

ZERO WASTE CITY ROLE PLAY GAME

The Zero Waste City role play game was designed as a final activity in the Zero Waste Ambassador training event, in order to practice all the main competences needed for being a Zero Waste Ambassador. This gives the learners a life-like yet safe environment for testing the level of their skills and understanding.

These are the elements of the game:

- The main aim of the activity is to give the learners a random municipality case, which may be quite different from their own situation, to test if they are able to apply zero waste principles in different contexts.
- The two first stakeholders are the most common ones that Zero Waste Ambassadors need to work with – a municipality representative and a waste company worker.
- A disruption is built into the game, in order to practice adapting to changing circumstances which also often happen in real life.
- The final stakeholder in the game is a journalist, as communication and talking to the media is also part of spreading the zero waste message.

The game is played in groups, 4 people in a group is the ideal size for the learners. Groups could either be randomly formed or formed by learners themselves.

Here you will find:

- The general set up for the game;
- The municipality profiles and disruptions;
- The short descriptions of stakeholder personas.

The descriptions are meant for the trainers playing the stakeholders. Additionally, some short background information can be created about the personas to give to the groups, for example in the form of a short biography or CV.

For those acting as the stakeholders, you will need experts with enough background in waste management, zero waste policies, and real life situations (and ability to portray these personas with a sense of playfulness!). Besides the stakeholders, it's good to have a separate person to be the game host, who will keep the time and help with the general flow of the game.

Recommended timeframe is around 4 hours without breaks – these can be added where needed. Time for the groups to form is not included, but this can be done also the previous day or given as a task during lunch or some other option.

Timeframe of the role play game

Time	Activity
30 min	Municipality case is presented to groups, building their proposal(s)
15 min	Meeting with the first stakeholder
15 min	Meeting with the second stakeholder
20 min	Teams analyse the info from their meetings, make plan for next steps
20 min	The disruption is presented. Teams have time to adjust their plan and get ready to present to the new stakeholder
15 min	Meeting with the new stakeholder
20 min	Making final plan (at the same time, trainers decide on the media angle for each group based on what solution they are proposing for the municipality)
15 min	Introducing media role to groups, time to prep for the interview with the journalist
10 min	Two team members are interviewed by the local media persona, 5 min each
60-90 min	All teams back together, reflections and feedback to each group (~10 min per group to share their own reflections), all experts giving their view and solutions

After receiving the municipality profile in the beginning, if groups are struggling, they can be guided to ask themselves questions like these:

- Highlight in text what you think are the most important facts, when making the decision.
- What information is not that important?
- What additional information do you need to ask from the municipality and waste management company?

A commented version of one municipality profile can be found at the end of this chapter, which can be helpful to guide learners to read and interpret information given to them. At the end of each group info, we have also added short expert-opinions on what they would do in this situation.



Stakeholders' rotation

In our pilot training we had 4 groups and 4 trainers/experts. Each trainer met with each group once, in a different role.

An example meeting plan with stakeholders for the groups:

	Round 1	Round 2		Round 3	Round 4
Group 1	Municipality rep – trainer 1	Waste company – trainer 3	Disruption	New waste advisor at municipality – trainer 4	Local media – trainer 2
Group 2	Municipality rep – trainer 2	Waste company – trainer 4		New waste company – trainer 1	Local media – trainer 3
Group 3	Waste company – trainer 3	Municipality rep – trainer 1		Consultant for mayor in charge of overseeing budget cuts – trainer 2	Local media – trainer 4
Group 4	Waste company – trainer 4	Municipality rep – trainer 2		City's waste management team – trainer 3	Local media – trainer 1

We reference the below information by each group, so that the municipality profile, the disruption, and the stakeholder personas for one case can all be found together.

GROUP 1

Municipality profile

- The municipality is medium-sized (200,000 inhabitants) and is quite residential, with lots of high-rise buildings in densely populated areas and suburbs. Only 30% of the population have access to a garden.
- 200,000 inhabitants generate 550 kg of residual waste per capita per year, which includes a lot of waste coming from local cafes and restaurants which is included as MSW.
- The average income of local residents is below that of the EU. Most residents' income comes from the tourism and hospitality sectors.
- Challenge of language diversity: there are often 5 different languages spoken by residents throughout the town.
- The municipality partners with the local private waste management company, which is responsible for implementing the waste and separate collection systems. The municipality has an overall say and control over which company operates this programme, but the waste management company is realistically the only business who have the capacity and technical requirements to run this service within the local area.

- 35% separate collection rates in the municipality:
 - Glass: street container.
 - Door-to-door collection of residual waste + paper and cardboard.
 - Plastic bottles and metals: street containers.
 - No separate collection of organics.
- An incineration plant is used for the vast majority of residual waste and has a contract to run for the next five years. The incinerator services many towns and communities across the local region, charging high taxes due to there being little alternatives available for municipalities to manage their waste. The plant is 50 km away from the town, resulting in high transportation costs, too.
- There is one central drop-off location that citizens use for hazardous, bulky, garden, and organic food waste, which is currently 10 km outside of the town, with low usage rates of around 5-10% of the population.
- The municipality is interested in the possibility of introducing a PAYT scheme, with local businesses not opposed to the idea either, but no action has been taken yet due to a lack of capacity.
- Currently, residents pay a flat base rate of tax to the municipality for waste collection and management, which does not differ depending on the amount of waste they produce.
- One small and independent packaging-free shop has been established in the town within the last 12 months, but otherwise there remains little to no encouragement of reuse. There are no repair centres in the local area, although some businesses do offer the service but with a small fee.
- Educational posters have been spread around the town in the past to encourage the use of separate collection bins for residents and tourists, as well as some social media advertising paid by the municipality to try to get more younger people recycling and reusing.

Stakeholder personas

Municipality representative



You are responsible for the operational level of a municipality, including finances and project management. Being a small municipality, you need to handle many things at the same time – you hardly keep up with the overload of work and many responsibilities. You mainly deal with urgent things and don't leave much room for new things – such as innovative approaches like zero waste, although you think they might be useful for the municipality's development and better waste management. How to find capacity for this extra work and responsibility? You need to be approached by chance, not pushed, and provided with a simple plan of how and where to start without much support and expert knowledge. You desire the feeling of trust and reliability.

Waste management company owner



You are a person of obvious practical concerns: you are both stern, old school, and unfavourable to suggestions of soft and poorly defined measures. You think in people, trucks, tons, euros – not long-term visions and social innovations. It's all about waste management technology and performing the core services the company was founded for.

Disruption



Local elections were held and, although everyone assumed the same party would continue, surprisingly another party won and took office in city government. The new party is known for their conservative and business-as-usual mindset. They appoint a new waste advisor, who finds zero waste an utopian idea (and probably just doesn't know anything about it). Your next meeting is with them.

New stakeholder personas

New waste advisor for the municipality



You are self-confident. You know some basics about waste management, but lack the big picture and do not know the local situation. You are in favour of ready-made solutions: you are willing to build facilities that will take care of the waste, rather than modifying the separate collection system. Three jobs generated by the new incineration plant seem like a big win. The main argument is that sanitation is guaranteed, waste disappears, and energy is created. You clearly minimise the importance of target values that will be mandatory for municipalities in the future, e.g. amount of packages to be recycled.

Journalist



You work for a media outlet which is under-resourced, understaffed and yet needs "newsworthy" content as much as ever. Stories that are unique, have a local angle to them, provoke controversy or debate, link to what's happening at the European level, and meet the interest of the local population are all you are seeking. To get into the real "story", you need to dig deeper and ask sometimes challenging or provocative questions. This is exactly the kind of content that your editor will appreciate.

Expert comment on the municipality case



Advice for the group

- Focus on optimising the existing separate collection system, because with collection rates at only 35%, there's lots to work on. This would include implementing a door-to-door scheme for all residents. Showcase how, with some initial investment, the scheme is proven to deliver higher recycling rates and better quality recyclables which are able to be sold at a higher price. With reduced residual waste, door-to-door schemes are proven to save money for the municipality, too.
- Organics is the priority – collect it from households directly and encourage home/ community composting throughout the municipality. Highlight the economic savings here, as well as obvious environmental benefits.
- Pilot PAYT locally to begin with, in a section of the municipality with the aim of having it implemented across 100% of the city after a couple of years of testing a gradual roll-out.
- Introduce reuse and repair centre(s) where possible with some municipal support, although ideally you would create an environment where social enterprises and businesses working on circular economy issues could flourish.

GROUP 2

Municipality profile

- The municipality is relatively small, with a population of 15,000. It is quite rural and geographically spread out. 90% of the population have access to a garden, with the municipality covering a 10 km area in total.
- Its 15,000 inhabitants are generating 280 kg of residual waste per capita per year.
- The average income of local residents is below that of the EU. Most residents' income comes from either agriculture or jobs that require travelling to the nearby big city.
- 60% of the local population are over the age of 50. It is an ageing population, with most younger people moving to bigger cities nearby.
- The municipality has a public waste management company, which it owns 100%. The company reports to the mayor and is responsible for the collection and treatment of waste.
- Door-to-door collection is currently only offered to a small area within the municipality, in the most densely populated area. Only 20% of residents have their waste collected at the doorstep. The rest are required to drop their waste at certain drop-off points with separate street bins.

- The average separate collection rate in the municipality is 37%, but this differs greatly between the areas which receive door-to-door separate collection and between those where people bring their waste to street bins:
 - Glass: street container for all.
 - Door-to-door collection of residual waste + paper and cardboard + plastics/metal/ drinks containers (PMD).
 - Street bins for residuals + paper/cardboard.
 - No separate collection of organics but some of the population carry out their own composting activities, particularly those who have farms or farm animals.
- 75% of the residual waste is currently sent to a local landfill, but this is at 95% capacity, so it cannot continue for much longer in its current state.
- The remaining 25% of residual waste is sent to the neighbouring big city's incineration plant. The contract for this is up for renewal in 8 years and is based upon a fixed fee, rather than based upon the volume of waste that is sent.
- There is one central drop-off location that citizens use for hazardous, electronic, and bulky waste located within the city centre. The recyclable materials here are then transported to the larger recycling plant at the nearby big city, which is 30 km away.
- The municipality is interested in the possibility of introducing a PAYT scheme but worries about the older population not liking the changes.
- The main local business and economic sectors are HORECA and elderly health care.
- Currently, residents pay a flat base rate of tax to the municipality for waste collection and management, which does not differ depending on the amount of waste they produce.
- There has been very little encouragement of reuse locally but many of the inhabitants would support actions on this, as they are aware that the landfill is close to being full and of the environmental risks this poses. There are no repair centres in the local area, although some individual tradesmen offer the service themselves, but this is unorganised and irregular.
- Leaflets have been shared with each household about the importance of recycling and on how to separate their waste. The municipality sees the good results of its door-to-door collection in the densely populated area, but it is worried about extending this to the whole population as they fear people will not have the space for extra bins. They also worry about the extra costs of door-to-door collection, which would involve vans driving further.

Stakeholder personas

Municipality representative



You are cautious about both the costs of any new policy and the ability to change the behaviour of an ageing population. The municipality is under-resourced and, therefore, very open to suggestions and ideas from external experts. However, keep in mind that the municipality has a limited budget and there is little interest from other colleagues, so any decision needs to be sustainably financed and easy to sell. Therefore, the presentation of data and figures to the municipality is key. Come into the discussion looking for ideas and tips on what can be done locally to improve the situation – you want to listen to the ‘experts’ and want to be able to take away some tangible policy ideas.

Waste management company owner



The waste company is owned by the municipality. As the company owner, you have worked for years to satisfy the municipality requirements, but you have also built up your hidden marketing network of recycled materials that you are not reporting. The proposals by Zero Waste Ambassadors might work if the final owner of a company – the municipality – gets excited. This, however, would ruin your comfortable business plan.

The current incineration approach is expensive for the city but profitable for the company. The contract expires within the next 8 years. So, it is your interest to postpone any actual zero waste activities until then. After that point, you would agree to planning sustainable waste management without landfill and incineration anyway. The biggest concern is that current contacts offer stability. You have a serious fear of changes.

Disruption



The head of the waste management company gets arrested for fraud and illegal side businesses in the recycling market. The company is temporarily closed by the police and, after a short search, another waste company takes over the waste management at the municipality. It happens fast – mostly because the new waste management company owner is friends with the mayor. The new head of the waste company has ties with the waste-to-fuel industry and it’s rumoured they are interested in developing that direction. Your next meeting is with the head of this company.

New stakeholder personas

New waste company



You are an “old machine” who knows all about waste, very technically skilled and supportive of innovations. You know how things work in the field but you are

struggling when it comes to soft approaches and to communicating effectively with residents (specially elders). You have high goals to improve waste management, but are very eager to follow the realization of waste-to-energy practices as this is the best thing you know. You are strongly committed to do your job well, although you are not putting environmental impacts first.

Journalist



You are an inquisitive investigative freelance journalist that will drill for concrete details and will not be satisfied with generic and handwavy answers, let alone misdirection. Also, since airtime is limited, there will be pressure on the interviewees to be concise.

Expert comment on the municipality case

Advice for the group



Collect and build your evidence bank which shows why waste-to-energy is such a bad idea for the municipality. Use mostly climate and energy efficiency reasons, whilst showcasing the lock-in effect on waste generation that these incinerators have. With the right collection system in place, the volume of residual waste can be drastically reduced here, which means there is no need (and no economic sense) in building the waste-to-energy plant. Focus first on the benefits that greater collection, recycling, and prevention can have to reduce the need for any incinerators.

GROUP 3

Municipality profile

- The municipality is large and quite urban. 20% of the population have access to a garden.
- 400,000 inhabitants generate 380 kg of residual waste per capita per year.
- The average income of local residents is below that of the EU. Most residents' income comes from the service sector (government, finances, customer support).
- Language diversity: 2 different languages spoken by residents throughout the town.
- The municipality partners with the local waste management company, who are responsible for implementing the waste and separate collection systems. The municipality has an overall say and control over which company operates this programme, but the waste management company is realistically the only business who have the capacity and technical requirements to run this service within the local area.
- Last year there was a 55% separate collection rate in the municipality:
 - Glass: street container.
 - Door-to-door collection of residual waste + paper and cardboard.
 - Plastic bottles: street containers.
 - No separate collection of organics.

- Separate collection rates have been stable at around 50-55% for the past 5 years, despite a couple of public awareness-raising campaigns on why and how to recycle.
- Most of the residuals (75% approximately) are landfilled locally.
- There are two central drop-off locations that citizens use for hazardous, bulky, garden, and organic food waste within the municipality, with relatively good use rates.
- The municipality is interested in the possibility of introducing a stricter PAYT scheme, with local businesses not opposed to the idea either, but no action has been taken yet due to competing schemes and the city being unsure which one to adopt.
- There are no repair or reuse centres in the local area, although some businesses do offer the service for a small fee.

Stakeholder personas

Waste management company owner



You are a person of obvious practical concerns: you are both stern, old school, and unfavourable to suggestions of soft and poorly defined measures. You think in people, trucks, tons, euros – not long-term visions and social innovations. It's all about waste management technology and performing the core services the company was founded for.

Municipality representative



You are covering the tourism sector, which is very commercialised and with minor sustainable practices. You are aware of the waste overload problems but don't have much knowledge about waste management. You are looking for quick solutions. Numbers, results, and reputation are very important to you. You are a bit afraid of change and don't want to lose the municipality's popularity. You might not see the benefits that zero waste measures could bring to the municipality.

Disruption



Your local mayor has announced that the city's finances have secretly not been well-managed for several years and, as a result, each department is being asked to cut its budget by 30-40%, which includes the waste management department. You also need to prove value for money for your activities and contracted services, with any new or increased revenue coming in (e.g. recyclable materials) being actively encouraged. Your next meeting is with the consultant for the mayor in charge of overseeing budget cuts.

New stakeholder personas

Consultant for mayor in charge of overseeing budget cuts



Money is tight and every policy needs to have a solid bank of evidence showcasing its costs, value, and impact. Time is also in short supply for you these days, so you want facts presented clearly and efficiently – you are not afraid to demand these from those with whom you meet. Waste is not your area of expertise and action on waste/recycling has been limited in the past – so not only do policy changes need to be well-evidenced, but you are also seeking easy sells to the population.

Journalist



There has to be a 'news value' in your article. News values in journalism are proximity, controversy, personal influence, suitability, impact, bizarre, human interest, timeliness, progress, genuineness, completeness, negativity, and money (of course). These elements determine whether the news is necessary or not for the readers. You will ask questions about money, duties, roles, things that are done well or gone wrong, and the persons involved. In a climate where money is tight and cuts are happening everywhere, stories of any new financial investments are viewed sceptically, yet they would make a great storyline for your editor.

Expert comment on the municipality case

Advice for the group



- Gather all the necessary data possible surrounding the municipality's waste budget so that you can understand where costs can be saved or reduced. For example, the key indicators are the fees for disposal, the operational costs of the collection and treatment, as well as the revenue made from selling on recyclables and (if relevant) the income generated by any EPR scheme used.
- To improve collection – focus on organics! Community composting could be one option or, if not, you could explore a central composting plant with potential biogas capture ([see the Milan case study for inspiration](#)).
- Explore local partnerships and options to embed reuse ([see briefing document for guidance](#)).

GROUP 4

Municipality profile

- The regional government consists of 4 small municipalities of 2,000–3,000 inhabitants each, with 10–15 km distance between them, in a rural area with no high-rise buildings. The vast majority of the population have access to a garden.
- Altogether, 9,000 inhabitants generate 350 kg of residual waste per capita per year.
- The average income of local residents is above that of the EU. Most residents' income comes from the tourism sector and the food production industry.
- 3,000 people of additional workforce commute to the region daily and weekly from neighbouring areas.
- The regional government has a contract with a private waste management company, who is responsible for implementing the waste and separate collection systems for mixed waste and recyclables. All biowaste is collected and treated by one local farm that is happy to use the compost it generates. The government has contracts with both, and they will run out in 5 years.
- 65% separate collection rates in the municipality:
 - Door-to-door collection of all waste: glass, paper and cardboard, organics, mixed packaging, mixed waste.
- The door-to-door collection system has been in place for one year, which caused the separate collection rate to go from 20% to 65% (the system in place before was a bring system with public collection points on the street supplemented by mobile collecting points).
- Residual waste goes to an incineration plant located 300 km away, with a gate fee of 150 euros/ton.
- There is no central drop-off location for hazardous and bulky waste, the service is available only on demand twice a year (hazardous waste for free, bulky waste for extra pay).
- Currently, residents pay a flat base rate of tax to the regional government for waste collection and management, which does not differ depending on the amount of waste they produce.
- Local food producers offer food delivery in reusable packaging and have a "factory shop" where they sell their produce in bulk. Reusable tableware dominates public events.
- During the launch of the door-to-door collection, a media campaign was organised for all the towns to inform inhabitants about the changes by visiting and doing events in all neighbourhoods.

Stakeholder personas

Waste management company owner



The waste company operates on the basis of a contract between you and the local government. The conditions are fixed in the contract. You only see proposals by Zero Waste Ambassadors as doable if they fit into existing contracts; or you might use it in future contracts. You can not change the content of the contract, but sometimes we can do more. Additional work, however, has a cost. Proposals are certainly valuable if they let you save costs, e.g. cutting transportation costs. New ideas would need to be presented to show how they can facilitate the company to fulfil the contract.

Municipality representative



Performance is already high, so you are not desperate to change – but you know that the current fees and costs of the system are too high in comparison with other places. Come into the discussion with an open mind, looking for new ideas, whilst also remaining very pragmatic about things. There is a bit of frustration with the lack of flexibility from the contracted waste company, but the performance has increased so much over the past 12-24 months that you cannot complain too much. As a region, you know that any change in policy must be clearly planned and thought through, especially as you will be the one presenting these to your municipal colleagues. Therefore, data and evidence of such policies working elsewhere are key.

Disruption



The largest importer of your waste for recycling and disposal decided to stop waste trade permanently. The city is left with a third of its waste streams without a final step. Waste starts piling up, there is a risk of overflow and the city government frantically looks for solutions. The industry suggests incinerating all the remaining waste. Your next meeting is with the representative of the city's waste management team.

New stakeholder personas

City's waste management team



You are in a position of power, but not ultimate power (not the mayor), so while largely autonomous, big decisions will have to be screened, plus the waste management company will need to be convinced to comply. Therefore, your mindset is one of openness to any solutions, allies, but you quickly evaluate them through thinking out loud and asking follow-up questions. After all, you are tasked with preparing concrete proposals for solving the disruption and doing that fast. In the short-term response there's no place for intangible measures, but mid- and long-term there is and the team knows these can complement each other.

Journalist



Your job is your life. You work for uncensored news and you are never satisfied with brief information, so you will not stop until you find the truth. You act very skeptical, and cast doubt on everything. You are an advocate of justice, a journalist with respectable mileage and great achievements. Your stories matter.

Expert comment on the municipality case

Advice for the groups



In waste management, volume matters. Instead of building a system for 4 individual sites, cooperation would offer savings and flexibility for the municipality. Due to the small number of people, communication is easy. Motivate people to source-separate waste and do home composting. However, feedback and continuous education has a great role. As a Zero Waste Ambassador, you could take the role of building communication and feedback plans for people, encouraging community-based actions, and serving waste collection and treatment in a way that consolidates the community. Let everyone feel like a player in this. Keep in mind that income and profit for waste in such a small region is also small, and the waste company is probably not willing to lose it. Perhaps it is possible to find a trade-off between new proposed actions (be it building repair shops, recycling centre, or similar).



EXPERT COMMENTED MUNICIPALITY PROFILE

How an expert reads and analyses information

Group 1 municipality info

<p>Size is important: it will give us a critical mass of waste that is linked to cost and income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The municipality is medium-sized (<u>200,000 inhabitants</u>) and is quite <u>residential</u> with lots of <u>high-rise buildings</u> in densely populated areas and suburbs. Only 30% of the population have <u>access to a garden</u>. 	<p>Not much industrial waste</p>
<p>Cannot use individual options, anonymous client</p>		<p>Lower transport distances, easier to collect</p>
<p>This volume is a bit too much compared to background data, there is space for reduction, check for errors in statistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>200,000 inhabitants generate 550 kg of residual waste per capita per year, which includes a lot of waste coming from local cafes and restaurants.</u> 	<p>Less garden waste available, homecomposting will make little sense, brown biowaste bin becomes a must</p>
<p>So they have massive catering? Is that waste included in residential amount? Try to keep household and catering amounts separately, go for food waste reduction and brown biowaste bin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average income of local residents is below that of the EU. Most residents' income comes from the <u>tourism and hospitality</u> sectors. 	<p>Calculate total amount, make waste audit, calculate sum per each material</p>
<p>Language diversity requires information campaign in all languages but mainly about 'how-to-separate-and-collect'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge of language diversity: there are often <u>5 different languages</u> spoken by residents throughout the town. 	<p>Tourism requires information campaign</p>
<p>If you propose changes in collection and treatment then one has to invest. Do you propose public, private or private-public ownership? This depends on local-national financial context, might need discussion with financial experts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <u>municipality partners with the local private waste management company</u> which is responsible for implementing the waste and separate collection systems. The municipality has an overall say and control over which company operates this programme, but the waste management company is <u>realistically the only business</u> that has the capacity and technical requirements to run this service within the local area. 	<p>Municipality rules, but they have no trucks and personnel. Private waste company does collection. Each proposal that municipality has, has a price. Discuss with waste company what could be realistic solution.</p>
		<p>So the private company actually rules! Do you tolerate this or would you diversify?</p>
<p>Good figure for a start! It means that residents are willing to participate. Expand!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>35% separate collection rates</u> in the municipality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glass: street container Door-to-door collection of residual waste + paper and cardboard 	<p>Consider collection of packages. See what is in the legislation, one has to collect WEEE, hazardous waste and bulky, too</p>
<p>Why do we need street container system if we have high rise buildings where door-to-door is doable easily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic bottles and metals: <u>street containers</u> <u>No separate collection of organics</u> 	<p>Without introducing separate collection high recovery rate is not possible. Support the door-to-door idea.</p>

Not my worry, irrelevant data for me

Any other waste treatment method cheaper than that is worth doing

Have better sorting, incinerate only what is inevitable

It's a good start to show what's possible

Very wrong place, too far for frequent use

And here is a proof: wrong locations equals to low usage and pointless business. Bring it to town, make it easy to use for citizens. Collect large variety of waste materials. Try with no fee or low fee. PAYT is possible

Flat rate does not motivate, differentiate the price – mixed waste has to be expensive, well sorted waste has to be free or cheap

This is private initiative, the government can just support it, nothing more

Good start, keep going, but remember that educating citizens is in the end lifelong work

- An incineration plant is used for the vast majority of residual waste and has a contract to run for the next 5 years. The incinerator services many towns and communities across the local region, charging high taxes due to there being little alternatives available for municipalities to manage their waste. The plant is 50 km away from the town, resulting in high transportation costs, too.

- There is one central drop-off location that citizens use for hazardous, bulky, garden, and organic food waste, which is currently 10 km outside of the town, with low usage rates of around 5-10%.

- The municipality is interested in the possibility of introducing a (PAYT) scheme, with local businesses not opposed to the idea either, but no action taken yet due to capacity.

- Currently, residents pay a flat base rate of tax to the municipality for waste collection and management, which does not differ depending on the amount of waste they produce.

- One small and independent packaging-free shop has been established in the town within the last 12 months, but otherwise there remains little to no encouragement of reuse. There are no repair centres in the local area, although some businesses do offer the service but with a small fee.

- Educational posters have been spread around the town in the past to encourage the use of separate collection bins for residents and tourists, as well as some social media advertising paid by the municipality to try to get more younger people recycling and reusing.

Any other waste treatment facility requires time to build. 5 years is quite close, until then we can afford incineration. You are bound by a contract, but consider not prolonging it after 5 years start with investments to reduce incineration

If we can introduce more local treatment options, then we can offer source-separation collection schemes with financial motivation to recycle rather than incinerate

Study the cost components, is it incineration tax, transportation or just high gate fee? Transportation you can reduce by considering transfer stations and transport optimisation. Incineration tax you can avoid by not incinerating! Huge gate fee can be a motivator to change the current waste treatment practice & waste collection practice

The prerequisite for PAYT is very good source-separation and separate collection. Introduce this first-hand, and only then consider PAYT. Managing PAYT requires funding too, and it can be too expensive to apply, even if it feels a fair play

One shop has insignificant effect on waste volumes, but has a great effect on public opinion – keep going. Best if it is in location of the municipal dropoff centre – one place to visit

Education has to be life-long, posters have limited effect

Expert comments:

- We have no information about waste composition. Propose making an audit.
- We have no info about the waste company. What are they capable of, what obligations do they have in contract?
- We have no info about infrastructure, amount and type of bins, trucks, facilities.
- We need to find the people who are making decisions in the city and waste company. In the end we need our proposals to find its way into investment plans.
- We have no info about how the city is administered. There has to be a waste or environmental regulation in the city. Find it.
- We do not know the national regulations. We can only guess that the location is in Europe, so EU directives will apply too.
- We definitely need to draft a waste management plan for the city with a 5+ year perspective and in relation to national ambitions.
- Every decision has a price tag. Learn about the financial situation with the current waste system. How the flat based rate was proposed? Can we propose a better one?
- Planning has to cover ALL waste fractions and consider ALL target values, not just easy-to-reach or popular ones.

What is irrelevant info?

Mere recognition that the system is like that and cannot be changed is a justification for doing nothing. One should be guided by national targets.

