

Summary of the Integrated Action Plan Maija Bergström, Forum Virium Helsinki

In REFILL project, Helsinki focused on the digital drivers and barriers for intensification of the use of spaces and temporary use. The aims of REFILL were supported by other projects linking to the same thematics: Flexispaces project executed a wide demonstration of digital solution that enables opening spaces for self service use. Digital Helsinki programme coordinated joint activities between these projects and other smaller development projects done by the city.

During the projects, Helsinki' willingness to open it's spaces for citizens was stated in it's newest strategy. The ongoing projects produced understanding and good practices to show how this could be done in a wider scale.

The learnings from REFILL, Flexispaces and Digital Helsinki were collected in one publication "Tilat avoimiksi" ("Open the spaces") to provide up-to-date insight on intensification of space and temporary use in Helsinki. The publication also works as the integrated action plan for REFILL, explaining in four scenarios, what the next steps for Helsinki should be.

The action plan was co-produced with city administration, researchers, space activists and companies operating in the field of space sharing. The co-creation took place in a series of workshops during autumn 2017, where four future scenarios were formed. These scenarios emphasize different angles for the future of spaces: how to make spaces visible, how to use the city as an experimentation platform, how the business models can be improved and how the spaces support in making Helsinki a nonstop city.

The publication opens by explaining the problematics of underused space in an editorial by Head of Cultural services Mr Stuba Nikula: the potential value of the space remains uncalculated, and the price of letting this space stay unused is not visible.

The publication explains several solutions that has been developed in Helsinki during 2016-2017: e.g. Flexi Spaces model that was also further developed during REFILL in a peer evaluation session in Helsinki. The publication also showcases good examples of temporary use benchmarked during REFILL: Nantes, Bremen, Ghent and Cluj. The examples are such, that could well fit in our local context.

The publication compares the differences between intensification of the use of space and temporary use of space – a topic that was especially relevant for Helsinki. The publication compares the aims and means for these different approaches.

The action plan comprises of afore mentioned four scenarios: how to make spaces visible, how to use the city as an experimentation platform, how the business models can be improved and how the spaces support in making Helsinki a nonstop city. The actions that are suggested were the results of three intensive workshops and walkshops. A leading idea is to think about the spaces as a service, and how it should be designed to meet the needs of the users. Some examples of the suggested actions are: Helsinki's new neighbourhood managers (Stadiluotsit) could promote temporary use and link local needs and empty spaces. The business model developed by Cable Factory could be further used with several other empty premises, too. The city could promote TU for real estate owners and communicate about the benefits of temporary use. The price for

keeping spaces underused should be calculated to better communicate in monetary terms. The schools could be one user for several underused spaces.

The action plan was formulated into wider scenarios, that allow proceeding towards more detailed project plans. This approach was chosen after evaluating different possibilities for IAP during REFILL transnational meetings.

Following the action plan, funding was secured for a new project undertaking several of the actions mentioned in the plan: Forum Virium Helsinki continues the work formulated in scenarios by supporting local schools to use empty and underused spaces in the neighbourhood, and developing further the digital solutions for self service use of spaces.