Opinions in Europe on Certification of Mass Catering

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Research Project:
One of the eight CORE-Organic research projects
(Coordination of European Transnational Research in Organic Food and Farming)

The aim of iPOPY…
is to study how increased consumption of organic food may be achieved by implementation of relevant strategies and instruments linked to food serving outlets for young people in some European countries

NO, DK, FI, IT, DE

Workpackage 3
Includes among other tasks the review and analyse procedures for certification of food serving outlets to propose certification procedures adapted to general European conditions

What was the main aim?

3 important questions:

What is the opinion about the current (non-)regulation of mass catering in European countries?

What is the opinion about the situation regarding the whole of Europe?

What is the position regarding a potential European harmonisation of this area of organic certification?

Methodology- What we did

2 Online- surveys

The first survey:
Open from the 4th December 2009 to 31st January 2010
Adressed to 190 certification bodies in all European member states and to Switzerland, Liechtenstein…
17 questions, open and closed

17 questions were the same in both surveys

The second survey:
Open from the 15th January 2010 to 31st January 2010
Adressed to 150 persons who are involved in the field of Out-of-home business
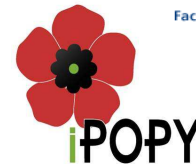18 questions , open and closed

Which countries answered?
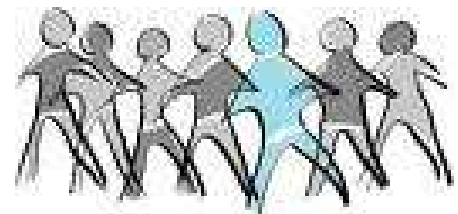
Which persons answered the surveys?

First survey:
Only send to certification bodies

General manager of the Certification bodies
Certification manager
Head of sections
Quality manager
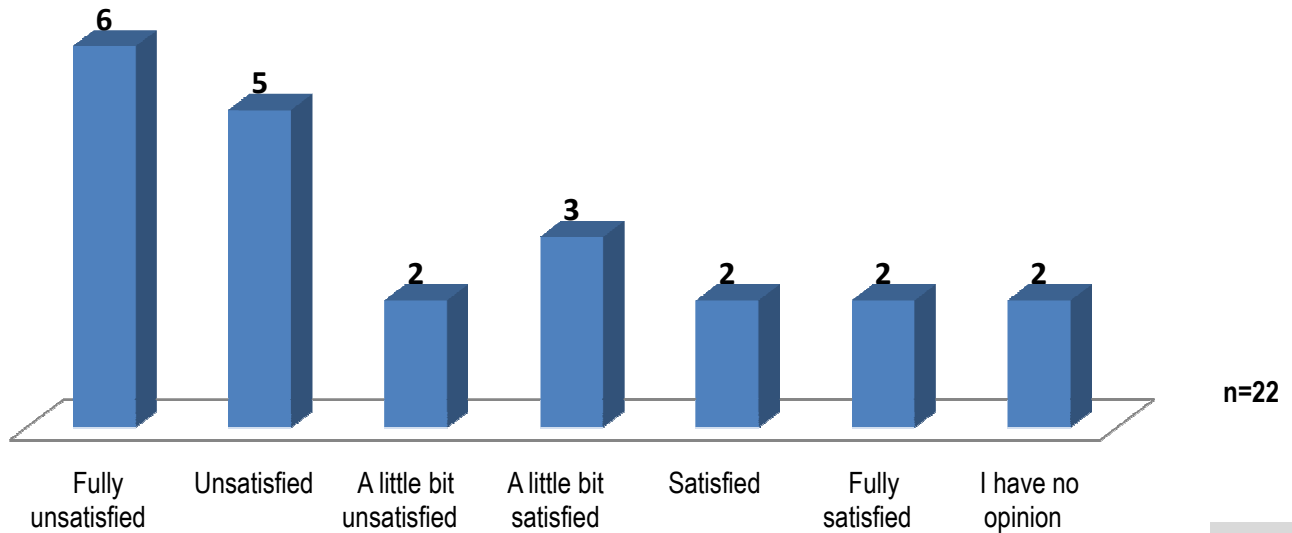
Second survey:
Send to people who are involved in this business

People who work:
In the public sector
As researchers / scientific sector
Developer
Journalist

Satisfaction level - certification bodies

How would you assess your satisfaction level about the present regulation of Organic Certification in Out-Of-Home Businesses in your own country?

n=22

Satisfaction level - comparison

How would you assess your satisfaction level about the present regulation of Organic Certification in Out-Of-Home Businesses in your own country?
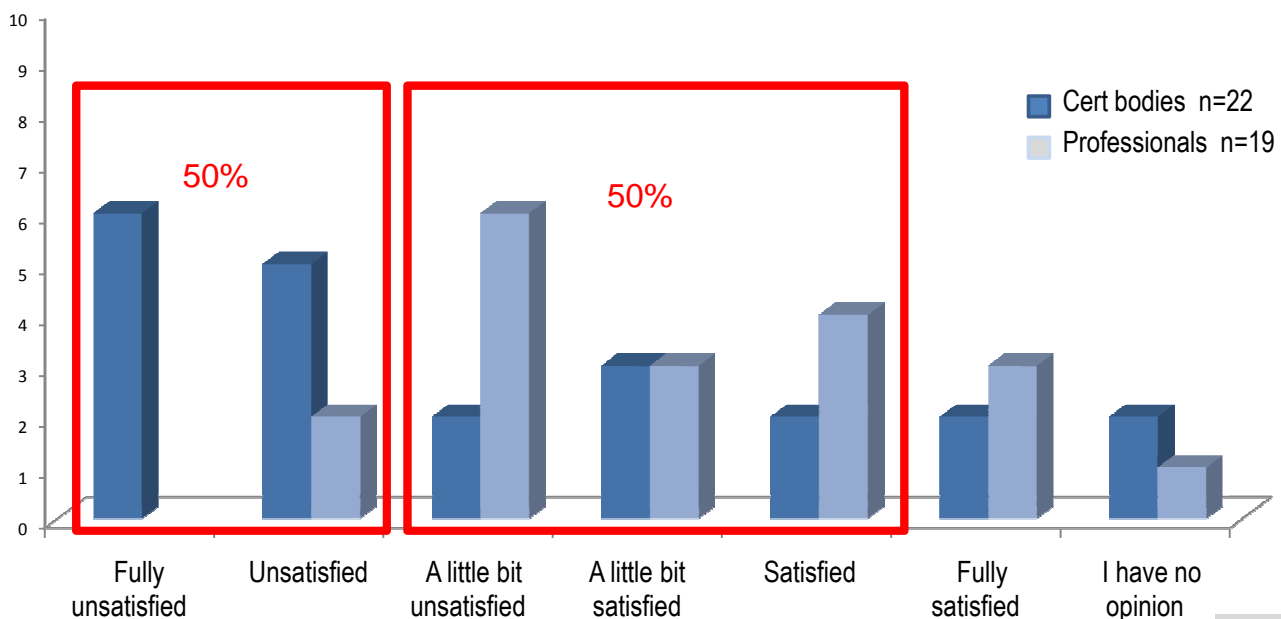

50% 50%

Cert bodies n=22
Professionals n=19

Satisfaction level compared to the individual form of regulation

How would you assess your satisfaction level about the present regulation of Organic Certification in Out-Of-Home Businesses in your own country?
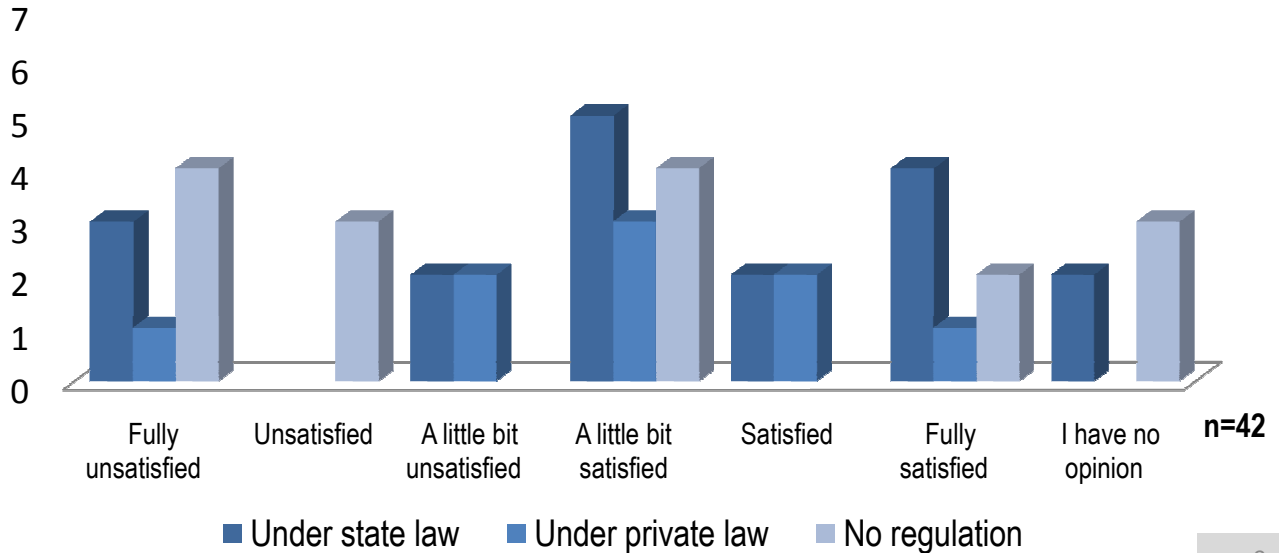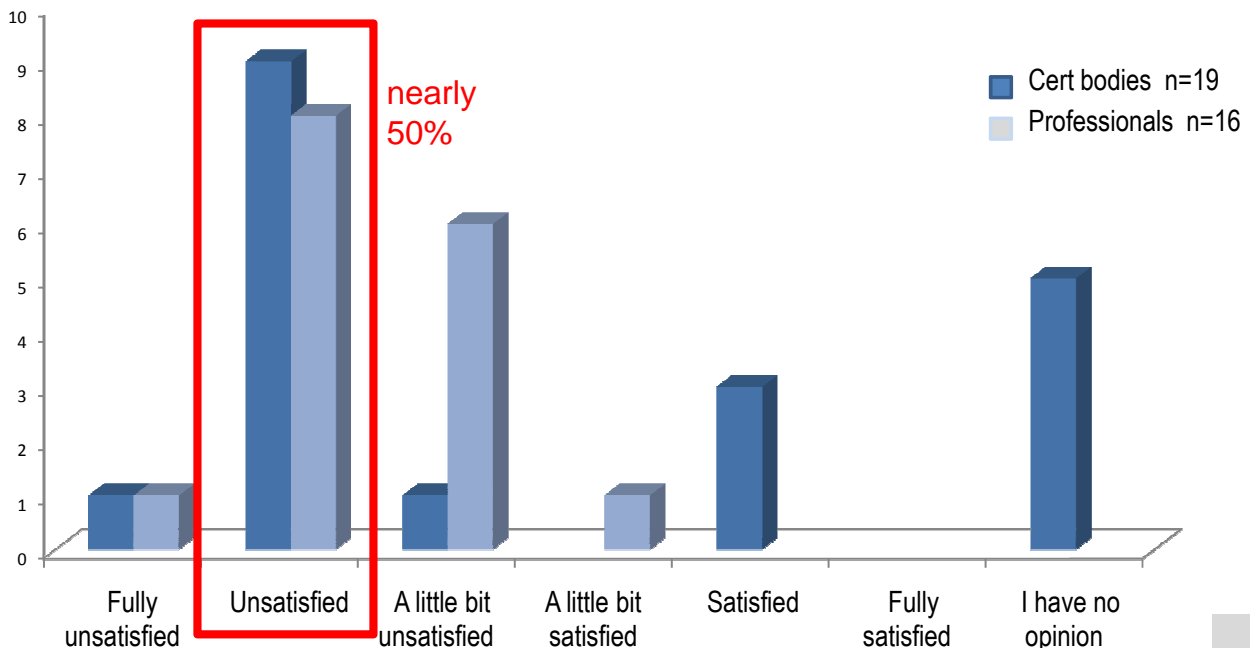

n=42

Legend: ■ Under state law ■ Under private law ■ No regulation

Satisfaction level about the regulation in Europe

How do you assess your satisfaction level with the present situation of the Organic Certification in Out-Of-Home Businesses in Europe?
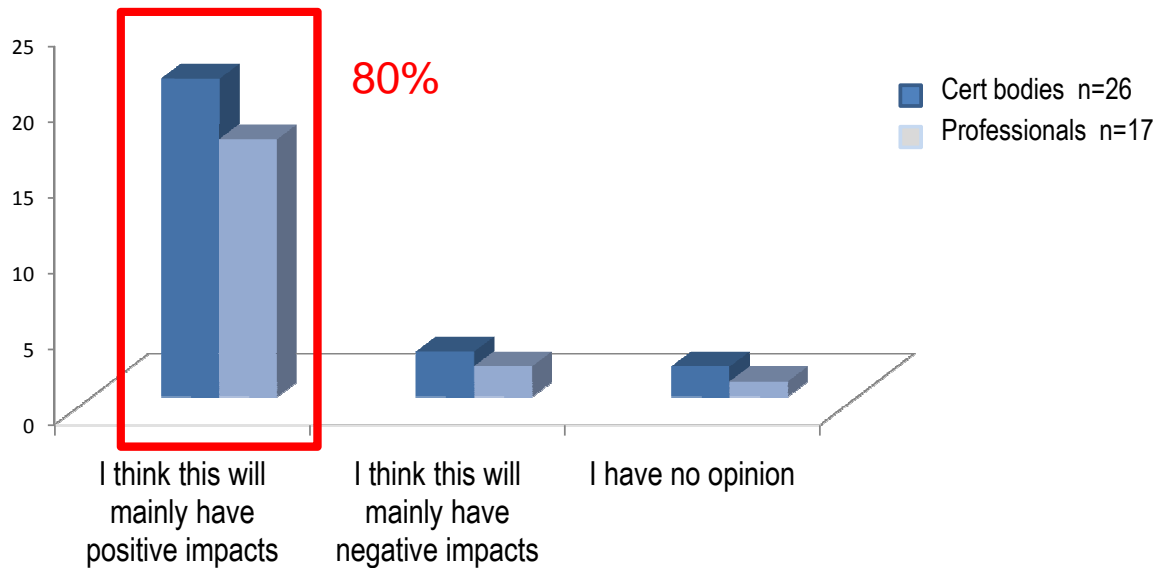**Are you satisfied about the regulation situation which is nearly completely different in every Member State?**

nearly 50%

Legend: ■ Cert bodies n=19   ■ Professionals n=16

The opinion about an EU-wide harmonisation…

What is your opinion on a possible EU-wide harmonised organic certification scheme for restaurants and catering?

80%

Cert bodies n=26
Professionals n=17

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Positve impacts

„Good to have consistency in organic standards throughout the EU"

„Create the same possibilities for all countries"

„Easier to handle for European and International companies, for consumers, producers and inspectors"

„Greater credibility"

„Potential expansion of the use of organic food"

„Comparability makes a discussion between countries more easier"

„It will be easier to discuss problems"

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Negative impacts

„Conditions are very different across the EU"

„Flexibility of the guidelines is necessary- for national circumstances"

„Regulation should not be too bureaucratic"

„Regulation should be changed in a negative way"

„The rules may not be as strict as they are now"

„Greater costs"

Strengths and Weaknesses

Which Strengths and Weaknesses do you see in the case of a future potential harmonisation?

"Better cooperation between countries and larger diversity of organic products"

„Cross-national cooperation and control"

"Better commercial exchanges"

"Easier for suppliers and exporters; transparent for consumers"

„Better traceability"

„Consumer confidence"

"Better understanding in "one" Europe"

"It is good to have international cooperation in the sense of bringing forward ideas how to achieve a good certification. Every country can select what is appropriate for their situation. Although a minimal level of rules should be developed for all restaurants in Europe."

Which Strengths and Weaknesses do you see in the case of a future potential harmonisation?

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"Especially in public sector, food systems are so different between countries, that it is still difficult to get comparable regulations."

"Need for individual solutions (but generalised)"

"There is no need for harmonisation, you do not move a restaurant from one country to another, like you do with goods."

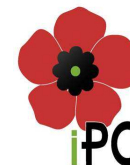"A lowering of standards in certain countries and the removal of focus on local climate-friendly food. "

"Less flexibility could be the result for some countries"

"Accept that organic sales cannot grow by making rules. The consumer will always be the starting point (awareness, attitude, knowledge, price,...)"
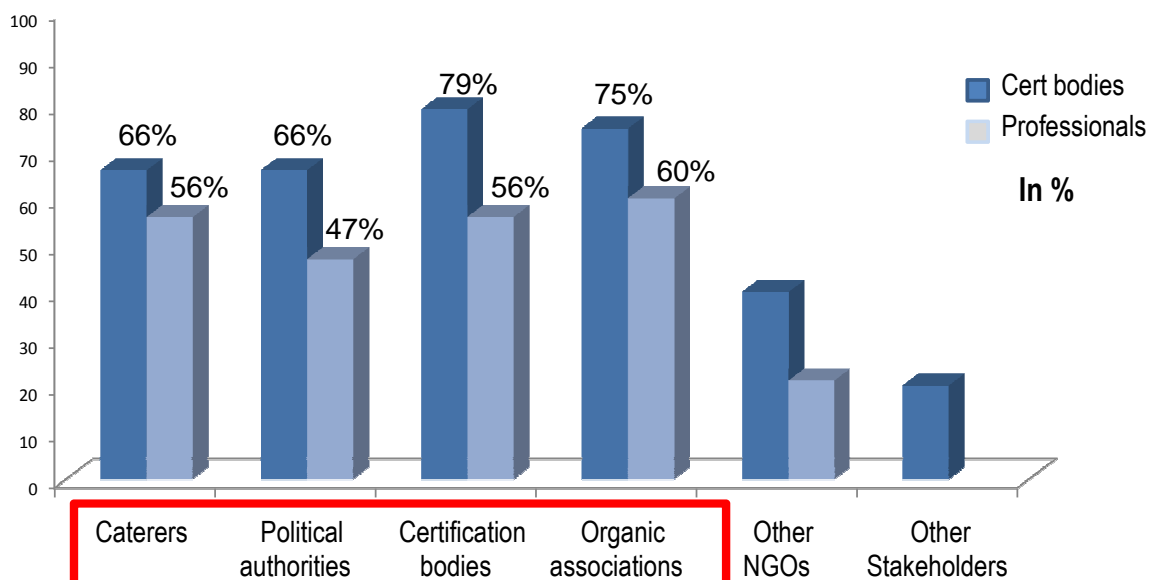
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Stakeholders for a potential harmonisation process

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Which stakeholders should be involved to discuss a possible future harmonisation of catering and restaurant certification in Europe?

Bar chart legend: Cert bodies, Professionals — In %

- Caterers: 66% / 56%
- Political authorities: 66% / 47%
- Certification bodies: 79% / 56%
- Organic associations: 75% / 60%
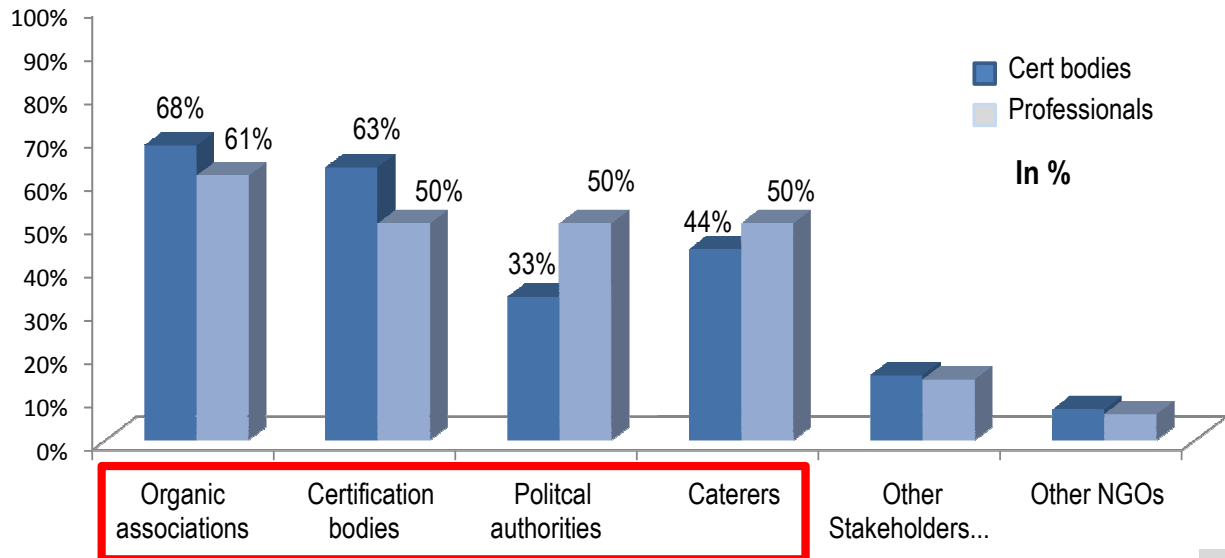- Other NGOs
- Other Stakeholders

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The strongest drivers for a harmonisation process

Who do you think would be the strongest drivers in the process of a possible future harmonisation in Europe?

The additional statements

What are, in your opinion, the most important factors for bringing a potential harmonisation process forward?

"I can see conflicts in the caterers that could prefer not have an obligation about the certification but I think it's could be a must for the development of the organic also in this sector "

„Freedom of trade"

"Different needs and traditions in different countries"

"I don´t think the harmonisation is the biggest problem, not if you don´t do an EU-regulation. The biggest conflict is to establish practical and functional scheme in countries without any scheme. "

"Sustainable vs. budgetary elements " and discussions of the right to define the problem

What are the main conclusions?

- The results can only reflect a small set of opinions because of the small rate of return, but we can see a **first status quo for this field of research**

- Especially the certification bodies are **not satisfied about the different regulation systems of organic certification of mass catering** within Europe

- There is **no correlation** between the satisfaction level of the participants and the type of country regulation

- **80%** of all participants can think of **mainly positve impacts** regarding a potential EU-harmonisation

- As important stakeholders and drivers for a potential process, all important institutions > **certification bodies, organic associations, caterers and political authorities**, should be involved in this process

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Thank you very much for your attention!

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