



EWWR good practices and case studies

(No Plastic in the Bin! - Prevention of plastic in organic waste)

1. Details of Action:

Coordinator: German Association of Local Utilities

Action Developer: Ökolöwe Umweltbund e.V.

Name of nominated action: No Plastic in the Bin! - Prevention of plastic in organic waste

Town: Leipzig

Region: Saxony

Country: Germany

Nominee category: Associations/NGOs

Dates of action: 19 November 2016

2. Action's theme:

- Reduce – Strict avoidance and reduction at source
- Reuse – Preparing for reuse and reuse
- Recycle – Waste sorting and Recycling
- Let's Clean Up Europe!

3. Action related to the Prevention Thematic Days 2016: Packaging waste – Use Less Packaging?

- Yes
- No

4. Description of the nominated action:

The association Ökolöwe in Leipzig works on environmental topics in the city of Leipzig since 1989. Thousands of citizens volunteer for Ökolöwe in Leipzig. Further the association has a team of 20 employees. Ökolöwe runs an internal working group about waste reduction and recycling. Since 2010 Ökolöwe participates in the EWWR. For the year of 2016 the waste reduction working group produced a city wide campaign against plastic bags in the bio waste bins. The reason is obvious: too many citizens (not only in Leipzig!) use plastic bags to collect their bio waste. Then they throw the bio waste together with the plastic bag into the bio waste bin. That causes a huge problem for biowaste fermentation plants. They cannot sort out all the plastic – plastic doesn't rot – the compost, created out of the bio waste, is polluted with plastic particles and therefore hazardous for the nature.

So the working group worked together with the two municipal waste companies of the region, who have a tremendous problem with the plastic bags and were therefore happy to start an awareness raising campaign.

There were produced leaflets, posters and stickers to put them on every single bio waste bin in the City (500.000 inhabitants). For the 19th of November there was held a public event in the city centre of Leipzig. Plastic bags were swapped with compostable paper bags. Around 600 people participated in the action and



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were informed about the impacts of their waste sorting behaviour.

5. Type of evaluation conducted and outcome of the evaluation:

- Number of visitors/participants
- Feedback from visitors/participants (willingness to change their behaviour)
- Quantity of waste avoided/collected
- Amount of CO2 avoided
- Other indicators

Number of collected plastic bags.

Outcome of the evaluation:

During the public event the team swapped around 600 plastic bags into compostable paper bags. Many citizens were interested to get to know more about the topic. They wanted to talk more about bio waste collection and the problem of plastic packaging waste. They especially like the information leaflets and the stickers. For many of them the topic was new and therefore they learned in an easy way to change their waste separation behavior.

6. Reasons why the action has been selected for the EWWR 2016 Awards:

a) Visibility and communicational aspects

I especially liked the campaign because of its communicational aspects:

- The focus was on one particular problem: plastic bags in bio waste.
- There was one easy answer: don't throw plastic bags into the bio waste!
- The leaflets show impressive pictures of fermentation plants full with plastic bags.
- The slogan on the stickers is great: "Plastic does not rot! Don't throw plastic in bio waste bin!" Can it be explained in an easier way? I don't think so!
- The association worked together with the 2 big municipal waste companies who had a mayor interest in the campaign.
- Therefore the press releases were covered by all local newspapers and also by the local radio.

b) Quality of content and focus on waste reduction, products reuse or materials recycling

The campaigns content is absolutely important in Germany: the correct waste sorting and especially the bio waste sorting must be pushed forward more effectively. Germany wants to produce good quality of compost. But too many people throw away their bio waste with a plastic bag, which contaminates the compost product.

c) Originality and exemplarity: What makes the action original or innovative?

The leaflet and the stickers are very informative – they use easy language, many impressive pictures and the core solution is easy to grab: No plastic in the bio waste!



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The easiest projects are the most successful ones. That's why the campaign is successful for Leipzig. It's easy to understand and the message is more than important. Only very few local campaigns were aware about that topic. That one is a best practice example for every municipality in Germany.

d) European reproducibility: How can other entities adapt the action to other contexts or European regions?

Ökolöwe would like to give out the picture material and share its experience with the topic with stakeholders in other countries. The campaign is easy to realize: the pictures and easy text on the leaflet are important. Then you must organize public events and talk to the citizens about it.

e) Lasting impact: In what way is the action designed to have a lasting impact?

The campaign was a big success for the city. Therefore Ökolöwe now even works together with the city residential building cooperatives and house owners to disseminate the information, the leaflets and the stickers. Ökolöwe plans the next highlight of the campaign during their summer event at 18th of June 2017

f) Motivation: How will your action motivate its target audience/the general public?

I really like the campaign because it works with an easy to understand problem/answer scenario. People should avoid using plastic bags for their bio waste. It is easy and therefore motivates people to do so because now they understand about the negative impact of their sorting behaviour.



Plastic bags in biowaste

Volunteers and visitors during the bag swap action



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