

# The Polish Network of Animal Welfare Bodies

## Early Experience and Future Directions

Witold Żakowski and Anna Morgunowicz

# The expanding role of AWBs

## Core responsibilities\*

- ✓ welfare oversight
- ✓ 3Rs advice
- ✓ protocol review
- ✓ experiments compliance
- ✓ tissue sharing

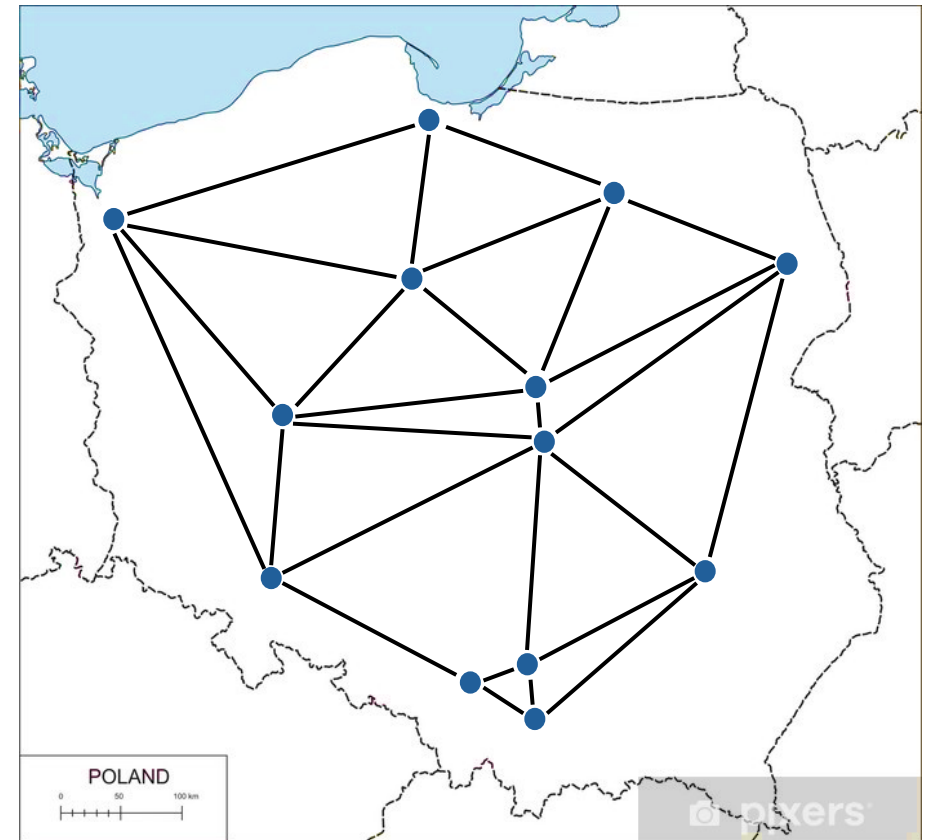
## Additional responsibilities

- ✓ training and competency
- ✓ rehoming of animals
- ✓ Culture of Care
- ✓ reporting

\* *The Act on the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific or Educational Purposes (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 266)*

# The Emergence of the Polish AWB Network

- ✓ April 2025
- ✓ 25 AWBs → 42 AWBs  
(~30% of all AWBs in Poland)
- ✓ informal and bottom-up initiative
- ✓ no limit on representatives per AWB
- ✓ non-hierarchical structure
- ✓ early integration with European Network of National Networks of Animal Welfare Bodies (ENAWB)
- ✓ regular online meetings
- ✓ national survey of AWBs



# Objectives of the network



Exchange of experiences and good practices



Harmonisation of AWB procedures



Scientific, ethical and regulatory support



Representation towards national authorities

# Survey of Polish AWBs

January – March 2026

29 AWBs (out of 42 network members)

60 questions

## Goal:

To identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for harmonisation

## Areas covered:



organisation and resources



welfare oversight



protocol review and compliance

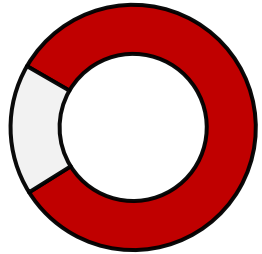


training and competency



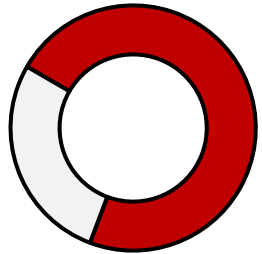
Culture of Care

# Limited institutional support



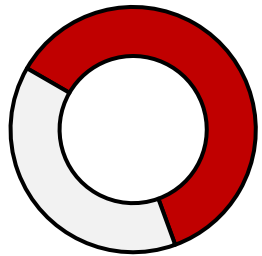
**82.8%**

**lack of organisational resources**



**72.4%**

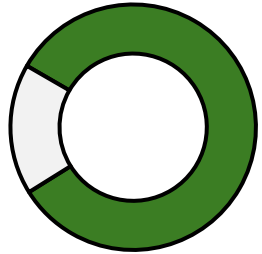
**lack of dedicated funding**



**62.1%**

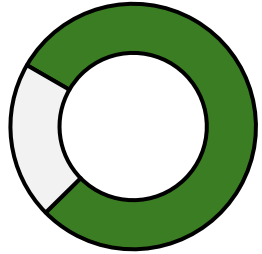
**lack of additional remuneration**

# High activity despite limitations



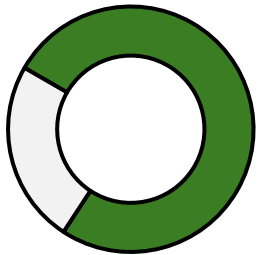
**82.8%**

**refinement of protocols**



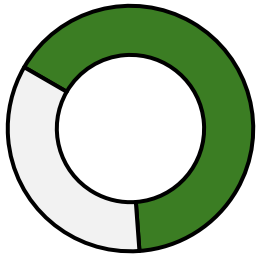
**79.3%**

**experiments compliance**



**75.9%**

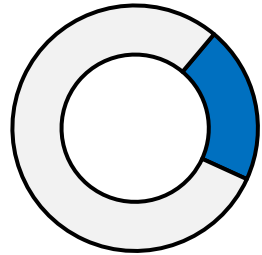
**welfare audits**



**65.5%**

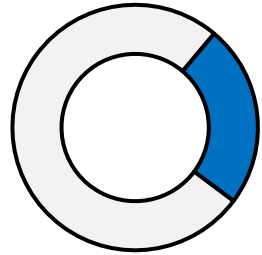
**tissue sharing**

# Areas for improvement



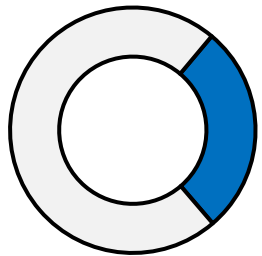
**20.7%**

**welfare-related educational events**



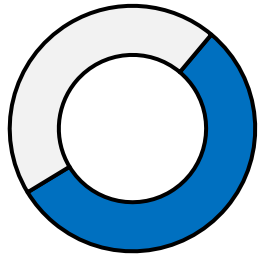
**24.1%**

**internal training program**



**27.6%**

**formal staff wellbeing support**



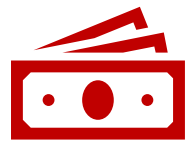
**55.2%**

**formal CPD verification**

# Key conclusions



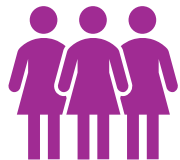
**High activity: welfare oversight and research support**



**Limited support: no funding and remuneration**



**Uneven implementation of AWB practices**



**Gaps: staff training and Culture of Care**

# Future directions

## Harmonisation

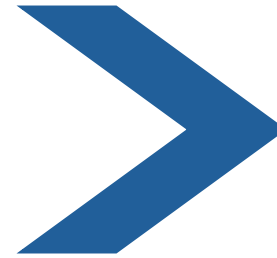
shared procedures and guidance

## Capacity building

training and competence development

## Culture of Care

staff wellbeing and education



**PoLASA 2026 Congress**  
(dedicated AWB workshop)

## Collaboration

national and international



**National Committee**  
**ENAWB**

# Thank you for your attention!

## Acknowledgements

Anna Morgunowicz

Members of the Polish AWB Network

PoILASA

ENAWB

