



PILOT BLOG

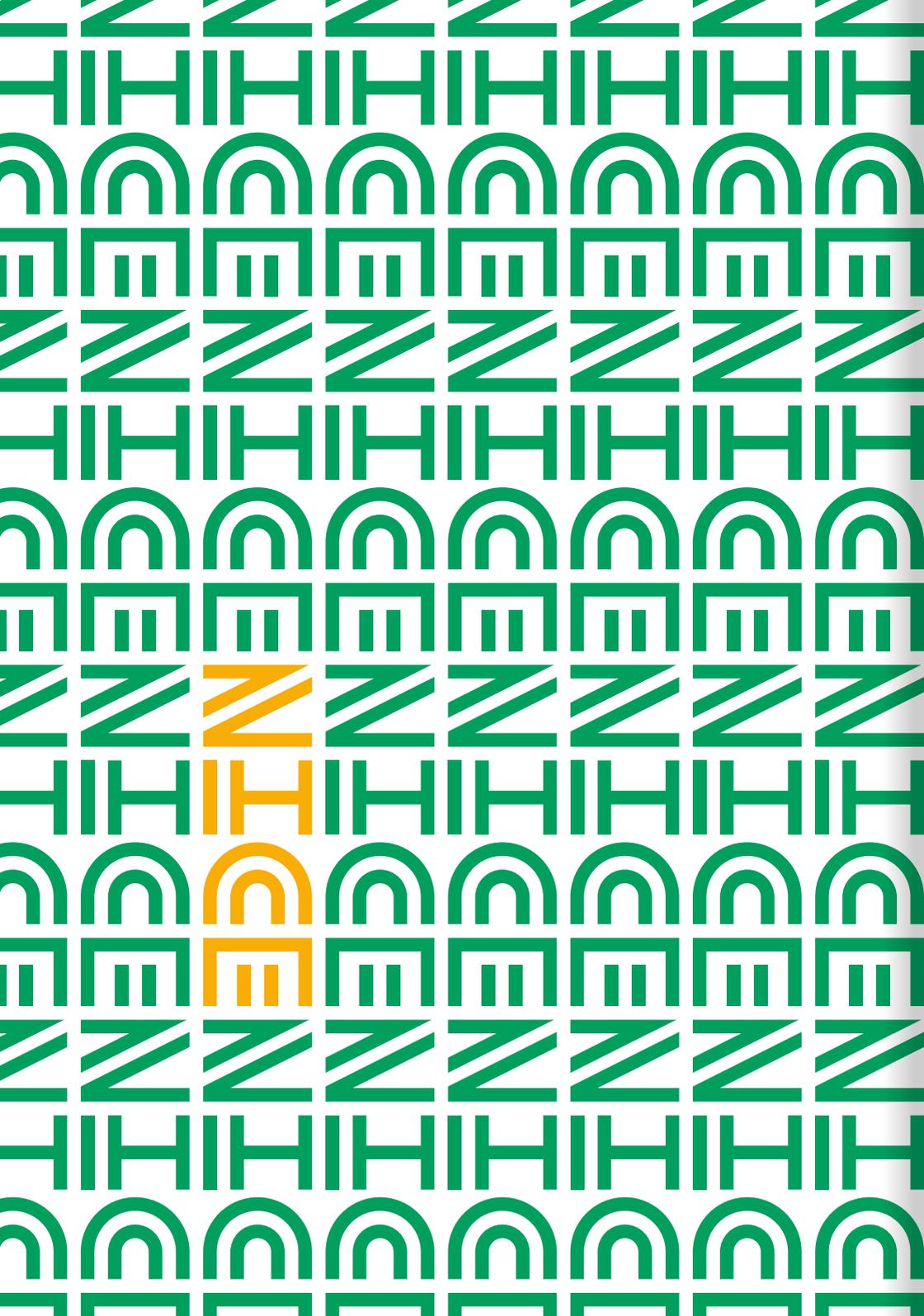
Graz

Herrengasse 10



The pilot project
at Herrengasse 10
was intended
to serve as
a small model
for the
“House
of Future”.





04 Perex

06 The pilot idea

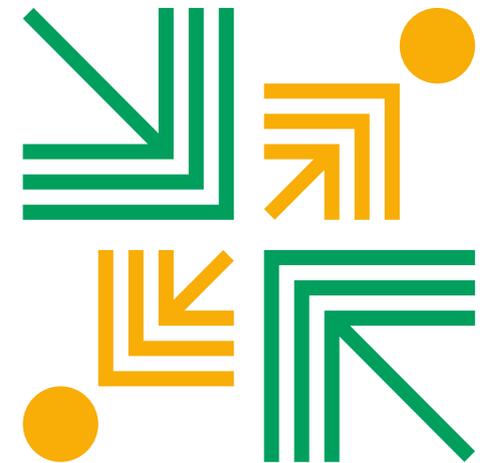
10 How it started

14 Implementation phase

22 Outcomes and learnings

28 Further Information

30 Partners



Perex

Graz has a large number of local entrepreneurs and people looking for space, especially in the areas of circular economy and sustainability. On the other hand, there are many vacant properties in the city center, but these are either unaffordable or unsuitable for these small businesses. High rents or spaces that are too large to be used on their own.

At the same time, **StadtLABOR** developed the idea of a “House of Future”. The idea is to offer sustainable consumption models and products, organize events and exhibitions, provide information points for the city of Graz, and offer sustainable catering. Create a place for cooperation and co-creation for a climate friendly and liveable future.

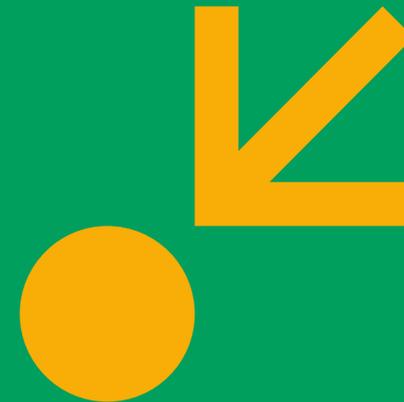
This vision of a “sustainable department store” continued to grow during the NiCE project. The pilot project at Herrengasse 10 was intended to serve as a small model for the “**House of Future**”.

The city of Graz provided a small space in the middle of the old town where producers could present their products and crafts. The focus was primarily on the following points:

The pop-up store is for local producers who do not yet have their own sales space in Graz.

The pop-up store is intended for companies that produce regionally and sustainably.

A mixture of sustainability, craftsmanship, and art must be ensured in order to bring a colorful mix to the city center.



THE PILOT IDEA



The pilot project at Herrengasse 10 aimed to temporarily revitalize a vacant inner-city property while giving entrepreneurs the opportunity to showcase their products and experiment with new business ideas. Sixteen businesses were selected through a call for applications, all of which shared a focus on regionality, sustainability, and art. Each entrepreneur took turns using the space in a purely self-organized manner, creating a dynamic and ever-changing showcase of local creativity.



The City of Graz, through its Department of Economic and Tourism Development, provided the 22m² space free of charge.





The only conditions were that it had to be attractively designed, operate with regular opening hours, and be equipped by the entrepreneurs themselves, including furniture and cash register systems.

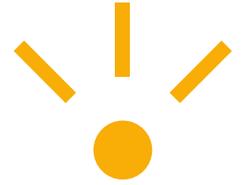


StadtLABOR organized the user calls, coordinated cooperation between the individual companies, and supported the users in their work at the pop-up store over the course of several months. However, the goal from the outset was to enable users to work independently.



Figure 1: The typical “portal” that became the pilot’s “trademark.”. Photo: StadtLABOR

How it started



At the beginning of April, the space in Graz became available and the city of Graz began searching for potential pop-up users. Through cooperation with the City of Graz's Department of Economic and Tourism Development via the NiCE project, StadtLABOR were entrusted with the search for users.

An online meeting was held with participants from the NiCE networking meetings, and a core group for the pop-up store was quickly formed. This core group was entrusted with planning for the months of June and September. In a second call in May, co-users were sought for the months of July and August. The call was shared primarily with the circular economy stakeholders who had been researched, and a total of around 22 people signed up for July and August.

Ultimately, the focus in June and September was on resource-oriented sewing and production, and in July and August, the focus was on the sustainable creative industry.

The groups were to set up and run the store independently. This required, above all, a process of building trust, which was supported by StadtLABOR. StadtLABOR tried to find suitable matches so that the shared use of space was also possible. The handover of keys and the obtaining of usage agreements were also handled by StadtLABOR. It was important for the users to always have a clear contact person for various questions, and StadtLABOR was able to provide this.



Figure 2: Participants of the core group after a joint meeting to plan the pilot project, Photo: StadtLABOR



Implementation PHASE



June was all about the circular economy. A group of five entrepreneurs who are upcycling textiles and furniture moved into the small space in the city centre. The entrepreneurs divided up the opening hours and sold their own as well as each other's products. This meant that small businesses could also take advantage of the offer.

The first week at Herrengasse 10 was opened by “Mafee”. Mafee produces childrens fashion directly in Graz. Their fabrics are all organic and they take a special approach: Various fashion pieces and accessories are designed to reduce waste. For example, size-adjustable children’s birthdaycrowns and backpacks are sewn, that ‘grow’ with the child for several years. This means that the products can be used for a longer period of time and do not end up in the used clothing containers as quickly as conventional items do.

The following women also worked with textiles:

Felizia alias ‘Waldlaeufer.in’, who upcycles jeans. Felizia is a denim artist and repairs jeans according to an old Japanese art of embroidery.

The next in the group was Verena from ‘fundikat’. She conjures up all sorts of textiles from vintace fabric. She produces cosmetic bags, passport covers and wallets.

Andrea from „Cerwenka“ is dedicated to the so-called „Froschgoscherl“. These items decorate traditional Austrian costumes in particular with upcycled leather. She also produces Hair accessories and bracelets - her trademark: ‘Froschgoscherl’ probably best translated into English as “Frogmouth”.

The group was enriched by Rike. Rike works outside the city at „vomHügel“. There you can buy local organic flowers and restored furniture. She gives old, used furniture a second chance.



Figure 3: The June group of the pop-up store, Photo: StadtLABOR



July and August are dedicated to the creative industries.

Herrengasse 10 will be hosted by [LebensGroß](#) throughout July and August. LebensGroß supports people with disabilities in their everyday lives and also has several workshops where various products are manufactured. These products are sold at Herrengasse 10. Felt pendants, ceramic cups, soaps and tea towels are just a small part of the product range.

In addition, there is an area of Herrengasse 10 that is available to young entrepreneurs. They can share the space on a daily basis with LebensGroß. Ten other female entrepreneurs also take of this opportunity to showcase their products. The group includes a jewellery designer, seamstresses, various artists offering watercolour paintings and artistic stained glass and regional cosmetics manufacturers.



Figure 4 daily changing users in July and August, Photo: StadtLABOR

September was once again all about textile upcycling and concrete home accessories. The textile June group brought Claudia from roomNo9 on board after “vomHügel” moved into its own store at Hofgasse 7 and was no longer part of the pop-up store.



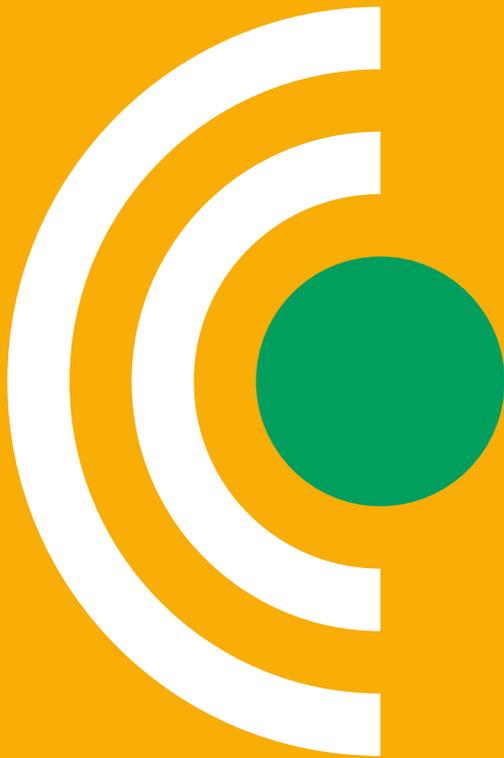
The pop-up store closed again at the end of September with a closing event featuring Studio Fenco. The closing event once again put the small pilot project in Herrengasse in the spotlight. Visitors got their money's worth with a fashion show by the upcycling label “Studio Fenco” and a wine tasting. The focus was on networking and personal exchanges with the producers.



Figure 5 Fashion show in front of the Pilot Herrengasse 10, Photo: StadtLABOR



Outcomes and learnings



Herrengasse 10 shows how important living labs are for everyone.



The opportunity to try things out was very important for most entrepreneurs. It allowed them not only to showcase their products, but also to test how they were received by customers. In addition, it gave them a first-hand experience of the everyday tasks involved in running a business. Things like customer contact and cash register systems could be tested in an almost playful way and without any business pressure (sales, etc.).



For the company “vomHügel,” the pop-up store was so successful that, after participating in the pilot, it opened its own store in downtown Graz.

Since October 2024, upcycled furniture and local organic flowers from “vomHügel” can be found at Hofgasse 7. They charmingly marketed the opening with the slogan **“Not a pop-up store – here to stay”** (Figure 6).



Another lesson that is currently still being developed and tested is the sharing of human resources. “Nachhaltige Kreisslerei”, a shop that permanently offers only sustainable and regional products from various companies, has adopted the concept to save costs.

As at Herrengasse 10, the various companies have their own space in the shop to sell their products. In return, they pay less rent for the display space for their products. Personal presence in exchange for rental costs. The advantage for Nachhaltige Kreisslerei is that they save on personnel costs and do not have to constantly retrain staff to sell the products well. When the companies themselves are in the store, they are also the best salespeople.

Not only entrepreneurs were able to try things out, but consumers and tourists in the city centre also benefited from the mix of sectors.

Citizens of Graz were delighted with the useful and creative interim use of Herrengasse 10 and would like to see more projects like this.

Tourists bought Graz souvenirs from the regional entrepreneurs in Herrengasse 10 and the sewing group was able to share their ideas about upcycling and gain new customers.



Figure 6: „vomHügel“ Store in Hofgasse 7, Photo: „vomHügel“

Further Information



NiCE Project Websites

StadtLABOR:

<https://stadtlaborgraz.at/de/2023/06/nice-from-niche-to-centre/>

Information about pilot “Herrengasse 10”:

<https://stadtlaborgraz.at/de/2024/09/zwischenutzung-herrengasse-10/>

NiCE project website, pilot actions:

<https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/nice/?tab=outputs>

Interreg: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/nice/>

NiCE Online Seminar: Bringing circularity closer to people
– the experience from Graz and Warsaw:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZIPZvKQ3w>

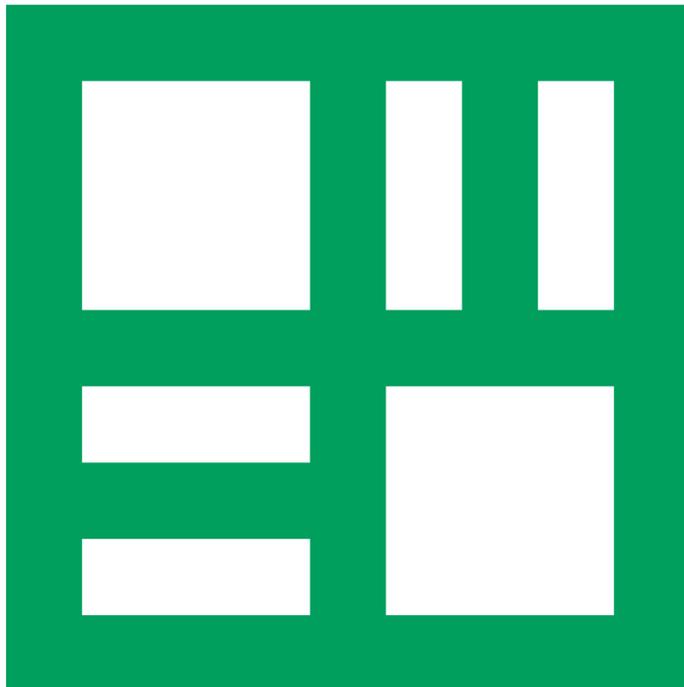
Pilot video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRL3B45V1ig&t=2s>



Pop-up store with regional and sustainable products in the heart of Graz



Pilot Partner Websites



Baumelei	– Handcrafted earrings made from Styrian wood
Cerwenka	– Traditional dress reimaged
Felizia Wurzinger-Keller alias Waldlaeuffer.in	– Denim Artist & jeans upcycling
Feygenblatt	– Handmade natural cosmetics in Graz
Fundikat	– Alteration tailoring
Gertrude Kowald	– Art of Essence
Himmel, Garn & Zwirn	– handmade bags and accessories made from old fabrics
Lebensgroß	– including workshops and sustainable products
Mafee	– Handmade organic baby and children's products with a focus on regionality and sustainability
Munaycolor	– Art inspired by Nature
Sabau.eco.design	– Sustainable home accessories dyed with plants
RoomNo9	– Home accessories made of concrete and partly from construction waste
Shiva Abossedgh	– Glass painter, paints old glass and bottles
Stefanie Hödlmoser	– Screen prints and risographs
Szidonia Szep	– Contemporary ceramic art
vomHügel	– Slow Flowers – Slow Living

Project partners

Interreg
CENTRAL EUROPE



Co-funded by
the European Union

NiCE





This project is supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme
with co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund.