

The City of Kiel becomes a Zero Waste Candidate City

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Kiel has become the first Zero Waste Candidate City in Germany and is one of two Candidate Cities in Europe after piloting the Zero Waste Cities Certification system, powered by the non-governmental organisation Mission Zero Academy (MiZA).

After working with MiZA, the Zero Waste Kiel association and their partner organisation Zero Waste Europe to help test and pilot the newly designed Certification, the City of Kiel passed a landmark vote of the Kiel council in November 2020 confirming their zero waste commitment. This commitment is centered around two main objectives:

- reducing the total amount of waste per capita per year in Kiel by an average of 15 % by 2035, and
- halving household and commercial waste by 2035 and reducing the total to less than 50 kg per capita per year in a long term.

Doris Grondke, head of the Kiel department for urban development, building and environment is proud of Kiel reaching this first level of the certification and says: *“The certification as ‘Zero Waste Candidate City’ underlines one more time our self-commitment of following the path towards Zero Waste. As first German certified “Zero Waste Candidate City”, we want to take on a role model and hope to inspire further cities in Germany to join the zero waste-movement in the near future, too.”*

Kaisa Karjalainen, Coordinator of the Mission Zero Academy, said: *“I would like to thank the team in Kiel for the energy and detail they have put in. They provided very detailed feedback and opened up their processes and thinking, which definitely made a difference during the pilot phase of the Zero Waste Cities Certification. I am also impressed by the very thorough background work done so far to get the commitment and their zero waste plan to where it is today. We are confident the results will be great.”*

The City of Kiel will aim to be amongst the first ever Zero Waste Certified Cities once it has passed an independent audit at a later date. Kiel’s Candidate status marks a significant step towards the creation of a more sustainable resource management system, and is an important contribution to the European transition to a circular economy implementation.

Notes to Editors

In order to become a Zero Waste Candidate City, the City of Kiel held six community stakeholder workshops in 2019 and 2020 with 450 Kiel inhabitants attending these events that resulted in 664 new ideas for potential zero waste measures identified. As a result, Kiel has a very impressive zero waste strategy which maps out its journey to ambitious resource management. Beneath its two main goals, it includes both a total of 107 zero waste measures and 18 sector-specific goals for the sectors waste management, public administration, educational institutions, households as well as industry, retails and events.

The Zero Waste Cities Certification is an independent, third party assessed certification standard, based on over ten years of expertise and close contact collaborations with more than 400 European Municipalities, which have committed to zero waste principles and circular economy implementation.

The Certification has been formalized in 2020 - 2021 including a piloting phase of six months with several municipalities of various sizes, geographies and contexts; as well as local NGOs working with municipalities on their transition towards zero waste. The pilot and testing phase was introduced to ensure that the certification system is relevant and beneficial for any municipality within Europe, while also maintaining the high standards that underpin the vision of zero waste and result in long lasting impact.

About the City of Kiel

Germany's northernmost big city with 249.000 inhabitants; shaped by the 17 km long fjord of the Baltic Sea; beautiful beaches; calls itself Kiel Sailing City; worldwide known for sailing regatta and city festival Kieler Woche (Kiel Week) and for the Kiel Canal between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea; four universities; political, cultural and financial centre of the Land Schleswig-Holstein; big shipyards.

About the Mission Zero Academy

The Mission Zero Academy (MiZA) is the capacity – building hub for local decision-makers, SMEs, and other organisations wanting to take a step forward in their zero waste strategies and circular economy implementation. First devised in 2018 but officially established in March 2021, MiZA is the spin-off of the European non-governmental organisation Zero Waste Europe (ZWE).

Press Contacts

City of Kiel, Press office, presse@kiel.de phone 0049-431-9011007 www.kiel.de/zerowaste
Mission Zero Academy, hello@missionzeroacademy.eu, www.missionzeroacademy.eu