

# HELSINKI-UUSIMAA CIRCULAR TRANSITION ARENA

- SUSTAINABLE USE OF BUILT SPACES



*The Helsinki-Uusimaa Circular Transition Arena connected various civil society and small business actors with the region's Circular Hub initiative. The Transition Arena workshops focused on sharing economy and sustainable use of built space. As a concrete result, a tool to measure the social impact of non-profit activities will be developed and tested with 1-3 NGOs. The tool will support NGOs when e.g. applying for low-cost spaces or funding from the municipality, as they will be able to reliably demonstrate the economic and social value of their activities.*

## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Almost 30 representatives of cities from the region, regional authority representatives, NGOs, associations, small enterprises and higher education institutions participated in the process.

## IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

The following challenges were identified and discussed:

1. How to change attitudes and measure the societal impacts of sharing economy and sustainable use of buildings?
2. How to use the existing built space more effectively?
3. How to foster new initiatives promoting sharing economy from the grassroots level?

## ABOUT THE PROCESS

One of the objectives of the transition arena process was to engage civil society and small business actors in the development of Helsinki-Uusimaa region's Circular Hub initiative. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Circular Hub forms an innovation ecosystem of expert organisations, municipalities, companies and research institutes, all working towards systemic change and new business opportunities based on a circular economy. The transition arena workshops focused especially on sharing economy and the sustainable use of built space.

The arena workshops were supported by external experts from Demos Helsinki. In the first workshop, the BSR Vision of Sustainable Life that was made in the We make transition! project, was utilised. Participants made suggestions to specify it and produced concrete goals based on the vision. These were: 1) Increase collaboration between public, private, and third sector to promote sharing economy. 2) Promote diverse and sustainable use of buildings and built space 3) double the lifespan of buildings from 50 years to 100 years.

In the second workshop the participants were divided into three groups, each focusing on a specific goal. In the third workshop, action proposals were made, and participants were prompted to identify their own organisation's role in implementing them and ideate pilots. In the end, participants voted for one pilot for immediate implementation. The transition agenda including recommendations and actions was compiled and validated with the participants by email.





# HELSINKI-UUSIMAA CIRCULAR TRANSITION ARENA

- SUSTAINABLE USE OF BUILT SPACES



- Civil society actors should be given the chance to contribute to the discussion on the shared use of built spaces. A stronger sense of ownership brings motivation to participate in the maintenance of one's own living environment.

The Regional Council will organise a series of events for the municipalities, civil society and innovation actors in the region. Speakers and participants will share concrete tips related to shared use of buildings.

## RESULTS

The immediate result of the process is a development of a social impact measurement tool that will be piloted with 1-3 NGOs. The tool will help measure the economic value of the social impact of non-profit activities. It aims to demonstrate why it is valuable to support and enable spaces to non-profit actors. This will offer new information that will be widely disseminated and hopefully integrated into permanent activities of many actors.

The transition arena process resulted in the following recommendations that are discussed and shared with the cities and municipalities of the Helsinki-Uusimaa region:

- The promotion of the sharing economy requires collaboration to share good practices and experiences. Detailed information, such as tips on how to set up procurement contracts for sharing economy services is needed.
- Long-term social impact must be measured and adequately taken into account when considering the costs and benefits of sharing economy services or the use of buildings and built space.



**"We exchanged views openly between different actors of society. Even we did not agree on everything, we could discuss our disagreements. [...] In the end, we all had a shared goal."**

## CONTACT

Miranda Sundholm, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council

