers in every neighbourhood of Ghent to keep contact to inhabitants, to get aware of the existing problems, to inform about the plans of policy and administration. Those neighbourhood managers are a kind of double a Ghent. They are working for the city as an employee but as well they work for their neighbourhoods as an expert in transferring local needs to the administration. Since they are related to the people of the neighbourhood they own the necessary street credibility, which make people trusting them and talking to them about their needs and problems.

One of the needs that came up in different mostly dense neighbourhoods was the questions of space for certain demands like workspaces for self-repair, spaces to meet and cook together, green spaces, leisure spaces, spaces for gardening and free spaces at all. Those needs, which came up to the neighbourhood managers, will then be communicated by the Policy Participatory Unit to the policy makers and the administration. For fulfilling these needs, temporary use projects could be a solution. In contact with further departments of the city the Policy Participatory Unit would negotiate the possibilities to realise the ideas of the citizens within the existing framework of the City of Ghent to support the project.

In this process the neighbourhood manager would moderate the discussion of different involved interest groups to cre-

The neighbourhood managers own the necessary street credibility, which enables people to trust and talk to them openly about their needs and problems.



ate a permanent project partnership. The details and responsibilities within the project are clearly distributed. Further the neighbourhood manager communicates all questions that came up within the project to the Policy Participatory Unit who then give the information to other authorities. The Policy Participatory Unit manages the fund for temporary use projects to support every kind of temporary use activities.

LESSONS LEARNT

There is not a lot of money, nor a lot of expertise needed to support temporary use projects. A person, who cares about the project and can provide little money for quite flexible and different purposes, already makes the initiation a lot easier. With this help at the beginning, the users and initiatives are able to implement their ideas and projects and later learn within the process to manage their own project. The persons caring about temporary use need to be good communicators, as a lot of their work is moderating between the different participants in the cities society. They need a strong street credibility to be trustworthy within the communities and they need to know how administrative and economic logic works. Since temporary use is limited, they are the ones who need to communicate, that there has to be an exit strategy for the potential end of a project.

The cities need to make transparent what kind of project can be funded. Temporary use should not replace governmental funding for culture or start-up's, it only supplements the empty space and therefore is not an argument to cut financial help for projects. The know-how on how temporary use works should be collected and be accessible to everyone.



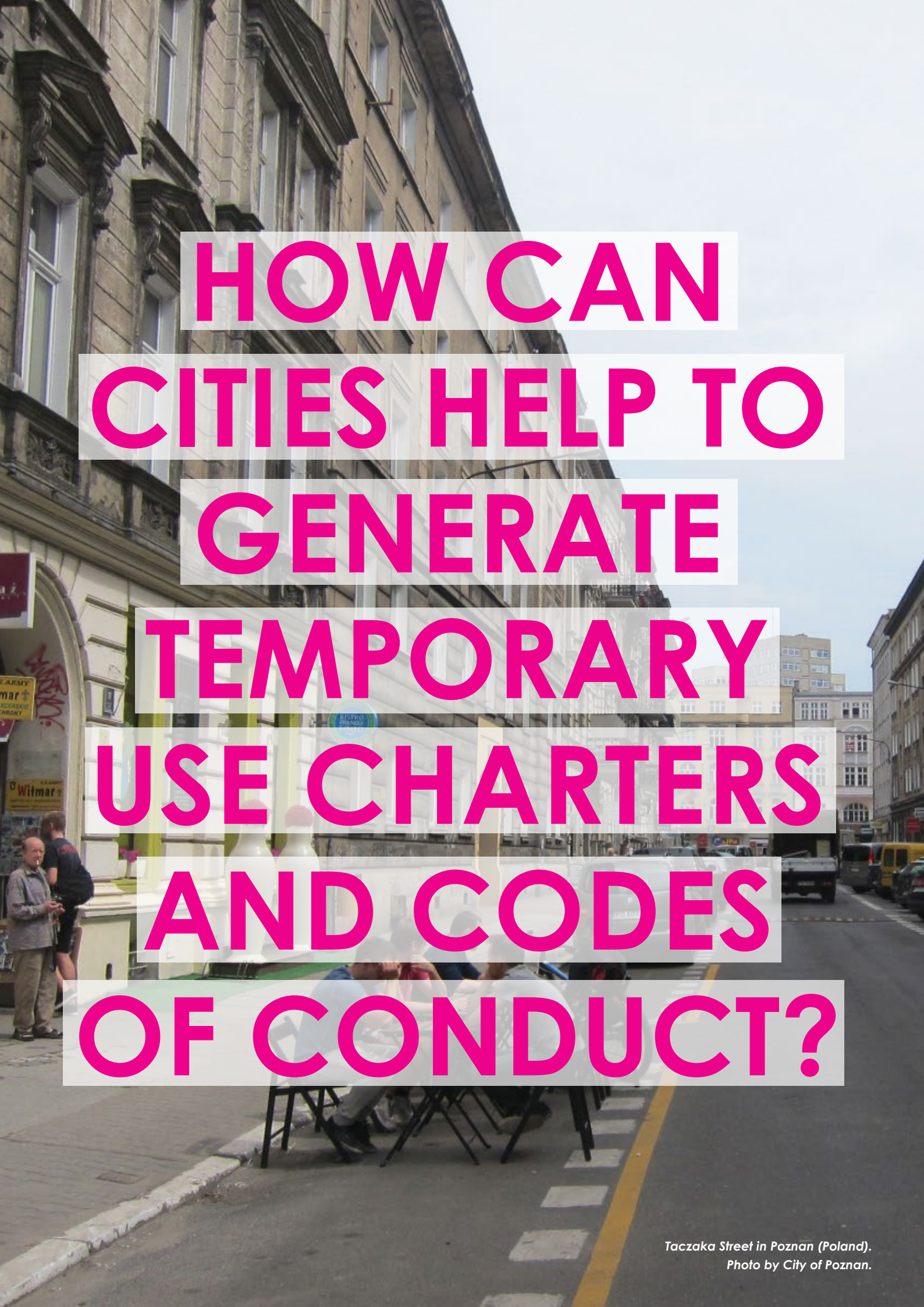
INSIGHTS FOR CITIES

1. If cities want to support temporary use projects, they need the right persons to contact the users (street credibility, knowledge of administration processes).
2. Cities need a framework and an infrastructure to support the temporary users with consulting and small money (ideal the city has a framework, which eases regulations for temporary use projects)
3. Temporary use is temporary. So cities need to have exit strategies (for example offering adequate space in another place, or giving the opportunity to change in a regular use).
4. The cities can't expect always results of temporary use in their sense, but in the sense of their citizens. They should be open for that.





(Top right, left and bottom pictures)
Under the flag '019', the collective Smoke & Dust will use a former factory building at Dok Noord during five years as an artistic meeting place, Ghent (Belgium).
Photos by 019.

A street scene in Poznan, Poland, featuring historic buildings and a cafe with outdoor seating. The text is overlaid on the image in large, bold, pink letters.

**HOW CAN
CITIES HELP TO
GENERATE
TEMPORARY
USE CHARTERS
AND CODES
OF CONDUCT?**

BE FLEXIBLE: CREATE THE RULES AND BEND THEM

By Agnieszka Osipiuk & Natalia Madajczyk, City of Poznan (Poland)



Residents and entrepreneurs benefit from the improvement of the quality of municipal space

The redevelopment of public and private spaces by activating unused buildings and spaces is strictly connected with interrelations among residents, activists, entrepreneurs, local authorities and other stakeholders. Especially, temporary tenants and residents are the key actors of this specific dialogue. On the one hand, initiatives should make temporary use spaces living, culturally attractive, sometimes even fashionable. On the other hand, they are often too noisy and generating different scale of difficulties for residents.

Temporary Use charters and codes of conduct, not necessary in fixed, official form, can be very helpful tools to firstly create and later foster understanding between different stakeholders involved in the process of temporary use. But only then, when they are transparent, understandable for average inhabitant and... ready to be changed to catch the flow of the city energy.

POZNAN: SOCIAL AGREEMENT ON TACZAKA STREET

Poznan used this tool to solve the problem of "How to combine the café hub with the comfort of residents?" in Taczaka Street situated in the "deserted" part of the city centre. For this purpose a model of connecting needs of residents and en-

trepreneurs has been developed. According to its rules, restaurants and retail outlets located in ground floors of residential buildings can use space on pavements and street only up till 10 p.m. After this hour outside restaurant terraces should be closed and quiet.

The social agreement elaborated among Taczaka Street stakeholders has been crucial for redevelopment of this street located in the centre of Poznan. Both residents and entrepreneurs can benefit from the improvement of the quality of municipal space. For residents it means clean parking spaces, calmer car traffic in summer time, more greenery and small street architecture. Entrepreneurs can extend their activities beyond its premises, to the street. Agreement concerns not only restaurants and residents directly linked with café terraces but also representatives of other residents in close neighbourhood, owners of real estates, expressing acceptance for the idea of such collaboration. It is also supported with municipal administration declaration of securing tidiness and calm in the neighbourhood.

Compromise between the needs of residents of the street and owners of restaurants concerning the hours of using café terraces was good example for other streets and parts of the City Centre. Nowadays, district councillors and local ac-





Government event in Ghent (Belgium).
Photo by ULG Ghent.



tivists suggest social agreement as the tool for solving local conflicts, offering good ambience of cooperation and respecting interests of different sides.

So far, Taczaka Street social agreement does not have any fixed written form. It depends on individual concrete case. There are pros and cons to this situation. It is a very flexible tool then, but more difficult to initiate by bottom-up representatives, not familiar with legal aspects of agreements. However, positive approach of the city administration for such solution enables gaining municipal support in these fields.

It is also a clear sign for Poznan inhabitants that city administration is open for new more flexible bottom-up inspired solutions. Mutual respect and agreement for common goal (quality of the terms of using temporary used space) is necessary. Sometimes it requires additional awareness increasing actions (like eco-awareness action closing municipal river beaches season, dedicated to cleaning temporary used riverbanks in Poznan). Such actions build understanding for common responsibility for space and quality of life in the cities.

GHENT: GOUVERNEMENT ACOUSTIC ISOLATION AND SET OF AGREEMENTS, FUND FOR TEMPORARY USE

Facilitating mediation and creation of set of agreements adjusted to individual temporary use projects are other examples of codes of conduct.

In Ghent, when you initiate a temporary use project, you get in contact with an existing regulatory framework. For example, when you host an indoor event for more than 49 people you need to follow security and technical requirements. To host a public event, you need an approval of the fire department and need to be in line with the safety rules and requirements. However, it is often a fact that for a lot of temporary use initiatives the overall regulatory framework does not work. Despite of that, the city and the service of Public Participation is a go-between to try to find solutions. The city tries to interpret the rules, or search for exemptions in order to get the temporary project up and running. This mediation process is very different from project to project and there is no ambition to set up a general code of conduct or a set of rules for all temporary use projects.

A mediation process often occurs when



there is sound pollution of the temporary use project in the neighbourhood. In many temporary used places in Ghent commercial activities and public events are organized. These activities can be followed with inconvenience of sound and parking in the area of temporary use. Residents complain about the noise. Often, the neighbourhood manager tries to mediate between the temporary users and the neighbours, and then a lot of individual agreements need to be set up. In Ghent, in two different ways the noise and other inconvenience generated by temporary use projects: Gouvernement and KERK, are being solved. In Gouvernement, focused on concerts, the temporary users themselves tried to mediate with the neighbours to achieve common understanding for using the place. They also invested in a good acoustic isolation to solve the noise problem.

In KERK, where big events are organised, the neighbourhood manager mediated between the neighbours and the temporary users. The mediation process included the neighbours, the temporary users, different city departments, and the political level. Together they made a new set of agreements in order to exploit the activities in the temporary use project. You could say that the advice of the city departments, and Agreements were written in a code of conduct, approved by all parties and by the Mayor and tailored on the KERK project.

In Ghent there was no ambition to set up a general code of conduct or a set of rules for all temporary use projects. Also the Fund of Temporary use has not made any charters of codes of conduct for the coordination of Temporary use initiatives. The set of agreements made for KERK were a single example. In the spirit that the city stimulates experimentation, the temporary users have freedom to explore their temporary use project. The incidents that occurred in KERK and in Gouvernement, were solved by a good mediation process, led by the department of Policy Participation and thanks to a good will of all different city departments in order to support the temporary use project.

However, even temporary use project have to follow the regularity framework that already exists (for example permissions for commercial activities, security requirements for public events, a license to serve drinks, an insurance for the building). The city tries to support these activities and even tries to bend the rules.





*Plantage9 e.V. and its residents, Bremen (Germany).
Photo by plantage9.*

Insights for cities

In Ghent, there is a feeling of a need to create a checklist to support the set up or the starting up of all activities in a temporary use project. Starting a temporary use project generates a significant organizational effort. Initiators of temporary projects struggle with the necessary regulations, security standards and need the licenses to have their activities up and running. There are temporary users, doing it in their own way, there are also temporary users calling the help of Ghent neighbourhood managers. It would be a great support, both for the temporary users as for the neighbourhood managers to have a document with a checklist of all steps that need to be taken to set-up of a temporary use project.

BREMEN: 9 E.V. - MIX OF CODES OF CONDUCT

Openness for new, unconventional solutions in combination with formal procedures presents also example of Bremen Plantage 9 e.V.

The Plantage 9 e.V. is situated in a former commercial site, that had been used by a company for fire protection. The whole building had been bought by the city of Bremen in case of a planned public street within the building plan for the neighbourhood that was never realised. For that reason the building used to be empty for around one year while there were few possibilities to rent it to someone on a regular base. The building itself was in a rather good condition and in a middle class neighbourhood of Bremen, while the direct surrounding was in poor condition (commercial, degrading, lifeless at night).

In the beginning of 2010 the ZZZ discovered this building and made first plans for a use of the building. The ZZZ invited first interested users and made site visits in the building. The city as owner of the building was quite open to the idea of temporary use, but was not in the situation to make a contract for every single room of the building, for that reason the ZZZ became renter of the building and rented it in 20 single contracts to the users. The temporary use contract was limited to one year, so in that time the users had develop together with the ZZZ an idea of how they could manage

the building by themselves. For that reason they formed the association Plantage 9 e.V.

The ZZZ helped and realised the whole project. They rented the building, they managed it and made contact to possible users in the beginning. After a while they managed to integrate the users in the management of the building so it became more self organised. The regulation on temporary use of public building was very useful as it helped to rent the building for one year just for the running costs (water, heating, electricity), even when the ZZZ was responsible for repairs. To make the project long term it was necessary to fit the building into German building code, especially in the case of fire protection, which was very expensive but paid off, as the project went into long term use. The tool of the ZZZ is rather unconventional, while the other codes were very formal. The regulation on temporary use is very useful as long as the public administration is using it. There was a good way in finding opportunities within the building permissions, but that still could have been more effective.

Examples from Germany, Belgium and Poland show that existing regulation concerning using buildings and public spaces should be enriched by new, often bottom-up generated solutions, to make temporary use possible to implement. On the other hand - apart from bottom-up perspective - the "institutional element" (municipality or appointed NGO) is necessary to facilitate the process and guarantee its implementation. Cooperation between institutions and social activist is crucial for success.

Codes of conduct don't have to be official procedures. However, writing down the basic steps and principles can be very helpful especially for new initiatives. Collecting experience of different cities such as mediations, social agreements, set of agreements, checklists, intermediaries, integration of users and other new could develop existing practices and make them more effective and resident-friendly.

1. Expanding official regulation with more flexible solutions

Official regulation are helpful as a frame, set of necessary steps to be taken. However different situations need different approach, so solutions driven from regulation should be as flexible as possible. In many case checklists of possible issues to be examine and/or implemented will be sufficient.

A separate checklist for mediation, in case of any conflict, could be useful.

Attention! Be sure that tailor made process still ensure equal and transparent process for all users.

2. The "institutional element" facilitates and guarantees the process

Presence of codes of conduct in temporary use framework supports including all necessary aspects like security, order, transparency and others. It creates also frames behind which neighborhood of temporary use will loose instead of gaining some value.

3. Crucial role of cooperation between institutions and social activist

Charters and codes of conduct prepared without cooperation among key stakeholders will be only piece of paper and will not facilitate smooth implementation of activities. Sometimes starting with establishing the common values and elaborate on base of it codes of conduct will be more effective.

4. Writing codes down and making them accessible for the public

Crucial issue is making charters and codes visible and accessible for the wide public. Adopting once a code of conduct and returning to it later with some improvements will facilitate openness for change that is to come.





*Bricolage Plantage in Findorff in Bremen (Germany).
Photo by ZZZ.*

A busy outdoor art market scene with people walking and browsing art displays under white tents. The text is overlaid in large, bold, pink letters on a white background.

**HOW CAN
CITIES PROVIDE
TEMPORARY USE
COACHING
TO MAKE
TEMPORALITY
AN ASSET?**

WE ARE ALL TEMPORARY USERS IN A FLUID SOCIETY

By François Jégou based on discussions with Gaetan Bourdin, Les Badauds Associés, Nantes, Harmen Zijp, De War, Amersfoort, Egbert van Triest, Pop Up Pallet, Amersfoort.

Contemporary society evolves at an ever-accelerating pace. Flexibility and mobility are positive assets. Nothing is anymore stable and permanent. In this more and more fluid and rapidly changing world reactivity is safer than inertia; reconfiguration is more promising than robustness; agility is better than strength. In such a flow we are all nomads. We move from places to places. We are temporary users permanently.

SUPPORTING TEMPORALITY

Considering vacant spaces in the city, temporary use of these spaces is an opportunity for starting project looking for affordable places. It is an opportunity but it is also an ersatz of permanent use. No project initiator is deliberately looking for a temporary use contract and s/he would prefer to access a permanent place instead.

All temporary users we met visiting the 10 partner cities of the REFILL network tend therefore to behave as permanent users often causing clashes at the end of temporary use period: either temporary users organized themselves as if they would be able to stay permanently and they do all what is in their power to remain as long as they could. And if they decide to go the operation to move is difficult and painful because they settled for a long time and need to dismantle all their installation.

This tendency of temporary users to behave as permanent users questions the way they should be supported. Beyond all the different supports –

technical help, financial subsidies, legal advices, etc. – that cities administrations may provide to foster temporary use, there is maybe also the need to help project initiators to adopt the right posture for a temporary use: to keep it light and avoid investing too much in their settlement, to organize in an agile and mobile setting, to include moving and reconfiguration in their strategic development plan.

WHEN TEMPORARY USE IS AN ASSET...

In October 2015, the National School of Art and Design of Nancy, France organized a symposium questioning Identities of the transitory. Introducing the programme, organizers wrote: [...] Social consensus means any precarious situation is an unconventional situation one must get out as quickly as possible. [...] The dynamic at play is described most often as a movement one has to put up with. This is both to provisionally accept the out of the social norm in order to justify the collective efforts whose goal is a return to a standard guaranteed by that norm. This means not supporting passivity, idleness, illegal activities, vagrancy that are all morally reprehensible. This logic of a return to the norm denies any ontological depth to the provisional, the ephemeral, the precarious. It is opposed to the logic of projects based on experimentation and on the integration of modes of existence that remain outside the standards. [...]

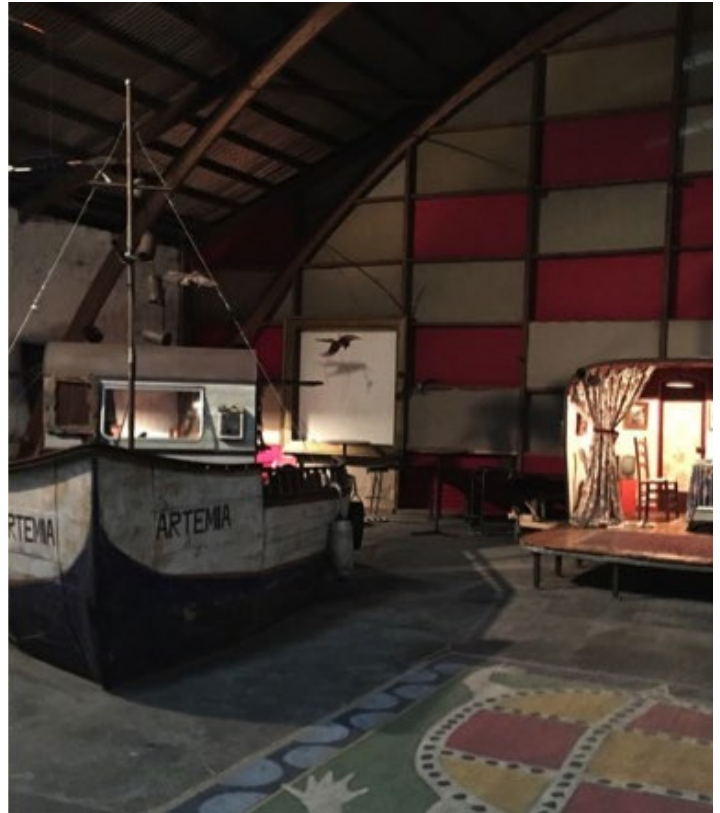
Back to our subject, the argument of the symposium suggests that temporality is perceived as a negative value in our society. In terms of housing in particular, always men did their best to build resistant and long-lasting shelters. Good places to stay are not only efficient shelter to protect from the elements and from outside dangers, they assume also symbolically the status of a cocoon, of a nest that ensure the permanency of the group and the cohesion of the coming generations. Temporary use of vacant places taps exactly into this paradox: it is an opportunity to get a shelter where to accommodate a project initiative and at the same time the time limit for which it is available is a threat for the future and a stress for the temporary users. It makes the shelter less comfortable and reassuring as it could be.

We would like here to discuss briefly this paradox and in particular: why temporality is likely to increase resilience in a fluid society? Under which conditions could temporary use be an asset for project initiators? Why temporary users tend to behave as permanent users? We will then draw some lessons from this discussion to better support temporary use as such rather than as an ersatz of permanent use.

SURFING THE FLOWS

Society is moving and transforming more and more rapidly pushed at the hyper-speed of technological development; innovation cycles become shorter and shorter to support com-





Les Badauds Associés, Aire 38, Nantes (France).
Photo by Strategic Design Scenarios.

petitiveness; globalization disseminates local changes; IT makes it available instantaneously everywhere. “Everything is moving, less and less is permanent, says Gaetan Bourdin, leader of Les Badauds Associés in Nantes, we are all precarious in a chaotic world!”. Increased dualization of society, new poverties, terrorism, migrations, etc. are more and more blurring our common understanding of the world and calling for revisiting our models of interpretation.

Les Badauds Associés is trying to tackle with this emerging fluidity working as a living lab where private and public players can crash-test their products and services and then co-create with citizens scenarios of evolution of their business models. And for Gaetan Bourdin, more and more emerging new value creation models are based on fluid and temporary setting: “logistic companies working with distributed and constantly changing storage places; entrepreneurs opening new storage places for building materials near each of their building places; a nomad hairdresser settled in a caravan changing location everyday and keeping only a digital link with its clients; a mobile carpentry moving from villages to villages following the de-

mand; the municipality of a large French city setting temporary public services in neighbourhoods whenever needed; etc.”

SERVING THE FLOW

Emerging business and value creation models relay more and more on fluid mobility between spots where they settle for short temporary periods. They also provide new services serving this emerging fluidity.

“If it were not a work object for us, it would be a pain in the neck” says Gaetan Bourdin. Les Badauds Associés has a 15 years’ story of nomadism, temporary use and is currently moving to another 4 years in the former military building Caserne Melinette in the centre of the city of Nantes. They grow from the culture of urban art and develop a capacity to appropriate a new space, both technically to make it safe and liveable and also symbolically to grasp the genius loci of the place in order to serve the purpose of the project initiative entering in a temporary use. Les Badauds Associés in most of the places they settled provided this know-how to appropriate a temporary space to other projects from NGOs and companies that had not these skills and capacities.

Pop-Up Pallets is a small company created in 2013 in Amersfoort and using transport pallets to build original interior design. Pallets are meant as ready-made Lego blocs, easy to combine, robust and cheap. They perfectly fit into large office spaces to build structures or cover walls. They are quick to assemble, disassemble and recycle to fit temporary installation and in particular the creative industry settling in temporary use spaces. Pop-Up Pallets developed a quick and cheap interior design service that fits temporary use and relay – certainly not by chance – on a material that is one of the symbols of our flow society.

FLUIDITY-READY

If a global trend towards more fluid structures can be observed, the temporary use posture is not fitting to all activities.

Diana Wildschut and Harmen Zijp have initiated De War, a mix community of artists and scientists accommodated since 2005 in an empty former industrial building located near the central station in Amersfoort, Netherlands. De War describes itself as a Urban Experimental Zone which is less about what they directly bring





Pop-Up Pallets, Amersfoort (Netherlands).
Photo by Pop-Up Pallets.

to the city but rather how they represent for the international foresight community an open experimentation of new value creation models and an incubator for the city of tomorrow. For Harmen Zijp, part of the activities of the De War community is not bound to a specific place and likely to move anywhere any time. Another part is on the contrary relating to a specific local audience, especially sensitive in such a medium-sized town as Amersfoort where people behave like in a village and don't move easily.

The ability to move is also relating to the how much material stuff each different project initiatives implies. In its nomad pathway, Les Badauds Associés evolved from street artists-like activities which material was all fitting in the trunk of a car to larger settings as the current living lab in the Aire 38 former industrial shed on the Nantes Island. The setting is now organized in caravans to keep both the agility and the benefits from accommodating each time new places. For Gaetan Bourdin: "having constantly to move, kept us awake. Spaces are spaces of possibilities, opportunities to invest [...] we have seen so many projects – dance companies for instance – that have been smashed by the burden of tackling with a space.

Before they were more agile moving between different places and able to concentrate on their art rather than on keeping up the space they wanted to have for themselves." For Egbert van Triest moving means also moving a wood working atelier with machines and stock of material but it "help the company to grow. In the first 4 years of activity of Pop-Up Pallets we moved several time between different temporary use. It should not be too often but every 2 years is good rhythm!".

“There is a fear of becoming permanent, leaving on a short term notice obliged to stay agile”

For Diana Wildschut: “there is a fear of becoming permanent, leaving on a

short term notice obliged to stay agile”.

TEMPORARY MIND-SET

The symbolic dimension of temporary use mentioned above reasoned in terms of precariousness and stress for some people. “After living for 10 years on a 3 months notice, declares Diane Wildschut, we tend to neglect the feeling of insecurity”. “It has to do with the psychology of people, says Harmen Zijp, in De War some were able to handle more insecurity, some struggled but were able to learn to live with it and some other didn't and after a certain time they left for a permanent place”. Gaetan Bourdin also confessed: “we were notified to be able to move to another space in May and we had to leave where we are now at the end of July. This has been a huge stress for part of the team”.

The space is also what made the community: compared to coherent project initiatives like Les Badauds Associés or Pop-Up Pallets, De War as an heterogeneous mix of very different stakeholders. The very fact of sharing the same space created the structural bounds that linked people together. For Harmen Zijp, “Moving De War somewhere else is a great risk of dis-



persion of the community.”

STONES AND FLOWS

Finally there is a series of misleading characteristics of temporary use that pushes project initiators to behave as permanent users. Consumers in societies with mature economies tends to be more fluid, to move between rented places, to consume goods and throw them away rapidly, to get the service without the burden of owning products. They detached from stones and stuff: materialism relate less to specific possessions but to consumption flows continuously renewed. At the opposite of this trend, a temporary user, for the very reason s/he cannot access to these consumption flows will feel more attached to goods. Because s/he is lacking for a space to settle in, s/he will tend to value the place s/he will get – even for a temporary period – and get more attached to it. On top of that a good share of vacant places commonly assigned for temporary use are in relatively bad conditions: brownfield have been abandoned for a long time; buildings have not been properly maintained; spaces are destined to demolition or heavy refurbishment; etc. In any case, where the tenant entering an apartment is supposed to give it back in the same state as s/he got it, a temporary user most of the time has more freedom to act on the space: nobody cares if s/he doesn't keep it clean or clashes paint, builds or breaks some separation walls, modifies the space in a way or another as s/he should not give it back in the same state. The temporary user is then de facto in a posture that resemble to what normally only owners can do and s/he is likely to invest more in the place.

TEMPORARY USE PLAN

What did we learn from this discussion and especially, what are the lessons we could draw for cities to better prepare and support project initiatives for temporary use?

On the one hand we have seen a great deal of reasons why temporary use could be an asset for more and more cultural, economical and social activities in our rapidly changing society of flows. On the other hand temporary use is perceived as an ersatz of permanency, a synonymous of precariousness or at best of transitory peri-

od. The challenge is therefore to raise awareness on temporary use assets for new candidates while at the same time equipping them in the best way to take maximum advantage of these assets. This challenge could be reported to what forward-looking activities could call an error of projection: temporary users project themselves in a space as if they would enter a space they would own or at least they could rent for an indeterminate period of time. Instead of a plan for permanent use, they should make a plan for temporary use.

In other words, any project initiative starting-up its activity is producing a form of business plan or value creation plan. Formally or informally, the project describes mostly in a written form and generally supported with some schemes a description of its goals, an estimation of its financial sustainability and potential of development, a projection or scenario of its possible development at short, medium and long term. This plan should in a way or another include the temporary use period of a determinate space. It should also imagine what is likely to happen next, beyond the temporary use period. As for a business plan, it has to keep a speculative form for instance of scenarios: “our temporary use terminates within 2 years: we may grow and be able to access a new space rented at market price (scenarios 1) or we may look for and enter another temporary use space (scenarios 2) or we even may be notified that the space where we are is allocated to us for another temporary period of time (scenario 3). For each of these scenarios, what do we do? What do we have to prepare before the temporary use period terminate? What expenses will we have and how do we finance them? How do we settle now to take into consideration a fluid eventual move? What are the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities to catch and the risks to prevent for each scenario? Etc.”

IN A NUTSHELL

If De War, Les Badauds Associés or even Pop-Up Pallets are all in different ways parts of an Urban Experimentation Zone looking for emerging patterns and models of the city of tomorrow, temporary use is for sure what foresights call a seed event: it is a

phenomenon insignificant for what it represent now but very important for what it foresees for the future and it induces to an appropriated posture in a fluid society.

In order to take advantage of temporary use as a seed event, the REFILL thematic network could jointly elaborate and test what a Temporary use plan could be and how partner cities could relay on it to foster the practice of temporary use, to support project initiatives and to build the future of their cities jointly with the futures of their communities.

Insights for cities

1. Temporary is temporary and initiatives have different needs in terms of accommodation: support lightness, flexibility, mobility coping with temporary settings and to preparing for the next moves...
2. Develop “transitory use coaching” tips and notes, handbook of cases and good practices; community of practice and mutual help between experienced temporary users and newcomers...
3. Public administration is rather embodying a culture of permanency: civil servants supporting temporary use need to develop a completely different state of mind based on fluidity, flexibility, lightness, risks-taking and rebound strategies...
4. Make sure the benefits produced by the temporary users - whether social, cultural, economical environmental - are not too “place-sensitive” and help to imagine how they can survive or be transferred (i.e. nomadic patterns; digital identity; farewell party; memory of the place; re-birthing process; transformative move; etc.)...
5. Support initiatives to develop their “temporary use plan” or in other words a “business plan” with place-related scenarios, anticipating strategies for after the temporary use period (i.e. affording a permanent place or moving to another temporary use or staying if current temporary use period is prolonged or etc.)...

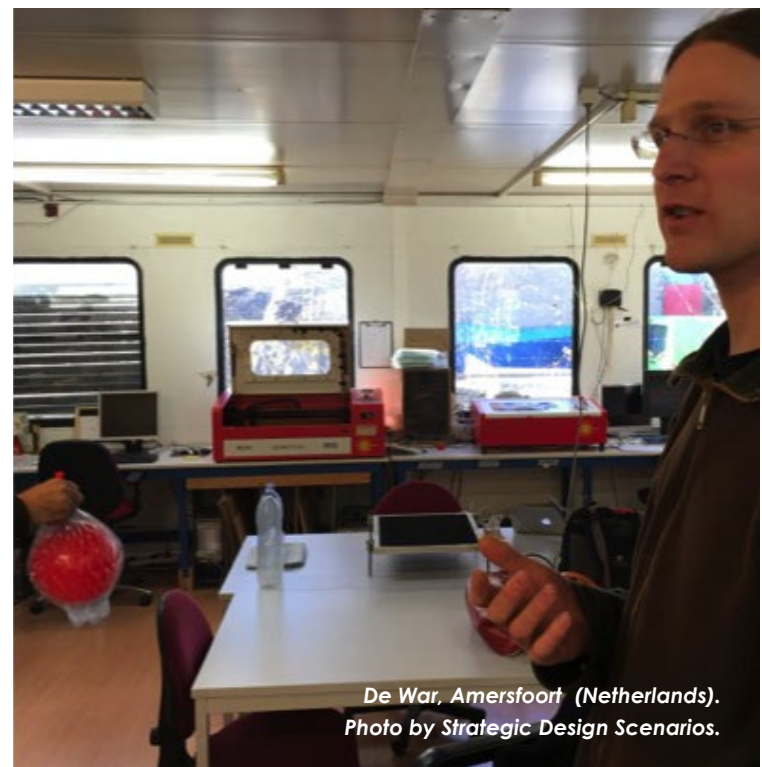




Pop-Up Pallets, Amersfoort (Netherlands).
Photo by Strategic Design Scenarios.



De War, Amersfoort (Netherlands).
Photo by Strategic Design Scenarios.



De War, Amersfoort (Netherlands).
Photo by Strategic Design Scenarios.



Les Badauds Associés, Aire 38, Nantes (France).
Photo by Strategic Design Scenarios.

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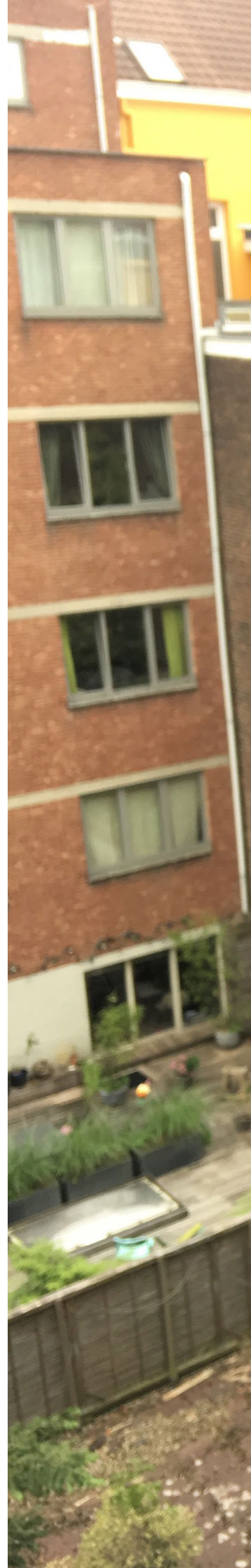
Check out the issue #4 of the **REFILL MAGAZINE!**

By Marcelline Bonneau, Strategic Design Scenarios

Do cities perceive temporary use as the new “normal” in cities? Are vacant urban spaces not anymore considered as an anomaly? If that is the case, we can bet it is likely to develop as a service with incentives and rules. The REFILL partners have indeed shown it is the case, throughout an array of different postures:

- Some instruments are available to incentivise temporary use for property owners and users;
- Some cities can systematize temporary use through the creation of a temporary use public service/agency; and
- Some temporary users see/market themselves as a form of service.

Some concrete cases exemplify the way it has been achieved so far. In Athens, Traces of Commerce propose a sort of “DIY urbanism”. In Bremen, a temporary use agency – the ZZZ – was set up and it is sponsoring specific temporary projects. In Cluj, the renovation of the Fabrica de Pinsule was shared. In Ghent, a Fund for temporary use for initiated to support the kick off of projects in temporary places. In Helsinki, the use of public spaces is being intensified as in the case of the Central Library. In addition, projects of self-renovation are being undertaken as in the case of Oranssi. In Ostrava, temporary use owners gain a co-developer for abandoned areas that are hard to develop. In Poznan, there is a preferential rate for some activities and Perfex is an example of a soft-maintenance project. In Riga, the Property department signed with the NGO Free Riga a memorandum. This NGO is also directly contracting owners. Do you want to know more about these? Check out the issue #4 of the REFILL magazine!



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DEVELOPING TEMPORARY USE AS A (NORMAL) SERVICE

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