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The economic impact of social value in temporary uses: A spatial-temporal analysis of cases in the Brussels Region

The short-term reuse of vacant real estate has demonstrated to be able to generate multiple benefits (Bishop, 2015; Madanipour, 2017; Oswalt et al., 2012; Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung Berlin, 2007), and being a quick solution to prevent abandonment risks, providing opportunities to access low-cost space. Research has demonstrated that short-term non-profit projects have the potential to drive innovation and generate social value (Mangialardo & Micelli, 2017; Pinard, 2020; Saleh, 2022). In fact, temporary initiatives can establish transient communities, test new land-use models, and inform real estate transformations (Lepik, 2012). Mostly, creative, artistic, and informal occupations (Andres, 2011; Honeck, 2017; McArdle, 2022; Shaw, 2005; Vivant, 2022) gained attention over the last 25 years, because they have demonstrated capacities for placemaking (Camerin, 2024; Hernandez-Santin et al., 2020; Karachalis, 2021) and urban regeneration (Darchen & Simon, 2022; Martin et al., 2019). For these and other reasons, temporary use projects have been increasingly integrated in urban studies (Chang, 2021) and in urban planning (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012), despite that the seduction of short-term solutions can hide unfair dynamics (Ferrerri, 2015). In this context, Temporary Uses (TU) have been observed critically, considering issues as gentrification risks (Assiter, 2022), benefit distribution (Ferrerri, 2020; Mens et al., 2023; Vivant, 2022), negotiations among actors (Zhang, 2018), and outcomes in co-production (Jaspers & Steen, 2019). However, we still don't have models to measure the economic impact of real estate TU in their urban contexts. Thus, we ask: 1) What are the economic impacts that the social value of a TU produces on urban context? 2) What factors describing urban changes and TU of vacant buildings correlate? And, consequently, 3) how does TU social value contribute to urban dynamics? To address this gap, this study aims at defining and test a methodological framework to measure the economic impacts generated by the social value of temporary uses on the urban context, with a focus on some non-profit initiatives¹. The objective is to understand how social value generates effects and impacts on the urban context (street or neighbourhood) improving the place quality, considering both space (urban context) and effects (observing its changes over the years). A mixed method analysis is applied to a set of case studies first at the urban scale and then at the real estate scale. We consider multiple cases of temporary use in the Region of Brussels (Occupation Temporaire OT), that have been mapped and monitored by temporary.brussels. First, we conduct an urban analysis of the neighbourhood place quality (Carmona, 2019) to observe the characteristics and the trends of main socio-economic indicators, land use functions, presence of services and amenities, and ongoing transformations in the area together with local policies. Then, we will assess the impact of

each temporary use case measuring a set of quanti-qualitative indicators with data from direct observations, project reports, and interviews². The TU assessment framework has been developed based on literature review and qualitative analysis of cases in the Netherlands, in Belgium and in France. Finally, we'll carry out a correlation analysis applying the Geographically and Temporally Weighted Regression (GTWR) (Fotheringham et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2019) in GIS (running R packages). Findings from this research contribute to the ongoing discourse on temporary urbanism by discussing how temporary uses support not only communities but also long-term urban development. The proposed framework for defining, measuring, and analysing temporary use provides insights for scholars, policymakers and urban planners interested in leveraging these initiatives considering a fair resource distribution for sustainable and inclusive urban regeneration.

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