

GRANULAR

LIVING LABS CROSS VISIT DOSSIER

Poland: West Pomerania



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West Pomeranian


ABOUT THE CROSS VISIT

This dossier outlines the cross-visit of the GRANULAR project (June 2025) at the Koszalin University of Technology in Poland, funded by the European Union.

Day 1 began with presentations on agricultural research, the [Polish Living Lab](#), and initiatives such as “Folwark Osada Gyrnica,” which promotes short, local, and sustainable supply chains. The visits included the Manufactory of Food in Białogard, showcasing traditional local products, and the fishing port of Unieście in Mielno, illustrating direct sales in tourist areas.

Day 2 started at Juchowo Farm, an example of social entrepreneurship applying biodynamic methods to restore soil and biodiversity, with products such as juices and jams sold directly on-site. The program continued at Hortulus Gardens (Dobrzyca), where permaculture practices and the sale of organic vegetables to local restaurants were presented, and concluded in Kołobrzeg.

The organisation of the visit highlighted a strong balance between theory and practice, as well as effective networking opportunities and the important role of translators. Suggested improvements include allocating more time for discussions (15–20 minutes after visits), extending the program to three days to allow for reflection, and involving local decision-makers in policies related to short supply chains. It is also recommended to include appendices such as the agenda, consent forms, and photographs.

Location

Topic
Short food supply chains
Number of participants
13 participants
Contacts
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Related work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catalogue• Practice Abstracts• More information

DAY 1: Overview of Activities

The event began at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the Koszalin University of Technology with a presentation of the potential and directions of research carried out at the University in the field of agriculture and rural areas.

Then the scope of activities and effects of the Polish Living Lab in the GRANULAR project were presented, as well as the presentation of the example of good practice “Folwark Osada Gornica”, which is an innovative project that promotes localism, direct relations, quality and sustainability of short supply chains. Another highlight of the meeting was a discussion of measures taken to develop short supply chains in the West Pomeranian region from the perspective of producers, as well as a presentation outlining the importance of ICT companies in the process of smart transformation of rural areas in Poland.

The meeting at the Department ended with a series of questions to the speakers and a discussion. Afterwards, the participants visited the Food Manufactory in Białogard. The manufactory is an example of an innovative investment supporting local entrepreneurs, offering high-quality products made with traditional methods from local raw products. During the meeting, participants were able to experience how short food supply chains work in the region.

It was also an excellent opportunity to taste local food produced from products supplied by local farmers. The cross visit continued in Mielno and Unieście, where the participants of the meeting had the opportunity to see how short supply chains work in the region (especially in a typical tourist destination) and learn about the operation of the Fishing Port in Unieście.

DAY 2: Overview of Activities

The second day began with a study visit to Juchowo Farm. The visit to Juchowo Farm demonstrated the innovative combination of social entrepreneurship with environmental protection and the needs of local communities. The farm stands out for its use of biodynamic methods to restore degraded soil and increase soil fertility, which focuses on biodiversity.

Juchowo Farm's practices are an excellent example of operating within short food supply chains. Its entire operation fully adheres to the key principles of this model, ensuring a direct connection between producer and consumer and minimizing intermediation. Juchowo Farm is proof of how the principles of short food supply chains can be implemented effectively and to the benefit of the environment and local communities. It's not just sales, but a whole philosophy of operation that focuses on quality, trust and sustainability.

Participants at the meeting were able to learn about the process of manufacturing products (juices, jams, herbal mixtures). After tasting food produced from products sourced from Juchowo Farm operations, the meeting participants traveled to the Hortulus Gardens in Dobrzyca. There they had the opportunity to learn about new business models in the context of short food supply chains, with a particular focus on the impact on land use change and the potential use of ornamental plants/flowers in these chains.

The gardens are an example of how organic vegetables grown according to permaculture principles are available for direct sale and used in local cafes and restaurants. Hortulus Gardens is a model of organic farming that promotes fresh, local produce and sustainable practices. We ended the meeting with a trip to Kolobrzeg, a city with tourist and health functions.

INSIGHTS & LEARNINGS

The visit provided Living Labs (LLs) participants with a comprehensive understanding of short food supply chains in a regional context. Theoretical presentations (e.g., Folwark Osada Gornica) were combined with study visits to operating business models, such as Juchowo Farm, The manufactory of Food in Bialogard, Fishermen's Port in Unieście and Hortulus Gardens.

Discussions with scientists, administration and local producers gave a full picture of the functioning and challenges of short food supply chains in the region. Study visits showed real, working business models. Juchowo Farm is an innovative combination of social entrepreneurship with environmental protection and the needs of local communities. It uses biodynamic methods to restore the soil, operates in a closed loop and produces high-quality products.

The manufactory of food combines tradition with modernity and supports local entrepreneurs, relying on local raw materials. The fishing port in Unieście perfectly illustrated how direct sales of freshly caught fish support the local economy and build trust through direct contact with the producer. Such visits inspire the creation of similar, sustainable and ethical initiatives in other communities, which strengthens regional economies and improves the quality of life in rural areas. The shared experiences and discussions enabled representatives from different LLs to exchange experiences and establish contacts, which is key to building a strong partnership network within the GRANULAR project.

On the other hand, the two-day schedule was very intense. The organisations think the visit should be planned for three days. Scheduling the program over a longer period would have allowed for more time slack between activities. This would have given space for additional discussions, more in-depth study visits (e.g., more time at each site, opportunities for in-depth interviews with staff), and would have given participants more time to reflect on their own and process information without rushing.

USEFULNESS FOR DECISION MARKERS

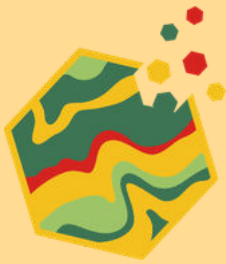
The visit to Koszalin, organised within the framework of the [GRANULAR project](#), was an extremely valuable experience for key local decision-makers, such as the Deputy Mayor of Bialogard, the Manager of The manufactory of Food and the President of the Folwark Osada Gornica Foundation. They were able not only to present their past achievements, but most importantly to learn new methodologies and data from a broader perspective, which will be used to support policies for the development of short food supply chains.

During the discussions, it was repeatedly emphasized (based on the rural proofing survey) that the province's existing development strategies are insufficient and do not fully address the region's challenges and opportunities in supporting the development of short food supply chains and sustainable rural and agricultural development.

Representatives of other Living Labs shared their knowledge of how they combine economic goals with social and environmental missions, how they manage initiatives, how they raise funds, or engage the local community.

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS





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GRANULAR is a four-year multi-disciplinary and transnational project. It aims at generating new datasets, tools and methods to better understand rural diversity and to promote place-based rural policies.



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