Pro **SHARE** | Enhancing Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion through Practices of Sharing in Housing and Public Space
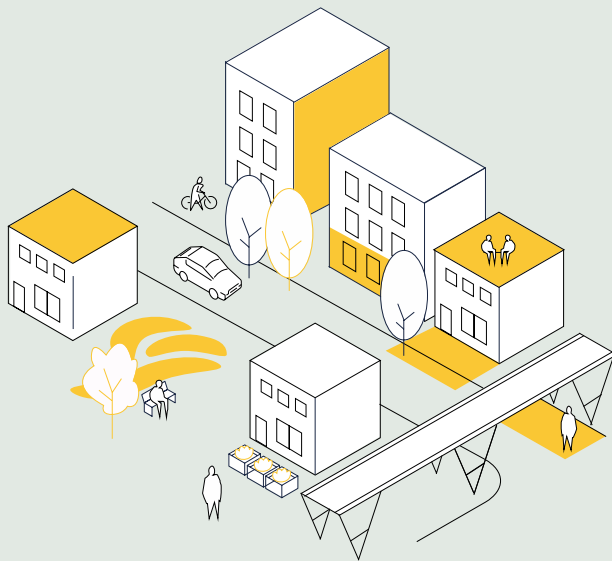
d.3.3. ProShare-Lab Vienna

Final report

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Context of the Urban Living Lab (ULL)[1]

The 16th district of Ottakring is one of Vienna's most rapidly growing areas. It is characterized by stark contrasts between the low-density middle-class residential neighborhoods on the west and the eastern working class area with higher population density, larger proportion of immigrant residents, and a comparatively high unemployment rate. Most buildings were constructed before 1919, during the Gründerzeit and are privately owned. Still, the inner part of the district functions as an entry point for migrants and young families because its historical housing stock remains more accessible than public housing.

The Vienna lab has been anchored in the Garage Grande, a temporary use project (2020–2023) developed by the Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung (GB*West), a municipal urban renewal office. Located in the middle of the dense, inner section of Ottakring district, Garage Grande has been established in a former multi-store car-park space, a building facilitated by the property owner (to be later transformed into private housing). The place currently serves as an open space for knowledge exchange and experimentation for different citizen-led DIY initiatives, free of rental costs, and subject to fewer institutional and administrative requirements. This way, it gives visibility to different forms of tacit knowledge of individuals and citizen groups with experience in topics pertaining to circular economy and community building at the neighborhood level.

Approach and methods of the ULL

Within Garage Grande, the Vienna ProSHARE-Lab has constituted a one-year interface-platform for learning about practices of sharing and forms of self-organisation set by a research team in collaboration with the GB*West. It has sought thereby to include plural voices among Garage Grande stakeholders by providing spaces for dialogue, and, in particular, to address underrepresented groups. This has been done by reaching out and creating relationships of trust with local initiatives that enable access to marginal communities.

The lab activities have been structured in two phases. In the first one, it has secured a physical space for interaction and exchange in which open dialogues on sharing practices have been facilitated by researchers to assemble residents' and urban initiatives' experiential knowledge(s). This was preceded by expert interviews that allowed identifying relevant actors related to existing sharing initiatives in the neighborhood. In order to collaboratively generate knowledge on sharing and space-commoning, discussions were combined with other participatory methods. Among these, the lab included a group discussion (on sharing practices with relevant actors and initiators of sharing projects), a participatory exhibition and a mapping workshop, that allowed rendering tacit knowledge of local sharing projects and initiatives visible and to foster networking and knowledge exchange among the diverse participants.

Phase 1 ProSHARE-lab activities included:

- Two events in cooperation with the urban renewal office and actors from garage grande during the neighborhood week to create a physical and virtual space for interaction and exchange: Kick-of event for opening the participatory exhibition and a community event called "Grätzl-Picknick". About 38 people attended at events of phase 1.
- The exhibition included information about the research project ProSHARE, important sharing initiatives in the district and invited residents to share their ideas and perceptions on the topic

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of "sharing". With pins, post-it's and stickers the exhibition can be designed interactively and grows with time. Beside the interactive parts of the exhibition, residents could exchange ideas through an "ideas market" and map sharing activities and – initiatives through a pin-board intervention. This approach on one hand allowed visitors to share and exchange knowledge about sharing- initiatives and low-cost or no-cost offerings in the district, and on the other hand supported the visibility of non-commercial sharing initiatives and practices in the district.

- Interested and residents were able to participate during the neighbourhood week at the Garage Grande and to visit the exhibition till end of November 2021 during opening hours. The contents of the exhibition will subsequently be evaluated and will be an integral part of the research project.
- During the "Gratzl-Picknick" relevant actors and initiators of sharing projects were able to present themselves to the neighborhood in an open and low threshold setting. The format included an open discussion with stakeholders from NGO social institutions (FLÜWI, Jugend am Werk), architecture (Pocket Mannerhatten, Grün statt grau), urban renewal office (GB*West) and sharing initiatives (Robin Foods, Material-koje) and ended with a buffet provided by an local food saving organization. Important topics have been motivation, borders and challenges but also potentials and conditions for success of sharing practices in the field of housing and public space.
- In combination with semi-structured, qualitative interview session with some of the main actors of garage grande, facilitated from December 21 till March 22, both activities (participatory exhibition and group discussion) contributed 1) to mapping and identifying practices of sharing and /or commoning and 2) to strengthening and reflecting on local networks of sharing regarding social (ex-)inclusiveness.

## Lab activities 2021: Phase 1
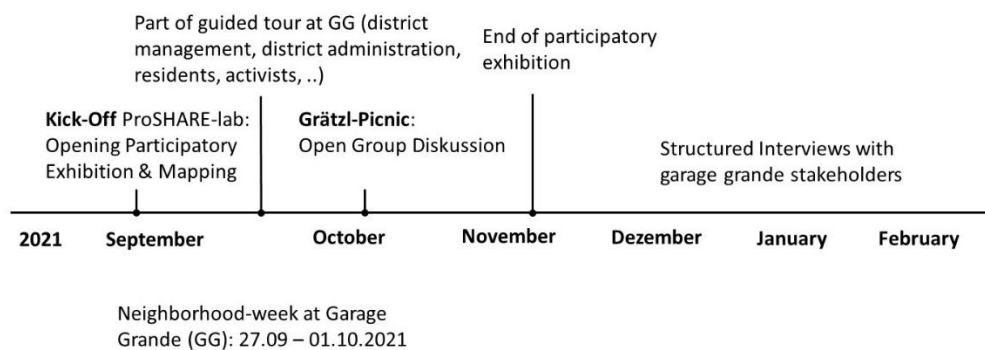
Outcomes of the first phase were:

- Development of a physical space for interaction and exchange
- Identification of new practices of sharing through interviews and exhibition
- More visibility: Co-mapping existing sharing practices in the district.
- Access to sharing-networks: promoting exchange and dialogue of sharing practices of different actors and residents in the research area
- Strengthening and reflecting on local networks of sharing regarding social inclusiveness

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The second phase has sought to deepen the discussion on (a) sharing practices, their framework, and conditions for success in general (i.e., to investigate boundaries and potentials of sharing and communing practices from the perspective of different users) and (b) on the possibilities for the continuation of the Garage Grande (network) in particular. To do that the lab activities have included collaborative processes such as a workshop with Garage Grande's sharing activists and the GB*West, experimentation open-source digital collaborative tools (i.e., MAZI), the continuation of the exhibition and a final workshop with policy actors in order to discuss the results of ProShare and policy recommendations for non-commercial sharing practices.

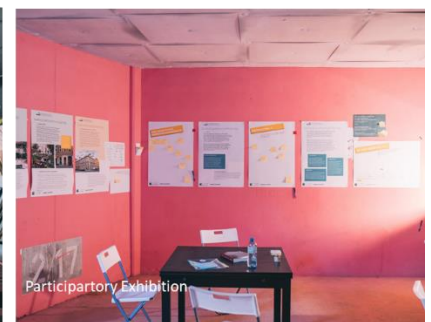Phase 2 ProSHARE-lab activities included:

- Extension of participatory exhibition: In order to support visibility of sharing/commoning practices in the district and research results to general public, TU Wien extended the interactive exhibition with two more facts sheet of preliminary results from the research project. The exhibition was open during opening hours of garage grande and during the co-creation workshop at ProSHARE-lab.
- Co-Creation Workshop with garage grande sharing activists: In order to foster networking, promotion, exchange and dialogue of sharing practices of different communities in the research area, TU Wien organized an open workshop for garage grande users and other interested groups in the neighborhood. There participants had the possibility to formulate and discuss conditions for success and co-create (new) sharing ideas. The workshop took place end of Mai at the garage grande and was focusing on future of sharing, the needs of activists to maintain sharing activities and co-designing a knowledge sharing platform. First part of the workshop included community building methods and had the goal to reflect on sharing practices but also to obtain needs of initiatives. The second part included experimenting and testing with digital open-source sharing tools, e.g. MAZI in collaboration with Garage Grande users. The tool MAZI was presented to garage grande users and other interested, as an open, digital knowledge sharing platform in the neighborhood. About 10 people participated at the workshop.
- Open facilitated discussion round with stakeholders from the district in cooperation with the urban renewal office: The main topics pf the discussion were boundaries and potentials of sharing practices (e.g community gardening) in public space from different institutional perspectives.
- ProShare-lab closing event: In September we conducted a closing event to discuss research results and policy recommendations with policy actors.

Lab activities 2022: Phase 2
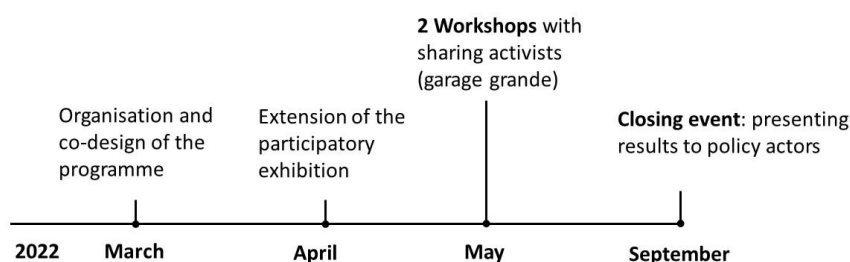
Outcomes of this phase have been:

- Identification of boundaries and potentials of sharing/commoning practices, in relation to access to housing, use of public space (discussion from different institutional perspectives and from user perspectives)
- Collaborative exchange of knowledge of sharing practices, reflection on design of sharing/commoning practices in the neighborhood to foster more diversity and social cohesion
- Formulation and discussion of conditions for success, co-creation of ideas and policy recommendations

Group discussion with sharing actors

Collective Mapping

Grätzl-Picknick

Workshop with Garage Grande Users

Guided Tour at Neighborhood Week (

Participartory Exhibition

Results

Results of the ULL have to be seen in connection with the different methods used. For example, participants of the exhibition have claimed for further sharing and common practices like neighbourhood events for more networking, the need for information about photo-voltaic systems on roofs, the redistribution of public street space and the transformation car parks into green open spaces. Their main motives for sharing for them were: capitalism criticism, social justice, (social) sustainability environmental awareness, trust, getting to know something new, improving something, changing the world, producing less, conserving resources.

In the group discussion participations developed challenges and potentials of sharing practices. Challenges discussed were:

- Differing individual expectations, open access
- "Sharing must be learned": careless handling of objects, problems of spaces that "cost nothing"
- Social differences: "If not everyone in the population has reached a certain level of prosperity, there is no sharing."

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- Funding, support for voluntary initiatives, shifting of social tasks to individual actors or small private initiatives

The potentials named were:

- Waste prevention, environmental protection, resource savings through fair distribution of production surplus (e.g. food).
- Humanitarian aid, individual benefits (e.g. savings in household costs), compensation
- Creation of (sharing) networks, neighbourhood networks
- Dissemination of knowledge about the district, joint design of publicly accessible spaces
- Promotion of environmental awareness, knowledge transfer (e.g. greening of facades, sustainability, climate protection)
- Access to urban resources
- Creating housing communities

The mapping workshop during the exhibition showed the variety of sharing practices in the district:
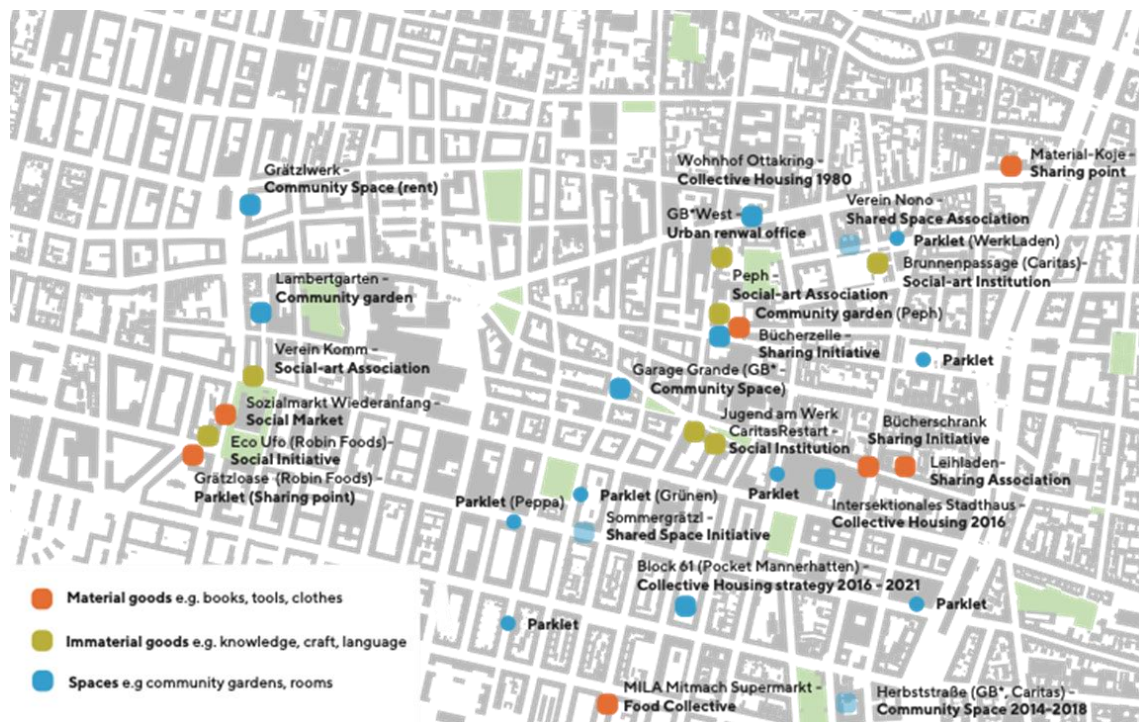
Generally, insights of the lab have revealed that space-sharing has been recognized as relevant among a wide range of participants: It was perceived to contribute to fostering senses of belonging, self-empowerment, and solidarity, enhance mutual community assistance, and facilitate access to more (shared) resources. In particular, participants shared the perception that places like Garage Grande, with its low -threshold to take part and low level of regulation, in which different types of urban commoning practices and social networks can develop and become visible, need to be further facilitated, supported, and maintained. The ULL also has allowed researchers to reflect with participants on different socio-cultural dimensions that influence or hinder space-sharing and commoning practices. One of the findings suggests that poverty and associated feelings of shame function as triggers of exclusion in sharing and commoning, dimensions which seem to be often neglected in debates about sharing practices.

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Reflection on the ULL

The general outreach of the ULL was relatively good as about 60 Persons in total have participated in the short time of the ULL. The activation of stakeholders, sharing-activists and policy actors was successful, but the ULL had to cope with the weak participation of residents, particularly of elderly people and people with migration background. The access and inclusion of vulnerable populations in the Lab remained limited, this would have needed more time and financial resources and a stronger cooperation with multiplicators.

The methods of the ULL in general worked good in terms of participation and results. However, due to the short project duration of ProShare it was not possible to co-implement sharing practices within the Garage Grande but also within the neighborhood. What was successfully carried out was the co-identification of different forms of sharing in the research area and of challenges and potentials of non-commercial sharing and the co-creation of (new) sharing ideas. More importantly, without the support of the urban renewal office it would have been really difficult to set up an ULL from scratch in the time frame of the project. The office gave the research team the possibility to build on the structures, processes networks already in use in Garage Grande and the physical space within the Garage Grande to realize the ULL. The urban renewal office, with its neighborhood networks, experiences and knowledge in sharing and commoning, was the most important actor in the ULL.

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