

Rahva Raamat Bookshop

Several shades from Polyflor's Expona Commercial range were installed in the premises of Rahva Raamat, which is located in Viru Shopping Centre and was selected as Bookstore of the Year by the London Book Fair in 2022. The design team's aim was to create an inviting community for its loyal customer base and knowledgeable staff.

Location: Estonia

Products: Expona Commercial

Sector: Retail

When it comes to a retail space such as a bookshop, it's important to consider the design, form and function of the floorplan. The overall layout needs to be cohesive and efficient, while offering visual guidance so that customers can easily access the sections that appeal to them most.

It's also vital to create an ambience that caters to the customers' needs, encouraging them to browse the books that catch their eye at their leisure and chat about them with friends. Clever design can also be used to capitalise on the overall footprint, showcasing the product offering to its best advantage, in turn increasing the store's revenue potential.

The right flooring plays an integral role in enhancing not only the interior design aspect of a store but its personality and, in turn, the overarching shopping experience. For example, efficient use of various colours, patterns and finishes visually separates areas of a retail space helping customers find their way around a store. Flooring should also be selected that can cope with the daily demands of the shop and be able to absorb loud sounds and reduce

noise levels, resulting in an altogether more pleasant customer experience.

Rahva Raamat, which opened in 2002 and is located on the third floor of Viru Shopping Centre, is the largest bookstore in the Baltic countries, stretching over 1,600m² of space and boasting several kilometres of bookshelves. As well as stocking an ever-evolving selection of books, the shop sells games, stationery, electronic goods, music, gifts and homeware. It is also home to the lively Literaat Café, which acts as the social hub of the store.

All of these elements combine to create a friendly cultural oasis for the bookstore's community and customers, regardless of their language, interests or age. They are served by staff who offer a level of service that matches the stimulating environment.

The renovation of the Rahva Raamat took place at the end of 2021, spearheaded by architect Taavi Aunre from firm Uddu OÜ, who filled the premises with design-led touches to improve the consumer experience.





When it came to the flooring, Taavi knew Polyflor well and the quality and aesthetic suited his vision. He selected a range of shades from the Expona Commercial Luxury Vinyl Tile collection, which spans a balanced palette of stunning wood and stone designs ideal for use in heavy commercial areas.

At Rahva Raamat, installers from AS Floorin cut bespoke triangles from 429m² of LVT planks and installed them in a strikingly modern geometric pattern throughout the shop's entrance area, adding warmth and appeal in abundance.

To achieve a tonal effect, they carefully interspersed 107m² of both LVT Expona Commercial 4081 Blond Limed Oak and 4031 Natural Brushed Oak, alongside 214m² of 4030 Dark Brushed Oak. The technical specification of Expona Commercial, with its high performance and ease of maintenance makes it ideally suited to a bustling retail space.

The choice proved to be a triumph, recognised as part of the store's recent Bookstore of the Year accolade, when judges commended it for 'demonstrating the importance of sustainability throughout its refurbishment'.

“ Flooring design is an important part of any retail space, particularly one which is as welcoming as Rahva Raamat and actively opens its doors to the community. We worked closely with Taavi and the wider Uddu OÜ Architects team to provide advice on the technical specifications and design qualities of LVT Expona Commercial Wood as this project progressed.

We're proud that this has resulted in an award-winning bookstore that customers want to spend time in. The shop floor looks beautiful and, underpinning this, we're safe in the knowledge that it also serves a practical purpose.

Allison Edge, Polyflor

