



Work Package 7

Consumer expectations towards organic products

BACKGROUND

Facts:

The production of organic products started to develop recently in WBC. The organic market is still a niche market, but there is a growing interest by the consumers to buy organic food products in WBC. This goes along with the overall trend towards a more health-oriented life style and growing concerns about sustainable development.

MATERIAL & METHODS

DELPHI METHOD:

3 rounds of the Delphi have been done. The procedure of application was as follows:

- Experts identification and recruitment.
- Definition of 1st round questionnaire.
- 1st questionnaire introduced to the panel of experts.
- Collection of individual opinions of the experts on this issue.
- First round report from each country.
- Report was sent to the same group of experts in order to get first feedback.
- At this stage a second questionnaire was also applied.
- After processing the data collected on the basis of the second questionnaire the third questionnaire was sent to the same group of the experts in order to get final feedback.

The experts' point of view about:

- a) **The current situation of the organic market in each country and the organisation of the supply chain.**
- b) **The forecasts of the experts related to organic market development.**

Research questions:

- What are the impacts of the government and policy on the organic sector in WBC?
- What is the state of production, the supply chains and the organic market in WBC?
- What are the factors that affect consumer behaviour regarding organic products?

RESULTS

Between 39 and 44 experts have been interviewed in total. The maximum was 14 experts in Slovenia and the minimum 3 in Macedonia.

STRIKING RESULTS

Government & Policy Impact	→ National development strategy for organic farming is very important.
Production	→ Motivation of the producers is important for the development of organic sector. → Teaching and training for organic farming is very much needed
Market	→ Clear labelling of organic products is necessary to enhance market development. → The organic market is increasing.
Trends	→ Marketing for organic products has to be improved. → Eco-tourism is important for the development of the value chain of organic products.
Supply chain	→ Quality management and traceability are important for a better organisation of supply chain of organic products.
Consumer behaviour	→ Health concerns are very strong motives for buying organic food. → Key promotional activities are education and information to consumers.

CONCLUSION

The current situation

- Committed market actors, farmers associations, stakeholders in rural development an environmental protection, consumer associations and policy makers act in favour of the expansion of the organic sector in all WBC.
- All experts reached the consensus that organic market in WBC is in the initial phase of development, but with great preconditions for production in the future. Consumer's motives for buying organic food are health, prestige and environmental awareness.

The forecasts

- In the future, the importance of the organic market will grow in WBC (tourism, agro ecotourism, schools, and hospitals).
- For the development of organic sector in WBC, all experts reached the consensus that National strategy for organic farming is needed, as well as regional and local government support.
- In the future all experts consider increasing promotional activities, education and information of consumers.
- The influence of EU Agriculture Policy will push the development of organic sector in WBC according to all experts in this research.

References:

[1] Renko, N., et. al. (2010). *Deliverable N° 7.1 - National report per country on the organic production on the basis of bibliography and data collection.* FOCUS-BALKANS

[2] Renko, N., et. al. (2010). *Deliverable N° 7.2 - WP7 Market data, market trend and consumer behaviour report for organic products in the WBC.* FOCUS-BALKANS