

Services 2.0 – bigger, better, faster?

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What do you think of when you hear the word service? Its etymology is likely linked to the word ‘serve’ – to do something or some things on behalf of another – but in today’s lexicon, it has many meanings depending on its social and material context. So, ‘service 2.0’ would refer to the next version of service, which is in some way renewed, different or better.

This theme issue of the Lumen online journal looks at services and their changes. Articles focusing on various sectors examine the perspectives of private and public services, industry, consumerism and, more broadly, societal issues related to the provision of services and changes in the operating environment. What kind of picture does the Services 2.0 issue paint of future services? Are they perhaps bigger, faster or better?

Without exception, the themes of these articles are impacted by the forces of change that are shaping society (e.g. Dufva et al. 2026). Global megatrends, such as climate change and demographic trends, or unexpected crises cause uncertain outlooks, sectors in transition. According to Dufva et al. (2026), megatrends help us get an idea of the future: changes, uncertainties and opportunities. They note that it is important to understand challenges in the context of the overall picture while knowing that it is not possible to solve all the world’s problems at once. (Dufva et al. 2026, 10.) Times of transition are causes for concern but also sources of potential. Bold attitudes and innovation, new ideas and fresh policies are given space but also take space by disrupting old established mindsets. Dufva et al. (2026, 11) also emphasise the importance of identifying opportunities while stating that, in times of transition, new systems are built from individual solutions. They emphasise the importance of having

multiple perspectives. This issue of *Lumen* is a good example of an overall picture enriched by various perspectives and solutions.

Preserving and restoring nature and the environment are a starting point in several of the articles. Nature is the basic premise of a renewing accommodation service, says Sanna-Mari Renfors. Besides tourism, the environment has been perceived to be important in many other sectors as well: environmentally friendly production methods and nature-forward methods with their welfare impacts have become a factor in sectors such as healthcare, social services and construction. In their articles, Ville Airas and Hanna Mäkitalo examine perspectives on the sustainability of industrial construction. Their articles bring light to new methods alongside traditional thinking.

In addition to ecological values, dimensions of social sustainability have also emerged as a factor of service production. Anne Puro, Johanna Majala and Merja Hjulberg bring up the impacts of nature on the brain health of working-age people and the wellbeing of older people. Nature values and the right to enjoy the experiences offered by nature are brought up as key values in several articles. In her article on the current state of accessible tourism, Jenny Janhunen finds that nature is one of the challenges of accessible tourism in Lapland. Nature, which we are all a part of, also has an intrinsic value. These articles shed light on the systemic nature of future service provision and the operating environment, where the needs of the environment and the individual are intertwined. Nature is a source of wellbeing for everyone from childhood through working age and until old age.

Jonna Löf and Johanna Sirviö examine student guidance, presenting highly contemporary critical perspectives. Through the concept of cruel optimism, they explain from an individual's perspective how mindsets and ways of speaking impact young people's coping and sense of agency. The shift in services for children and young people is also reflected in the article by Johanna Majala describing the change in child protection; Majala highlights the genuine participation of young people in the development of services. Promoting the inclusion of all ages requires broad perspectives but also attention to detail. The accessibility of digital social welfare and healthcare services in Lapland was examined by Leena Viinamäki, Sirpa Kaukiainen and Outi Mikkola, who note that taking individual situations into account is important when developing services. Sirpa Kokkonen is following along the same lines when

reflecting on for whom services are being developed. On the theme of digitalisation, Anu Pruikkonen and Sari Mattinen examine students' digital service environment. In other words, the issue of the digital accessibility of services does not only concern older people.

Developing the services of the future with critical thinking, a culture of doing things differently. This is reflected in a growing interest in societal issues, societal and social entrepreneurship and innovation. These themes are highlighted by Eeva Erkinjuntti et al. in their article focusing on the student interface and Marko Palmgren et al. in their article on societal innovations. The article written by Anne Tolvanen complements these fresh perspectives on entrepreneurship by describing opportunities for cooperation between students and businesses.

Services are increasingly associated with expectations in the private and public sectors, in experiences as services, in wellbeing services and in housing and construction services. For example, the growth of tourism in Lapland has been huge after Covid (e.g. Visitory 2025; Lapin luotsi 2026). This creates pressure to improve the quality of tourism services and ensure the wellbeing of workers but also on the organisation of wellbeing services and health services in Lapland while the number of people in the region increases during the high season (Yle 2025). Housing shortages have also been considered to be linked to the accelerated growth of tourism, especially in Rovaniemi (Rosengren, Haanpää & Hakkarainen 2026). This acceleration challenges the social acceptability of tourism if it begins to produce side effects that have a negative impact on local life and the wellbeing and inclusion of local residents.

Matters of inclusion are central in public and private services alike. Focusing on the user perspective and understanding customers are essential parts of developing inclusion. Ignoring people's voices or only including them superficially do not necessarily heighten the experience of inclusion (e.g. Haanpää, Hakkarainen & Harju-Myllyaho 2024). In digital environments, the combination of physical and digital experiences into phygital experiences indicates a transformation that should be taken into account when developing services, whether they are the experience services and hospitality described by Hannivaara et al. (2024) or the wellbeing services described by Milla Immonen and Hanna Kurkinen in their article included in this issue of Lumen (Hannivaara, Haanpää & Miettinen 2024).

In her article included in this issue, Elisa Maljamäki discusses the theme of preparedness and risk management in organisations. She posits that it is important to look at risks from the environmental, social and administrative dimensions. Maljamäki links risk management to the theme of anticipation. It is important to ask “What if?”

At the European Union level, the perspectives of inclusion and the built environment culminate in the New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative where aesthetics have been identified as a third element besides inclusion and sustainability. (NEB 2026.) In the context of Lapland, this list might include experientiality. When considering version 2.0 of future services, NEB frames perspectives for the provision of future services that help improve their quality, accessibility and attractiveness.

Cross-cutting themes of this issue and its articles are the ideas of responsibility, sustainability and renewal. Responsibility is associated with nature and the environment, communities and individuals. Responsibility also concerns digital environments and services. When reading these articles, you get an idea of the edge conditions for the services of the future. They require anticipation, tolerance of uncertainty and preparedness for changes. They also require looking boldly ahead and being adaptable. After all, the question is how we can create services and the ability to respond to future challenges without jeopardising the ability of future generations to do the same. Whose voice is heard in the services of the future? Maybe the environment? Children and young people? Older people and those who need support? Residents and communities? Our featured columnist asks if we have what it takes. I feel like we do.

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