

REFILL

Reuse of vacant spaces as driving Force for Innovation on Local Level

URBACT III



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TEMPORARY USE • DYNAMICS FOR LIFE

STATE OF THE ART

May 2016



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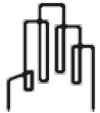
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Foreword:

This State of the Art is the first deliverable of the REFILL URBACT III network. It will be included at the end of Phase I as the first part of the network's Baseline study.

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PREFACE TO THE STATE OF THE ART

Temporary use is entangled in a web of complex (private, public, associative) interests and issues at stake. The dichotomy between some of these motives, but especially the infancy of this topic on the agenda makes it important for city administration to question themselves, their urban planning and the way they can bring together interests which are at first sight diverging, in order to contribute to developing more integrated urban planning. At the same time focusing on this issue can have a strong economic, social, environmental and cultural potential for city development. More than that, such an approach questions the way cities are governed and the role city administration can play in mediating between the different stakeholders. As such, the REFILL network's objectives are to investigate the way temporary use can contribute to a quest for new governance models to support temporary use:

- Exchange and evaluation of local supporting instruments;
- Ensure long lasting effects of temporality; and,
- Build a more flexible, collaborative public administration.

In this State of the Art, we outline the current situation of temporary use in Europe and its potential for urban planning and integrated governance: whether of vacant spaces or building, or of unused ones, the practice is outside the realm of traditional urban planning. Yet through its support of a range of economic, social, environmental and cultural values, some municipalities have developed a range of attitudes in order either to: enable and initiate them; to claim and coach them; or, to formalise and exploit them. At the EU level, the support has been mostly on brownfields whereas support or research on temporary use is still scattered. We have also sketched out the potential for temporary use to play an active role in triggering or influencing organisational shifts within city administrations.



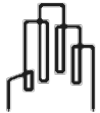
I. INTRODUCTION

In the 50s' film "Le chantier des gosses", children were spending their leisure time in an abandoned lot in the very centre of the city of Brussels: this place was vacant, yet to be built. That was also in such a place the nephew of Tati's My Uncle was eating donoughts and whistling at pedestrians so that they would bump into lamppost. These spaces were free of rules, a ground for fertile experimentation, individual empowerment and creativity development.



A once-upon-a-time use of vacant spaces in Europe ©Jean Harlez & TATI

European cities have evolved, we see less and less of these places yet to be transformed into modernized neighbourhoods of the city. However, new types of vacant spaces have emerged: these are buildings which have been abandoned as they do not fit with the evolving needs of companies and working practices, these are brownfields where heavy industries left deeply rooted pollution which makes impossible commercialization of these lands, these are leftovers from strong industrial pasts of some regions – in the form of buildings or abandoned lands, former docks, ... All of these give a new face to European cities and create a potential for redynamisation through the realm of temporary activities which can take place on them. However, taking them into consideration in city governance is still recent, inexistent in some cities. Municipalities are yet to develop structures and frameworks which can enable taking advantage of their potential at most. As has been observed in many cities, such initiatives are strongly led by citizens and creative entrepreneurs. Society is changing, cities as well. Citizens are asking for greater involvement in city development. They are taking an increasingly important role in city governance, what questions the way cities are currently being governed. Temporary use of vacant places can be an entry point into a transitional organizational shift of governance, giving increasing room for manoeuvre to citizens.



II. DEFINING TEMPORARY USE

1. Share of vacant spaces

Unused or vacant spaces can be those spaces left vacant during the formation of the city. However, the number of these is constantly decreasing and here we are rather concerned with spaces and buildings which were previously occupied and abandoned at some point. These can be called “Vacant Terrain” when we refer to the emptiness of the terrain compared to the surrounding built environment, and when it is not occupied by neither people nor construction and infrastructure. We would call them “Urban Wastelands, Brownfield, Derelict land, Degraded and Deteriorated land or buildings” when referring to abandoned spaces, without urban activity and in some occasions contaminated (Nefs 2006).

However, identifying spaces and buildings which are not occupied is quite tricky. Indeed it is sometimes quite difficult to clarify what a “vacant” building or space is, not to mention different typologies from one research to another (Nefs 2006). In addition, the definition of what a vacant space or building is varying depending on the country. However, from the data that does exist, we can see that the percentage of conventional dwellings which is vacant ranges from the very low 1.7 % in Sweden to a third of the total dwelling in Greece.

Table 1 Vacant conventional dwellings in EU27 (% of total dwelling stock) (Dol and Haffner 2010)

Country	Around 2000	Around 2009
Austria	NA	NA
Belgium	NA	NA
Bulgaria	NA	NA
Cyprus	24.1	NA
Czech Republic	12.3	NA
Denmark	6.3	6.8
Estonia	10.9	8
Finland	8.8	9.6
France	6.1	6.3
Germany	8.2	8
Greece	33.2	NA
Hungary	5.6	NA
Ireland	12	NA
Italy	20.7	NA
Latvia	3.1	8.6
Lithuania	3.7	NA
Luxembourg	2.3	3
Malta	27.6	NA

In a similar vein, the Guardian revealed in 2014 that 11 million homes were unoccupied across Europe: 3.4 million in Spain, 2 million in France and Italy, 1.8 million in Germany and more than 700,000 in the UK and in Portugal. This is in sharp contrast with the estimate that 4.1 million people would be homeless in the EU (Neate 2014).

In Brussels, it is more than 10% of total offices that are vacant within the Brussels Capital Region, and 30% when taking into account the outskirts. In Amsterdam, it is 17% of the office space that is unoccupied (Böhlke 2013).

To some authors, this not only causes problems in light of the increasing urban demographic growth and need for new housing but also to new economic developments. Indeed, all types of companies and institutions tend to replace their offices which are not fit to their needs moving to new ones and leaving the former ones behind.

Netherlands	2.2	1.5
Poland	5.3	NA
Portugal	10.6	NA
Romania	NA	NA
Slovak Republic	11.6	11.1
Slovenia	10.1	NA
Spain	21.9	NA
Sweden	1.7	1.7
United Kingdom	3.4	NA

However, the design and techniques of the office building is evolving constantly leading to an acceleration of their obsolescence. For companies and institutions, it is about finding better, well-equipped, up-to-date spaces (Böhlke 2013). Such a neglect of vacant spaces and buildings also means greater urban sprawl and its consequences on urban planning and the environment.

This share of vacant spaces and buildings is constantly increasing throughout Europe. The change in land and building occupation can be explained by economical changes such as the financial crisis, industrial and commercial restructuring, industrial changes, and new forms of entrepreneurship. Alternative forms of solidarity and commitment levels are arising. Society and organisation processes are also taking on new forms: office work is becoming more flexible, telework is expanding, public space is used differently and properties are developing multi-use facilities. This is increasingly the case in some sectors: in the creative industry, in culture and counter-culture for example. Spatial needs are increasing, these activities search constantly for experimentation places, often developing some pioneer activities with a strong bottom-up impulse with the support of social innovations. New technologies contribute to these new dynamics through their speed and spread, supporting communicating and restructuring all forms of logistics. More details and examples are given in the remainder of this section.

2. Values of temporary use

Temporary use has grown continuously since the 1950s and 1960s when the historical centres were abandoned and the peripheries started to expand. Squatter movements emerged in 1970s to take advantages of these vacant spaces and buildings and new forms of programmes and public-private cooperation were set up in the 1980s in order to transform docks and industrial areas into residential and office space. Since the following decade, there has been a trend to go back to downtowns which is strongly related to the operations of urban revitalisation, requalification, renovation and redevelopment dealing with unused terrains and buildings (Nefs 2006). Berlin is often put forward as the example of a city where temporary use had appeared to tackle vacant properties in the 1990s and 2000s in a city where dissent, alternative and underground culture was quite prominent (Colomb 2012).

Temporary use is the activity taking place outside the ordinary functioning of the real estate market. It can be driven by creative milieus, activist and community uses, promoter of culture and counterculture, as new approaches to urban space, as form of consumerism or by private sector initiatives (SEEDS 2015). Temporary use is also

dependent on the strategies for users, owners and intermediaries as presented in the table below.

Table 2 Temporary use strategies of users, owners and intermediaries (Oswalt, Overmeyer, and Misselwitz 2013)

Strategy	Description
Enable	Removing the barriers to temporary use in a sizeable urban area with many under-utilised properties. No formal programme.
Initiate	Reaching agreement with landowners and resolving legal questions. Need for an agent to initiate a cluster of temporary uses.
Claim	Fighting for contested spaces or contested activities
Coach	Training and empowering self-organised users.
Formalise	Transition to permanence lasting structures, open-ended leases and permits, formal legal structures, professional management)
Exploit	Commercial use by real estate owners.

Temporary use, however, is not only about the use of vacant spaces and buildings. It can be a different use of a space or building during a limited period in time, usually in search for pop-up artistic or activist events. This is for example the case of the worldwide initiative PARK(ing) Day where groups of citizens create temporary parks on parking slots: while experimenting on new ways of interacting and creating a community bound, citizens seek to take back their city and to become proactive actors of their surroundings (see case box below).

PARK(ing) Day - Temporary use of public space for civic expression

Since 2005, PARK(ing) Day is an annual worldwide event, taking place on the third Friday of September where artists, designers and citizens transform metered parking spots into temporary public parks. For a short time, the parking spot becomes a springboard to civic engagement and to urban landscape. The project is used and adapted, as an “open source” in 162 cities all over the world. Activities organised in these “temporary parks” have ranged from free health clinics, planted temporary urban farms, produced ecology demonstrations, held political seminars, built art installations, opened free bike repair shops, ... The project claims that through its open-source model, community organizers can identify community needs and develop targeted activities, experimenting on common solutions. It is about challenging existing notions of public urban space and empowering people to help redefine space to suit specific community needs. The project also values the metered parking space as an important part of the commons – a site for generosity, cultural expression, socializing and play. This action is promoted within the legal remit of each urban context. Cooperation with municipality can be sought but it is rarely the case as it is rather seen as an “unsanctioned guerrilla art action”



PARK(ing) Day is for everyone! - NYC and Kropfhamer and Blütenkorb's installation- Munich, both 2009 ©Kate Nicholson & via Green City Munich my.parkingday.org

Temporary uses provide opportunities for interaction, participation, and start-ups. They are also a new ground for urban planning and make a contribution to the sustainable design of urban change (Ziehl et al. 2012). Temporary use has been widely argued not only as the mere use of empty or vacant spaces or buildings, but also as being crucial in the development of new values for the cities: both as a “value of the use” (for the citizen using the available space) and the “exchange value” (generating revenue for the benefice of the real estate business) (Nefs 2006). These can be of economic, social, environmental, or cultural nature.

a. Economic value

Temporary use has a strong potential to develop the economic activities of a city, to create jobs and businesses, to develop skills, and to improve the attractiveness of spaces. It can do so by providing: (flexible and cheap) working spaces, networking spaces, and the centralization of activities (hubs). As such, temporary places can become urban catalysts or urban incubators. One such key example is the cost-efficient reuse of vacant properties when spaces have been empty for a while. On the one hand, this is in particular useful for real estate owners who seek an intermediary situation before renovation or buy out: with a given small investment, real estate owners can accommodate a temporary use for a limited period: they benefit from maintenance of their location at the same time as tenants benefit from a low rent. On the other hand, it provides start-up companies, community projects and social initiatives with a space to test their business and organisational models, as in a period of incubation. Such a concept has been promoted through the “Meanwhile Space”: while providing tools for partnerships between real estate owners, municipalities and citizens, it puts forward the mutual advantages that can be raised from a temporary use of empty buildings, as presented in its implementation in Craigavon, Ireland (see case box below).

Meanwhile space, Craigavon (IE) – Temporary use for economic redevelopment

The Meanwhile concept is to provide platforms for a community of people interested

in occupying affordable space for temporary periods. It brings together local authorities, real estate and construction stakeholders, as well as creative entrepreneurs in a joint to work to utilise vacant property for alternative uses. Guides, leases and toolkits are provided to standardise and increase impacts of meanwhile uses. In Craigavon, 25% of the city was left vacant because of the economic crisis. Through a partnership of all the involved stakeholders a programme to occupy temporarily the buildings was set up. The streets changed appearance and brought back life to the neighbourhoods including increasing safety at night and increasing business development in the area.



Edward Street benefiting from the Meanwhile Programme ©Craigavon

Another economic potential is for temporary activities to serve the regeneration of given places or buildings. Through complementary projects, they can give a new life to abandoned places or buildings which can then go back to the market with a higher value. This was the case of a former hospital in Bologna (see case box below).

Mutts hospital, Bologna (IT) – Temporary use for regeneration

After a failed attempt to sell a former Mutts hospital, the Province of Bologna proposed it as a ground for cultural activities. Since 2013, it has hosted the Bologna WaterDesign, #THISISBOLOGNA, FRUIT self-publishing exhibition and many other vernissages, performances, and sound installations.

Through the promotion of such a cultural platform, the Metropolitan City implemented integrated governance and collaborated closely with cultural associations and institutions, universities and research centers, economic stakeholders. Through this temporary use, the former hospital has gained value on the market. In addition, it has played an important role in the promotion of culture as well as contributed to the creation of new jobs and businesses in the field of technology, digital and innovative start-ups. It has also been the entry for engaging the dynamic forces of the city and for capturing the dynamics created around a temporary use.



A former Mutts Hospital's potential promoted through culture ©Municipality of Bologna

b. Social values

Creating or reinforcing social links, binding communities or social inclusion are essential to many temporary uses. They indeed provide space for meetings and activities in the neighbourhood and enable temporary housing. They can provide housing in the form of shelters for people in need of a roof such as refugees. They can also experiment on new ways of using the public space to create social bounds. Such a use can also go in the direction of mitigating social and economic conflicts about the fact that buildings which could be occupied are left vacant. The case box below presents the example of a day care centre which is taking place in a vacant building before a new one is built. This centre has become the central place for social care and community life in the neighbourhood.

Day-care centre, Satu Mare (RO) – temporary place before final localisation

“Sfantul Acoperamant al Maicii Domnului” is an association caring for children of disadvantaged families set up in 2010. It seeks to foster social cohesion and preventing early school dropout. While waiting for the construction of a day care centre which will be built in 2016, it occupies a vacant public building, a former social centre. The centre organizes integrated socio-medical services as well as varied teaching and training activities. These are organized by a range variety of volunteers: priests, teachers, pensioners and public figures.



Children taken care for in a temporary day care centre @Satu Mare

c. Environmental value

Occupying temporarily spaces and buildings can also contribute to improving urban public spaces and greens, preserving natural habitats and depolluting areas as well as promoting urban agriculture and local food. Indeed, especially when the places have been vacant before, they provide new ground for agriculture and recreation but especially for experimentation on those areas. This was for example the case of the “Hot Summer of Urban Farming” project in Copenhagen, Denmark, where artists sought new insights into urban agriculture and sustainable food (see case box below).

Hot Summer of Urban Farming in Copenhagen (DK) – TempUse, culture, sustainable development

In the outer of Nørrebro, Denmark, eight Danish and foreign artists made temporary works, gardens and plantations on unused spaces. This project was an experimentation for exploring informal and temporary uses of spaces that are undetermined. The main focus areas of the projects were: inclusion and exclusion, the use of public space, the origin and history of plant life and the relation between the city and its surrounding. These could all be conceptualized by a closer connection between agriculture and the city. Starting from utopian concepts, it sought to create visions of what the place could become. A mobile kitchen was also installed on the spot. The project was curated and organized by visual artist Nis Rømer in the context of the organization for art in public spaces and media, [Publik DK](#).



Hot summer of urban farming ©Eco-publicart.org

In addition, temporary use in itself is strongly concerned with the fact that the current paradigm of economic growth should be revisited: the incessant construction of buildings, creation of waste, isolation of workers and citizens, all these are taken at odds in many temporary use practices. Such practices also seek other opportunities for cities in order to optimise their existing resources. They can contribute to the future of “smart” or “compact” cities, if not by limiting the air pollution and noise (which would become increasingly concentrated) at least in the development of flexible public transports, new ways of consuming or new collaborative services.

d. Cultural values

In many cases, temporary use is also strongly linked to the history of the city, mainly industrial history. Using these spaces enables cultivating the historical memory of the city and also to produce culture and develop creativity on the images provided by these spaces. Many initiatives are taking place in abandoned industrial or military sites, or even brownfields. Ground Control in Paris is specialised in organising ephemera events in a different location every year, shedding light onto some unknown places of the French capital, at the same time as providing alternative ground for night life (see case box below).

Ground control ephemeral mobile bar, Paris (FR) – 2015 Edition in a former train depot

The Ground Control project organises temporary bars in a different location each summer. In 2015, it settled in a 3-hectare-large former depot and repair place for trains, which had been unused since 2009. The place hosted a wide recreation and cultural place with a pétanque area, hen house and a garden, a bar and snack place. When sitting on deckchairs on the abandoned tracks visitors could watch and hear the trains passing by nearby. Concerts and performances, as well as a flea market took place there. Ground control was seen as a “living place”. A convention for temporary use was signed between the organisers, specialised in event management, with the French Railway Company, SNCF. The company then benefited from a use – and rent - of the space before the site is demolished in 2016 for the reconstruction of social housing. The two signatories of the convention found an agreement in that the organizers keep the spirit of the place and remained open

to the neighbourhood life.



Ground Control 2015 : ephemera bar at a former train depot ©cheminots.net & Parisianist



III. SUPPORTING TEMPORARY USE

Temporary use is not a given. It is usually not considered part of normal cycles of urban development. It disturbs traditional urban planning and governance through unusual occupation of the place, leading to necessary rearrangements: economical, legal, social or managerial. However, “temporary uses can become an extremely successful, inclusive and innovative part of contemporary urban culture”. (SUC Studio Urban Catalyst 2003)p.4). More than anything else, some municipalities have started to acknowledge the need for developing an adequate interdisciplinary governance model, taking account of the complexity of the landscape and of the issues at stake. This support can be broadly categorised in three strategies, referring to the typology in Table 2: enabling and initiating, claiming and coaching, formalising and exploiting.

1. Enabling and initiating

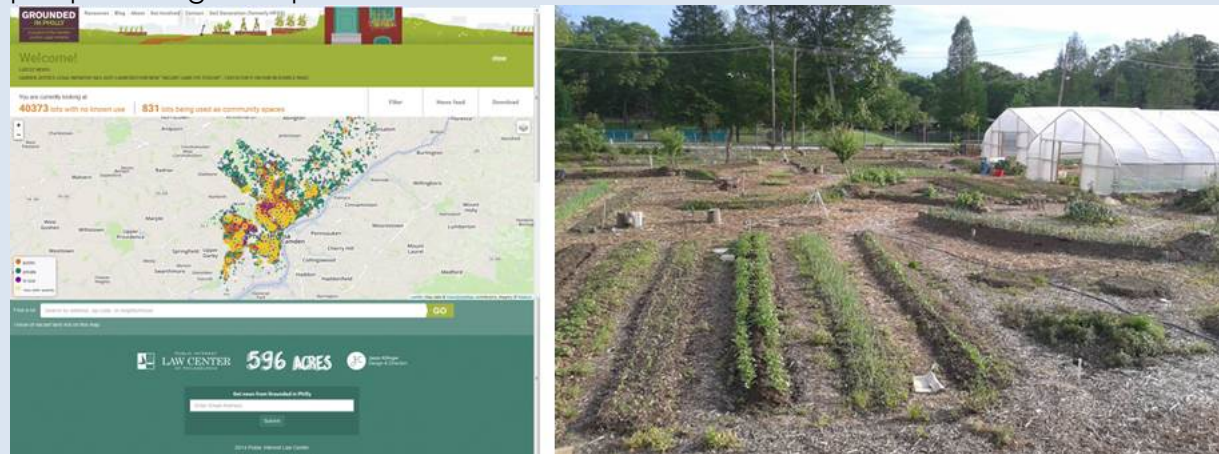
Some municipalities open up their real estate databases to engage citizens and entrepreneurs in revitalizing empty properties. Some have developed framework models to kick off temporary use: transparent overview of a city's real estate situation, mediating between owners and users, introducing taxes, tax breaks and incentives, granting permissions, offering funding and loans and proposing adequate structures or mechanisms (Patti and Polyak 2015a). Under such an approach, municipalities are being proactive at providing top-down leverage to kick off temporary use. They can provide the infrastructure necessary to the adequate experimentation, usually with a search for long-term effect in learning, economic term or community binding. Some cities have already launched some processes in order to envisage the potential of temporary for their own development. For example, the Municipality of Copenhagen (Technical and Environmental administration) funded in 2010 a [project](#) to search effect, barriers and opportunities of temporary uses as well as a collection of good examples of temporary uses.

Enabling temporary use starts by researching and promoting the assets of empty spaces and building. This can take the form of an online map making an inventory of vacant spaces, based on existing database and cross-referencing them. Such databases are also often providing support to get started, including referring to legal issues, as the “Grounded in Philly” project presents in the case box below.

[Grounded in Philly, Philadelphia \(USA\) – mapping and supporting access to vacant spaces](#)

Grounded Philly is an initiative of the [Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia](#). It seeks to facilitate the transitioning of vacant land into community-controlled green spaces, gardens and gathering places. This takes the form of an online map gathering data from various public entities. The website enables residents to get connected as well as to get information, including legal on securing and using

prospective green spaces.



From mapping to farming with Grounded in Philly ©Grounded in Philly

2. Claiming and coaching

Municipalities are less advanced in the promotion of bottom-up initiatives, in support emerging new needs or opening-up to new forms of cooperation with grassroots initiatives. When they do so, they acknowledge the potential of such temporary use initiatives to be part not only of urban planning but more generally of general urban life and can act as experts. This has been the case with the Toestand initiative in Brussels (BE) which started as ad hoc and unauthorised occupation of vacant spaces before becoming a legitimate stakeholder in the landscape of urban planning and environmental protection in the region (see case box below).

Toestand, Brussels (BE) - Bottom-up expertise for city governance on temporary use

Toestand is an organisation triggering bottom-up initiatives to redynamise the city where it is not active anymore: forgotten or abandoned buildings, terrains and (public) spaces – soon to be destroyed or rebuilt - by means of temporary and autonomous socio-cultural centres. It focuses on dialogue, creation, autonomy and actions. In parallel, and after the organisation squatted and made some experiments in a few spaces, the Regional Ministry of the Environment, Bruxelles Environnement, launched a call for project to use empty spaces on a lot before a park would be constructed. Toestand won this project, [Allee du Kaai](#), hosting 4 buildings and outdoor space which adds up to 7000m². A park is being constructed in different phases while the land is de-polluted. The buildings will be destroyed between 2016 and 2018. The organisation started raising the interest of the Ministry on the neighbourhood needs, the potentials for the evolution of such a park. Toestand has become the expert on temporary use for the Ministry which is dealing for the first time with such an issue directly.



3. Formalising and exploiting

The underlying concept of temporary use of vacant spaces and buildings is to be limited in time. As “intermediary”, “in-between” or “meanwhile” spaces, the question is what cities can do to take advantage of their experiences, integrate their results in urban planning or other public service development, and foresee other related or similar experience. After the given time for the temporary experience or experiment, whether it is because the project is finished, the place or building has found another use or that rules of the games are changing, the temporary use can take different new forms to which municipalities have developed new strategies to operate a transition beyond temporality.

a. Recurrent

The temporary use can become recurrent: the activity is repeated over a certain period of time, in the same place, while the building or space remains vacant. In such a scheme, the initiatives can be strongly bottom-up but require the support of the municipality for agreement on the terms of land use. In other instances, such a use can be beneficial for remediation of polluted areas at the same time as increasing citizens’ wellbeing and attractiveness of deserted parts of the city. The urban beach of Prague is an example of such a temporary use.

Smichov beach, Prague (CZ) – Yearly urban beach

Like in many other cities throughout the world, Prague has been organising temporary summer beaches for two years. On the shore of the Upper Quay of the Voltava river, It is a 200-metre long sandy area equipped with sunbeds, parasols, showers, change-rooms, background for summer sports, stage for culture programme and pier for yachts and steam boats. The beach also proposes some eating and drinking facilities. The beach is set up by a private organisation together with the municipality district Prague 5 and every summer it submits a new project for organising the urban beach.



b. Migrant

The temporary use can also be migrant: the activity is repeated in several locations under the same format. In some instance, it can become an international movement, repeated elsewhere and adapted to local cultural contexts. In these circumstances, the project usually takes place in “abandoned” places without the need for strict agreement with the municipality. However, for some security reasons, and city policies, prior agreement can be asked. In some instances, these events also become emblematic of citizens’ mobilization about urban planning issues in their cities, getting visibility of what can be achieved, how the places can be used and installing an on-debate on the given places. In other instances, they combine the reuse of mobile infrastructure with the regeneration of derelict areas, as presented by the Deptford project, in the case box below.

The Deptford Project, London (UK) – Temporary Train Carriage Café

A train carriage from the 1960s was renovated to become a café. It landed in the derelict neighbourhood of Deptford, in Lewisham, London in 2008. Except for providing foods and drinks, the train carriage also hosted an events programme and invited the creative community to run activities on site: Celebrating Deptford, Silent Cinema, The London Design Festival, Deptford X, Barn dances, supper parties and Christmas festivities. Thousands of people came from far and wide to visit the area. As well as creating the initial interest and identity of the area, the train café has temporarily formed part of the new development of the neighbourhood providing the link between the railway station and new routes into the town centre. After five years, the presence of the café regenerated totally a site owned by Cathedral Group Plc. It left its location in 2014 and is looking for another location to regenerate.



A temporary café in a former train carriage to regenerate neighbourhoods@Deptford project

c. Transient – towards institutionalisation?

The temporary use project can be stopped, or transient: the activity was carried out over a dedicated period of time. It is not needed anymore or the place has taken an official or new function. It is then for the city to decide how to integrate the learning from this experience into city governance.

As mentioned already, temporary use can be a realm of opportunities for cities. Some cities have realised the long-term benefits of these activities for the city and the citizens, which can be of economic, environmental or social nature. To some extent, temporary use can then become institutionalized or been set-up as a “free zone”, making temporary -permanent. Such an institutionalization re-assesses the balance between the financial value of the place/building as opposed to the social value brought in by the activities. This can be the case when projects have been emblematic of a given dissent movement but are also increasing the attractiveness of some neighbourhoods. In the case of Christiania in Copenhagen (DK), the municipality has designed a zone with specific legal status, and is constantly adjusting its approach in order to support this alternative living movement, and its values for the cities, at the same time as sticking to municipal rules, common to all the neighbourhoods of the city (see case box below).

Freetown Christiania, Copenhagen (DK) – Exclusive legal framework for long-term temporary use

The occupation of Christiania, an area of Christianshavn of Copenhagen, started as an illegal settlement, in a military area in 1971 – inspired from the hippie movement, the squatter movement, collectivism and anarchism - for protesting against the lack affordable housing. The area was a place providing the conditions for artistic development but also leisure and recreational activities for visitors. The area is now a self-proclaimed autonomous neighbourhood of about 850 residents, covering 34 hectares, with its own electricity plant, a bath-house, self-governing society in quest for economically self-sustaining.

The debates around the status of the area were first formalised in the Christiania Law of 1989 where the area received a special status, transferring parts of the supervision

of the area from the municipality of Copenhagen to the state. Since 1994, residents have paid taxes and fees for water, electricity and trash disposal. Following agreement were made to the use of the land with the Danish defence ministry (which still owns the land) in 1995. Since then, debates have been unceasing in-between the illegal occupiers and the city, both claiming for the use of the land, the former in total autonomy from the government rules (and services), the latter making concessions but still controlling. After having reached an agreement in 2007 which gave the control of Christiania to the city over the course of 10 years for the purposes of business development, in June 2011, the residents of Christiania agreed to collectively set up a fund to formally purchase the land at below market prices. The community made its first payment in July 2012, officially becoming legal landowners. Becoming landowners though will not prevent from questioning the laws to be applicable in this area which was a first attempt of “free state within the state” with their own set of rules, independent of the Danish government. One of the major controversies remaining, beyond the non-payment of taxes, is the tolerance given to the sale of cannabis, granted since 2004.



Christiania self-claimed free zone in the city of Copenhagen ©Christophe Gouache

Such an institutionalisation requires a strong collaboration and co-working with concerned stakeholders. It also questions legal frameworks, the room to provide to experimentation, but also, and more generally the legitimacy of the municipality. In some instances, the political power related to the use of these spaces or buildings require the municipalities to find a compromise for them to keep their legitimacy. This might also include some major changes to the way the spaces and buildings are managed themselves. The municipality can take an increasing role in it, which is conflicting with the original idea of bottom-up temporary use movements and can interfere with the values and missions of the projects themselves. In Paris, in the 59 Rivoli aftersquat artistic movement discussions are still on-going about the services that are to be provided by the municipality, and which have been quite supportive so far, but the limits to the interference of the municipality of the place (see case box below).

The 59 Rivoli Aftersquat , Paris (FR) – Permanency of squat through municipal management

In November 1999, the former building of the bank Crédit Lyonnais, abandoned for

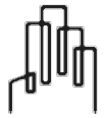
the previous 15 years, was being by a group of artists in order to revive it, to create a place for artists to create, live and expose and to prove the validity of a cultural alternative. Today, it hosts 30 artist's studios open to the public 6 days a week with up to 4,000 visit the artists' studios, exhibitions or concerts on average per week. It is a hub for creativity and culture, which is meant to be democratic, accessible, close to citizens and making a bridge between artists and citizens.

After a first notification for eviction due on the 4 of February 2000, the artists obtained a 6-months delay during which the press became increasingly aware of this "squat" (contraction of squat and art). As a result, the squat remained unsettled for many years during which the government did not take any decision, whereas artists were still at the verge of being evicted. The major change appeared when Bertrand Delanoë, then running for mayorship of the city of Paris, promised to legalise the squat if he were to be elected, what he did when the results of the election gave him this position, in 2001. In 2005, the City of Paris bought out the building to Credit Lyonnais in order to maintain the activities of the artists. In 2013, some disputes arose after an audit of the management of the building and where the administration wanted to have a say in the artists being accepted in residency. The disputes are still being settled.



The support of Paris' Mayor Bertrand Delanoë, from the temporary chez Robert Electron libre to the permanent 59rivoli ©59rivoli.org & Lutetia

As presented above, the timeframe of temporary use is crucial: although it is at first perceived as limited in time, its initiators or users can claim for its permanency. They can be proven of being of high – usually social – value to the city. However, municipalities are still facing the difficulty to develop the adequate frameworks, tools and mindset in order to benefit from the energy – and the experimentation power - coming out of these experiences at the same time as making in fit with the municipality rules and policies, in a way that is financially viable. The dynamics arising from these initiatives are also crucial to the city's functioning and municipalities are yet to develop their own approach to capture them and maintain them at the end of the projects.



IV. EU'S APPROACH TO TEMPORARY USE

1. Brownfields and regeneration

Temporary use has been supported by decisions, policy documents which pave the path towards new way of ensuring urban cohesion and developing economic, social and cultural social activities. The reuse of brownfields in particular is seen as contributing to these objectives and a valuable alternative to urban sprawl to re-use abandoned urban industrial, military or port sites as was stated in a series of 2006 European Commission reports, declarations and staff working documents: on the need to reuse of vacant brownfields (European Commission 2006d), developing projects on this for cities and regions (European Commission 2006a) and especially in relation to Cohesion Policy (European Commission 2006c; European Commission 2006b).

In this regard, some precursor projects were the FP5 [URBS PANDENS](#) - Urban Sprawl: European Patterns, Environmental Degradation and Sustainability (2002-2005) and the FP7 [URBAN Atlas](#) (2006 and 2012), which mapped the environmental impact of urban planning of 305 most populated cities in EU27 and also identified vacant areas and buildings in urban areas and their economic potential.

A series of EU research projects were also funded in order to identify the scale of the issue presented by brownfields and their regeneration, and the development of sustainable land planning in cities: the FP4 [CLARINET](#) - Contaminated Land Rehabilitation Network for Environmental Technologies (1998-2001); FP5 [CABERNET](#) - Concerted action on Brownfield and Economic Regeneration network (2002-2005); and, FP5 [RESCUE](#) - Regeneration of European Sites in Cities and Urban Environments (2002-2005). The FP5 [LUDA](#) (2004-2006) also focused on regeneration in large urban distressed areas.

Under INTERREG III B, cities also gathered to reconvert former military zones [CONVERNET](#) (2003-2006) and redevelop former industrial areas under [REVIT](#) - Revitalizing industrial sites (2004-2007).

In line with DG REGO's theme "4.4 Re-using brownfield and waste disposal sites" (DG REGIO 2007), the URBACT II programme (2007-2013) supported a series of projects addressing the issue of brownfields under its priority 2 – Themes "Environmental Issues" and/or "Integrated development of deprived areas and areas at risk of deprivation". The [REPAIR](#) project was about the transformation of abandoned military zones sites into thriving sources of economic activity, employment and social cohesion. The [BRING-UP](#)¹ project focused on brownfield regeneration in central metropolitan areas

¹ The project was ended after its development phase.

and integral urban and landscape approaches for disadvantaged areas in decentralize locations.

These above-mentioned policies and projects have been focusing on land management. Another stream of the EU approach has envisaged the way vacant lands or brownfields can be integrated in the city as a new element of urban planning or even city governance in general.

2. Reuse and temporary use

In the “Cities of tomorrow” report the European Commission emphasized the potential of temporary use for strengthening the position of cities in the EU. The decline of population in cities is a threat to the capital value in leading to vacant flats, shops and office spaces: this might lead to abandoned neighbourhood becoming no man’s lands, speeding up the withdrawal of private interests in a vicious circle. At the same time, cities should go towards a more compact settlement structure with limited urban sprawl and become a place of attraction and an engine of economic growth. The report therefore sees temporary use and experimentation processes in these places as solutions. It would lead on the one hand to use building stocks more efficiently in particular in allowing entrepreneurs and creative people to profit from temporarily reduced rents at the same time as proposing owners recognition of a building in use, as well as related revenue flow and assurance of occupation. It would also lead to a strategy for redevelopments and revitalisation of certain areas. The “Cities of Tomorrow” reports concludes on this point by stressing that “temporary use is a basis for new forms of social cohesion and local economic networks.” (European Commission 2011)).

In agreement with such an EU support, the FP5 URBAN catalyst project had been advanced in working with and for stakeholders to develop the potential of temporary use (see project box below). This project was key in setting up the baseline for researching and developing policies in relation to temporary use.

URBAN CATALYSTS – initial mapping and tools for temporary use development (FP5, 2001-2003)

Urban catalyst explored strategies for the temporary use of left-over sites in urban areas. As an interdisciplinary platform for research and public interventions it sought to stimulate discussion amongst architects and planners about the use of void spaces in the city: unplanned and informal uses of these spaces, which operate within informal economies and fall outside the remit of traditional urban planning and new forms of urban development where citizens would be the initiators rather than professional developers. The project identified strategies for temporary use and developed instruments and methods that integrate its potential into modern city management and urban design. It focused on communicating and interacting with stakeholders, making temporary use a marketable product for cities and developers.

Going one step beyond, the ERDF-funded [OLE](#) (Open LAB Ebbinge, 2009-2011) developed a public-private partnership in order to test the development of a “micro-city” inside the city of Groningen on one hectare area of wasteland. The key element of this project was the involvement of the variety of concerned stakeholders, and especially the setup of a public-private partnership. It provided ground for innovative and creative entrepreneurs to develop experiments in using demountable, nomadic and sustainable buildings.

The [URBIS](#) (Urban Land Recycling Information Services for Sustainable Cities, 2014-2017) project focuses on the reuse of vacant land. With a strong economic focus (funded by the FP7 as part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme) this project used advanced data systems to identify the potential of vacancies for reuse strategies. The aim of this project was to combine the potential of urban areas with economic growth. In particular it sought to control urban sprawl, reuse vacant land and maintain urban density, in order to provide the financial basis for public transport. It also used earth observation open data for supporting sustainable brownfield redevelopment. It then implemented standard operational URBIS information services for urban vacant land recycling support with sustainable business model.

The INTERREG IV B SEEDS project combined academic research with experimentation at the city level: it built strongly on previous projects in order to implement pilot temporary use policies in the partner cities (see project box below).

SEEDS - Stimulating Enterprising Environments for Development and Sustainability

INTERREG IV B (2012-2015)

The SEEDS project sought to promote the reuse of vacant sites while focusing on the implementation of innovative spatial planning policy instruments, and on stimulating regeneration and sustainability, in each of the partners’ pilot cases. It carried out research and analysis in parallel to on-site experimentation, developing skills and opportunities for those furthest from labour markets, transforming growth prospects. In particular, stakeholders and citizens were at the heart of these tools and strategies development for which these were produced. The project also sought to deliver the economic impulse needed in deprived areas while changing land-use patterns. The project developed a “Charter for re-use” supporting temporary use of vacant places and buildings through 10 actions: reactivate, enhance, experiment, create, learn, ripen, value, support, enable, and recognise.



Finally, the URBACT TUTUR network has taken further the reflexion upon the possibilities to promote temporary use in urban regeneration (see project box below).

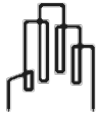
TUTUR - Temporary use as a tool for urban regeneration

URBACT (2013-2015)

The objective of the TUTUR project was to introduce a method of temporary use in urban regeneration to cities. The approach taken by TUTUR was to find new and agile ways to respond to local needs. It took



temporary use as a source of life for neighbourhoods in order to promote a sustainable urban regeneration promoted by public administration and citizens. The project transferred the practice of the ZwischenZeitZentrale agency in Bremen, which makes the link between those offering vacant places and those in need of such places, to Roma (IT) and Alba Iulia (RO). The project was highly concerned with bringing together stakeholders, engaging municipal and private economic development agencies and property owners, as well as cultural organisations, to elaborate potential uses of existing infrastructure and resources. Architects (and landscape architects, designers) also play a key role in the development of models for interim use and in the establishment of temporary spatial possibilities. The thematic focus of the project was to respond to needs related to youth employment, with co-working and start-ups, and cultural activities.



V. TEMPORARY USE AS A DRIVER FOR MUNICIPALITY SHIFTS

1. Temporary use's experimentation power

Temporary use can sometimes be the ground of on-site dissent experimentations which take place on a vacant place without upfront agreement or permission. Such experimentations are a real-life trial of what a place could become, what would be realistic and feasible as well as what citizens and users would value. Such processes are often collaborative and participative and propose complementary and transferable approaches. These have a strong potential to support governance as they provide additional services to those proposed by municipalities in that they collaborate directly with citizens, they are citizen-driven, they take risks and make trials and errors about possible outcomes of given lands or buildings. Some municipalities have learnt to incorporate these outsiders' inputs into their governance model. It was the case of Park Fiction in Hamburg, where an experimentation took place on a place originally foreseen for a real estate project and was later integrated in the neighbourhood development plan (see case box below).

Park Fiction, Hamburg (DE) – Temporary use for bottom-up experimentation feeding into city governance

Whereas a new housing and office development plan was being launched in the St Pauli's quarter of Hamburg, Germany, the *Hafenrandverein* (Harbour Edge Association), launched an experiment for actually transforming the area into a park: "Park Fiction". Through collective and participatory planning project, it draw the plans for a public park and started to organize activities, a series of public events in the site, including talks, exhibitions, open-air screenings and concerts. The project' vision was to act and implement changes instead of organising a protest for a public space: with this on-site experimentation, citizens could use the park and improve it according to their needs.

The project was partly funded by 'the 'art in public space' programme of the city's culture department developed the idea of a 'collective production of desires'. It was transparent: it developed tools and techniques to make the planning process more accessible. It sets up a strong communication campaign and visibility which made it difficult for the municipality to block their proposals. At the same time on-going discussion and negotiations took place between the protagonist and the local officials. As one of the results, one member of this project even became the city administrator responsible for liaising with the residents and the park was inaugurated in 2005.



Temporary use can also contribute to restoring buildings and spaces and to the renovation and regeneration of problematic neighbourhoods. New urban plans can emerge making temporary use a new way of managing empty buildings and spaces. Some governments are acknowledging the role temporary use can have on urban planning. The Danish Ministry of Social Affairs, for example, published a [toolkit](#) to identify area potentials through temporary uses, by using a space early in transformation process. Through an advanced brainstorming and collective projection in what a future area could become, the methodology provides architects, urban designers, planners, consultants, municipal officials, politicians and developers with a catalyser for the development of the area around the temporary use. These visions of the urban space, involve citizens, future residents and future users in order to create a dynamic between the traditional urban planning tools and space use.

2. Municipalities' adaptation to temporary use

The municipality of Amsterdam was seeking to encourage private owners of vacant spaces, residential properties and houses to use them for alternative uses for creative endeavours, start-ups, and incubators. However, the municipality observed that it required involving both private companies and NGOs for adapting to local needs but also that these did not speak the same language. In addition, there were no follow-up of the projects in the administration (interest parties had to present their case each time all over again. As a result, the administration set up a full-time position for one civil servant to focus on transforming vacant spaces in 2000, responsible, amongst other to liaise and talk individually to all stakeholders (Polyak and Oravec 2015).

Indeed, temporary use of vacant places requires new forms of cooperation between public administration, private owners and citizens. It can be reinforced by an improved communication between owners and users, the building of a network, and the identification of existing resources and collection of data. This, in turn, requires a

flexible legal framework, a fast decision making process, local sensibilisation and continuous integration of models (Elisei 2015).

Creating a new infrastructure and ecosystem for temporary use is one of the key challenges to support it. At the same time, it is also an opportunities to develop new governance models for administrations.

3. Temporary use's influence on municipalities

The cases presented throughout this document highlighted the way municipalities have adapted the way they design and implement local policies in order to develop temporality of activities and to go beyond it. They have become collaborative, participatory, and flexible. They have also learnt to listen and react to grassroots movement and to open the city governance to outsiders.

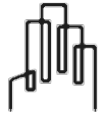
Temporary use can indeed have a strong impact on the changes within city governance: not only does the municipality need to adapt, but it can also be affected – positively - by these transformations. This corresponds to the current needs of cities to adapt to new needs, similarly to the administrative mismatch , mentioned in the “Cities of tomorrow” report “the administrative boundaries of cities no longer reflect the physical, social, economic, cultural or environmental reality of urban development and new forms of flexible governance are needed” (European Commission 2011). The same report also called for new evolutions in city governance, and in particular the need to:

- Deal with challenges in an integrated, holistic way;
- Match place- and people-based approaches;
- Combine formal government structures with flexible informal governance structures that correspond to the scale at which the challenges exist;
- Develop governance systems capable of building shared visions reconciling competing objectives and conflicting development models;
- Cooperate in order to ensure coherent spatial development and an efficient use of resources;
- New governance modes based on citizens' empowerment, participation of all relevant stakeholders and innovative use of social capital are needed; and,
- In the context of weakened links between economic growth and social progress, social innovation offers an opportunity to widen the public space for civic engagement, creativity, innovation and cohesion (European Commission 2011).

Temporary use indeed plays a key role in cities as it can accommodate innovation and adapt needs and capacities to available resources (Patti and Polyak 2015b). It fosters networks and co-creation dynamics. It also provides new roles for the concerned stakeholders. Civil servants are becoming matchmakers and coordinators. The owners of the lands or buildings and the users of these areas

become in turn providers of services or of solutions to the others' problem (e.g. ensuring maintenance of an empty space and using a space at affordable price).

Temporary use is a tool which proposes new framework for interaction with stakeholders. It brings a variety of stakeholders together. It provides feedbacks to the administrations concerning what the necessities are in the neighbourhoods and what the capacities to provide those needs are. It also sheds light as to where city administration needs to communicate and create synergies. Finally, it can create more sustainable management models as increasing community energies are involved (Patti and Polyak 2015c).



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