

## DELIVERABLE D.T2.4.1

### GOOD PRACTICE

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Good practice research documentation

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to show YOUMOBIL partners good practice in reinvention of unused railway infrastructure, especially railway stations. Abandoned (or disused) railway stations are buildings or structures which were constructed to serve as a railway stations but have fallen into disuse. There are various circumstances when this may occur - a railway company may fall bankrupt, or the station may be closed due to the failure of economic activity such as insufficient passenger numbers, operational reasons such as the diversion or replacement of the line. In some instances, the railway line may continue in operation while the station is closed. Additionally, stations may sometimes be relocated along the route of the line to new premises - examples of this include opening a replacement station nearer to the centre of population, or building a larger station on a less restricted site to cope with high passenger numbers.

Many rural stations and lines began to close in the past with the introduction of new bus services, and of course the increased popularity of the car and the improvements in road conditions. Other lines and stations never lived up to the expectations of their operators. Many rural stations were also badly sited, away from the towns and villages that they were designed to serve and this too led to a rapid decline in passenger numbers when more convenient forms of transport became available.

Many former railway lines, railway buildings or rail carriages were converted and now they have new functions. Architecturally and historically notable station buildings may present a problem if they are protected under building preservation laws but fall into disuse. Such buildings are often very abandoned or simply demolished, or they may be preserved as part of a heritage railway.



Fig. 1 - Railway station converted into private house, Mayfield, UK<sup>1</sup>

In rural areas, especially in UK, former railway station buildings are often converted into private residences. Examples include many of the stations on the closed Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway in England. Example from Mayfield (UK) represents a conversion of the original ticket hall of Mayfield Station on the Cuckoo Steam Railway Line built in 1880 (Fig.1). Also many former railway carriages have found a new life

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/money/gallery/2018/nov/16/homes-in-former-train-stations-in-pictures>



off the rails, being ingeniously reused as holiday homes for permanent housing or as cafeterias and restaurants. Despite their derelict state some of them have potential to be transformed into an incredible projects. The property at Fig.2 is remote, and with no access to city power or water supply. It is completely off the grid, capturing rain water and generating all of its power from a small solar system. After 8 years of part time renovation work, the carriage has now been transformed into a wonderful, small house which overlooks the big sky country of the Central Otago region of New Zealand.



Fig. 2 - Railway carriages converted into private house, New Zealand<sup>2, 3</sup>

Some former railway lines were repurposed as managed nature reserves, trails or other tourist attractions - for example Hellfire Pass in Thailand (Fig.3), known by the Japanese as Konyu Cutting a railway cutting on the former Burma Railway ("Death Railway"). It was built with forced labour during the Second World War, in part by Allied prisoners of war. The pass is noted for the harsh conditions and heavy loss of life suffered by its labourers during construction. The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum and the Hellfire Pass itself now serve for tourists.



Fig. 3 - Hellfire Pass tourist route and Memorial museum, Thailand<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.livingbiginatinyhouse.com/railway-carriage-home-conversion/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u\\_MWbZsDHC8&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_MWbZsDHC8&feature=emb_title)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.discoverythailand.com/Kanchanaburi\\_Hellfire\\_Pass\\_Memorial\\_Museum.asp](https://www.discoverythailand.com/Kanchanaburi_Hellfire_Pass_Memorial_Museum.asp)

Many former railways were converted into cycle ways, such as Bystrická Cycling Route a part of Kysucká Cycling Route, which ranks among the longest tourist cycling routes in Slovakia. It was built on the former rail line on the narrow gauge historic forest railway (Fig.4).



Fig. 4 - Cycling route on the former rail line, Slovakia

There are also many abandoned and neglected buildings other than rail ones in rural areas. Countryside represents the picture of each region and country. Its image and structure were created historically and are continuously changing. Overall picture of a countryside is based on both residential, farming and manufacturing buildings. In the past, countryside was predominantly inhabited by farmers, yet, today, people working in the cities and towns are moving to the countryside and also both small and larger industries are being more and more established in these parts of country. Both the design and layout of residential, farming and industrial buildings, alongside with technical and green infrastructure, create a special rural environment that affects both social and environmental conditions of rural life.

Rural buildings and their properties can be also reutilised in tourism, based on the protection and the valuable re-utilization of popular rural architectural heritage with potential interest for tourism purposes.

This document presents 27 reinvention cases especially throughout Europe, but also worldwide, that were investigated in YOUMOBIL project. In addition to good practices already known to YOUMOBIL partners (e.g. Stanica Žilina-Záriečie), further good practices of other areas were researched and documented. Some of good practice owners were approached to share their knowledge in the planned summer school. The aim of this document is to provide YOUMOBIL partners with ideas how to rebuild, reinvent and reuse the abandoned railway infrastructure, especially in rural areas, but also those situated in the smaller towns remoted from bigger cities. This information will help project consortium to share and exchange the potential ideas for changing the pilot spots. Most of cases are unused railway stations or rail buildings which have lost the purpose for operation. Several projects are presented to give also examples of social capital of such reinvention projects. When young people think about moving to or staying in a rural region, they consider the economic incentives, but at the same time they choose a community or a small town where they feel a sense of belonging. Communities that have it are more attractive places to live because things work better. People work together to solve problems and make things better. Communities can enhance their future by establishing a culture of working together to solve problems, launch new initiatives, and make the rural community a better place to live. Old railway infrastructure can be converted to such centres for community life.

## 2. Examples of good practice - reutilised railway infrastructure

### 2.1. Museums

Many old railway buildings were converted to museums, focused especially on rail transport. They now represent a collective living space for knowledge sharing and discussion, opened to all as a space for reflection and investigation into relations between the cultural heritage and the historic, symbolic and technological role of rail transport in the past. Visitors can learn how railways actually work. The museums usually contain collections of steam locomotives, old apparatuses, tools and other items of technical heritage related to railways. Rail museums often host occasional events for public and train enthusiasts. On such occasions, old steam locomotives are taken out of hangars and their furnaces are fired up as part of the museum's efforts to keep all the artefacts in operational condition.

#### Museum of railway transport

Purpose: Museum

Location: Rajecké Teplice, Slovakia

Population: 2.970

Story: Enthusiasts of transport and its history can visit and have a great time in the small local Museum of Transport in Rajecké Teplice, in the building of the railway station, which was officially opened in 2014 by the Museum of Považie. Visitors to the Museum of Transport Rajecké Teplice can see real railway tracks, masterful draisine, equipment used on the railway in the past and a showroom of an historic transport office. Little visitors have an opportunity to play with historic model railway. Authors of the project did not forget about the regional particularities, as many of the acquired objects come right from the local route Žilina - Rajec. The museum also displays historic uniforms, guide's commentary and occasionally the operation of some old machines and equipment. The route Žilina - Rajec also run historic trains every year.



Fig. 5 - Model of railway for children, Slovakia<sup>5</sup>

#### Gage County Historical Society Museum

Purpose: Museum

Location: Beatrice, Nebraska, USA

Population: 12.300

<sup>5</sup> <https://pmza.sk/muzeum-dopravy/>

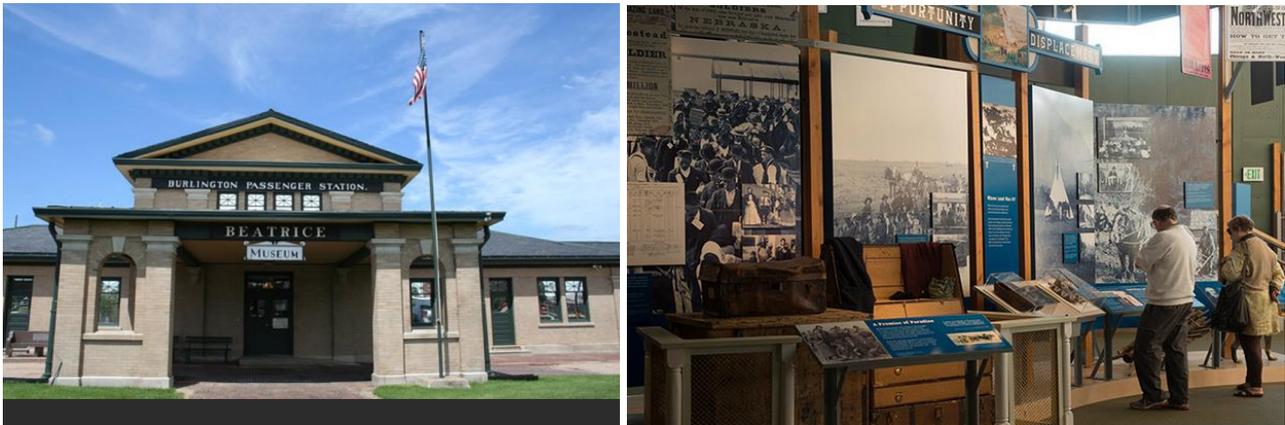


Fig. 6 - Gage County Museum, USA <sup>6</sup>

Story: The Gage County Historical Society collects, preserves, and interprets artefacts and archival materials related to the history of Gage County and holds them in trust for present and future generations. The Museum is in a 1906 Burlington Passenger Station, the first Neo-Classical Revival architectural style on the Burlington line. This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### Railway museum in Mariefred

Purpose: Museum of railway transport

Location: Mariefred, Sweden

Population: 3.700

Story: Östra Södermanlands Järnväg, Eastern Södermanland Railway is a 600 mm narrow gauge railway in Mariefred, Sweden. Steam-hauled passenger traffic is provided all days of the week during the summer.



Fig. 7 - Museum of transport, Sweden

There is exhibition of old rolling stock and workshops, given added interest by the fact that narrow-gauge steam trains still run between Mariefred and Läggesta. The museum is run by the non-profit association ÖSJ, Östra Södermanlands Järnväg (Eastern Södermanland's Railway).

#### Railway Musuem in Lužná

Purpose: Museum of railway transport

Location: Lužná, Czech Republic

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.gagecountymuseum.info/index.html>

Population: 1.900

Story: Since 1999, the Czech Railways Museum in Lužná u Rakovníka has been occupied with the maintenance and operation of historical rail vehicles which now, after many years of service, bring joy to railway enthusiasts and everyone interested in the history of transport. The museum is located near the railway station Lužná u Rakovníka in a beautiful natural setting at the edge of Křivoklát forests. The collections here comprise steam locomotives of various series and periods, historic diesel locomotives, railcars and examples of technical railway equipment. Also, regular nostalgia train journeys take place here, thanks to which you can not only see the history of railway transport, but also experience it yourself.



Fig. 8 - Museum of transport, Czech Republic<sup>7</sup>

### Jozef Kroner Musuem

Purpose: Museum

Location: Staškov, Slovakia

Population: 1.500

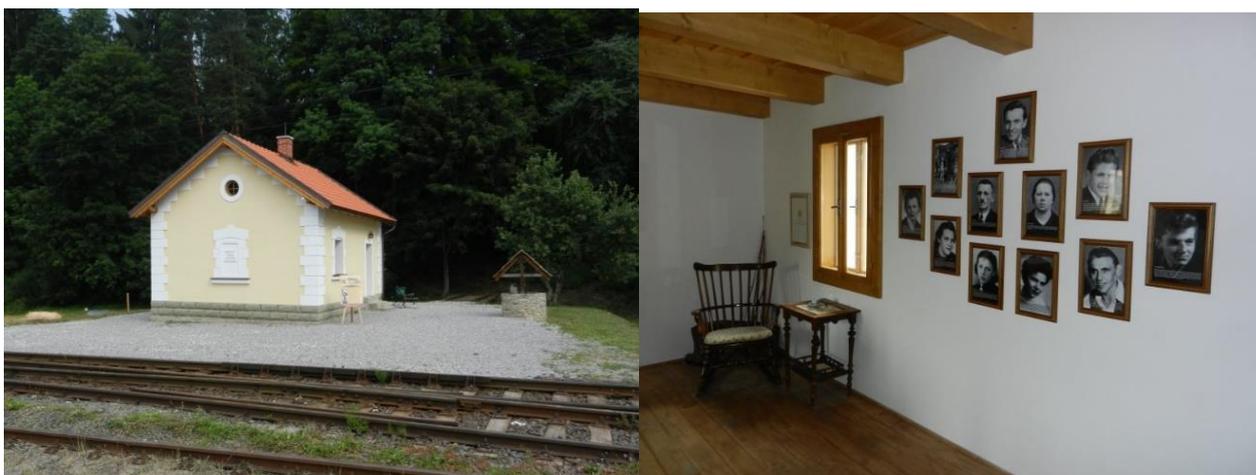


Fig. 9 - Born house of known Slovak actor, Slovakia<sup>8</sup>

Story: The birthplace of the prominent Slovak actor and holder Oscar, Jozef Kroner is located near the railway station in village Staškov. Jozef Kroner was born in a small railway guard house. The house was built in 1914 and served as a guard house for the railway line. After 1990 the house was renovated and rented for

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cdmuseum.cz/en/default.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.regionkysuce.sk/sk/zaujímavosti-z-regionu-kysuce/kulturno-historicke/12-rodny-dom-jozefa-kronera>

recreational purposes. The tenant, however, used the house very rarely, and so the building gradually began to deteriorate and became a refuge for the homeless and the target of vandals. The Slovak railways as the owner stopped performing any maintenance work and the technical condition of the house deteriorated quickly. In order to save the house, the municipality of Staškov entered into negotiations with representatives of the Slovak Railways. The municipal council decided to reconstruct the house on its own using local tradesmen and enthusiasts who were willing to help selflessly. Staškov village officially opened the reconstructed house and a memorial room established there on 19 November 2011.

For more examples of railway museums see<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2. Culture centres

### Stacja Kultura, Biblioteka Rumia

Purpose: Station, Library and Culture centre

Location: Rumia, Poland

Population: 45.000

Story: The old building of railway station was rebuilt into city library. The Culture station the main seat of the Municipal Public Library in Rumia is the first institution of this type in Poland that was opened at the still operating station. This project initiated a new trend of reinvention of stations for cultural purposes. It arose from the need to save the ruined train station, as well as to expand the cultural base in Rumia. The station building, maintained in the style of modernism of the 1950s, was extremely neglected. From the outside, it was only cleaned and refreshed. Only 20% were left for railway needs. Whereas the rest of the object with an area of 1.5 thousand sq. m has been turned into a kind of modern cultural centre with a rental centre for adults and children as well as a reading room with computer stands. In addition, the facility includes: a gallery, two conference rooms, a mirror room, painting, photography, and ceramics and comics studio. Apart from library activities, the Culture Station organizes various cultural events. Author meetings are held here, excellent guests from the world of art, science and culture are invited. Conferences, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, workshops (theatre, art, dance and photography), as well as various activities for children and seniors are organized there.



Fig. 10 - Stacja Kultura, Biblioteka Rumia, Poland<sup>10, 11</sup>

In 2016, it has received global recognition from the Library Interior Design Awards.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.wikiwand.com/en/List\\_of\\_railway\\_museums#](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/List_of_railway_museums#)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.bibliotekarumia.pl/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/StacjaKulturaRumia/>



## Old railway station Atterndorn

Purpose: Station and culture centre

Population: 24.000

Location: Atterndorn, Germany

Story: The project was launched and process of transformation started in 1999. The German railways DB closed the station in 2002. In 2005 Atterndorn town purchased the station building. Since the 2010 the concept called Fahrplan (Timetable) was adopted. Who are the Fahrplan designers? The Bürgerhaus Alter Bahnhof initiative is a network of committed citizens, local politicians, associations and groups. At the moment it includes: Agenda forum, Youth centre, Cultural office eV, Senior council, Art association "Kultura", Children's studio of the art association Südsauerland eV and the Artist association Südsauerland eV. The initiative has come together under the umbrella of the "Sponsors and supporters association for the youth work in Atterndorn eV". The district of Olpe and adjacent areas are with up to 65% jobs in the manufacturing industry an industrial region with many employees, high economic and tax power. A strength, but also a necessity, lies in a well-trained workforce. Due to the demographic change, the region is already showing signs of a number of "bleeding" of young people with good education. Here is a need to take countermeasures - through a hands-on community centre. Railway station culture brings people closer, connect them, and develop them - and also place and a region.



Fig. 11 - Old railway station Atterndorn, Germany<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/BahnhofAtterndorn/>

## Railway station Záriačie

Purpose: Station and culture centre

Population: 84.000

Location: Žilina, Slovakia

Story: The station was open in 1899 as a part of Rajec railway line connecting Žilina city with rural area of Rajec. The project Railway Station (Stanica Záriačie) started with the reconstruction and simultaneous use of the space in the still operating railway station Zilina-Zariecie (free of charge contribution by The Railways of Slovak Republic).



Fig. 12 - Stanica Záriačie, Slovakia<sup>13</sup>

The operator of this cultural centre is a civic organisation called Truc sphérique, providing a platform for the interaction of art-activism and real life-culture. It is an independent cultural project-space, defying definition. Stanica is a member of Trans Europe Halles, a network of independent cultural centres and other European networks (more information on Network is in Conclusion section). In 2004, the organisation won the Enlargement of Minds Anniversary Award from the European Cultural Foundation, provides space for innovative artists who wish to discover new creative territories, its activities include: performances, concerts, projections, exhibitions, discussions, lectures, workshops, artistic workshops for children, residential programmes of artists, participatory artistic, community, social activities, graphic design, cultural policies, education, information, creative services, a garden and a park, an internet café linked to the room's original function - a waiting room for passengers, wheelchair access on the two floors.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/StanicaZilina/>



## Beaver Station Cultural & Event Center

Purpose: Cultural and Event centre

Population: 4.500

Location: Beaver, Pennsylvania (USA)

Story: Beaver Station Cultural & Event Centre – in the historic town of Beaver, Pennsylvania – is a restored vintage Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad passenger station dating to 1897. Beaver Station is part of the Beaver Area Heritage Foundation. Much of its original grandeur is still intact or beautifully restored including an elegant front entrance porte cochère, slate roof, stained glass windows, marble mosaic floor, box beam ceiling and shiny brass railings. It also features an outdoor, covered trackside courtyard with lush garden beds and raised planter boxes for all-weather enjoyment.

Preserved and operated by the Beaver Area Heritage Foundation, the Station’s beautifully landscaped three-acre campus includes a road side garden maintained by the Penn State Master Gardeners, an event lawn featuring a historic bandstand like “Belvedere” structure, an award winning local history museum and log house as well as ample free parking. The station can be rent for organising the various events.



Fig. 13 - Beaver Station Cultural & Event Center, USA<sup>14</sup>

## The Highland Heritage and Culture centre Grantown East

Purpose: Cultural and heritage centre

Population: 2.400

Location: Grantown on Spey, Scotland (UK)

Story: The Highland Heritage and Culture centre is located in Grantown East, Scotland. The main purpose of this centre is heritage centre (transport museum) focusing on railway track with combination of place for cultural events, restaurant, etc. The railway track was closed for passengers in 1965, in 1968 completely. Railways have served Scotland for nearly 200 years.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.beaverstation.org>

The line which ran through Grantown East, built by the Great North of Scotland Railway, was opened in 1863. The last train passed through Grantown East on 2nd November 1968. The station became abandoned for long period. In 2015 Revack Lodge Estate announced plans to develop the station site as a heritage centre. The renovation of station was completed in 2018.



Fig. 14 - The Highland Heritage and Culture centre, UK <sup>15</sup>

Heritage Centre offers short videos about The Speyside Line, The History of the Kilt, An Introduction to Highland Games, The Making of Grantown East Tartan, Kilt Making and The History of the Clydesdale Horse. Two mini trains are available for sitting and enjoying the view.

### JUKUZ centre

Purpose: Social and culture centre for young people

Location: Puderbach, Germany

Population: 2.200

Story: The small village Puderbach is home for young, social and culture project called JUKUZ. The centre is situated in the old railway station. The rail service was shut down in 1985. The Puderbacher train station was bought by the Afflerbach Company, which used it as a freight station, the upper floor in the old quarry stone building was rented to a family, the ground floor with the old ticket office was empty, and the former baggage hall rambled away. The youth centre was established there, on the edge of the tracks, far enough from the nearest houses, but still centrally in the centre of Puderbach. In autumn 2002 an all-day "Open Air Festival" was to promote the acceptance of the "JUKUZ" by the Puderbach population and in September 2003 they started in the "Old Railway Station" with a big cultural festival, children theatre, comedy, but also a

<sup>15</sup> <http://grantowneast.com/>

free church service Heaven with gospel choir. The centre represents a meeting place for people of all ages, all nationalities, many interests, with great curiosity in the world of the imaginable and beyond.



Fig. 15 - Jukuz culture centre <sup>16</sup>

## 2.3. Examples of reinvented railway infrastructure with other purposes

### Temora Railway station

Purpose: Rural community hub

Location: Temora, Australia

Population: 6.100 inhabitants

Story: The community hub completed in 2016 is situated in old railway station. The State Heritage-listed Temora Railway Station has been restored and returned to active use so it can once again play a central role in Temora's social and economic fabric. The facility is housing a youth centre, railway museum, and exhibition space. It is a part of a wider precinct renewal and tourism scheme to house events and provide free camping. The main building, dating from 1893, housed a Station Master's office, ticketing rooms, and waiting rooms. In 1912 a refreshment room was added beside the main passenger building. The complex also included a large parcel office and timber switch room in adjacent buildings lining the platform. Temora Railway Station was an important part of the railway network connecting the Riverina to other parts of NSW, and the focus of much activity. Temora was a bustling rural community with the busy station employing many local residents. It was the focus of the area's rural activities, with stockyards and grain sheds, and facilities for steam engines. This history has generated strong ongoing community links to the station. The space is highly utilised and valued by the community, for families using the park, by visitors to Temora to stay and explore local history, and for community events. Temora Shire Council was awarded a NSW Government heritage grant to enable restoration, repairs, and re-use of the station buildings. Initial work included extensive repairs to undo damage caused by termites and vandalism. The restoration work also removed 1960s additions and fixed poor detailing of services that had been added to the buildings during

<sup>16</sup> <https://puderbacher-land.de/jugend-und-kulturzentrum-puderbach/>

their last years of usage as a railway station. Working in consultation with John Holland Group’s heritage advisors, stakeholders and the community, council identified a series of new uses for the site and developed an adaptive re-use strategy.



Fig. 16 - Rural community hub, Australia <sup>17</sup>

The station precinct was separated from the town centre by fencing and closed roads and pathways. These limited the use of the space and made the area prone to vandalism. Access, boundaries, and fences were renegotiated as part of the new lease agreement, and unnecessary sections of fence removed so the station forecourt could be linked to an adjoining playground and tennis club. New landscaping has returned the forecourt to active use as public green space and an amphitheatre, and an interpretive walking trail now circumnavigates the whole railway precinct.



Fig. 17 - Rural community hub, camping site, Australia <sup>18</sup>

Facilities for local events and tourists have been provided, including refurbished public amenities. The green space and amphitheatre support events like local markets and live performances, and a free camping area has been set up for tourists with large vans and vehicles. The former refreshment room has been refitted for use as youth club, and the former kitchen has been adapted to become a multi-function community venue with opportunities for commercial tenancies. The whole site has been successfully transformed into a hub of community activity, as well as a much-needed tourist facility. A second stage of the project has also obtained NSW Government funding. This includes the walking trail that takes in the wider railway precinct, and features interpretive panels providing stories about wheat, wool, the flour mill, and the steam locomotive works.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/case-studies/2019/01/temora-railway-station>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Temora-railway-station/201781976508043>

This project demonstrates how creative thinking can bring a heritage precinct whose use has changed back into the life of the community, without affecting its heritage values. Minimal changes at the site have ensured people are once again using this important part of Temora and as a result will continue to understand its significant railway heritage.

### Community Center for Agro-ecological Supply

Purpose: Citizens Agro-ecological centre and market

Location: Chacarita, near Buenos Aires, Argentina

Population: 27.000

Story: At the edge of Buenos Aires there is located the Community Centre for Agro-ecological Supply. Hidden down a desolate Chacarita cobblestone road between rusted abandoned train cars and the Federico Lacroze station, you will find El Galpón, one of the few co-operative farmers' markets in Buenos Aires that specializes in organic and natural locally grown products. The centre serves as the place where the citizens can purchase the local production from city or rural areas. This organic food market in an old train warehouse in Chacarita is proof that with a little bit of imagination, the unlikeliest of places can be turned into a hub for sustainable business. In the El Galpón cooperative market you can find all manner of fair trade, locally-sourced, organic and recycled products for sale. There are also organised yoga classes, permaculture workshops and a community radio.



Fig. 18 - Citizens Agroecological centre and market, Argentina<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> <https://pickupthefork.com/2010/07/28/el-galpon-market-organico/>, <https://elgalpon.org.ar/>



El Galpón is not like a traditional farmer's market that I've been spoiled by - it is more like a fair with about 10 stands each featuring a few products. For the past 5 years, local farmers and producers have come to this yellow warehouse biweekly (Wednesdays from 9am - 1pm and Saturdays 9am - 6pm) to sell organic cheeses, vegetables, fruits, freshly cut herbs, dairy, poultry, beef, wines, honey, spices, sweets, clothes and other handmade goods. Sponsored by the Asociación Mutual Sentimiento, El Galpón emerged as a space for farmers and social organizations (Centro Comunal de Abastecimiento - CCA) to provide consumers with natural products, without pesticides, in order to promote the importance of environmental responsibility, protection of worker's rights, and fairly priced organic and sustainable food purchases. The organic craze has yet to hit the city, but with the help of the CCA and the MAPO (Movimiento Argentino para la Producción Orgánica), slowly but surely they are working hard to encourage awareness of the benefits of organic production and consumption.

### El Hostel Vieja Estación

Purpose: Eco hostel

Location: Puente del Inca, Argentina

Population: located in national park

Story: This eco-hotel is situated in abandoned railway station in natural park area Puente del Inca. The hostel lays on the old Transandine line that once shuttled passengers between Chile and Argentina by way of the Andes. At 2720 m above sea level and only \$20 per night, it's popular with backpackers on route to the Américas' highest peaks. The old Argentine Transandine Railway Station was turned into a colourful hostel. Located in Puente del Inca, an area rife with geothermal activity, the hostel sits only 5 km away from the Aconcagua National Park entrance. If you are crossing the border from Argentina to Chile, or need an affordable stay (with Wi-Fi) before attempting to climb the highest mountains in the Américas, head to The Old Station in Puente del Inca. It is not to be missed. The guest house has also ski school and ski storage space, and guests can enjoy a drink at the bar. There is a gift shop at the property. Ski equipment hire is available at this guest house and the area is popular for skiing and hiking.





Fig. 19 - Eco hostel - El Hostel Vieja Estación, Argentina<sup>20</sup>

### Hospedaje Leñas del Tolosa

Purpose: Guest house

Location: Las Cuevas, Argentina

Population: located near Aconcagua national Park

Story: Located in Las Cuevas, 9 km from Paso de Uspallata, Hospedaje Leñas del Tolosa provides accommodation with a shared lounge and free private parking. The accommodation features a 24-hour front desk, a shared kitchen and currency exchange for guests. There is also small museum of railway situated at this place.



Fig. 20 - Hospedaje Leñas del Tolosa, Argentina<sup>21</sup>

### Botanical Garden Inside Atocha Train Station, Madrid

Purpose: Botanical garden

Location: Madrid, Spain

Population: 6,642.000

Story: The Atocha Train station is the largest railway station in Madrid, Spain, and one of a kind in the world. What makes Atocha so special is the stunning 4,000 square meter tropical garden the station houses under the arched skylight. The part of the station where the greenhouse resides dates back to 1851, to the time

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/hostellaviejaestacion/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/hospedajeleniasdeltolosa/photos/a.194871677390562/942828095928246/?type=3&theater>

when Atocha was inaugurated. The station was partially destroyed by fire in 1892, and after several renovation the last of which took place in 1992, the original building was taken out of service as a terminal, and converted into a concourse with shops, cafés, a nightclub and the magnificent greenhouse. Over 7,000 plants belonging to around 260 different species adorn the garden, including a pond with 22 species of fish and turtles. In the summer months, when the dry heat of Madrid seeps through the glass roof, hundreds of tiny sprinklers let off a sort of steam, giving the place a genuine look of outdoors jungle.



Fig. 20 - Botanical garden in Atocha former station, Spain<sup>22</sup>

## 2.4. Examples of reinvented abandoned tracks

Many of Central Europe's railroads began their decline especially in the 1960s, leaving behind kilometres of abandoned and unused tracks. But thanks to different initiatives, these abandoned rails have been repurposed and transformed into open trails for some of the best hiking and biking in countries or into living trails. This section show some of the most unique projects.

### Rosheim-St Nabor railway in Alsace

Purpose: Art cycle and walking track

Location: Rosheim-St Nabor railway in Alsace, France

Population: situated in countryside

Story: completed by Oslo-based Reiulf Ramstad Architects (RRA) in a collaboration with Parenthèse Paysage, Chemin des Carrières, or the Quarries' Track, reclaims an abandoned railway with architectural elements arranged in an artistic composition. The project repurposes the old site of the Rosheim-St Nabor railway in

<sup>22</sup><https://www.amusingplanet.com/2012/09/botanical-garden-inside-atocha-train.html>

Alsace, France, and brings it back to life. Measuring 11km, the new path follows the old railway and undulates across the French countryside. Chemin des Carrières invites both hikers and cyclists to discover the landscape in a refreshing way. Along the railway track are built the various art mobiliars in order to relax or enjoy the leisure time. Along the path goes a story, which the stops split into four chapters of different sequences of landscapes offering varied universes and highlighting remarkable sites. Unusual elements punctuate the way, aiming at awakening the visitor’s senses, and water is encountered repeatedly.



Fig. 21 - The “Voie verte” from Rosheim to Saint-Nabor, France<sup>23</sup>

### ‘Brujitas’ in San Cipriano

Purpose: Riding attraction for tourists

Location: San Cipriano, Colombia

Population: 311

Story: The brujitas are a testament to the ingenuity of the Afro-Colombian inhabitants of this tiny little Pacific jungle village, around 3 hours from Cali by bus towards the port city of Buenaventura. A train line passes by the entrance to their town, but passenger trains don’t run anymore, and only the occasional freight train passes by, wailing solemnly in the night most of the time. San Cipriano’s residents have invented

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.my-weekend-in-alsace.com/review/voie-verte-rosheim/>

the brujitas - old motorbikes attached to wooden platforms with benches on them, placed on the train tracks and driven, with no small amount of screeching, scraping and rattling, at break-neck speeds between the town and the road. The ride takes around 20 minutes and passes through beautiful jungle, eerie, crumbling tunnels, and over one bridge. At one point the forest opens up and you are presented with a breathtaking panorama of the river as it works its way through the forest. It's as if Universal Studios commissioned a ride for their theme park, based on some jungle film that never got made, and then abandoned it to be taken over by entrepreneurial Colombians.<sup>24</sup>



Fig. 22 - 'Brujitas' in San Cipriano, Colombia<sup>25</sup>

### The Čiernohronská railway Čierny Balog

Purpose: Riding attraction for tourists, and museum

Location: Čierny Balog, Slovakia

Population: 5.153

Story: There were many forest rail lines closed in 1950s in Slovakia. The last one was closed on December 31, 1982. It was the railway at stream Čierny Hron. Its wide network with numerous extensions in the Čierny Hron stream was in its best times in the late 40s more than 130 km long. It was the greatest forest railway network in Slovakia. Fortunately, a group of enthusiasts was successful in the saving the main line with some short extensions together with the rest of equipment in the last minute. Railway line was registered in the list of cultural heritage. After long 13 years of hard work service was opened to public between Hronec and Čierny Balog in 1995.

Now the historic Čiernohronská forest railway ranks among the greatest attractions in region Horehronie in central Slovakia. It once hauled timber down the picturesque valley of the river Čierny Hron, now it transports visitors and above all their children. Its track consists of two sections. The longer one connects the station Chvatimech next to Hronec with Čierny Balog and the second leads from Čierny Balog to the valley Vydrovská dolina. Trains were operating on narrow rails gauged 760 mm which originally hauled timber extracted in huge forests of the mountain range Rudohorie. The first 10.8 km long section of the railway was put in operation in 1908. The network of the forest railway was expanded until it measured unbelievable 132 km. Since 2003, visitors apart of having a ride on the Čiernohronská railway can also visit the interesting Open-air Museum of Forest.

<sup>24</sup><https://seecolombia.travel/blog/2015/03/riding-the-brujitas-in-san-cipriano/>

<sup>25</sup><https://www.outdoyo.com/activity/river-adventure-enjoy-an-afternoon-of-nature-and-t/>



Fig. 23 - Čiernohorská railway and Open-air Museum of Forest<sup>26</sup>

### Gippsland rail trails

Purpose: cycling trails

Location: Victoria, Australia

Population: situated in countryside

The Gippsland region has several rail trails along disused railway and tram corridors that wind their way through farmland and forests and across historic trestle bridges. The longest is the East Gippsland rail trail (151 km) from Bairnsdale to the Snowy River at Orbost but, for those who fancy a shorter ride, the 25 km Gippsland lakes discovery trail follows an old tramline through the Colquhoun state forest. It links the East Gippsland trail to Lakes Entrance and is a good one-day option; it's mostly flat with just a couple of short, reasonably gentle, climbs. Most of the riding is on compacted gravel and there are several good picnic spots along the way, beside the very pretty Mississippi Creek. More information on reinvented rail track can be found here.<sup>27</sup>



Fig. 24 - Gippsland rail trails, Victoria, Australia<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.chz.sk/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.railtrails.org.au/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://uncoolcyclingclub.com/east-gippsland-rail-trail-bruthen-nowa-nowa/>

## 2.5. Examples of reinvented abandoned wagons

### Seabank - tourist facility in rail carriages

Purpose: Accommodation facility for tourists

Location: Selsey, UK

Population: 10.700

Story: Located just at the beach of Selsey, Seabank offers a truly memorable experience for eight guests. Incorporating two 19th-century Standley railway carriages in its design, this gorgeous home encapsulates all that is both charming and eccentric about the British seaside!



Fig. 25 - Accommodation facility for tourists, Selsey, UK<sup>29</sup>

After years on the tracks running between London and Brighton, the two carriages were retired and converted just after the Second World War. Ever since, they've delighted guests in this beautiful beachfront villa, and still proudly show off their original features today. As you enter from the front door - just steps from the sea wall - you'll find yourself in a sunny living and dining area with panoramic sea views. You'll also find the first railway carriage right in front of you! Painted in a beautiful blue, with gold lettering, this first carriage houses a cosy, quirky sitting room and a restful double bedroom. The original doors with twist handles have been perfectly preserved, and you can still enter each room from either side of the carriage!

### MEATliquor restaurant

Purpose: Restaurant

Location: King Crossing, London, UK

Population: 8,982.700

Story: After building a cult following amongst burger aficionados from the back of a food wagon, MEATliquor owners approached architecture firm SHED DESIGN to evolve the brand, and translate the essence of the early incarnation into a permanent restaurant in King Crossing, London. The concept had two simple ingredients: a unique idea for each site borne out of location, mixed with a no-nonsense approach to the operations, add a large portion of debauched anarchy and this allowed SHED to develop a design language that is now synonymous with MEATliquor. An abandoned train carriage dominates the space, housing the bar and kitchen. The theme of transport carries on into the out-dated seat fabrics and carriage seating, rusty finishes and graphic prints. It's like looking back to the days of British rail in the 1980's. SHED collaborated with creative agency ILOVEDUST to create a colourful backdrop to the space. Skylights, windows and the rear wall are adorned with MEATliquor characters and the train carriage was graffiti-tagged on site.

<sup>29</sup> <https://hostunusual.com/categories/railway-carriages-stations/seabank-selsey/>



Fig. 26 - Bar in the old carriage, London, UK<sup>30</sup>

### 3. Examples of good practice - different reutilised infrastructure in rural areas

Rural areas have been increasingly “hollowed out” in recent decades as young people migrate to urban areas. This shift also means lower levels of education and income in rural communities. Rural communities shouldn’t be discouraged in their efforts to attract young people. Craig Schroeder, director of youth engagement at the Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship in Lincoln, Nebraska, has developed five strategies to attract and retain young residents:

- High-speed internet. In his survey Millennials cite high-speed internet access as a basic staple of modern life. In rural settings, it enables long distance learning and online business opportunities.
- Invest in “youth priorities.” Millennials value socialization, so it’s important for rural communities to create “third spaces”—places other than home or work, such as Internet cafes and microbreweries.
- Provide entrepreneurial opportunities. More than 70 percent of young people want to own a business; 17 percent already do. Public markets, shared workspaces, financial incentives and “Buy Local” campaigns are all indications of an entrepreneurial culture.
- Actively engage and consult youth. Make sure they know their ideas and opinions matter. Involve them in community planning and local government, in addition to surveys and focus groups.
- Market your community to attract young people. Create intentional marketing campaigns targeting young people in short, digital formats. Promote small-business friendliness and utilize peer-to-peer recommendations<sup>31</sup>.

Young people from rural or geographically isolated areas often have limited opportunities (all the action is happening in the cities). However it is possible to set up projects to make things happen rurally as well. Projects need to have, or to create, a space in which to operate. Rural infrastructure reinvention projects could bring local people together and provide such a space. Projects need to be actively supported and

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.designboom.com/design/meatliquor-shed-studio-kings-cross-restaurant-london-10-04-2017/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.peoriomagazines.com/ibi/2018/apr/5-strategies-attract-youth-rural-communities>

backed with more than just money. There must be support for the project from key people and active participation from the target group - young people as well.

The expansion of rural tourism is a trend that is common to most countries in Europe. Tourism is considered to be a potentially complementary activity for local communities and especially for farming families. The benefits are generally summed up as a three-way yield for the host community (the Economic and social dimension of rural tourism, for the land itself (environmental maintenance), and for the tourist (leisure and tourism in the countryside), which implies a sequence of inter-related benefits<sup>32</sup>.

This section provide information on several projects - reinvented rural architecture (not railway infrastructure), performed in rural areas to support local community, to attract young people to stay in rural areas and to attract visitors.

### The Plum Yard, Malovice

Purpose: Open space for theatre and art, citizens engagement

Location: Malovice, Czech Republic

Population: 635



Fig. 27 - Theatre hall in Plum Yard <sup>33</sup>

Story: Plum Yard is an association established in 2013 by the members of Continuo Theatre and their colleagues. It is located in South Bohemian Region in the village of Malovice, not far from the towns of Vodňany and České Budějovice. The association was established in order to support the renovation of the farmyard where Continuo Theatre resides. There was also a need to make a body that will administer the newly built cultural space. The renovation of Plum Yard enabled to create a unique cultural background for production of various artistic activities. Plum Yard is an open theatre, artistic and educational space. It is a place for meeting, creating, sharing and exchanging ideas, it is a place of freedom as well as order. Plum Yard association is based on four activities:

- It provides facilities and supports the production of Continuo Theatre
- It creates its own regular programme of visiting theatres, companies or groups for children as well as adults

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.academia.edu/5938209/Rural\\_tourism\\_in\\_Spain\\_an\\_analysis\\_of\\_recent\\_evolution](https://www.academia.edu/5938209/Rural_tourism_in_Spain_an_analysis_of_recent_evolution)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.meatspace.cz/prostory/svestkovy-dvur/>

- It creates and offers residential programmes for artists of all branches of culture - theatre, dance, music, fine arts
- It organises local community and neighbourly activities.

The population of Malovice is small, there are not any shops, and there is a restaurant in a nearby village which is about 1.5 km far. Cultural events at Plum Yard are visited by local residents and people from surrounding villages and towns. Main events of the season are visited by people from a bigger distance, even from the capital city of Prague. European Voluntary Service takes place in the seat of Plum Yard association. Meeting the Plum Yard team might serve for personal enrichment by means of various customs and habits of different cultures. They also offer educational experience in several branches according to the participant's orientation, such as cooperation in running a cultural centre (dramaturgy), production, administration, technical support (light design, sound design, stage manager), cooperation in creating residential network and platform for artists, communication with foreign partners, cooperation in community projects, language support. During European Voluntary Service Plum Yard association is looking for people who are exciting to learn how cultural centre and theatre works in a comprehensive sense and is willing to discover how it can work in a small village. Volunteer has to be prepared for unusual conditions of living (accommodation in caravans, but full equipped, etc.).<sup>34</sup>

### STRAZE, Greifswald, Germany

Purpose: Open space for theatre and art, citizens engagement

Location: Greifswald, Germany

Population: 54.000 inhabitants

Story: People in Greifswald wanted to create a public space with the potential to reach people in the region and have a positive influence on the nature of their society. Open space and incubator for diverse activities; a place for experimentation, to test and demonstrate the benefits of more ecological and socially inclusive forms of living and working; a place where transcultural encounters happen and it is possible to find local responses to global processes; a space for cultural and educational activities relating to a range of issues from democracy, human rights, antiracism, and antidiscrimination to solidarity economics. A once splendid meeting place and free house known as Zum Greif (The Griffin), the building is an important historical monument of considerable value for the region from a cultural history perspective.



Fig. 28 - The Griffin house in Greifswald<sup>35</sup>

Following its construction in the mid-19th Century, it soon fulfilled a focal role in the cultural life of Greifswald as the venue for theatre performances and other public events. The house is a listed building

<sup>34</sup> [https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisation/53937\\_mt?language=fi](https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisation/53937_mt?language=fi)

<sup>35</sup> <https://teh.net/member/straze/>

but is in a dilapidated state due to years of neglect by previous owners. Their aim was to save the house for posterity and restore it in a sensitive manner.

The house is an open and welcoming place for people who want to become actively involved in making society and the local cultural scene better. It is a place that connects people, who want to make a difference, a place that lends weight to their arguments and allows them to be heard. People decided to stay here, in a region where an already weak civil society is being further weakened by cuts and resignation. They want to live together and create the necessary basis for economic security and independence through mutual solidarity. They are a loose amalgamation of initiatives and individuals, both adults and children. Some of them have been living in Greifswald for many years, others are more recent arrivals. They are involved in local affairs: in youth work, refugee support networks, human rights initiatives, environmental groups, in the arts and the culture sector, and in local politics. Because they want to have their say and shape society for the better they have established new projects or taken on responsibilities in existing groups. Examples include the Scouting Association of Western Pomerania (Pfadfinderbund Mecklenburg-Vorpommern); the sailing ship Lovis; verquer, an educational project; the Greifswald International Students Festival (GrIStuF); the Student Theatre Society (StuThe), Film Club Casablanca; Kabutze, a community sewing studio; and the fair trade shop.<sup>36</sup>

### **MALTFABRIKEN, Ebeltoft, Denmark**

Purpose: creative and cultural centre

Location: Ebeltoft, Denmark

Population: 7.000

Story: Maltfabrikken was founded as a malting house in 1861 and closed down in 1998, is a former malt factory - the iconic red buildings in the heart of Ebeltoft town date back to 1861. Today Maltfabrikken is a creative and cultural centre with workshops, concert venue, artist residencies, bistro, microbrewery, library, museum, creative entrepreneur workspace, youth space and much more. Maltfabrikken takes pride in helping their local community grow.



Fig. 29 - Maltfabrikken in Ebeltoft<sup>37, 38</sup>

They want to make more people realize how attractive and fascinating it can be to live in a rural area with a strong cultural, creative and welcoming community. The main driver is the combining urban diversity and rural tranquillity in a small town with a strong cultural and creative nerve. Hospitality, openness, co-creation, “hygge”, community building and social inclusion via creative expression is Maltfabrikken’s DNA.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.straze.de/in-english/>

<sup>37</sup> [www.maltfabrikken.dk](http://www.maltfabrikken.dk)

<sup>38</sup> <https://syddjurs.lokalavisen.dk/nyheder/2019-07-16/-Byggeplads-Sommerfest-p%C3%A5-Maltfabrikken-5387423.html>



Through international networks and projects Maltfabrikken is working to learn from and contribute to the diversity of cultural and creative environments in Europe and the rest of the world. Maltfabrikken is a member of the network Trans Europe Halles.

### KULTURFABRIK, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg

Purpose: cross border regional cultural centre

Location: Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg

Population: 35.000

Story: Kulturfabrik Esch-sur-Alzette (KuFa) is a cultural centre located in a former slaughterhouse in the city of Esch-sur-Alzette in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. As of 2019, the state-funded centre attracts almost 80,000 visitors a year. From the 1880s until 1979, the complex of buildings served as the public slaughterhouse house of the city of Esch-sur-Alzette. Then in 1982 the buildings were squatted by the Theater GmbH, which used the spaces for rehearsals and performances. In 1983, this was formalised by the creation of a non-profit organisation.

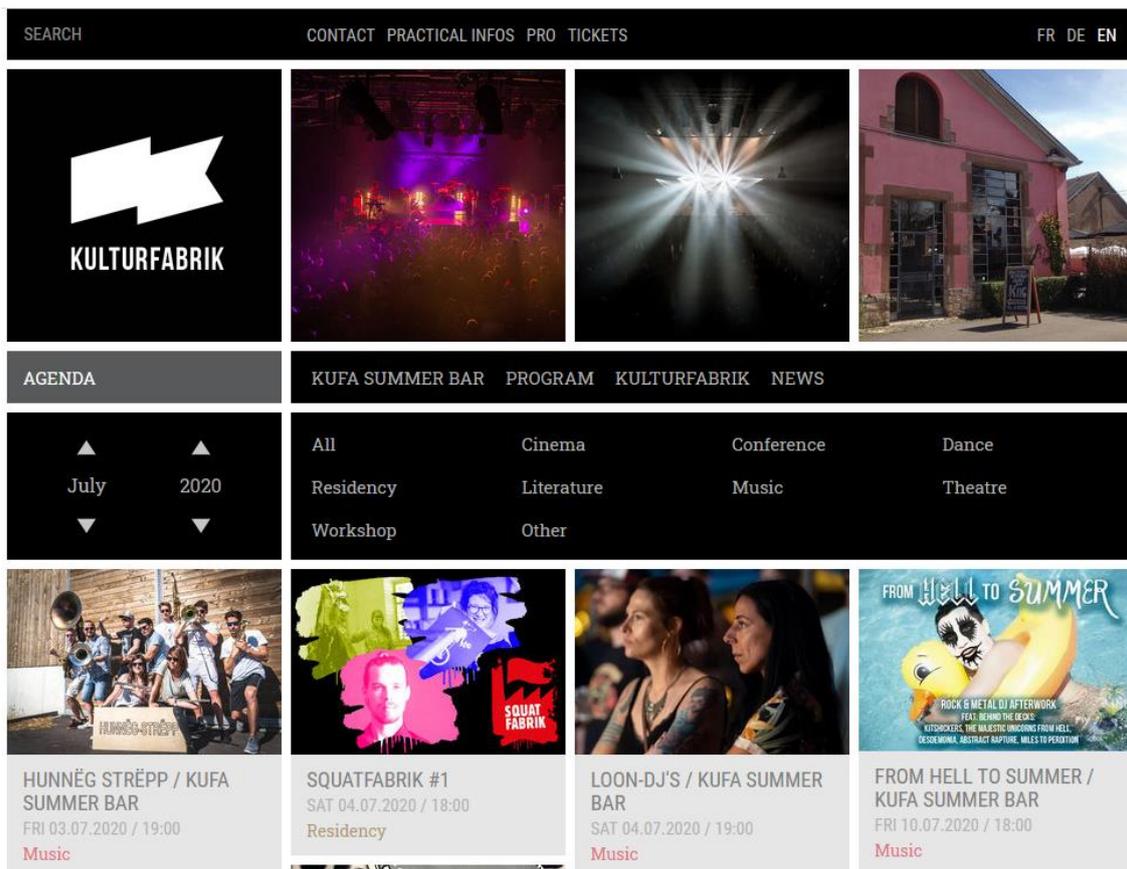


Fig. 30 - Kulturfabrik web page<sup>39, 40</sup>

The Kulturfabrik became a cultural centre with state support in 1996. It received a renovation grant of 1.93 million euros and in 2002 was receiving 308,000 euros yearly to cover running costs. There are about 20 employees on permanent contracts and some on fixed term contracts. The Kulturfabrik opened its doors to the public in 1998 and has become a regional and border crossing cultural centre to all art forms. It's a

<sup>39</sup> <https://kulturfabrik.lu/en/home/>

<sup>40</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kulturfabrik\\_Esch-sur-Alzette](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kulturfabrik_Esch-sur-Alzette)

place to meet, welcome, reintegrate, stay, create, train. It supports projects in various forms and has become a home for artists. Kulturfabrik runs about 200 different projects per year, some of which take place in Luxembourg and the Great Region. It's an environment of stone and metal, the architecture a mirror of its past rooted in the end of the 19th century and the interwar period. Located in the border region offers also the place for cross-border cultural activities.

### **LA FERME! Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium**

Purpose: Home for all style music

Location: Esch-sur-Alzette, Belgium

Population: 29.000

Story: La Ferme! is known as *Home for all styles of music*. Based in rural old farm building, La Ferme! is really changing the cultural scene of Wallonia in Belgium. La Ferme! Is first and foremost a venue hosting up to 300 musical events a year in its magnificent 17th-century barn renovated into a concert hall with impeccable acoustic qualities and state-of-the-art equipment, including a recording studio. This is the unique rural example of barn restoration into specific music projects. From jazz to rock to classical, world music and more experimental genres, music is present in all its forms. Concerts, artist residencies, studio recordings, productions and festivals follow one another throughout the year.

In addition to its own programming, the Ferme! rents its different rooms for activities that are the subject of independent communication (associations, conferences, student accommodation, etc.). Thanks to the support of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the Ferme is now a true centre of musical creation unique in Belgium. The Farm supports many musical projects from the creation phase to distribution in Belgium and abroad.



Fig. 25 - La Ferme! <sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> <https://laferme.be/>



## Conclusion.

There are plenty of examples of best practice of adaptive reuses of old railway infrastructure. Adaptive reuse refers to the process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for. It is also known as recycling and conversion. It is an effective strategy for optimizing the operational and commercial performance of built assets. Adaptive reuse of buildings can be an attractive alternative to new construction in terms of sustainability and a circular economy. It has prevented thousands of buildings' demolition and has allowed them to become critical components of urban or rural regeneration.<sup>42</sup>

The reinvention of railway infrastructure can act as the catalyst to stimulate also revitalisation of whole area and also community life. Municipalities, building owners, architects, developers, builders and entrepreneurs who wish to become involved in rejuvenating and reconstructing a building must first make sure that the finished product will serve the need of the market, that it will be completely useful for its new purpose, and that it will be competitively priced. YOUMOBIL partners who will prepare reinvention projects in pilot sites will prepare feasibility study to justify the “market” for the recycled project and its viability for future. The examples listed in DT2.4.1 can be followed in many similar localities in rural, or suburban areas, including YOUMOBIL partner sites.

More information on such projects can provide also publications and networks, among other also Project Trans Europe Halles. Project Trans Europe Halles is a network of grassroots cultural centres with members in 36 European countries. Project focuses to convert abandoned buildings across Europe into vibrant centres for arts and culture. By doing so, members transform their communities, neighbourhoods, cities, towns and also in some cases rural areas. They are one of the oldest and most dynamic cultural networks in Europe. They have been at the forefront of repurposing abandoned buildings for arts, culture and activism since 1983, based in Sweden and they have 127 members in 36 different countries across Europe. Their three founding pillars are: People, Arts and Buildings. People are at the heart of the network. People are both the driving force of centres and their primary focus. They work hard for the benefit of their communities. Their ultimate goal is to build a society where all people can thrive. Different abandoned buildings including railway infrastructure were transformed with creativity using arts and culture to create spaces where people can have fun, feel empowered and get inspired. Network aims to amplify the voice of the cultural and creative sector in Europe by influencing policy-making processes. Network forges strategic partnerships with business, public administration and academia and is get involved in events that can influence public policies. Network potential has been also recognised by the Creative Europe Programme, which has awarded it with a four-year network grant for the period of 2017-2021. This grant has supported network core activities and allowed it to expand the programme to the Balkan and Eastern Partnership regions. Trans Europe Halles is co-funded by the Swedish Arts Council and the City of Lund, Sweden. Network project Factories of Imagination is funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. The project Developing Inclusive and Sustainable Creative Economies is funded by the Horizon 2020 Programme of the European Union. The project Cultural and Creative Spaces and Cities is funded by the European Commission. The Region of Skåne, Sweden, funds the International Resource Office. At network web page you can find a selection of publications, videos and audio materials. They will help you learn how to become a better leader. How to open a successful cultural venue. How to make your organisation more resilient, and much more.<sup>43</sup> How to convert rails to trails can be found here<sup>44, 45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adaptive\\_reuse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adaptive_reuse)

<sup>43</sup> <https://teh.net/resources/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://humanecology.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk161/files/inline-files/EPalacios.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> McCants, A. et al. 2016. New uses for old railways, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (2016) ISBN-13: 978-1533696304