



# EWWR good practices and case studies

## (The experiment Yellow bag)

### 1. Details of Action:

Coordinator: German Association of Local Utilities  
Action Developer: Das Experiment Gelber Sack/ Experiment Yellow Bag – Ms. Evelyn Spillmann  
Name of nominated action: The experiment Yellow bag  
Town: Hildesheim  
Region: Northern Saxony  
Country: Germany  
Website: <https://www.facebook.com/events/978890362240616/>  
Nominee **category**: Citizen(s)  
Dates of action: 19 to 27 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:

Ms. Spillmann is the founder of “Experiment Yellow Bag”, a facebook community which sets the goal to reduce the amount of packaging in the household garbage (In Germany packaging is being separately sorted by the households in the “yellow bag”). For the EWWR Ms. Spillmann organized 2 sorts of actions:

#### 1. Experiment Yellow Bag - Online through facebook

How can I avoid, replace or reuse what I throw into the yellow bag every day? A question that looks for answers. The 4-weeks join-in experiment, a kind of packaging waste diary. Anyone who wants to, can document 4 weeks on the Facebook page, what he throws every day in the yellow bag/plastic waste bin. He can get tips and suggestions, support and motivation from over 800 interested people and exchange with them. In the end there is a short questionnaire, a conclusion after 4 weeks of intense examination of the own plastic waste. Usually there is doing 1 person the experiment at a time. During the EWWR month of November Ms. Spillmann organized 8 people doing the experiment and posting their results and comments through the facebook platform <https://www.facebook.com/DasExperimentGelberSack/>

Through her success the municipal waste company in Hildesheim adapted her idea and created a 4- week calendar for every household in Hildesheim. Then they invited the households to participate by having their



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personal experiment “offline”. Participating households can win prizes! <http://www.zahhildesheim.de/PDF/GelberSackTagebuchKp.pdf>.

165.000 households are invited to take part in the “offline” experiment until April 2017.

2. EWWR Action Week in Hildesheim. After EWWR 2015 Ms. Spillmann founded a plastic free round table in her home town Hildesheim consisting of private citizens. Together they created a whole week of different actions for the city. The events can be found on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/978890362240616/>

For the action week the round table collaborated with Greenpeace, little shops, libraries the city cinema and a school. Greenpeace offered a city center event about micro plastic reduction in cosmetics. The round table further organized an upcycling afternoon and the screening of the documentary “RG28” – a German documentary about an old mixer called RG28 and about the value of products. The library and the little shops offered books and waste reduction products for a special discount, presenting them in the shop windows. Further the round table organized a clean up. The school presented her upcycling ideas out of LED lamps. There were also taking place thematic meetings with key note speakers during the meetings of the “plastic free round table”.

### 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

Outcome of the evaluation:

Around 200 people directly took part in the different actions. 150.000 people were reached indirectly by commercials, promotion and public events in the city center.

The “plastic free round table” doubled its participants since the week of waste reduction, which is a big success. The events were succesful, especially the upcycling afternoon. Participants reported they were inspired and motivated to change their consumer habits to reduce packaging waste in their households. The adaptation of the online action “experiment yellow bag” by the municipal company is a big boost for the topic. The municipal company ZAH reaches 165.000 households with their information campaigns. The greenpeace action against microplastics in cosmetics received 100 new signs within one afternoon! The facebook experiment yellow bag reaches 1000 people in all over Germany.

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

#### a) Visibility and communicational aspects

Ms. Spillmann spent alot of effort and networking skills to develop further her motivation to reduce packaging waste in Germany. The combination of an online experiment through facebook and an “offline” „plastic free round table“ is an excellent idea. It reaches a maximum of public attention. Especially the round table actions in Hildesheim were succesful:

The local radio channel featured the round table with a one hour podcast: <http://stadtimwandelpodcast>.



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The local press reported in the newspaper about the different actions in Hildesheim.

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

Ms. Spillmann is active since 2 years and she already applied for the EU AWARD with her online facebook experiment “yellow bag” in 2015. Since then she had developed the project further, networked within her city, talked to the important stakeholders such as environmental NGOs, the municipal company, shops, the cinema, schools, other citizens and the press. That is why she managed to organize an “online” and an “offline” network of people interested in reducing packaging waste and plastic waste in their surrounding. The variety of possible actions is enormous thanks to the wide network Ms. Spillmann has created. Hildesheim therefore was one of the most active cities during EWWR 2016 thanks to many grassroots activists, civil citizens and various local stakeholders.

Many topics were touched:

- Reduction of packaging waste by self experiments. This is the most intense way to confront people with their own garbage: let them analyse what they produce!
- A clean up to sensibillize people about the effects of waste thrown into the nature.
- Upcycling afternoon to become creative with the waste you produced.
- Film screening of the wonderful documentary “RG28” – a documentary about the value of the products you own.

Special shop window decoration with zero waste products and books about waste free living.

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

Ms. Spillmanns “online” initiative through facebook is original and innovative because it works with the nowadays social media tools. The access for private citizens is more than easy. The “offline” plastic free round table and the network Ms. Spillmann builds since 2 years is impressive and a best practice example for anyone willing to change things in his or her own town. The fact that the municipal waste company approached her and offered to adapt the “online” experiment yellow bag to and “offline” version for every household in Hildesheim is a really huge success in my eyes.

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

Especially the online tool of the initiative is absolutely easy to adapt for every other country. All you need is a motivated individual. The plastic free roundtable and the networking is time intensive. That is why Ms. Spillmanns private engagement is such a highlight for me. It is absolutely on voluntary basis and happens without any financial support.

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

The lasting impact of Ms. Spillmanns projects are impressive. The growing plastic free round table community proofs that, as well as the growing “online” community around the “experiment yellow bag” as well as the new collaboration with the municipal waste company. There are several plans to organize more upcycling afternoons, public events and more self made experiments to reduce packaging waste.

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

I personally think, the best way to motivate people is to let them become active. Both the “online” and the “offline” projects of Ms. Spillmann allow people to take action without big efforts. The collaboration and networking of different people such as the local library, the shops in the city, the cinema, also brings up new people and new topics around waste and waste reduction.



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The cinema in  
Hildesheim



Shop window during the EWR