



Food
Consumer Observatory



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Why trust is crucial: Consumer trust and the adoption of new healthy and sustainable food products

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A healthier and sustainable diet – a question of **trust**!

If people are to have a healthier and more sustainable diet, they need to....

- **trust** the information that we give them on what is healthy and what is sustainable.
- **trust** retailers, manufacturers, retailers and authorities so that they are willing to adopt new healthier and more sustainable products coming on the market.

Without trust, there is
no green transition.



The EIT Food TrustTracker

The EIT Food Consumer Observatory is running the TrustTracker project, an instrument designed to track consumer trust into the main groups of food chain actors, and to investigate how this affects consumer confidence in the integrity of the food supply and in the technologies used in food production

TrustTracker started in 2018 with data collection in 5 countries, extending to 13 countries in 2019 and 18 countries in 2020

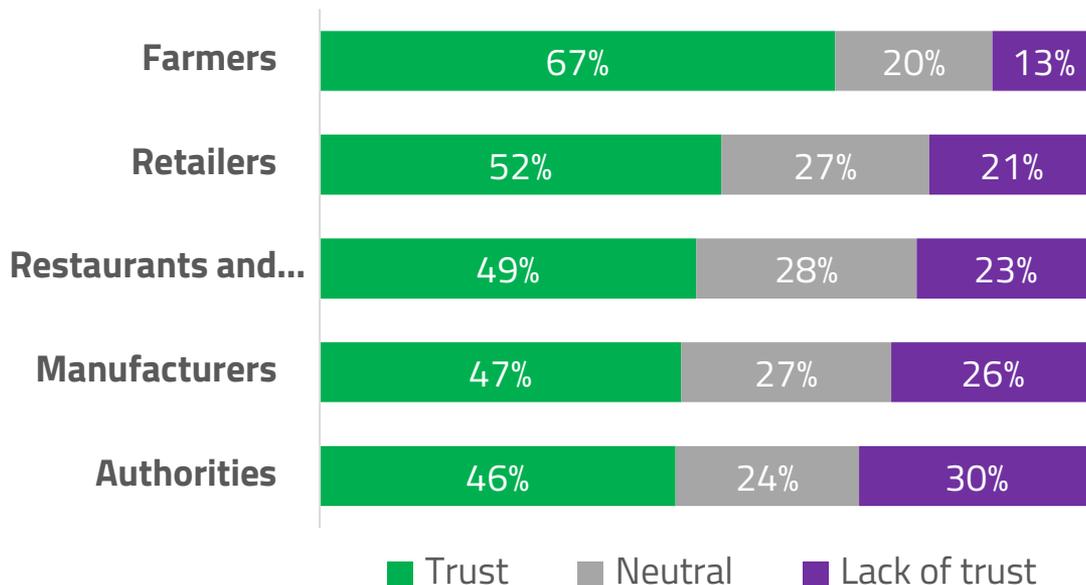
The analysis presented here is based on the 2024 data with a sample of 18,000 respondents

Macready, A. L., Hieke, S., Klimczuk-Kochańska, M., Szumiał, S., Vranken, L., & Grunert, K. G. (2020). Consumer trust in the food value chain and its impact on consumer confidence: A model for assessing consumer trust and evidence from a 5-country study in Europe. *Food Policy*, 92, 101880.

Macready, A. L., Hieke, S., Klimczuk-Kochańska, M., Szumiał, S., Wachter, K., Arnoult, M. H., ... & Grunert, K. G. (2025). Why trust is crucial—The moderating role of trust in the relationship between motivation and intention to buy healthy, sustainable and novel foods. *Food Quality and Preference*, 126, 105386.

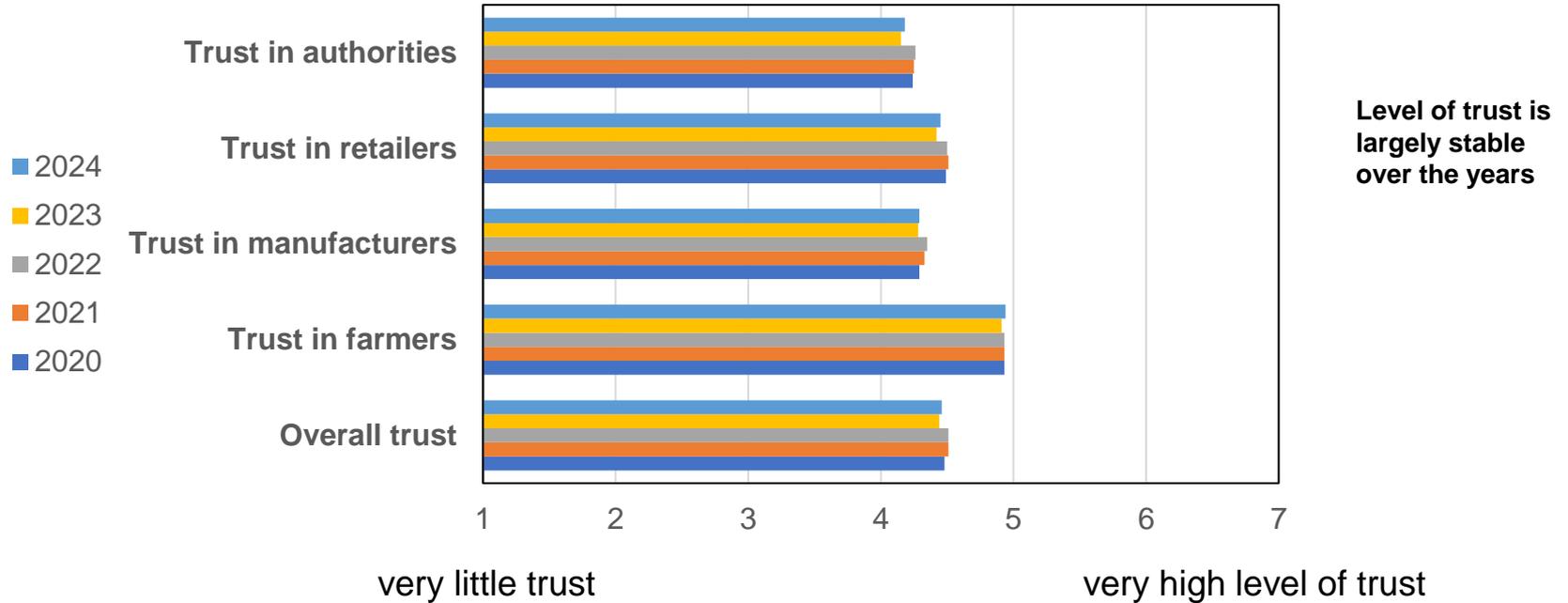
Trust – and a lack of it – in food chain actors

2024 TrustTracker data



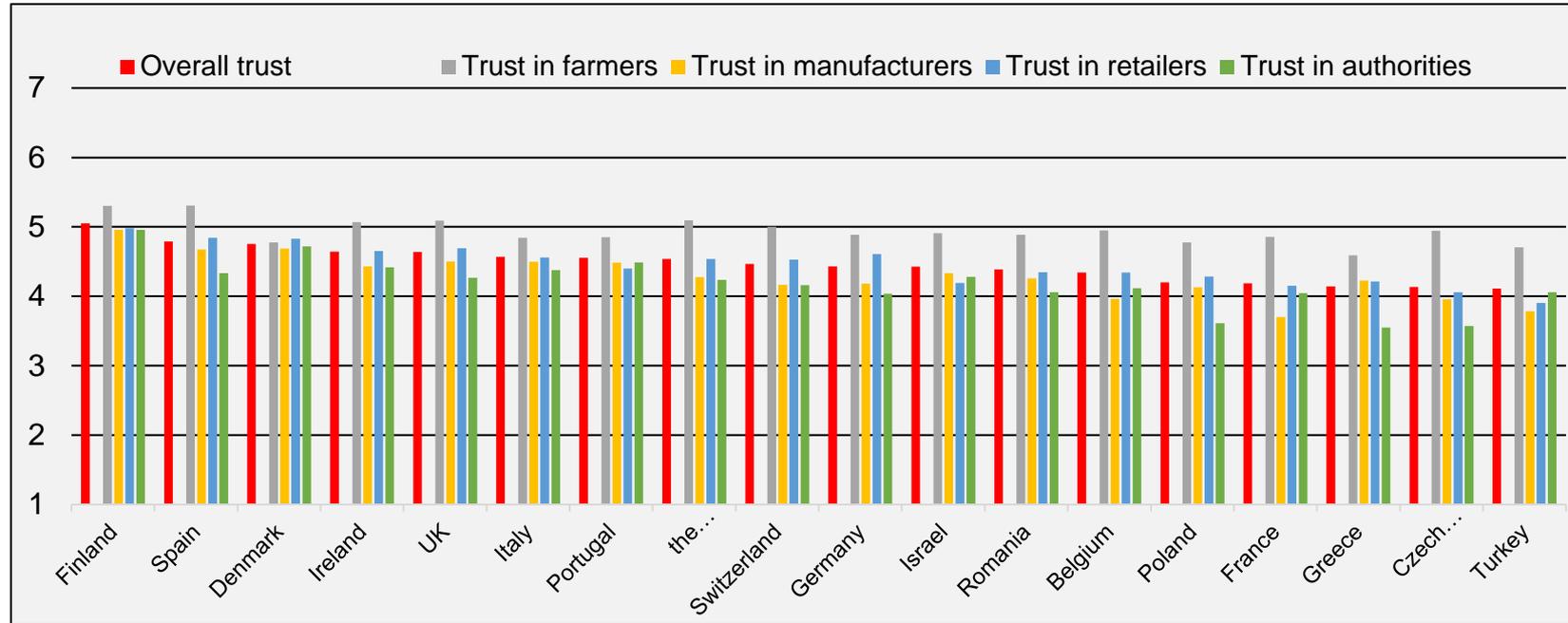
Only about half of European consumers trust food chain actors – except for trust in farmers!

Trust in food chain actors 2020-2024



Overall trust in food chain actors in different countries

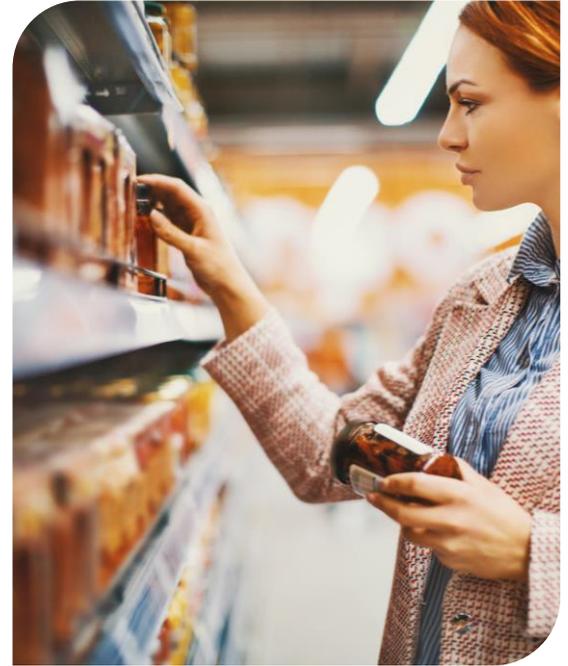
2024 data, 18 countries



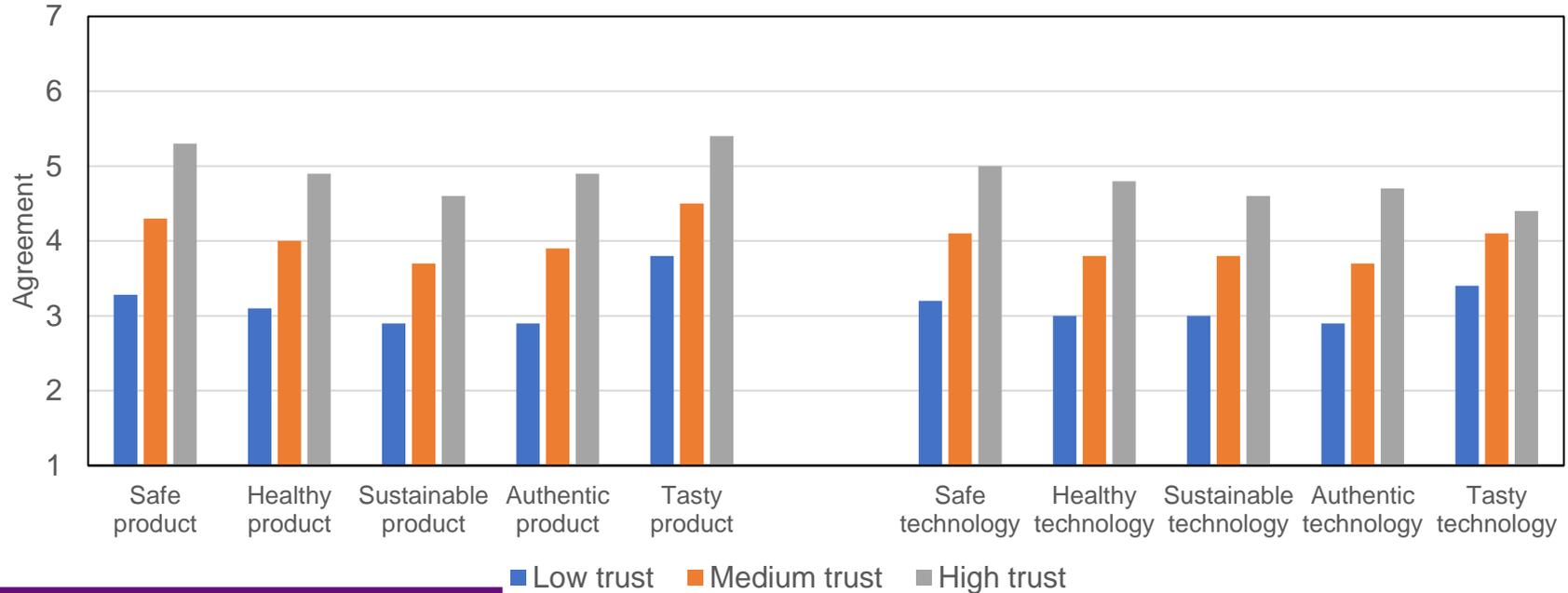
Consumer level of trust is not high!

What does the low level of consumer trust mean for consumer confidence in the way food is produced and in the products coming on the market?

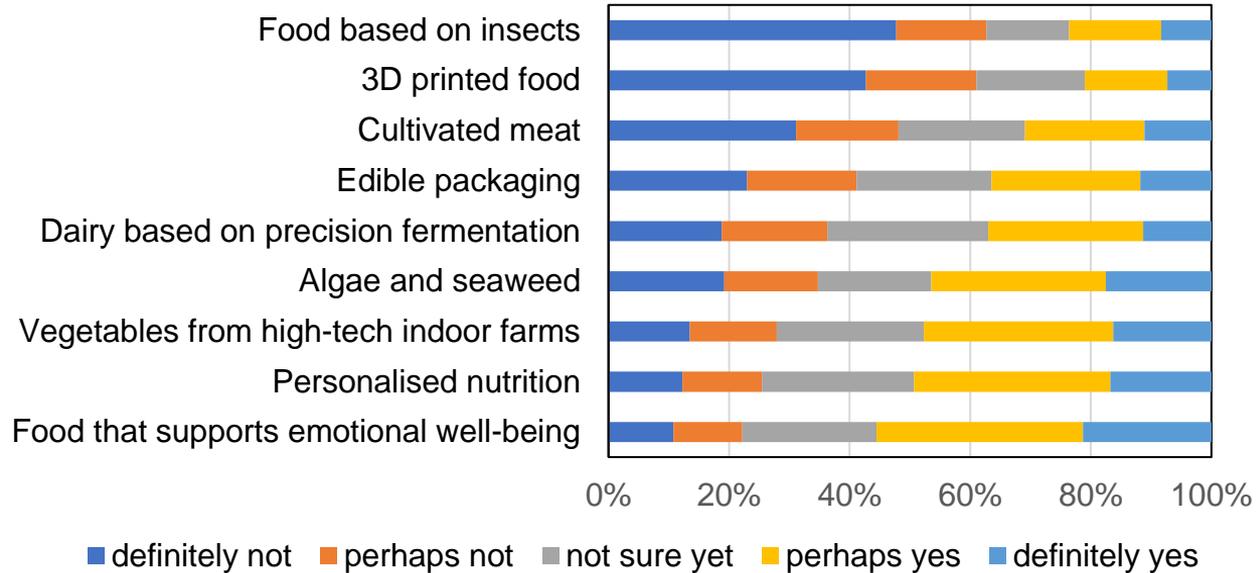
And what does it imply for their willingness to try and adopt new, healthy and sustainable food products?



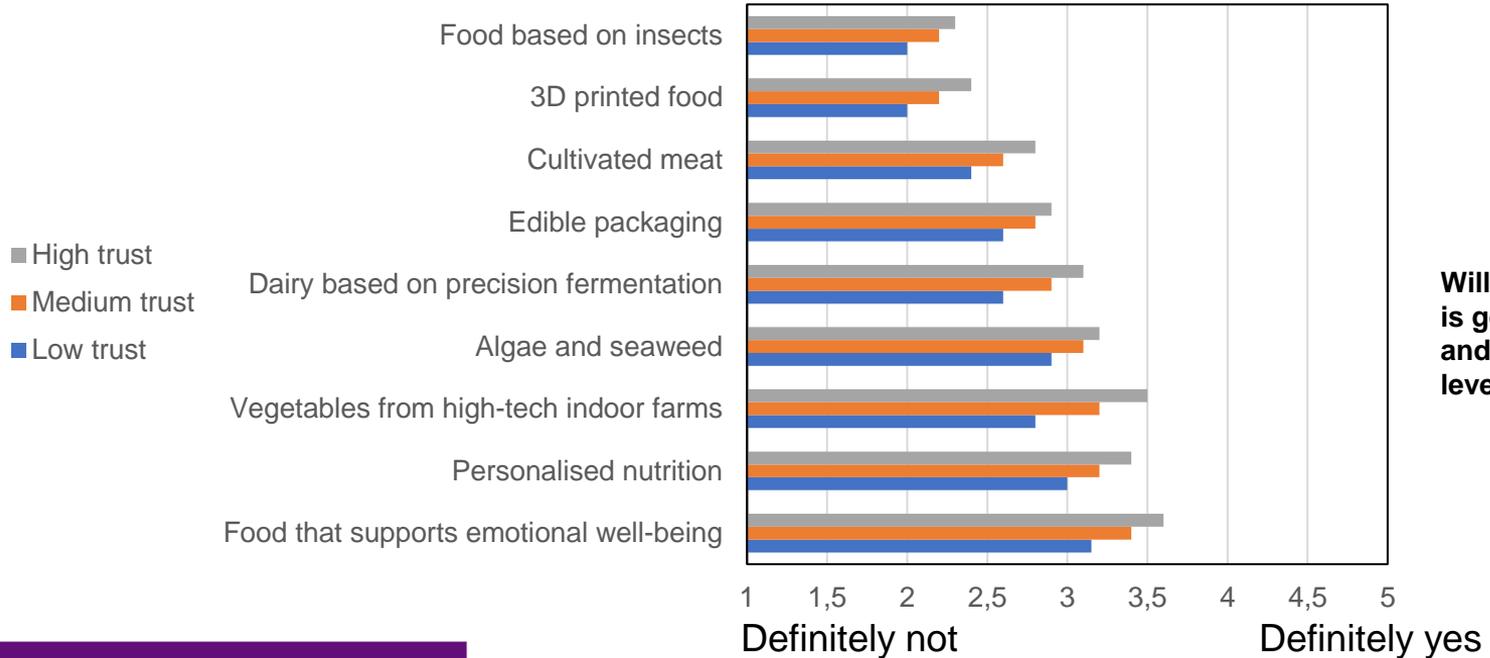
Trust in food chain actors affects confidence in food products and food technologies



Willingness to try novel products



Trust and willingness to try novel products

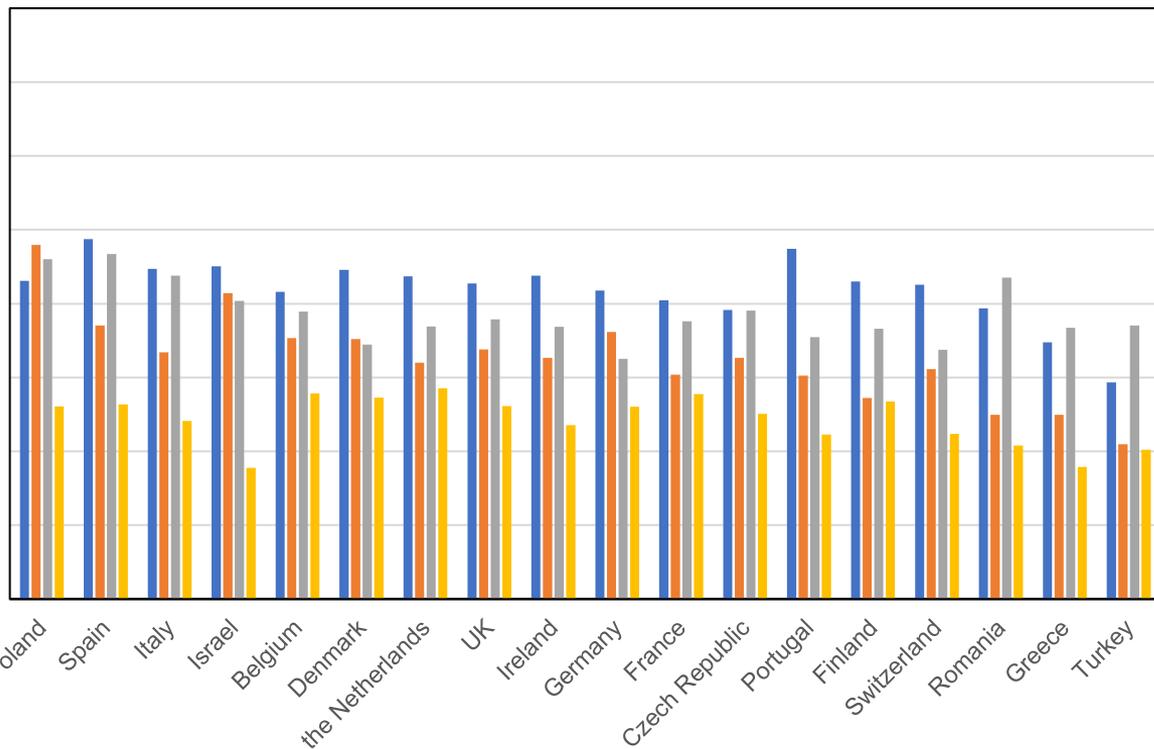


Willingness to try is generally low and depends on level of trust

Willingness to try by country

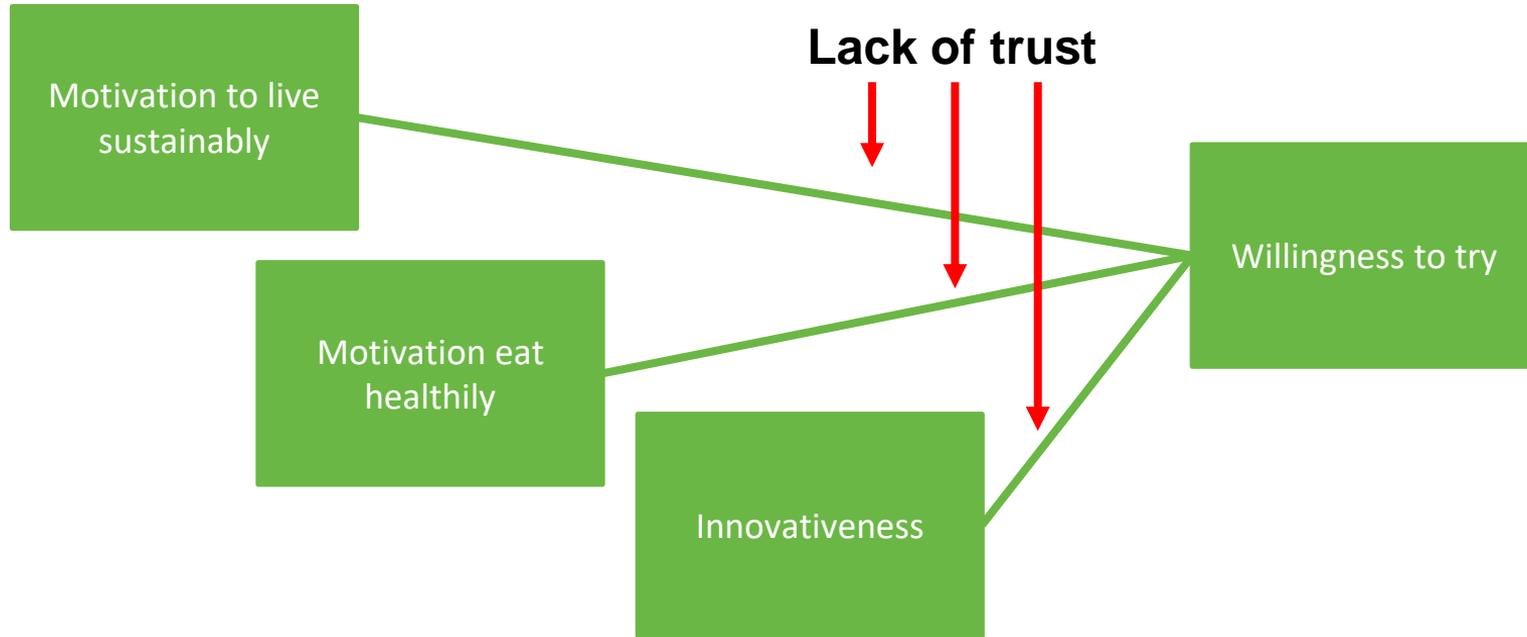
Definitely yes 5,00

Definitely not 1,00



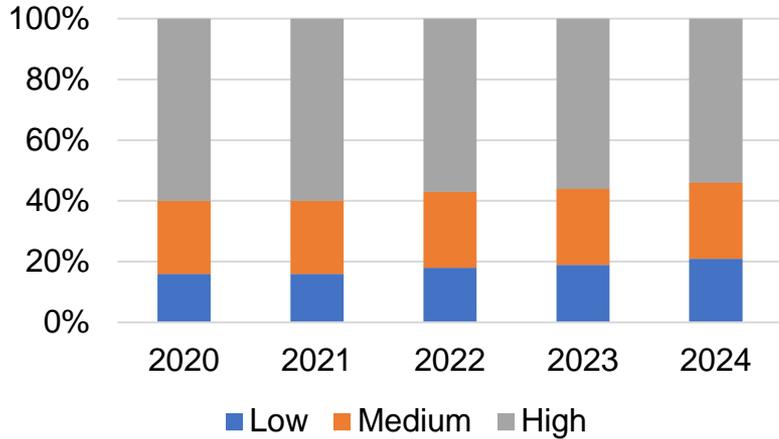
■ Algae and seaweed ■ Cultivated meat ■ Precision fermentation ■ Insects

What determines willingness to try?

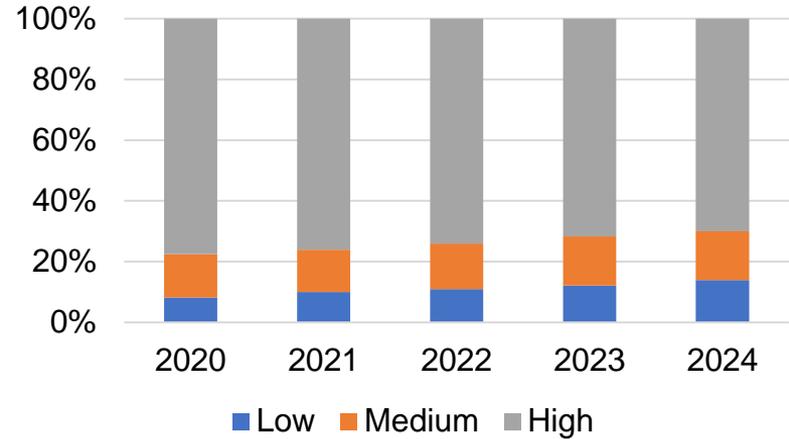


Motivation over time

Motivation for healthy eating



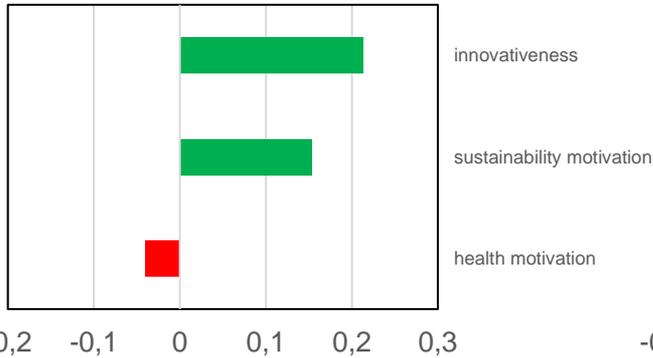
Motivation for sustainable living



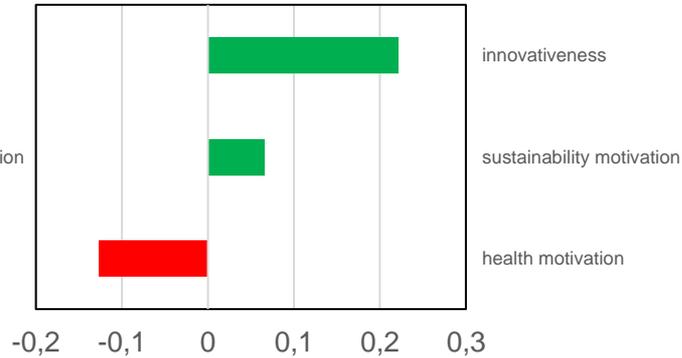
**Motivation
decreases
slightly over time!**

Determinants of willingness to try

Algae and seaweed

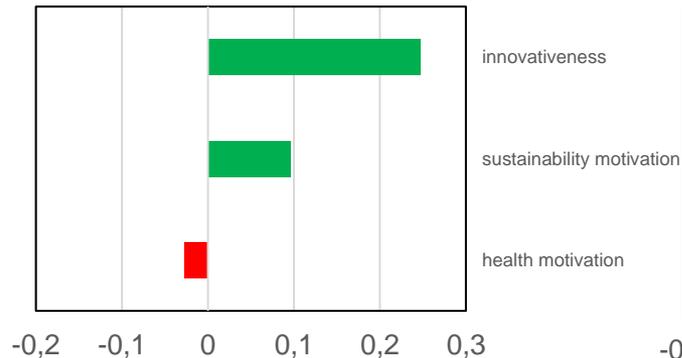


Cultivated meat

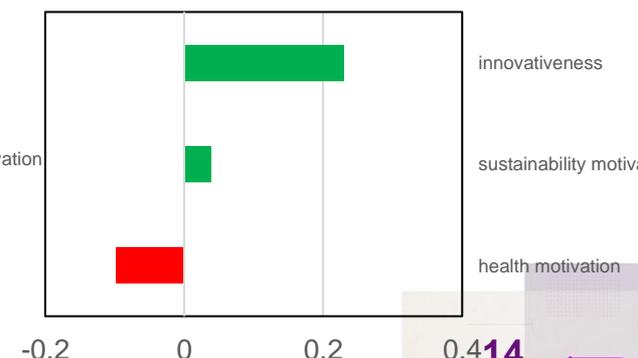


Innovativeness most important – and health motivation can be a barrier!

Precision fermentation dairy



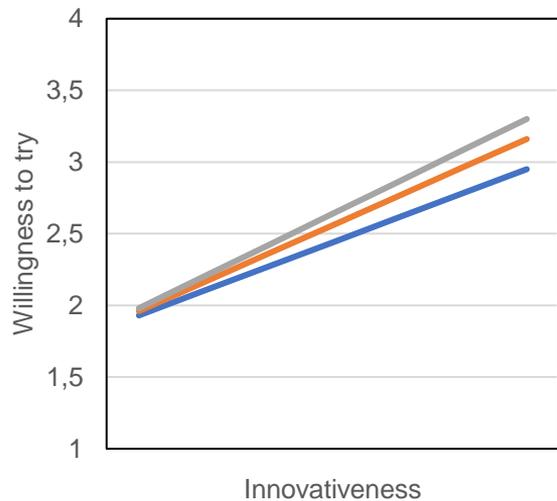
Insects



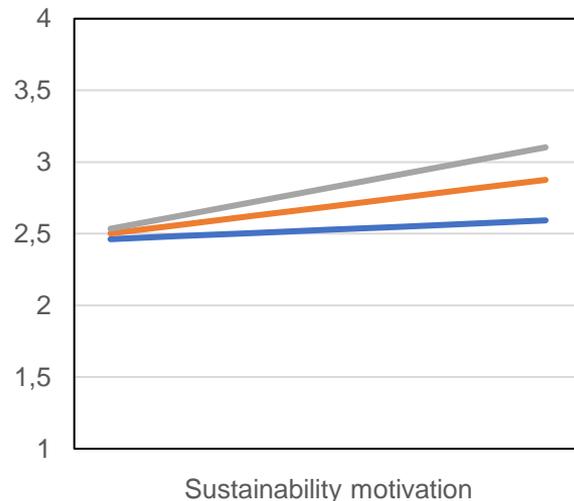
The moderating effect of trust

- Even if you are motivated to buy new, healthy and sustainable products.....
-you may not do so if you do not trust actors in the food chain
- We find this effect for all the new products investigated – except algae and seaweed!

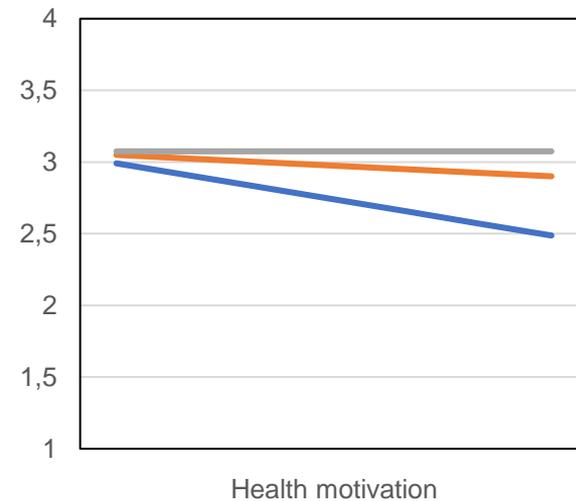
The moderating effect of trust – cultivated meat



— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust

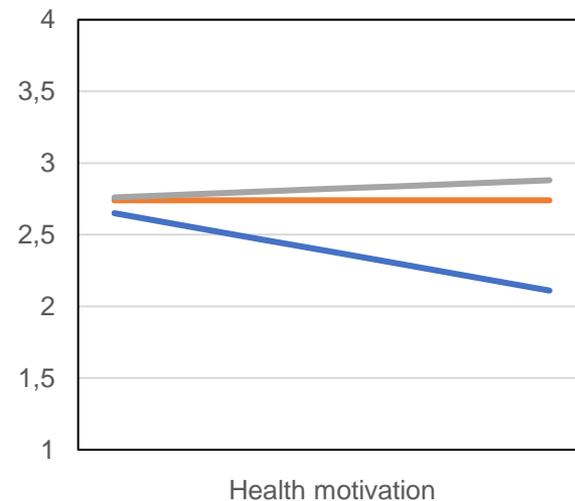
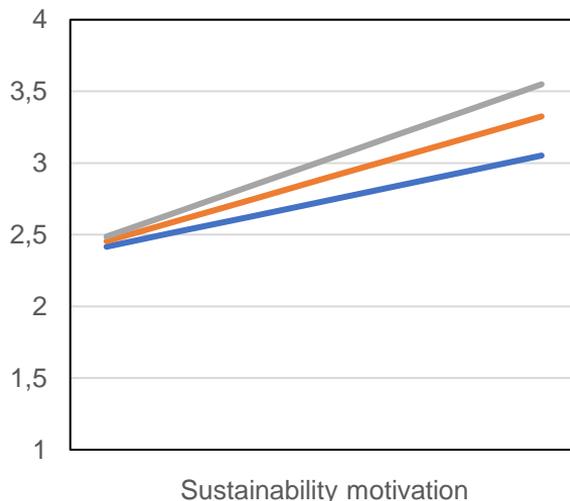
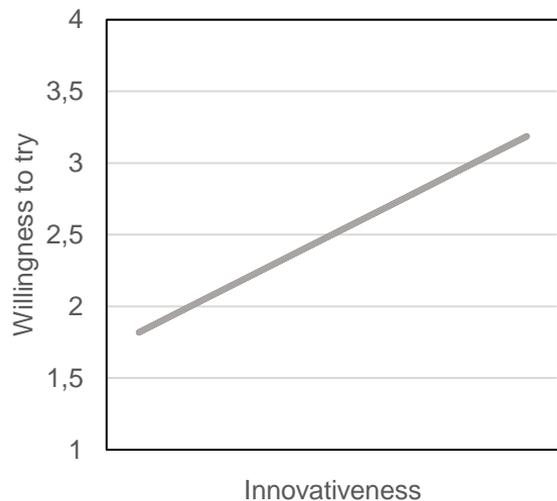


— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust



— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust

The moderating effect of trust – dairy based on precision fermentation

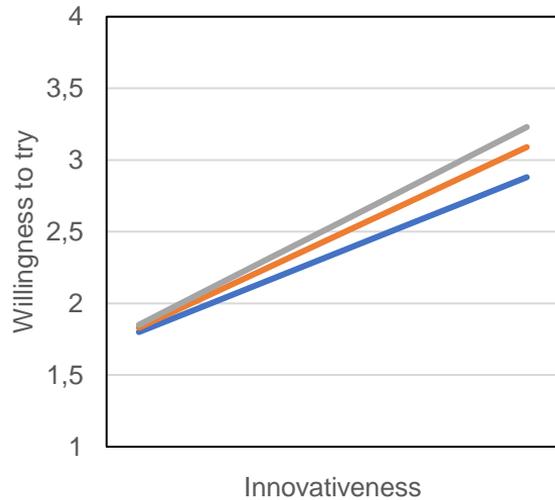


— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust

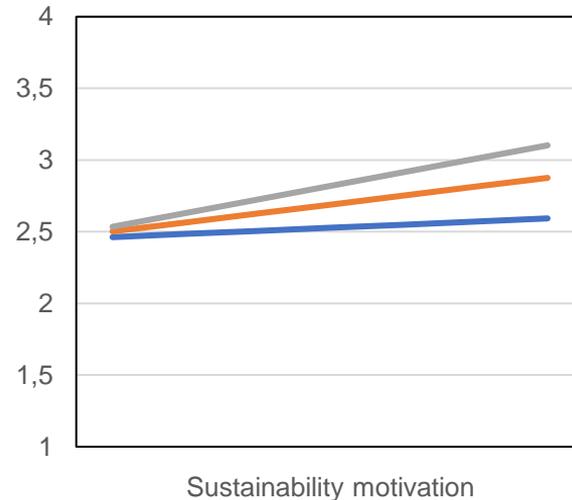
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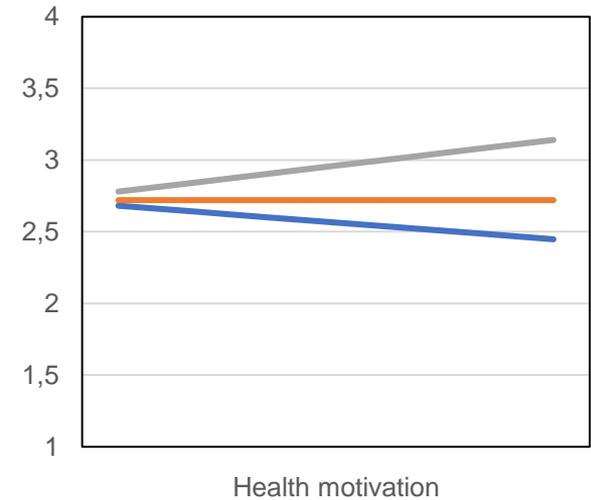
The moderating effect of trust – insects



— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust

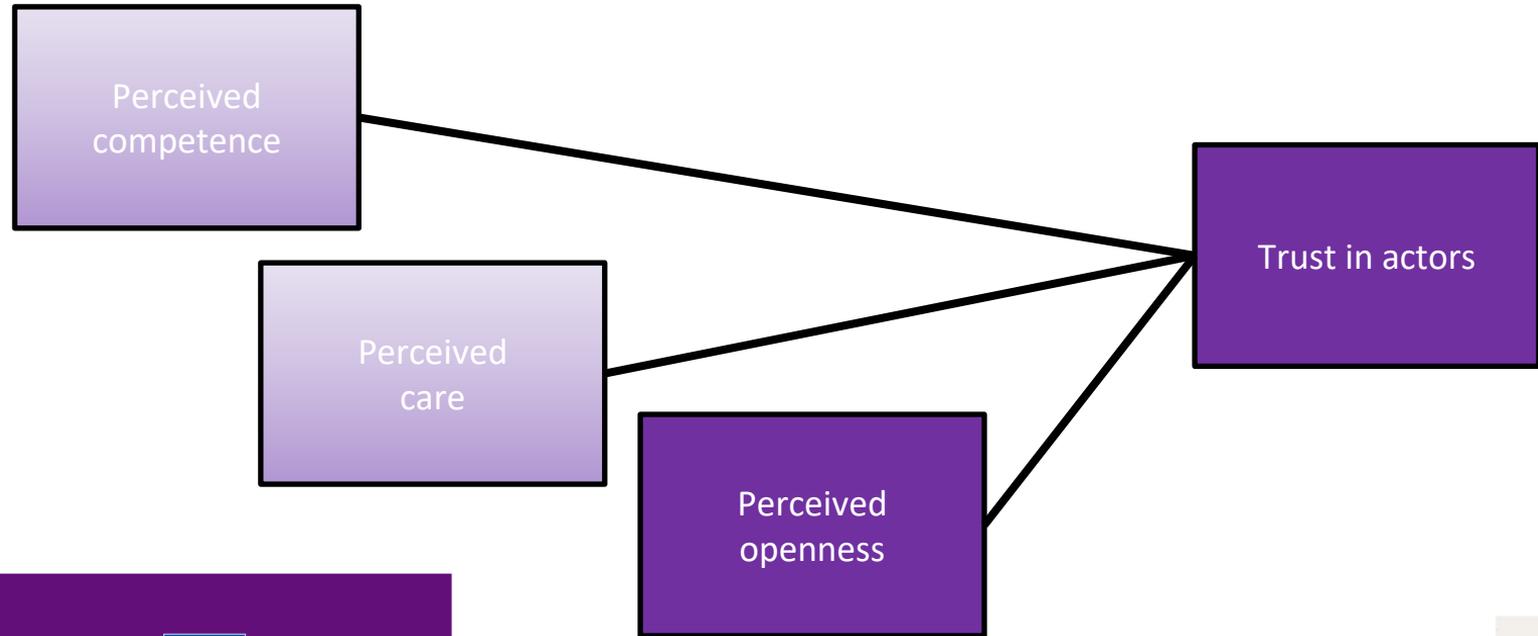


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— Low trust — Medium trust — High trust

Lack of trust is a barrier towards adoption of new healthy and sustainable products – what can be done?

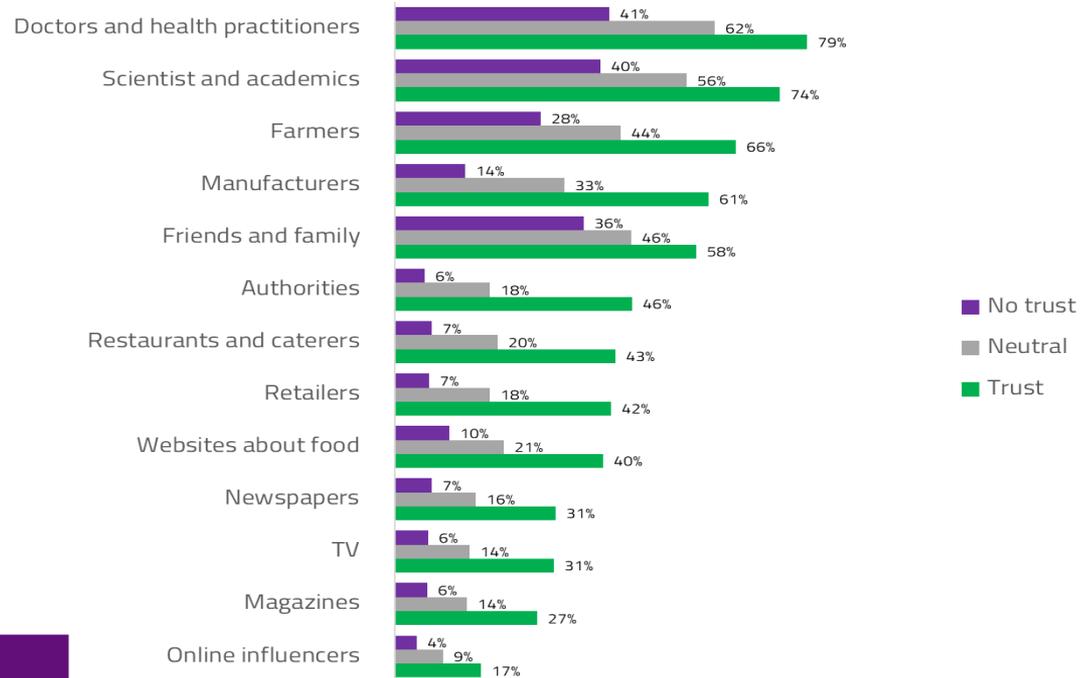


Openness as a facilitator in the promotion of new healthy and sustainable products

- Openness about the raw materials used and about the technology used in processing
- Openness about the nutritional properties
- Openness about the environmental impact

Trust and confidence in information sources about food and health

More openness by increasing transparency is the major handle for increasing consumer trust – but at the same time lack of trust makes consumers more skeptical about all information sources



Conclusions

Too many consumers have low levels of trust in food chain actors

The low level of trust is a barrier to the adoption of new and sustainable products, but can also contribute to low levels of knowledge about food systems

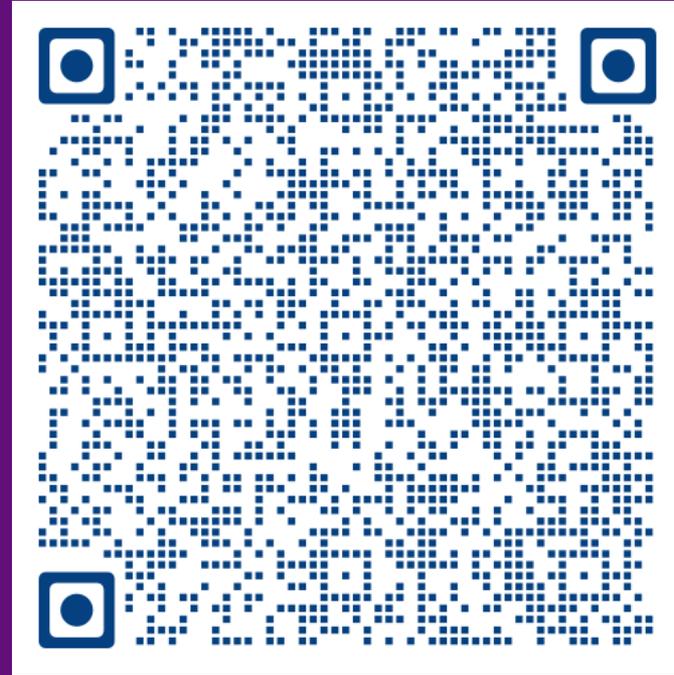
Openness and transparency are key factors in trying to increase the level of consumer trust



Thank you for
your attention!

Consumer Observatory

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<https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/consumerobservatory>

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