



**Translated from the original German version**

**Unverpackt - Lose, Nachhaltig, Gut in Kiel was a pioneer in Germany for a new way of consumption and a forerunner of a true circular economy.**

**Today I am announcing its planned closure on 31 December 2022.**

**Dear Customers, Dear Supporters,**

**and dear owners of unpackaged shops all over Germany,**

In 2014, I opened Germany's first packaging free shop in Kiel, "Unverpackt". Since then, a movement has emerged. The concept has proven that alternative and environmentally friendly consumption patterns are possible in our society and at the same time meet the requirements of hygiene, digitalisation and competitiveness.

With the "Unverpackt" concept, owners and managers of packaging free shops focus on the prevention of unnecessary disposable packaging, on the alternative of reuse, on the reduction of food waste, and on a higher appraisal of food. The packaging free shops also work to reduce packaging waste along the entire supply chain. In this way, they support the model of a resource-saving and efficient circular economy [1]!

By raising awareness in society about the problems of single-use packaging, the packaging free shops often take on a direct educational mission. They have made such an impact on society, suppliers, the media, politics and the retail sector that the word "Unverpackt" has now become a natural term in Germany for this type of grocery shop.

With the shop in Kiel, I have offered seminars [2], supported student work, received school visits, and written publications [3], or participated in studies [4]. The Unverpackt shop in Kiel has also contributed to the vision of a "Kiel Zero Waste City", which I co-initiated in 2018 [5].

Unfortunately, the "**historically symbolic**" **Unverpackt shop in Kiel**, after a healthy growing success until 2019 (like many other Unverpackt shops in Germany), has been hit by successive crises: five COVID waves and, after Russia's attack on Ukraine, the fear of the erosion of our prosperity. These have drastically hit shopping and consumption habits: social distancing, increased home office [6] and finally the return to the supermarket or discounter - real winners that have meanwhile integrated the narrative of sustainability (rarely in an honest way) into their marketing concepts.

So I've seen a significant drop of two-thirds in customer numbers since 2019.

I have always felt obliged to you, dear customers, employees and especially fellow campaigners, who have opened a packaging free shop themselves after taking part in my workshops. We have (Germany-wide) , I have (locally) searched for solutions!

Aware that this is not a question of managing our small shops, but rather a global social phenomenon, and in view of the first shop closures in Germany, we approached the Minister of the Environment, Mrs. Dr. Lemke, together with the Unverpackt Association ("Unverpackt Verband") as early as April 2022. Our aim was to promote "packaging free shopping", be it through campaigns, incentives for this shopping model, recognition of the educational function of packaging free shops or by finding legal means to defend the model against greenwashing. Unfortunately, in my opinion, these proposals were not embraced. We were directed to approach the Länder individually.

What I did... with letters to the city of Kiel and the regional ("Land") government. My aim was not to get grants (there were certainly nice offers and concepts here!), which in the end are only a temporary remedy, but to find a solution with the help of competent experts in order to revive the business, possibly in a different form that puts the public benefit in the foreground, an "Unverpackt 2.0". In short, to quickly set up a long-term plan! Talks did take place. But they remained talks and ideas.

My strength to persevere has its limits. Maybe I'll miss a turning point where everything will turn for the better again. But today I have made a decision: I have put my heart and all my energy into this concept and business for 10 years. I am now closing the Unverpackt shop on 31 December.

Of course, I would be happy if a successor for the shop with fresh ideas and a suitable concept would come forward: It is still possible! I would be happy to be available as an advisor.

The conservation of resources, the reduction of waste and the call for a change in consumer behavior, which is not a refrain but a change in our habits, remain essential issues for me. I will continue to campaign for these ideas in

the environmental NGOs "Zero Waste Kiel e.V." [7], "Zero Waste Germany e.V." [8], the movements "Break Free from Plastic" [9] or "Exit Plastik"[10] and in my everyday life.

And I believe today more than ever: The Unverpackt concept, even without the shop in Kiel, is at the forefront of European and national ambitions in terms of waste prevention and circular economy [11] [12] [13], and is a role model for an ecology of everyday life! I also appeal to society to continue to support all other packaging free shops.

Best regards,



**Marie Delaperrière**

**8 Jahre Unverpackt**



<https://youtu.be/HySawQdqb-c>

**The sound of things**



<https://youtu.be/QITpKxqvrEY>

## Referenzen

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- [7] [Zerowaste-kiel.de](http://zerowaste-kiel.de) Stand 19.11.22
- [8] [Zerowastegermany.de](http://zerowastegermany.de) Stand 19.11.22
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- [11] Europäische Kommission - 2019 - Der europäische Grüne Deal - Mitteilung der Kommission [...]
- [12] Abfallrahmenrichtlinie 2008/98/EG über Abfälle, geändert durch Richtlinie 2018/851/EU
- [13] Novelle des Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetzes – KrWG

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