

Developing the adult education centre “Förde-vhs” into a third place/ a place for all - Kiel, Germany



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The pilot project in Kiel is dedicated to developing the adult education centre, Förde-vhs, into an open and inclusive community space. This initiative focuses on creating areas where people can gather, socialize, and build connections without the influence of commercialization. We believe this in turn will foster cultural, educational, and social engagement among all citizens.

Through this pilot project, the City of Kiel aims to enhance the appeal of its educational offers and make the institution more visible, open, and adaptable to the diverse needs of its users.

WHY | Purpose

The aim is to rethink public services and make the adult education centre more attractive and accessible to different target groups. The pilot, located in a heterogeneous neighbourhood, is characterised by a diverse building structure and population structure with a high number of single-person households. The pluralisation of society is visible here in all its facets. It is therefore important to create a space for interaction and education that is inviting and empowering for all.

Creating these spaces can empower the public by creating a non-commercial space that is easily accessible to all citizens and an open space for experimenting with new formats of participation and education. As an intangible benefit, education has the potential to create lasting impacts on citizens' lives.

For public services, this pilot project is a transformative opportunity to unite across departments, fostering collaboration and discovering innovative perspectives.

HOW | Field of Action

- The pilot project will develop an existing public space using the *Liveability* principles. Existing strategies of the city of Kiel will be taken up, further developed, and coordinated - making public services more user-friendly, refining existing structures and public services, making the city administration more accessible, creating open learning and meeting places, integrating digital education.
- It will be in collaboration between two different departments within the city, thus strengthening cross-cutting cooperation within the public administration.
- Students of the geography department at the University of Kiel (CAU) have done extensive empirical research and analysis on the place and its integration into the neighbourhood.
- The results were used to develop a measurement plan focused on visibility, accessibility, usability and neighbourhood involvement.

WHO | Actors

- Employees of the city administration, e.g. adult education centre and the department of social services
- Geography department of the Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel
- Citizens from the neighbourhood and beyond,
- Civil society organisations and independent social services.

Contact

Anna Emil | Change Agent | Anna.Emil@kiel.de

Tobias Laufenberg | Change Implementer |
tobias.laufenberg@kiel.de



"In our society more and more people are becoming isolated. However, we can only tackle the challenges of daily life and multiple crises if we unite and support one another. That's why it's crucial, now more than ever, to create inclusive spaces where we can gather and connect with each other." - Anna Emil –City of Kiel