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STADTTEILVERNETZER STUTTGART

GUIDE

GIVE A SECOND LIFE TO THINGS



Trilateral Project

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction	- page 3
2. Municipal authorities' views in Lodz, Prague, Stuttgart	- page 6
Lodz	
Prague	
Stuttgart	
3. Eco-consciousness of citizens in Lodz, Prague, Stuttgart – SURVEYS RESULTS	- page 15
4. Categories of things you can give new life to – examples of good practices	- page 21
Clothing and textiles in Lodz, Prague, Stuttgart	
Food in Lodz, Prague, Stuttgart	
Furniture and decorations in Lodz, Prague, Stuttgart	
5. Some other ideas to give things a second life	- page 41
Do it yourself - simple projects to get started (DIY)	
6. Author team	- page 45



INTRODUCTION

The guide *“Give a second Life to things”* is the result of a trilateral project funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme (KA210-ADU-E45F2005 – Small-scale Partnerships in the Adult Education sector), implemented jointly by three partner organisations: the Activus Foundation from Łódź, Letokruh z.ú. from Prague, and Stadtteilvermittler from Stuttgart.

In this guide, we present the results of numerous observations, interviews, and studies through which we explored adults’ awareness and the actions undertaken by residents and local authorities in Łódź, Prague, and Stuttgart to protect the environment, combat climate change, and prevent pollution caused by the overproduction of food, clothing, furniture, and other everyday items, particularly those made of plastic and non-biodegradable synthetic materials.

We discuss various aspects of the issue, solution strategies, and examples of good practices related to recycling, reusing, and revitalising items.

THE ESSENCE OF EARTH DEGRADATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCHERS

In the 18th century, humanity underwent the Industrial Revolution, which significantly increased carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, altering natural climate variability and the structure of Earth’s ecosystems. The intensification of the greenhouse effect is now an indisputable fact, and the average global temperature continues to rise. This has led, among other effects, to the melting of glaciers and ice sheets, the loss of sea ice, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events such as droughts, heatwaves, torrential rains, hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, and floods.

One piece of evidence is the comparison between average temperatures from the pre-industrial era and current measurements. The global average temperature is now more than 1°C higher. Researchers from the Stanisław Siedlecki Polish Polar Station in Hornsund, Spitsbergen, analysed meteorological data collected over 40 years. Their findings show that, during this period, the average temperature in this region increased by 4.5°C. “These changes are more than six times greater than the global average,” the researchers warn.

The global ecosystem is defined by planetary boundaries. Planetary boundaries are a concept referring to Earth system processes and the limits beyond which abrupt, non-linear, and potentially irreversible environmental changes may occur on a



continental or global scale—for example, critical tipping points in the Earth’s climate system. In essence, planetary boundaries define a “safe operating space” for humanity, indicating how much we can exploit the Earth while remaining within limits that avoid severe anthropogenic environmental disruption. Exceeding one or more of these boundaries may have harmful or even catastrophic consequences,

triggering abrupt, non-linear changes on scales ranging from continental to planetary.

In September 2023, a team of scientists quantified, for the first time, all nine processes that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth system. These are: climate change, biodiversity loss, disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, deforestation and the conversion of wild areas into agricultural land (environmental degradation), ocean acidification, freshwater use, ozone layer depletion, and chemical pollution.

According to research, by 2023 six planetary boundaries had already been exceeded: climate change, biodiversity loss, disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, environmental degradation, and freshwater use. Exceeding one or more of these boundaries may trigger non-linear, abrupt environmental changes with potentially catastrophic effects. Today, we are already observing phenomena such as increased variability in precipitation and drought periods, dieback of coniferous forests, altered life cycles and extinction of bird species, disrupted plant growth (including vegetables and fruit), the spread of new allergies, and other ecological disturbances.

THIS IS WHAT OUR PROJECT IS ABOUT

Our goal is to raise awareness and disseminate knowledge that individual human actions—such as pollutant and CO₂ emissions, excessive use of natural resources, water pollution, and agricultural production—have a direct impact on environmental change and degradation. But our mission goes beyond that. By presenting the results of our joint project activities, we aim to promote changes in habits, behaviours, and attitudes that can help prevent, counteract, and halt the processes of Earth degradation. This includes actions focused on:

1. Environmental protection
2. Reducing food waste
3. Lowering CO₂ emissions
4. Living consciously and deriving satisfaction from making a tangible impact on protecting our planet

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MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES' VIEWS IN LODZ, PRAGUE, STUTTGART



MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES' VIEWS IN LODZ

A meeting with a city official

1. Why is the topic of recycling and reusing things important to our city?

Cities play a key role both in raising awareness of the importance of counteracting the negative effects of climate change and in implementing pro-environmental projects and activities. Undoubtedly, one of the factors contributing to adverse climate change is the excessive amount of waste generated by consumerism. Under current law, responsibility for municipal waste management rests with local authorities. The City of Łódź is obliged not only to organise the collection and disposal of waste from residents, but also to provide them with the means to sort their waste properly.

3. Does our city have its own regulations or programmes that promote the recycling, repair and reuse of things (e.g. clothes, furniture, appliances, food)?

The City of Łódź has its own regulations concerning the organisation of waste collection from residents and related fees. In accordance with the Act on Maintaining Cleanliness and Order in Municipalities, the municipality was required to achieve a level of preparation for reuse and recycling of municipal waste of at least 45% by weight by 2024, with even higher targets in subsequent years. The City of Łódź is making efforts to meet these targets but has not yet succeeded. That is why all activities that reduce the amount of unsorted waste are so important. In addition, the City of Łódź operates an eco-portal where it publishes up-to-date information on recycling, among other topics, and supports projects run by various organisations in this field.

4. How does the city help citizens to separate waste properly and what does it do to encourage litter reduction?

First and foremost, clear information and an understandable sorting system are essential. Up-to-date information can be found on the eco-portal and is presented in an accessible manner. There, residents can read, among other things, that a five-bin system of selective municipal waste collection is in force in the City of Łódź.

Sorted waste should be placed in colour-coded bins: paper, glass, plastics, metals and multi-material packaging, bio-waste consisting of food and kitchen waste from households, and mixed waste.

In Poland, as of 1 January 2025, clothing and textiles may no longer be disposed of in residual waste bins. Much of the clothing intended for disposal is suitable for reuse and can be placed in used clothing bins located in various parts of the City of Łódź. There are also containers for electronic waste in Łódź, where residents can dispose of small used electrical and electronic equipment.

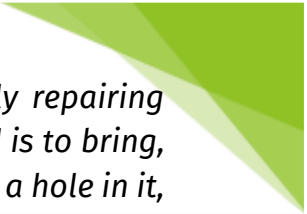
Free collection of large electronic waste, such as washing machines, refrigerators and televisions, must be arranged via the MB Recycling hotline (572 102 102). At the same time, residents may also donate unwanted clothing, footwear, books and toys. Expired medicines can be returned to pharmacies. The eco-portal also provides a schedule for the collection of bulky waste, such as old furniture. In addition, there are four selective waste collection points in the city where residents can dispose of used clothing, construction waste, old tyres, refrigerators, washing machines and other items.

Łódź also has a food bank that accepts and redistributes food with a short shelf life. Moreover, an increasing number of community fridges and food-sharing points operate in the city, allowing residents to share surplus food with those in need.

5. Are there places in the city where people can recycle or repair things? Are new such initiatives planned?

Such facilities include clothing containers that allow garments to be given a second life. Anyone can find the address of the nearest container, as all locations and a map of the containers are available on the eco-portal. Some charitable organisations also collect unwanted but usable clothing. It is also possible to send a parcel containing unwanted clothing free of charge as part of the *Ekozwroty* project, implemented by the Foundation in partnership with, among others, the large InPost parcel locker network.

In addition, the Veolia Foundation, established by companies supplying energy and water to the residents of Łódź, has been supporting the development of a network of repair cafés since 2019. The founders describe the idea of repair cafés as follows:



“These are grassroots initiatives by local communities aimed at jointly repairing items that would otherwise end up in the rubbish bin. All that is required is to bring, for example, a wobbly chair, a squeaky bicycle or a piece of clothing with a hole in it, along with a bit of positive energy. On site, with the support of specialists, participants learn how to carry out the necessary repairs themselves and give the item a second life.”

6. What are the biggest challenges the city faces in developing recycling and environmental activities?

The biggest challenge is to motivate an increasing number of residents to adopt environmentally friendly habits. This is achieved through various educational campaigns, which are systematically conducted from nursery school onwards, but also among senior citizens. To strengthen motivation, it is also necessary to show the effects of environmentally friendly habits, including waste sorting habits. The city must therefore maintain and modernise its waste collection and processing infrastructure. Such investments are costly, but should not result in excessive increases in waste collection fees.

7. How can citizens get involved in green activities in our city?

The City of Łódź encourages residents to participate in public consultations, provides information on various projects of potential interest, and awards microgrants for pro-environmental initiatives.



MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES' VIEWS IN PRAGUE

Graphic: JaWagabunda.pl

A meeting with a city official

1. Why is the topic of recycling and reusing items important for our city?

Recycling and the reuse of items are essential for Prague because they help reduce environmental impact, save natural resources, and support the city's climate goals. Prague aims to become a circular city that minimizes waste and maximizes resource efficiency.

2. Does our city have specific regulations or programmes that support recycling, repairs, and the reuse of items (e.g., clothing, furniture, appliances, or food) ?

Strategy "Circular Prague 2030"

Textile recycling and exchange initiatives

- OblecPrahu.cz portal: A project focused on textile sorting and recycling, created in cooperation with the Clothing Bank and the City of Prague.
- SWAP events: Public exchange events where people can swap clothing and accessories free of charge.

Reuse centres and points

- Re-use points: Operated at collection yards (Prague currently has 10 re-use points).
- Re-use centres: Larger community spaces offering repairs, workshops, and the presentation of upcycled items (Prague has three, e.g., Sto.re or LIBRE).

Repair workshops and educational activities

- Reuse at Schools project: An educational programme focused on furniture renovation and minor repairs, implemented for example at SOŠ Jarov and the DDM Technical Station.



3. How does the city help residents sort waste correctly, and what does it do to motivate them to reduce the amount of waste they generate?

Prague supports proper waste sorting by introducing new collection systems, running information campaigns, and adjusting local regulations to encourage responsible waste management. From 2025 onwards, the focus is placed on biowaste, textiles, and reducing bulky waste.

4. Are there places in the city where people can donate items for reuse or repair? Are new initiatives planned?

Yes, Prague has a network of re-use points and re-use centres where residents can donate items for further use or repair. The city is actively expanding these initiatives.

5. What are the biggest challenges the city faces in developing recycling and environmental initiatives?

Prague faces several major challenges in developing recycling and ecological activities, including insufficient infrastructure, still low public awareness, complex coordination between city districts, and financial or legislative barriers.

Another challenge is the reluctance of some residents to reduce personal consumption in favour of environmental sustainability.

6. How can residents get involved in ecological activities in our city?

Residents of Prague can participate in ecological activities through eco-centres, community gardens, educational programmes, volunteer initiatives, or experiential activities in municipal forests and parks focused on nature protection and sustainability.

They can also engage through local civic associations.



MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES' VIEWS IN STUTTGART

A meeting with Dr Max Schuchardt, Bioeconomy Project Manager,
representing Florian Sorg, Circular Economy Coordinator for the City of
Stuttgart

1. Why is recycling and reusing items important for Stuttgart?

More than 16 million tonnes of materials arrive in Stuttgart every year. That is equivalent to around 3,667 times the weight of the Stuttgart TV tower. These materials find their way into our everyday lives as electrical appliances, furniture and building materials. Their manufacture requires raw materials, labour and energy. Unfortunately, many of them end up in the rubbish after what is often a short lifespan.

In 2023, for example, around 2,000 tonnes of electronic waste were collected by Abfallwirtschaft Stuttgart (AWS). And many of us have unused electronic devices lying around in our drawers or basements. When these products are disposed of, their economic value is lost and further greenhouse gas emissions are generated. Through reuse, repair and recycling, we can extend the life of the things we use or love. This creates new economic value from existing resources. In this way, we save resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is entirely in line with our Swabian tradition of intelligent resource management. And it contributes to the City of Stuttgart's climate neutrality goal.

2. Does Stuttgart have its own regulations or programmes that promote the recycling, repair and reuse of items (e.g. clothing, furniture, appliances, food)?

As part of the circular economy strategy and bioeconomy strategy of the state capital Stuttgart, a total of 47 specifically formulated measures will be implemented over the next few years. The following (additional) measures provide a small insight into what the city is doing in this area:

→ Jetztklimachen! repair map

<https://jetztklimachen.stuttgart.de/reparieren>.

Stuttgart has plenty of repair cafés, repair shops and places where citizens can have their smartphones, bicycles or small kitchen appliances repaired. The online repair

map brings together Stuttgart's repair locations and makes it easier to find repairs for a wide variety of products.

→ Communication campaign 'Let's go reusable together'

Since 2023, catering businesses have been required to offer a reusable alternative to disposable packaging when selling food and beverages for consumption outside their premises. In 2023 and 2024, the city of Stuttgart ran an awareness campaign to promote the increased use of reusable packaging. The target groups were both the catering industry and the citizens of Stuttgart. In November 2023, relevant catering establishments in Stuttgart received a letter informing them about the reusable packaging requirement. They also received free communication materials to help them implement the reusable packaging requirement and the information requirement.

In February 2024, the city called on consumers to exercise their right to reusable packaging under the slogan 'Let's go reusable together!'.

More at <https://jetztklimachen.stuttgart.de/mehrweggehen>

Financial support for the 'Hobbyhimmel' open workshop (2024/2025):

As a non-profit project, 'Hobbyhimmel' has set itself the goal of expanding the craftsmanship skills of as many people as possible. A large workshop area with various work areas is available to everyone.

→ Library of Things

Since May 2025, more than 120 different items – from Toniboxes and projectors to pottery wheels – have been available to borrow from the Stuttgart City Library's Library of Things in a resource-saving and cost-effective manner.

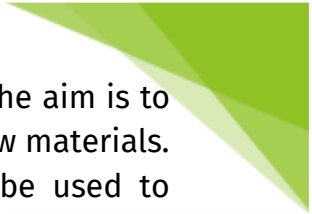
[https://www.stadtbibliothek-stuttgart.de/aDISWeb/app?service=direct/0/Home/\\$DirectLink&sp=SOPAC∓sp=SWI07000310](https://www.stadtbibliothek-stuttgart.de/aDISWeb/app?service=direct/0/Home/$DirectLink&sp=SOPAC∓sp=SWI07000310)

→ In the area of climate-friendly nutrition, the city supports measures against food waste.

This is because around 80,000 tonnes of food end up in the rubbish every year in Stuttgart. As part of the city's climate campaign jetztklimachen! (act now for the climate!), the #2teliebe campaign was launched in 2024 under the motto 'Together against food waste' (more at <https://jetztklimachen.stuttgart.de/2teliebe>).

Food rescue stations, known as Fairteiler, are designed to combat food waste. The city of Stuttgart is promoting the establishment of public Fairteiler in the city area with up to € 3,500 per location. The city also regularly raises awareness of food waste internally, for example through videos in the municipal staff restaurants.

→ Bioeconomy strategy of the state capital Stuttgart



This strategy considers all biogenic material flows in the urban area. The aim is to recycle as much of these material flows as possible and use them as raw materials. This includes, for example, biowaste or sewage sludge, which can be used to produce biogas. Another example is the recovery of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus in Stuttgart's sewage treatment plants, or the material use of green waste. The latter can be converted on site into compost or, through pyrolysis, into certified biochar. When locally produced biochar is then used, for example, as a planting substrate for urban trees or in regional agriculture, part of Stuttgart's carbon cycle can be closed. When biochar is used in building materials such as concrete or asphalt, so-called negative emissions are created, as the carbon bound in the biochar is removed from our atmosphere in the long term. These negative emissions are essential for achieving and maintaining urban climate targets in the long term.

<https://www.stuttgart.de/leben/umwelt/klima/klimastrategie/klima-fahrplan-2035/biooekonomie?loc=de>

3. How does the city help citizens to separate waste correctly and what is it doing to promote waste reduction?

→ This issue is handled by Abfallwirtschaft Stuttgart (AWS)

<https://www.stuttgart.de/service/entsorgung/services-der-aws>

8. Are there places in the city where people can recycle or repair items? Are any new initiatives of this kind planned?

First and foremost, items should be repaired before they are sent for recycling. Stuttgart has repair cafés and the open workshop 'Hobbyhimmel'. There, anyone can repair items themselves or collaboratively. In addition to repair cafés, courses are held there regularly – from welding and jewellery design to DIY for beginners.

Furthermore, this open workshop offers the opportunity to realise your own creative ideas. Tools, plotters, 3D printers, milling machines and, above all, space are available for this purpose.

Such facilities are supported by the city of Stuttgart because, apart from repairing things, we see them as providing added value to society. People from a wide variety of backgrounds come together to solve a problem – to repair or create something.

This social interaction is particularly important today and promotes community spirit in the city's districts.

When products can no longer be repaired and have reached the end of their life, they should be disposed of properly and sent for recycling. Stuttgart currently has five recycling centres in the districts of Hedelfingen, Münster, Plieningen, Weilimdorf

and Vaihingen. Stuttgart households and businesses can deliver household quantities here.

- The city's jetztklimachen! repair map lists other places where repairs can be carried out and is constantly being expanded:
<https://jetztklimachen.stuttgart.de/reparieren>

5. What are the biggest challenges for the city in developing recycling and environmental activities?

The product design itself determines whether the product can be repaired, reused or recycled. The city of Stuttgart is therefore implementing training workshops on circular design and business models, for example in collaboration with Umwelttechnik BW.

Approaches such as reusable systems or car sharing require courageous people who promote innovation and new business models. In addition to the political framework, this also requires the involvement of designers, engineers and entrepreneurs.

Ultimately, however, the decisive factor is whether the new, more sustainable product is also competitive on the international market.

6. How can citizens participate in environmentally friendly activities in our city?

There are many things that each and every one of us can do.

Here are a few examples:

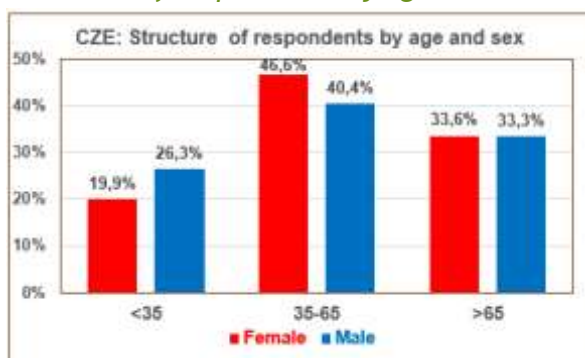
- Borrow items from the library of things or buy second-hand/used items.
- Find out about repair options and go to the repair café with young and old alike.
- When buying, check whether products are durable, repairable and reusable.
- Use online/local resale offers.
- Ask for reusable alternatives when consuming outside the home.

ECO-CONSCIOUSNESS OF CITIZENS IN LODZ, PRAGUE, STUTTGART

- SURVEYS CONCLUSIONS -

The full report on the surveys conducted is a separate output of the project. Therefore in this Guide we only present the most essential information and the conclusions of the survey. The survey was participated in by 591 respondents from Łódź, Stuttgart and Praha.

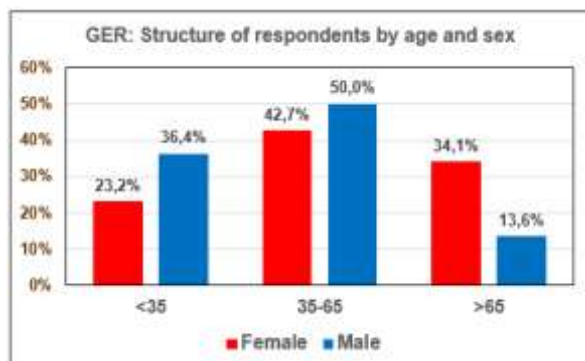
Structure of respondents by age and sex



Commentary on Czech charts:

Number of respondents: 203
in which F:146, M:57

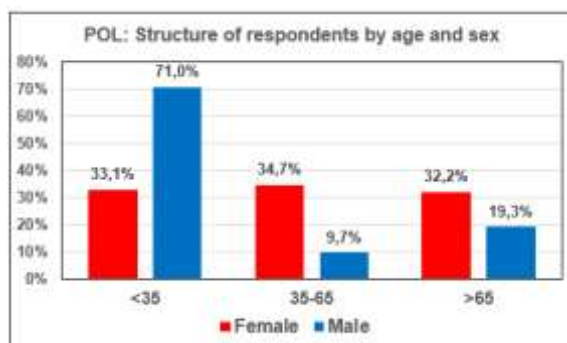
Most respondents among women and men are people aged 35-65.



Commentary on German charts:

Number of respondents: 208
in which F:164, M:44

There are few men and exactly half of men are aged 35-65.



Commentary on Polish charts:

Number of respondents: 180
in which F:118, M:62

The distribution of women by age is uniform, but among men, the dominant group consists of people up to 35 years old.

The questionnaire layout is as follows:

Age: Sex (F/M/Other): I live in a single-family house (Y/N):

Type of family/partnership: 1. Single 2. Family 3. Other
(question number)

Q1. Do you enjoy shopping?

1. Rather yes 2. Rather no 3. I don't have an opinion

Q2. What is the amount of waste you produce?

1. Not much 2. A lot 3. I try to limit it

Q3. What do you think is the impact of advertisings (including influencers) on the development of consumerism?

1. It is big 2. It is small 3. I don't have an opinion

Q4. Do you think about reusing things you have (including food) in a different way?

1. Yes, often 2. Rarely 3. Never

Q5. Do you know the rules of waste segregation and do you apply them?

1. I know and I apply them
2. I know, but I don't always apply them
3. Segregation is a problem for me

Q6. Do you think that excessive production of waste increases harmful climate change?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know

Q7. What motivates you the most to give things a second life?

1. I want to save money
2. I want to protect the environment
3. I enjoy creating and modifying the things
4. I am inspired by other people
5. My own imagination
6. Nothing motivates me

In the questions Q8 and Q9 you can choose one or more answers

Q8. Where do you usually find inspiration for reusing things?

1. Social media
2. Radio / TV / articles
3. Friends and family
4. Courses / workshops
5. Nowhere / I don't know

Q9. How do you give a second life to the things?

1. I prepare a new dish from leftover food
2. I modify clothes
3. I renovate/recycle old furniture
4. I change the functionality of the equipment
5. I reuse packaging
6. I don't give a second life to the things

Structure of respondents by knowing the rules of waste segregation and apply them (Q5) divided by motivations the most to give things a second life (Q7)

Motivations the most to give things a second life	I know the rules of waste segregation and I apply them		
	CZE	GER	POL
1. I want to save money	14,9%	26,7%	30,5%
2. I want to protect the environment	64,2%	55,0%	35,9%
3. I enjoy creating and modifying the things	11,9%	8,4%	17,2%
4. I am inspired by other people	2,2%	6,3%	3,1%
5. My own imagination	3,0%	3,7%	7,8%
6. Nothing motivates me	3,7%	0%	5,5%

For the 64,2% of Chechs, 55,0% of Germans and 35,9% of Poles who know the rules of waste segregation and apply them the main motivation to give things a second life is protection the enironment.

Structure of respondents by finding inspiration for reusing things from social media (Q8) divided by motivations the most to give things a second life (Q7)

Motivations the most to give things a second life	I usually find inspiration for reusing things from social media		
	CZE	GER	POL
1. I want to save money	11,8%	29,8%	38,5%
2. I want to protect the environment	67,1%	54,2%	34,4%
3. I enjoy creating and modifying the things	11,8%	8,5%	14,6%
4. I am inspired by other people	2,3%	6,4%	4,2%
5. My own imagination	2,3%	1,1%	8,3%
6. Nothing motivates me	4,7%	0,0%	0,0%

For the 67,1% of Chechs and 54,3% of Germans who founded inspiration for reusing things from social media the main motivation to give things a second life is protection the enironment but for 38,5% of Poles the main motiation to give a things a second life is a desire to save money.



CONCLUSIONS

1. Czechs and Germans do not enjoy shopping, unlike Poles.
2. A higher number of Poles and Czechs believe that the influence of advertising on the development of consumerism is significant, whereas nearly all Germans think that this influence is small.
3. Most men, unlike women, believe that they produce a smaller amount of waste. The majority of respondents try to limit the amount of waste they generate.
4. Germans are the most familiar with the rules of waste segregation and apply them in practice. There were no responses indicating that waste segregation is a problem for them.
5. Czechs, Germans, and Poles believe that excessive waste production contributes to harmful climate change. This view is shared by most Germans.
6. Women think about reusing items in different ways more often than men. Men in Poland rarely consider this issue.
7. The greatest motivation for giving items a second life is the need to protect the environment; however, for young Poles and older Czechs, saving money is a stronger motivation. No German respondents selected the answer “Nothing motivates me”.
8. Inspiration for reusing items most often comes from friends or family; among younger people, it comes from social media, while older people are more influenced by radio and television.
9. The main ways of giving items a second life include preparing new dishes from leftover food and reusing packaging. There are significantly more women than men who modify clothes, whereas more men renovate furniture. No German respondents selected the answer “I do not give items a second life.”

CATEGORIES OF THINGS YOU CAN GIVE NEW LIFE TO

- EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES -

CLOTHING

SECONTIQUE

Second-hand shop for clothes and accessories

Stuttgart city centre

Description:

“Fashion gives hope!” Secontique stores in southern Germany collect and sell large quantities of barely worn clothing to conserve resources and reduce textile waste. Most of the new clothing sold in Germany originates from countries in the Global South, where low wages and poor working conditions contrast sharply with the throwaway mentality of the Global North. By promoting second-hand fashion, the initiative supports the circular economy, reduces environmental impact and takes responsibility for the ethical aspects of global production chains. A total of five Secontique stores operate across southern Germany.

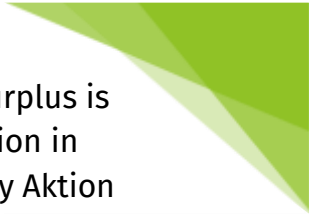


Objective:

The initiative aims to extend the lifespan of clothing, encourage mindful consumption and reduce textile waste, while promoting global social justice. Proceeds from second-hand clothing sales provide sustainable support for people in the Global South.

Materials used:

High-quality clothing donations are collected, sorted and prepared for resale. The range includes simple everyday wear and high-end designer brands, all at affordable prices. In addition to private donors, some companies contribute unsold surplus production. A team of 14 volunteers and six part-time to full-time staff members carry out the work. On average, four people donate clothing every



day. Proceeds from clothing sales finance the store's operations; any surplus is forwarded to Catholic Church projects worldwide, such as youth education in Uganda and support for women affected by violence in Colombia, run by Aktion Hoffnung.

Effect:

By extending the life of textiles and reducing demand for new clothing, Secontique stores make a measurable contribution to resource conservation and climate protection. At the same time, revenue generated through second-hand sales enables continuous support for development projects worldwide, linking local sustainability with international solidarity.

Transferability:

The model can be adapted to any city with access to clothing donations, motivated volunteers and reliable coordination. With a functioning donation and resale system in place, second-hand fashion can strengthen the circular economy while providing sustainable support for global social projects.

Contact:

<https://www.secontique.de/shops/secontique-stuttgart.html>

ATTENTION, THE RUBBISH TRUCK IS COMING

Facebook Group in Łódź

Description:

„Attention, the rubbish truck is coming” is the name of a popular social initiative and the name of the www.uwagasmieciarkajedzie.org Foundation of the same name, which works to reduce waste by giving a second life to items that are still usable but could end up in the rubbish bin.



The activities are based on the free exchange of items (clothes, furniture, equipment, food) through numerous Facebook groups, which promotes reuse and waste reduction.

Objective:

Group members offer or seek unwanted but still valuable items, avoiding throwing them away. The foundation coordinates over 300 local Facebook groups, bringing together over a million people. The group 'Uwaga! Śmieciarka jedzie' ('Attention! The rubbish truck is coming') has very detailed rules. They state: The group serves to facilitate the transfer of unwanted items. It is a functional group, not an entertainment group.

Materials used:

First and foremost, however, the rules concern what is allowed and what is prohibited. It is not permitted to post offers for sale or exchange. It is not permitted to give away items that are illegal to give away, such as medicines. It is not permitted to offer animals. Offers for items that directly offend religious feelings, incite aggression or are politically agitating will not be posted.

Effect:

The foundation strives for systemic changes in the approach to consumption and waste management in Poland by promoting the circular economy model. Environmental impact - these activities contribute to a significant reduction in waste and carbon dioxide savings.

Transferability:

Members of the group may post information about items they intend to give away to others. Anyone can become a member of the group and donate their belongings. Sales are not permitted. If you have something you do not need but could be used by someone else, post information about it.

VINTED

Description:

Vinted is an online **marketplace platform** (which connects multiple sellers and buyers in one place) for buying, selling and exchanging used clothing, footwear, bags, accessories and other items (e.g. children's items, household items and even collectibles) between users.



The vinted.pl app is free to install. When making a purchase or sale, a small fee is charged for 'buyer protection'. For example, for an item that costs PLN 50.00, the buyer pays an additional PLN 5.40. The seller pays nothing.

Objective:

Vinted operates as a peer-to-peer social marketplace, allowing individuals to easily get rid of unwanted items and earn money, and buyers to purchase inexpensive second-hand goods, thereby supporting the concept of sustainable fashion and ecology.

Materials used:

Clothing sold on Vinted is made from natural fibers (wool, cotton, silk, or natural leather) and synthetic fibers (polyester, polyamide, viscose). Often, the clothing is made from recycled materials.

Effect:

Buying and selling used items isn't just about saving money. It also involves raising and deepening awareness of the needs of the natural environment, reducing consumerism, and caring for clean air, climate, and the Earth's natural resources.

This is also creating an increasingly popular trend that emphasizes the greater value of second-hand goods over new ones.

Transferability:

The idea of selling used items that are no longer needed is easy to spread on a smaller scale as well – among friends, acquaintances, and family members. The popularity of second-hand shopping is also shown by large sales portals like Allegro or OLX.

Others:

In Łódź, clothing chains such as H&M, Reserved, Zara, Mango are increasingly placing bins where customers can drop off used clothing.

THE “SECOND-LIFE WARDROBE”

ŠATNÍK - PRAGUE

Description

Šatník is a community-based wardrobe project where people donate clothing and essential items they no longer need.



These items are then passed on free of charge to single parents, families in difficult situations, and people fleeing conflict. Every donated piece is given a second life, extending its use and reducing waste, while directly supporting those who need it most.

Objective:

- promote circular economy principles through the reuse of clothing and household items,
- provide dignified material support to vulnerable families, especially single mothers and their children,
- activate community giving and volunteer involvement,
- show that everyday items — like people — deserve a second chance.

Implementation and Resources used:

- Šatník operates a dedicated space in Prague that receives clean, functional clothing and essentials from the public.
- Donations are sorted, displayed, and distributed by a team of volunteers, who run the project without financial compensation.
- The project also provides targeted support to mothers and children escaping war, including newly arrived families from Ukraine.
- Communication focuses on the core message: *“Every donated piece finds a new owner and gets a second chance.”*
- Items must be clean, intact, and suitable for immediate reuse to ensure dignity and quality.

Effect:

- Clothing and essential items remain in circulation rather than becoming waste, supporting environmental sustainability.
- Families in need gain access to high-quality items at no cost, strengthening their stability and confidence.
- The project fosters community solidarity and shared responsibility through donor and volunteer engagement.
- Šatník demonstrates how giving things a second life can also bring new hope and opportunities to people.

Transferability:

The model is easy to replicate in any municipality or community:

- secure a space for collection and distribution,
- engage volunteers,
- communicate clear donation guidelines,
- build partnerships with local organisations helping families in need.

The concept can be expanded with swap days, repair workshops, or education on sustainable fashion and reuse.

COMMUNITY REUSE & SWAP EVENTS IN PRAGUE

Department for Environmental Protection, City of Prague (MHMP)

Description:

The City of Prague, through its Department for Environmental Protection, organises regular community REUSE Days (swap events) aimed at reducing waste and promoting circular behaviour among residents. These outdoor neighbourhood events enable the exchange of clothing, household items, books, toys, and small equipment, while encouraging citizens to rethink consumption habits.



In addition to public events, the municipality also facilitates internal swap activities for employees and clients within municipal buildings. These indoor events offer a more focused environment, often supported by an accompanying programme such as tailoring or small garment repairs.

Objective:

The main goals are to:

- extend the life cycle of everyday items through reuse,
- reduce textile and household waste in the city,
- strengthen community connections and civic engagement,
- create a replicable model of sustainable, low-cost environmental action.

Implementation and Materials used:

REUSE Day (public outdoor swap)

- organised in accessible outdoor locations within city districts,
- includes volunteer involvement in collecting, sorting, and preparing items,
- offers space for small repairs and basic maintenance of donated items,
- supported by repeated organisation throughout the year, which helps anchor the habit of reuse within communities.

Internal Swap (within the organisation)

- targeted at municipal employees or clients,
- held twice a year in indoor meeting rooms,
- thematically adaptable (books, plants, seasonal items),

- often supported by skilled volunteers – e.g., a seamstress available for clothing alterations or minor repairs.

Effect:

The swap events significantly reduce the volume of reusable items ending up as waste and raise awareness of circular economy principles among the residents and employees involved. They foster a sense of shared responsibility, community participation, and practical engagement in sustainable behaviour. Internal swaps have become highly popular, strengthening relationships within the organisation and offering employees a practical way to participate in environmental initiatives.

Transferability:

The concept is simple, low-cost, and highly transferable. Any municipality, community organisation, school, or company can implement similar swap events with minimal resources. The availability of volunteers and a clear methodology for organising the swaps makes it easy to replicate both public outdoor REUSE Days and internal organisational swaps in other cities or institutions.

CATEGORIES OF THINGS YOU CAN GIVE NEW LIFE TO - EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES -

F O O D

REPAIR-CAFÉS

In different places in Stuttgart

Description:

Across Stuttgart, several volunteer-run Repair Cafés provide community spaces where people gather on dedicated action days or during regular afternoon and evening sessions to repair everyday items that have broken.



A wide variety of skills and repair themes are represented, from bicycle repair meetups to technical troubleshooting, clothing mending, and fixing furniture or household items.

Objective:

The project aims to extend the lifespan of everyday objects by encouraging people to use them for longer instead of throwing them away. Participants often learn about the construction and functioning of their devices or items while repairing them. Repairing saves resources, expands practical knowledge and is even more enjoyable when done together.

Materials used:

The repair cafés operate using donated tools and shared equipment, as well as the existing knowledge of volunteers and guests. Repairs are carried out collaboratively and supported by research and the exchange of practical experience across different areas, such as electronics, textiles, mechanics and woodworking.

Effect:

In neighbourhoods across Stuttgart, countless items are repaired and returned to use instead of being discarded. This initiative reduces waste, conserves resources and strengthens community learning and cooperation.

Transferability:

The concept can easily be adopted anywhere. Things break everywhere, so all that is needed is a space and a group of people willing to share their skills, knowledge and curiosity to help one another repair items rather than replace them.

Contact / information: <https://www.repaircafe-stuttgart.de/>

**FOODSHARING-CAFÉ RAUPE
IMMERSATT**

West Stuttgart



Description:

A unique food-sharing café has been operating in the west of Stuttgart since 2019. The café has a cupboard filled with rescued food, which is brought in daily by volunteers from the food-sharing community. Visitors can choose how much they pay for beverages, which are offered on a “pay-what-you-can” basis.

Objective:

The project aims to reduce food waste and strengthen social participation by providing a space where people can come together, share and consume food, regardless of their financial situation.

Materials used:

The café relies on donated and rescued food supplies, supported by a network of local volunteers. It operates based on voluntary contributions of time and resources, a community-driven system of daily food collection and an open payment model for beverages.

Effect:

The café has become a pioneering initiative within Stuttgart and across Germany. It successfully demonstrates how rescued food can be saved from landfill and shared in a communal environment, benefiting the local and global climate while fostering social connections.

Transferability:

The idea is simple and can easily be adapted for use in other cities. All that is required is a motivated community willing to raise funds to set up the café and volunteer to collect and redistribute food on an ongoing basis.

Contact / infos: <https://www.raupeimmersatt.de/>



HARRYS BUDE

South Stuttgart



Description:

Since 2020, Harrys Bude has been distributing rescued food five days a week.

Over 40 volunteers provide around 300 people with seasonal fruit and vegetables from the weekly market, baked goods from local bakeries and non-perishable goods from various supermarkets. The food is provided free of charge, and no proof of need or social documentation is required.

Objective:

The project aims to reduce food waste while ensuring free, low-threshold access to healthy food for all. It also promotes participation by offering meaningful volunteering opportunities.

Materials used:

The initiative relies on surplus food donated by markets, bakeries and supermarkets, and is supported by a dedicated team of volunteers. Daily logistics for food collection and distribution are essential, as is a fixed space for handing out goods and an organisational structure that ensures continuity and accessibility.

Effect:

Since its opening, many tons of food have been saved from going to waste. The project has gained significant public visibility and enjoys strong support from civil society, businesses, and politicians. It demonstrates how social impact and environmental protection can be achieved simultaneously.

Transferability:

Similar concepts have already emerged in other districts. Successful transfer requires reliable contact persons who can consistently maintain relationships with markets, guests, and volunteers. With dedicated local coordination, the model can be successfully replicated.

Contact / infos: <https://www.harrys-bude.org/>

CAFÉ BÍLÁ VRÁNA AT CHODOV SENIOR HOME

Giving Spaces and People a Second Chance

Pohoda Society & Domov seniorů Chodov



Description:

Domov seniorů Chodov provided vacant space in its building for the expansion of Café Bílá vrána, a social enterprise operated by the NGO Pohoda. The café employs people with disabilities and now serves both seniors living in the home and the wider neighbourhood.

By opening the space to Pohoda, the senior home gave the premises a second life — transforming an unused area into a lively community café and pastry shop with a strong social mission.

At the same time, the café gives a *second chance* to people with disabilities by offering meaningful employment, skills development, and social inclusion.

Objective:

- revive and meaningfully reuse an unused space inside the senior home,
- create job opportunities for people with disabilities,
- connect seniors, staff, families and the local community,
- integrate a sustainable social enterprise into everyday life of the home.

Implementation and Resources used:

- Domov seniorů Chodov offered Pohoda long-term access to the space, making the expansion possible.
- In early 2025, a new café was opened inside the building; later, a pastry shop accessible both from inside and the street was added.

- Pohoda established a dedicated social-enterprise company (*Pohodová Bílá vrána s.r.o.*) to ensure stable operation and access to funding for employees with disabilities.
- The café follows sustainable practices: waste separation, responsible sourcing, and cooperation with community organisations.
- Employment is supported through grants and planned applications for workplace assistants.

Effect:

- A formerly unused space gained a second life — becoming a café that provides daily social contact for seniors, visitors and staff.
- People with disabilities gained employment and training, helping them grow professionally and socially.
- The senior home's environment became livelier and more community-oriented.
- The café strengthens local connections and supports the idea that both *places* and *people* can thrive when given meaningful opportunities.

Transferability:

This model is easily replicable for senior homes, municipal facilities or community centres with unused or underused space.

Cooperation with a social enterprise can bring:

- revitalisation of public buildings,
- new services for residents,
- inclusive employment opportunities,
- and broader community engagement.

It shows how giving spaces, organisations and people a second chance can create long-term value for everyone involved.

FOOD SHARING-FRIDGES

in Łódź

Description:

Food-sharing fridges (community fridges) are publicly accessible points (refrigerators and cupboards) used for the free exchange of surplus food between people.





They help combat food waste and support people in need, while following safe food-sharing rules (product description and preparation dates). Anyone can leave fresh, properly packaged food or take whatever they like.

Objective:

Everyone – regardless of their financial situation – can use community fridges. Giving and taking: you can leave surplus food (e.g. after holidays) or take the products you need. Homemade food must be tightly sealed, labelled with ingredients, and marked with the date of preparation.

Materials used:

What you can leave (examples): Factory-sealed products, ready-made meals, bread, fruit, vegetables, dairy products (in accordance with the rules). What not to leave (examples): Raw meat, fish, dishes containing raw eggs, spoiled or partially spoiled food, or products in opened packages (guidelines are usually provided on-site).

Effect:

Reducing food waste, saving food from being thrown away. Social support - providing access to free food for people in difficult situations. Most importantly, the idea of food sharing promotes sharing and builds responsibility for food.

Transferability:

All it takes is choosing a visible, publicly accessible location (e.g. near an apartment building or in a community center), obtaining the owner's consent, ensuring access to electricity (if a fridge is needed), installing stable equipment (a fridge or cabinets), displaying clear rules, announcing the launch of the point online, and finding a partner to help maintain cleanliness – the key is to bring only edible, non-expired products."

CATEGORIES OF THINGS YOU CAN GIVE NEW LIFE TO - EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES -

FURNITURE and DECORATIONS

ARTS AND CRAFTS STUDIO

Łódź, Gdańska 44

Description:

Agata Talczevska's Arts and Crafts Studio in Łódź specialises in furniture restoration and artistic painting.



The gallery restores old, stylish Polish furniture, as well as contemporary furniture purchased at flea markets throughout Poland and items brought in for restoration by individual customers.

Objective:

Repairs, renovations, and refurbishments are carried out here. Depending on the degree of wear and tear or damage to the furniture, employees fill in any gaps, sand down the surfaces, and then paint and varnish them. Both large pieces of furniture, such as wardrobes and tables, and small items, including chairs, stools, coffee tables, picture frames, and mirrors, are repaired and refurbished here.

Materials used:

Natural wood furniture is accepted for renovation. Most often, these are pieces of furniture and objects made from Polish tree species such as oak, ash, linden, and fruit trees.

Effect:

Repaired and refurbished furniture looks like new. It is very solid, beautiful and durable. It can be used to furnish both stylish and modern interiors. Furniture restored by the Fine and Applied Arts Studio is a beautiful decoration for public buildings such as offices, theatres and galleries.

Transferability:

It can be said that searching for and restoring old furniture has become fashionable in Poland. Sometimes it is furniture that belonged to ancestors, sometimes it is bought at markets or in antique galleries. It is encouraging that there is a growing awareness in society of the need to protect the natural environment and care for forests by preventing tree felling.

GIVEAWAY FLEA MARKET

South Stuttgart

Description: A “Give-Away Flea Market” takes place every two weeks on Saturdays next to Harrys Bude. Donated items, primarily clothing, are distributed free of charge to people in difficult social situations.



Volunteers stand behind long tables for several hours, supporting the distribution process and ensuring that items are handed out fairly and according to need.

Objective:

The project aims to provide people with items they urgently need, while offering others the chance to pass on things they no longer use, rather than throwing them away.

Materials used:

The market relies entirely on donated clothing and other useful everyday items. Volunteers manage distribution, organising the goods, assisting guests in choosing items, and upholding a fair and respectful process for everyone involved.

Effect:

Each year, countless pieces of clothing are given a second life — precisely where they are needed most. The project promotes social dignity, strengthens the community and prevents usable items from becoming waste.



Transferability:

The concept can be implemented in any city. Everywhere, there are people with unused possessions and people in need of them. All that is required is a group of individuals who are committed to coordinating the exchange between the two groups with empathy and reliability.

REPAIR CAFÉ – COMMUNITY REPAIR WORKSHOPS IN PRAGUE

Department for Environmental Protection City of Prague (MHMP)

Description:

The City of Prague organises Repair Café **events**, which serve as community-based repair workshops focused on extending the life of household items.

These events allow residents to bring small household electronics, textiles, toys, furniture, and other usable objects that require repair. Supported by skilled volunteers, the workshops combine practical repair assistance with an informal social gathering, offering refreshments and encouraging community participation.

Repair Cafés also include thematic evenings, such as toy repair sessions or textile mending workshops (e.g., patching torn clothing). These thematic programmes help attract different target groups, from parents with children to seniors interested in handicrafts.



Objective:

The initiative aims to:

- reduce waste by repairing rather than discarding household items,
- promote practical skills and DIY repair culture among residents,
- support intergenerational learning through shared activities,
- strengthen community engagement and circular economy behaviour.

Implementation and Resources used:

- Events take place in municipal or community spaces equipped with basic repair stations.
- Volunteers and skilled hobby repairers support participants with diagnostics and repairs of items such as textiles, toys, small electronics, lamps, or furniture.
- The municipality ensures organisational coordination, promotion, and a welcoming environment including coffee/tea and small refreshments.

- Thematic repair evenings focus on specific categories:
 - toy repair sessions (e.g., repairing stuffed animals, replacing parts),
 - textile mending events (patching, visible mending, simple sewing repairs),
 - Furniture or upholstery basics.
- The emphasis is on active participation: visitors learn how to repair their items rather than handing them over passively.

Effect:

Repair Cafés help reduce the volume of discarded items and strengthen awareness of resource-saving behaviours. Participants gain practical hands-on skills, which increases their confidence in repairing everyday items. The events foster a sense of belonging, encourage volunteering, and build connections across different age and social groups.

Transferability:

Repair Café events are highly replicable and suitable for municipalities, NGOs, community centres, or educational institutions. They require only a small space, volunteer expertise, and basic tools. Thematic evenings make the concept adaptable and appealing to a wide range of participants, making it an effective model for promoting circular economy practices in any community.

FIREWOOD RACK

Private property in Łódź

Description:

As part of organizing the area around a private house in a single-family housing estate, a functional wood shed was built using recycled wooden pallets.

The aim was to create a space for storing firewood used in a home fireplace, while at the same time reusing wooden waste in the spirit of the circular economy.



Objective:

The objective of the activity was to organize the space and use wooden pallets to provide an aesthetic and practical firewood storage area.

Materials used:

Six used Euro pallets were used for the construction. They were cleaned, treated with natural linseed oil, painted with wood paint, and assembled into a simple structure. The entire project was completed within two days.

Effect:

A solid and aesthetically pleasing wood shed was created, fulfilling its practical functions. The project strengthened the ecological awareness of the participants and fostered a sense of shared responsibility for the immediate neighborhood environment.

Transferability:

The idea can easily be implemented either as a local community initiative or individually for personal use.

THE ACADEMIC DESIGN CENTRE in Łódź

Description:

The Academic Design Centre in Łódź is a place for promoting art and design. It promotes and organises exhibitions and conducts educational activities for people of all ages.





Workshops are held there on clothing design, ceramics, visual identity, posters, art and photography books, as well as sustainable design. Some of the workshops are dedicated to the processing of natural raw materials, including wood.

Objective:

The objective of the activity was to find artistic inspiration and transform, give a new function to or decorate old objects or wooden elements.

Materials used:

Small boards, pieces of wood and wicker baskets were used for the activity. The objects were cleaned, smoothed and creatively transformed. Paints, threads, strings, leather, canvas and other fabrics and raw materials were used to process the wood. It turned out that old things could be glued, fastened, given new shapes and new functions, and given a second life.

Effect:

Old, useless items have been transformed into decorative objects, adding new colour to interiors.

Transferability:

The idea can be easily implemented at home. Every home has some small items or odds and ends that you don't know what to do with, but it's a shame to throw them away. Repurposing small items can also be great, educational fun for children.

SOME OTHER IDEAS TO GIVE THINGS A SECOND



DO IT YOURSELF

- SIMPLE PROJECTS TO GET STARTED (DIY) -

Furniture, decorations, wood elements

- Old dresser → turn it into a bathroom sink. Paint it, cut a hole in the countertop, install a sink – with a small modification, it looks very stylish.
- Old doors → offer lots of possibilities for repurposing. For example, you can turn old doors into a table, a desk, or a headboard for a bed.
- Wooden ladder → you can turn a ladder into a shelf or a rack for towels, blankets, or plants. Make sure to thoroughly clean and sand the wood before varnishing or painting your new piece of furniture.
- Chairs from different sets → you can create a cohesive set by painting all the chairs in the same color.
- You can also style each chair individually, giving it a unique color and decoration. Stencils with patterns for decoration can be bought at IKEA or at a specialized art supply store.



Every piece of furniture transformed with a designer's touch adds originality, uniqueness, and an amazing atmosphere to the interior.

Clothes

Dress, skirt

→ **Change the sleeves** – turn long sleeves into $\frac{3}{4}$ length, puffed, or remove them entirely.

→ Make a mini/midi version or add a ruffle in a contrasting fabric.



→ Cut off the top, insert an elastic band or a belt at the waist. Shorten and give it a new bottom.

→ **Change the style** – turn a dress into a tunic for leggings or jeans. Add a belt, buttons, or ties – you can change the silhouette without altering the basic construction.

→ **Dye it** (tie-dye, ombre, or a solid color). →

→ **Get creative** – make a two-piece set (top + skirt); redo the back or neckline – V-cut, tie, lace; patchwork – combine several dresses into one.

Food

Stale bread → croutons or breadcrumbs.
Pan-fried or baked in the oven, it turns into a new meal.

Citrus peels → natural air freshener.
Throw them into a pot of water and simmer for a while – your whole home will smell amazing.

Banana → banana bread; oatmeal – naturally sweetened by the banana.
Sauces and chutneys – for cheeses, meats, or vegetarian dishes.

Banana peels:
→ For fertilizer (soaked in water or buried in soil),
→ For polishing plant leaves or shoes,
→ Face or hair mask – banana + yogurt/honey.

Quick idea (2 minutes):
Mash 2 very ripe bananas, add 2 eggs and 4 tablespoons of oats, and fry small pancakes – no sugar, no flour.

“Banana ice cream” (nice cream) – blended frozen banana, optionally with cocoa or peanut butter.

Banana cubes – mashed bananas frozen in molds, perfect for yogurt or oatmeal.

Chocolate-covered bananas – coated and chilled.

Energy balls – banana, oats, peanut butter, cocoa.

Banana mousse – as a dessert or a topping for pancakes.



Radish greens →

radish greens pesto. Ingredients: greens, nuts (e.g., walnuts, cashews), Parmesan, garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper.

Method: Blend everything into a smooth paste. It tastes great with pasta, sandwiches, or as a dip.

Salad addition → chopped greens are a great way to enhance vegetable salads or those with couscous, quinoa, tomatoes, and cucumber.

Butter with greens → mix soft butter with finely chopped greens, salt, and a little garlic. Perfect for bread, potatoes, or grilled vegetables.

Soups and broths → radish greens work wonderfully as an addition to vegetable creams or broths – they add freshness and color.

Smoothies → you can add the greens to green smoothies along with spinach, apple, and banana – it enriches the drink with vitamins.

Cabbage cores → cream soup or vegetable broth – the cores can be cooked together with root vegetables and seasonings, then blended into a smooth cream.

Slaw from cores → cut into thin strips, mix with carrot, apple, yogurt, or mayonnaise, and season with salt and pepper.

Fried chips or stir-fry → thinly sliced, sautéed with a little oil, garlic, and spices.

Filling for dumplings, pancakes, or stuffed cabbage → chopped cores can be sautéed with onion and spices.

Cauliflower cores → cream soup – cauliflower core adds thickness and a slightly sweet flavor. You can add potatoes, carrots, and seasonings.

Vegetable puree → cooked core blended with butter and seasonings – an alternative to mashed potatoes.

Fried “nuggets” → cut into cubes, coated in spices and breadcrumbs, then baked or fried.



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