

Fork to Farm – Polish Zero Waste Association factsheet



Organisation: **Polish Zero Waste Association (PZWA)**

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The municipalities we have worked with: Rydułtowy, Chorzele and Pruszcz Gdański (PG).

Other partners we have collaborated with: Polish Institutions (ZZM), other Municipalities and experts in Poland.

OVERVIEW

In the past two years, PZWA has been implementing the Fork to Farm (F2F) project to strengthen bio-waste prevention and collection systems in Polish municipalities. Two pilot partners, Rydułtowy in southern Poland and Pruszcz Gdański in the north, joined the initiative in 2024. A third municipality, Chorzele, joined in March 2025. After 2 years of cooperation, these three municipalities have become our allies in improving local waste management. PZWA has organised diagnostic meetings on the waste situation, stakeholder workshops for residents, teachers, and housing cooperatives. We also connected Chorzele with the Management of the Kraków Municipal Greenspace Authority (ZZM) in order to gain knowledge about the experience of ZZM in the subject of school garden projects and foodsharing fridge, which Chorzele intends to implement in 2026. The activities of ZZM were such an inspiration that we organised a webinar on food-related activities, from cultivation to waste, which was also attended by the city of Rybnik, which shared its idea of reducing food waste in educational institutions and creating food sharing initiatives.

In **Rydułtowy**, the municipality launched a home composter subsidy programme and co-created a local composting manual with PZWA. Preparations are also underway here for a door-to-door collection pilot programme, which is to be implemented at the end of the year in cooperation with the company which will provide necessary equipment. The municipality also plans to launch a community garden and two food sharing fridges.

In **Pruszcz Gdański**, the association ran workshops on zero waste cooking and bio-waste separation. PZWA also presented the project nationally through two bio-waste conferences, firstly in-person one in 2024 in Pruszcz Gdański with 80 participants, and a second one, held online in 2025, with more than 100 participants from Poland, both including the Deputy Minister of Climate, Anita Sowińska, experts from the wider Fork to Farm project and Polish specialists in bio-waste topics.



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CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

The project faced several structural and contextual challenges. The most significant barrier at the start was the **municipal election cycle**, which delayed formal agreements and temporarily halted engagement with new local authorities. One targeted municipality withdrew due to a change in political leadership, forcing PZWA to identify new partners mid-implementation.

Another ongoing challenge concerns **engaging housing cooperatives and residents**, a crucial yet difficult stakeholder group in PG and Rydułtowy. In Pruszcz Gdański, where most inhabitants live in multi-family buildings, participation from housing associations has remained limited, even though this group generates the majority of mixed waste. Awareness and motivation to sort bio-waste properly remain low.

Additionally, **limited local budgets and competing priorities** such as smog reduction and heating system replacements, has restricted funding for education on this topic or wider bio-waste infrastructure. Finally, there is still a need for **systematic training** for local leaders of change and waste collection staff, as well as stronger **national guidance** on motivating residents. Despite these barriers, PZWA has built lasting partnerships and credibility, proving the readiness of Polish municipalities to engage when given expert and organisational support.

SUCCESS AND VICTORIES

Bio-waste conferences

The project achieved national visibility and knowledge exchange through the two bio-waste conferences we organised, which brought together representatives from municipalities, Marshal Offices, local companies, the Ministry of Climate and Environment, and Fork To Farm partner organisations. These events positioned PZWA as a trusted intermediary between local governments and European expertise.

Door-to-Door (D2D) in Rydułtowy

For almost a year, discussions have been ongoing in the Rydułtowy municipality about launching the D2D pilot project, which is intended to be the first such project in Poland. PZWA tried to develop the project within the framework of a grant, aiming to implement the pilot based on [the model of the Partizanske municipality](#) in Slovakia; however, for various reasons, this did not succeed. Now, work is underway on a smaller scale pilot. If it goes ahead, we will be the first in Poland to obtain data that we will share with other municipalities and the Ministry of Climate, encouraging them to support this solution in Poland and to implement it permanently in Rydułtowy as well as in other municipalities.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY OR COMMUNITY

In all three municipalities, the most noticeable change has taken place at the institutional level, driven by **stronger involvement of local authorities and public institutions**. Thanks to a series of structured meetings with mayors, municipal staff, and representatives of educational and social institutions, the Fork to Farm project has initiated a genuine shift in how bio-waste issues are addressed. Authorities are now working in teams, exchanging experiences, and showing readiness to implement concrete, long-term solutions.

In Rydułtowy, cooperation with schools and municipal units has resulted in **a coordinated educational effort and municipal composting actions**. In Chorzele, after the first stakeholder meeting, **collaboration quickly extended beyond the town hall**. Work has begun on a community garden with a composting area and a partnership with the local parish is underway to install a food-sharing fridge. Moreover, in 2026 PSZW plans a dedicated session with the newly formed Youth Municipal Council, aimed at **involving young residents** in shaping the town's circular initiatives.

STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITIES

After two years of implementation, the Fork to Farm project has helped **build a stronger foundation for community engagement and awareness around bio-waste management**. While broad behavioural change across populations takes time, we can already observe tangible shifts in knowledge, interest and local cooperation.

The project has made the topic of bio-waste more visible and understandable for residents, educators, and municipal officials. Through workshops and meetings, communities have gained practical knowledge on composting, food waste prevention, and the importance of proper segregation. Participants increasingly recognise that small, everyday actions can contribute to larger environmental outcomes.

Although many results remain qualitative at this stage, there is clear **progress in awareness and institutional commitment**. Municipalities are continuing these actions with their own resources, which indicates ownership and motivation to sustain the work. The project has therefore laid the groundwork for longer-term, measurable community impact in the years ahead.



"I am sure that a lot of good has come out of your visit, because it has opened some people's eyes to the problems associated with waste. It's not that everyone in Chorzele will now know how to sort waste. But we need a push, and that push has finally come"

Michał Wiśnicki | Deputy mayor of the City and Commune of Chorzele



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RYDUŁTOWY

Population size: **21,500 inhabitants** | Type: **Urban**

Focus: Household bio-waste prevention and composting; the development of a public composting site and supporting educational campaigns. We tried to pilot a door-to-door collection project via stronger engagement from local decision-makers, securing deeper understanding of the issue from key stakeholders.

Local community engagement: Series of stakeholder meetings and public webinars on composting, segregation and zero-waste cooking manuals. We developed [a manual on composting](#), distributed via social media and on our website, whilst the municipality subsidised public composting bins for green waste.

Metric	Baseline (pre-project)	Current (post-implementation)	% change
Separately collected organic waste (by target group e.g. households, businesses, total city?) (tonnes/year)	72 kg/pp/year	92.77 kg/pp/year	+28.9%
Compost or biogas produced (tonnes/year)	R3: 512.62 tonnes	675.78 tonnes	-

CHORZELE

Population size: **10,100 inhabitants** | Type: **Mixed** (rural & urban)

Focus: The latest data shows that in Chorzele, 173,645 kgs of bio-waste per person was collected in 2024. We sought to increase this even further through collaboration with the municipality and local partners through initiatives such as the design of a community composting area and the development of a foodsharing fridge in partnership with a local church.

Local community engagement: A good example of community engagement was “Neighbour day”, a public event promoting local NGOs. During “Neighbour Day” in the municipality of Chorzele, we accompanied municipal employees in educational activities promoting zero waste. The event itself was intended to showcase the activities of local NGOs, especially the popular and thriving “rural housewives’ clubs” in small municipalities, whose activities focus mainly on food. PSZW’s activities focused on education of zero waste activities, including bio-waste management and food waste prevention.





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PRUSZCZ GDAŃSKI

Population size: **32,300 inhabitants** | Type: **Urban**

Focus: It focused primarily on educating local stakeholders on proper bio-waste sorting, composting and food waste prevention. We organised workshops on zero waste cooking and composting, as well as the preparation of education and nudging campaigns via a separate grant. We achieved stronger engagement from local decision-makers and a deeper understanding of the issue, recognising the need for municipalities to take stronger action on the topic. We organised semi-regular workshops for local officials, NGOs and municipal staff on bio-waste, also covering in greater detail key topics such as the practicalities of composting and policies for food waste reduction.



Stakeholders' meeting, Chorzele



Event in Rydułtowy



Event in Chorzele



Anita Sowińska, Ministry of Climate, Bio-waste Conference in Pruszcz Gdański



Bio-waste Conference in Pruszcz Gdański



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[Zero Waste Europe](#) is the European network of communities, local leaders, experts, and change agents working towards the prevention and elimination of waste in our society. We advocate for sustainable systems; for the redesign of our relationship with resources; and for a global shift towards environmental justice, accelerating a just transition towards zero waste for the benefit of people and the planet.



[The Polish Zero Waste Association](#) (PZWA) works to change public awareness of resources by preventing waste at source, promoting waste-free lifestyles, and shifting production and consumption patterns toward a circular economy.



The campaign forms one part of our broader work within the [European Methane Matters Coalition \(MMC\)](#). The coalition aims to ramp up ambition at the European Union level and within key European countries to reduce methane emissions across the energy, agriculture, and waste sectors by 2030.



In 2024, [#ForkToFarm campaign](#) made impressive advances, especially at the local level. The campaign empowered 541,366 people across six European countries with better bio-waste solutions, from separate collection to community composting.

