Experiences after accession to the EU –

Presentation of public perception research study:

Nanotechnology and Food Safety in Republic of Slovenia

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EFSA Focal Point

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Slovenia's national Focal Point

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
The Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment

is appointed as Slovenia's national Focal Point on technical and scientific matters.

First agreement between EFSA and MAFF was signed on 23 August 2008.

The agreement has been last renewed on 1 February 2012
and is valid until 31 December 2012.

Focal Point acts as a centre of partnership, cooperation and effective communication between EFSA and relevant bodies in Slovenia, bringing together different authorities engaged in the risk assessment process concerning food and feed safety, nutrition, animal welfare, animal and plant **health**.

Tasks of Focal Point

Primary responsibility

to gathering data and transfering information between EFSA and relevant bodies in Slovenia, which include risk managers, national authorities, stakeholders and research institutes in the fields of risk assessment.

FP shall ensure the exchange of information on:

- results of scientific research projects;
- ongoing risk assessment and opinions uder preparation;
- requests for specific information;
- the development of important risk assessment initiatives in Slovenia and in EFSA.

Tasks of Focal Point

FP shall provide advice on:

- scientific actions in common interest that could be undertaken within the network, in particular in the framework of Article 36 (178/2002);

- the development of database of scientific experts and research organisations in Slovenia that could assist EFSA.

FP shall provide support on:

- disseminating materials concerning EFSA within Slovenia;

- organising and co-ordinating in Slovenia the exchange of information and documentation concerning scientific activities of relevance to EFSA.

http://www.mko.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/food_safety_and_quality/efsa_focal_point/

Survey of public opinion about risks related to nanotechnology, about food safety and visibility of EFSA in Slovenia

- Time of survey: 20 – 24 June 2011
- Population: Residents of Slovenia of the age of majority
- Method of survey: telephone survey (80 % stationary and 20 % mobile telephone)
- Realised sample (n) = 710
- Representativeness: Ensured through multi-level random sampling by stratification by statistical regions and post-stratifications (weighting by gender, age, type of settlement and education level)

Available on:

http://www.mko.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/food_safety_and_quality/efsa_focal_point/scientific_documents_and_publications/

Population statistics

- **Gender:** 52 % women and 48 % men

- **Age:** -18 – 34 years = 28 %
  - 35 – 54 years = 38 %
  - ≥ 55 years = 34 %

- **Average age of respondents** = 47 years (min = 18, max = 88)

- **Education level**: - elementary or less = 25 %
  - vocational = 27 %
  - secondary = 33 %
  - higher or more = 16 %

The knowledge of nanotechnology

The knowledge of nanotechnology is very poor.

Q: Have you heard of nanotechnology, are you familiar with the field of it?

- 12 % of the surveyed people are familiar with it (A: Yes, I know it).
- 22 % of the surveyed people have heard of it, but they do not know it.
- 66 % of the surveyed people have never heard of nanotechnology.

The familiarity is higher among men, better educated people, younger people and residents of towns and cities.

Nano-ingredients in food and their labelling

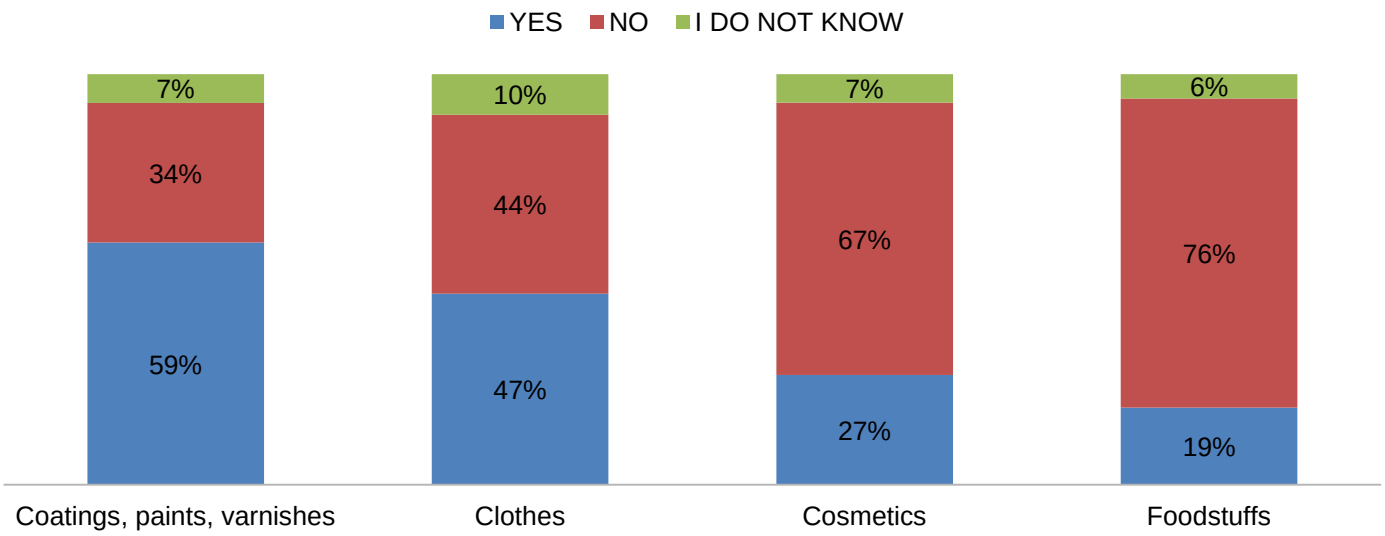
Almost all respondents (95 %) who had heard of nanotechnology agreed that nanofood and nano-ingredients in food must be labelled.

In terms of statistical provability, the answer to the question

„Do you agree that nanofood and nano-ingredients in food must be labelled separately?“

did not depend on gender, education level, type of settlement and age.

Willingness to buy products made by nanotechnology

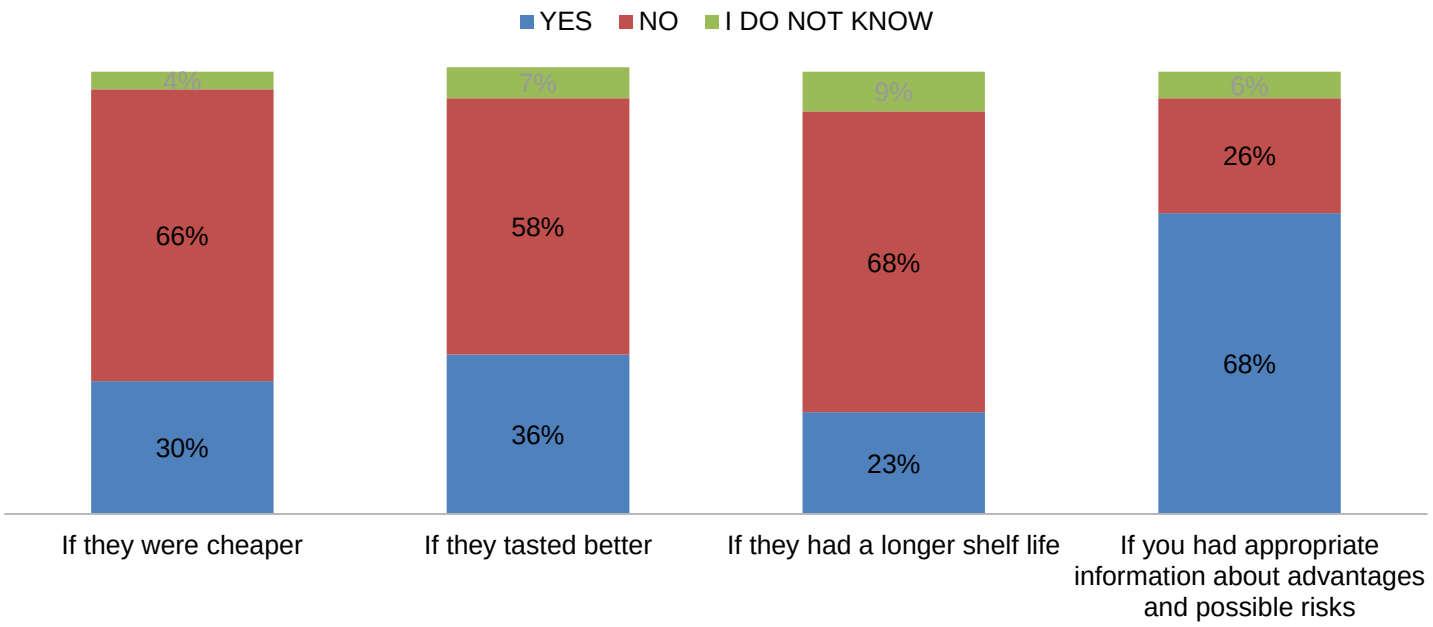


The willingness to buy products made by nanotechnology declines with the intensity and directness of contact between technology and the human body.

Statistically demonstrable differences

- Women are not as certain regarding these questions as men.
- Men are more willing to **use nanotechnology in paints, coatings, varnishes and clothes** than women, but less willing to **use it in cosmetics and foodstuffs**.
- Statistically provable correlations in terms of education level, age and size of settlement were not observed.

Willingness to buy foodstuffs with nano-ingredients

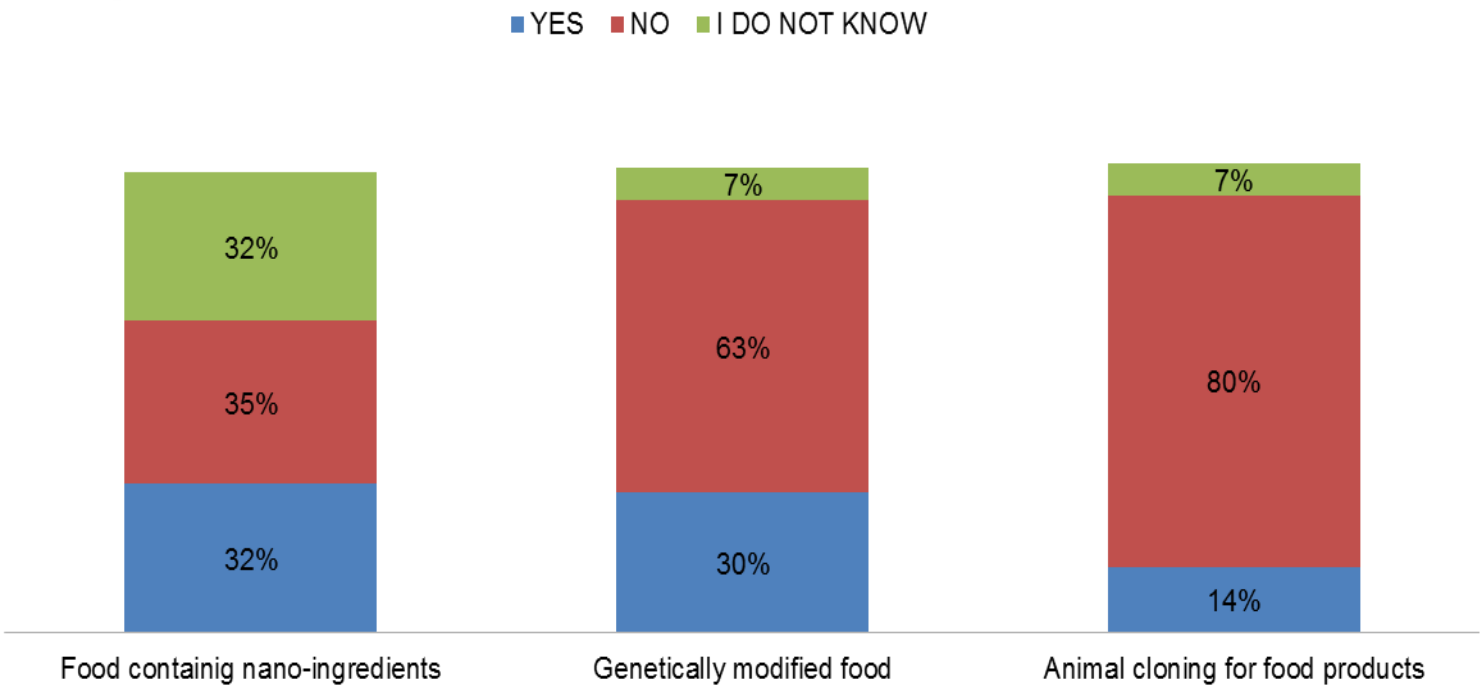


The knowledge about advantages and risks turns out to be the key factor.

Statistically demonstrable differences

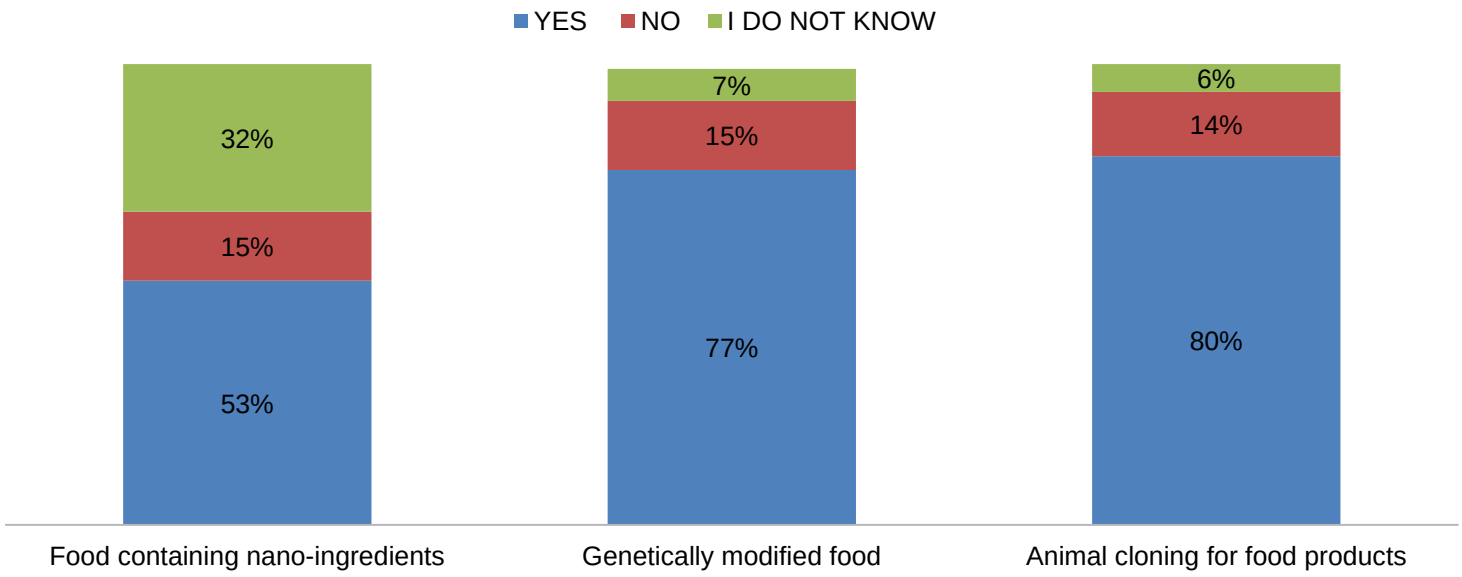
- Slightly more women than men would be convinced by **a lower price and better taste**, although these women still constitute a minority.
- **Longer shelf life** would, to a larger extent, convince only those with elementary education or less.
- **Appropriate familiarity with advantages and risks** would, to a greater extent, convince younger persons.

It constitutes a possibility for the development of new, better products

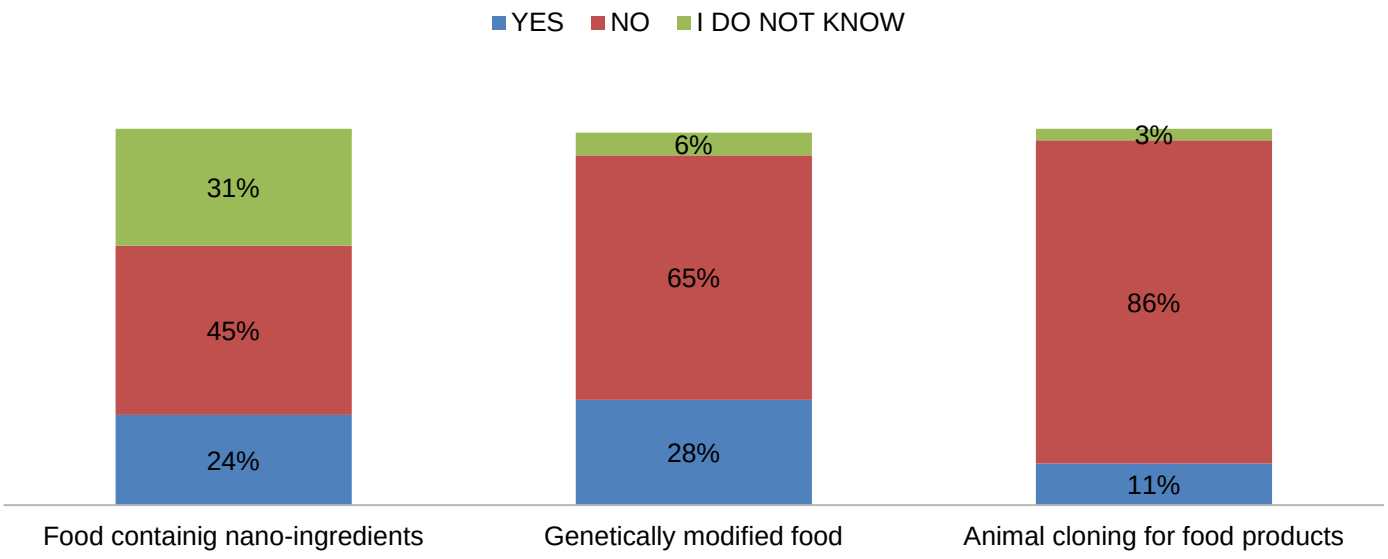


Although the rejection of **food containing nano-ingredients** is less marked than the rejection of GMFs and animal cloning, the considerably higher shares of undetermined replies indicate a **low level of familiarity**.

It constitutes risk to human health



It is ethically acceptable



Animal cloning for food products is considered the least acceptable of all practices in question.

Statistically demonstrable differences

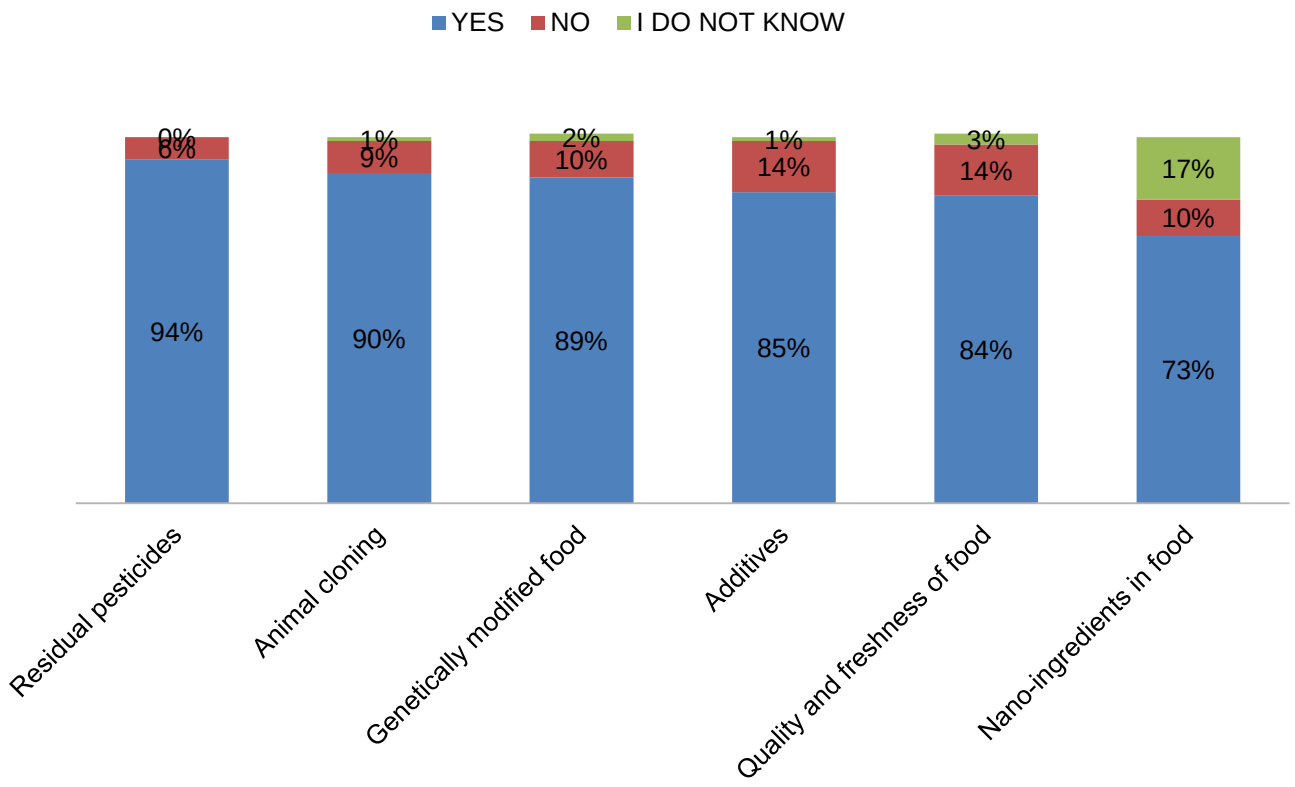
- The general rejection of genetically modified food increases with age.

- The conviction about ethical acceptability and possibilities for the development of better products made with nanotechnology was more prominent in men, while women were relatively more frequently uncertain.

- The low proportion of undecided respondents shows that opinions in the population have been clearly formed in the field of genetically modified food and cloning.

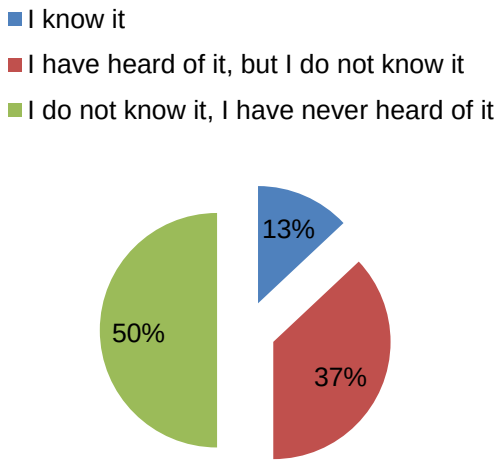
- The negative attitude towards cloning is apparent and firm.

Levels of concern regarding safety of food



Nano-ingredients in food are the smallest source of concern. The high share of uncertain answers indicates the relatively poor knowledge of this field.

Knowledge of the European Food Safety Authority

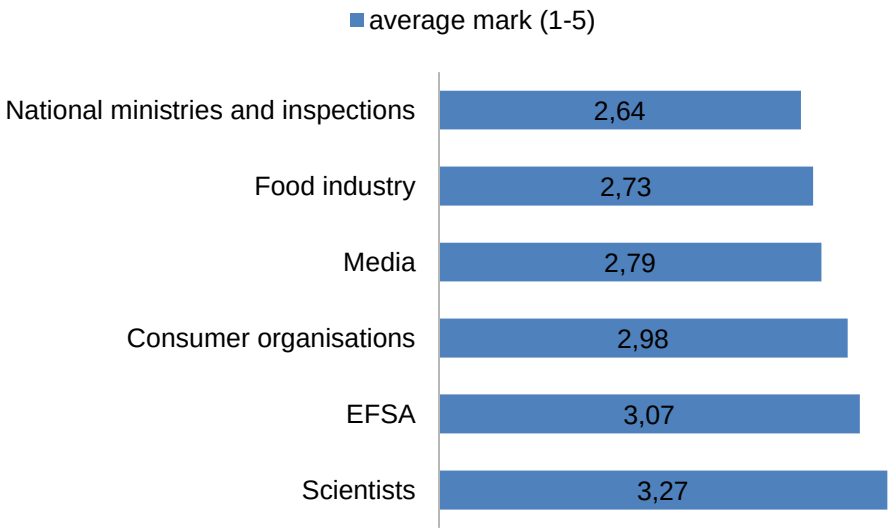


The knowledge of the European Food Safety Authority is rather poor.

The knowledge of authority grows with the level of education.

Younger respondents expressed their familiarity more frequently.

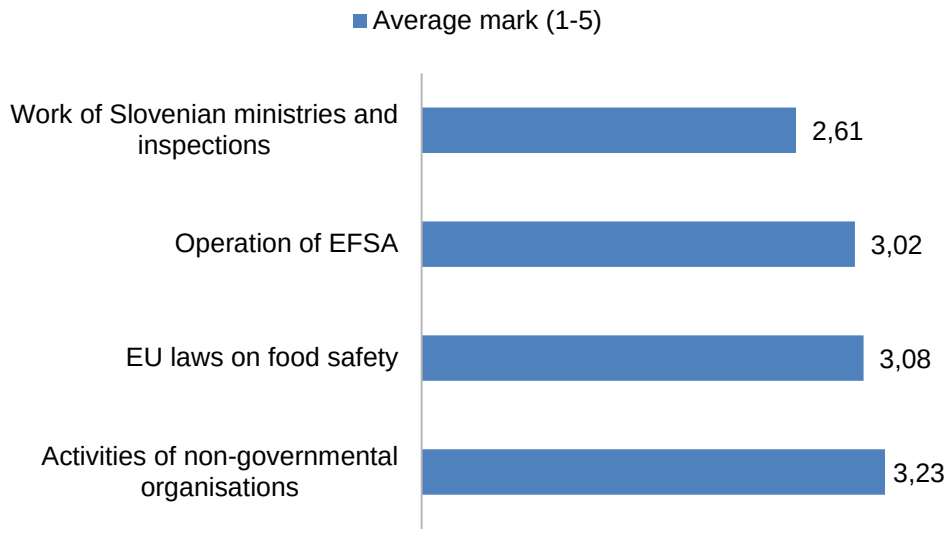
Trust in information sources



Men showed an above-average trust in consumer organisations, while women expressed such a level of trust in national ministries and inspectorates.

The trust in consumer organisations and scientists increases according to education level.
The trust in industry decreases in inverse proportion to the education level.

Contribution to the safety and awareness of consumers



The activities of non-governmental organisations were evaluated more highly by men, respondents with higher, university and vocational education, and by the middle and young generations.

The young generation evaluates the importance of EFSA above average, while the older generation gives the same evaluation to the work of Slovenian ministries and inspectorates.

Post - **survey between experts working in the field of food safety**

- **Realised sample** (n) = 47
- **Gender:** 70,2 % women and 29,8 % men
- **Education level**: higher or more = 100 %
- Comparison with the results of the survey for the higher educated respondents only (N % = 16)

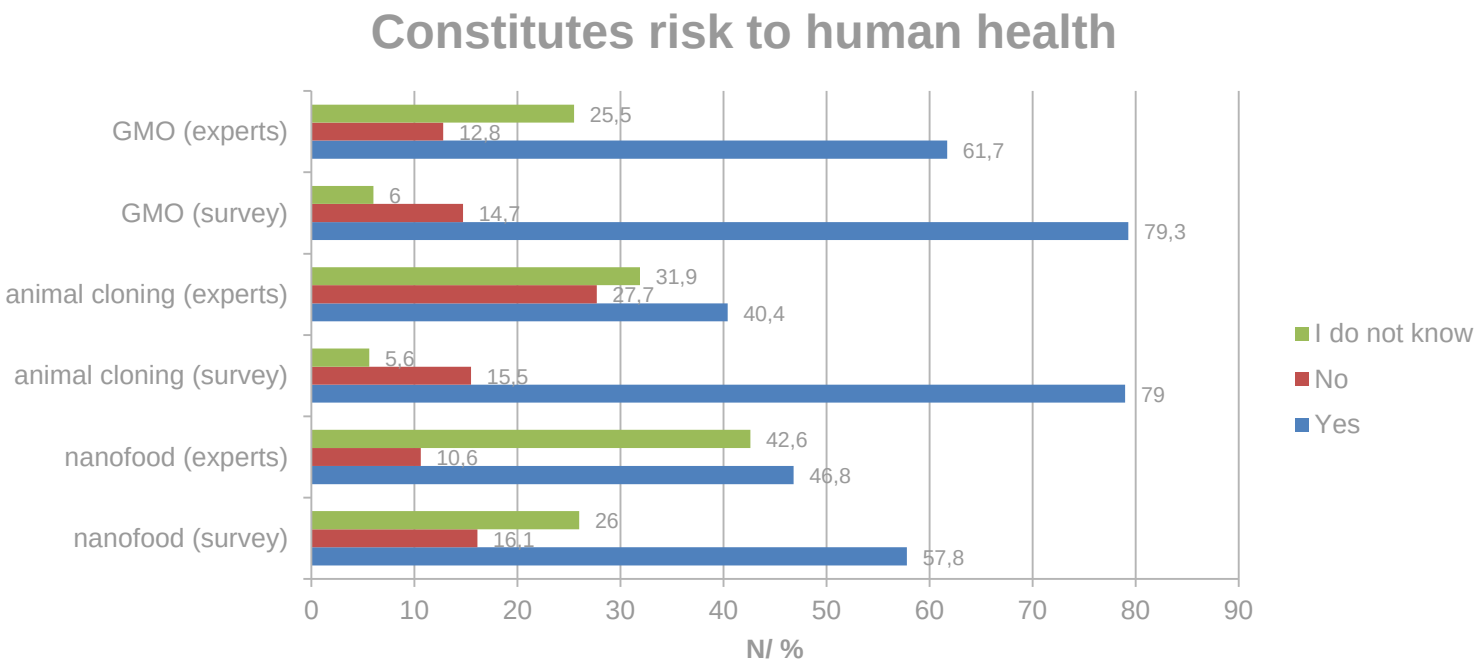
Levels of concern regarding the safety of food

Levels of concern regarding the safety of food						
	Residual pesticides in fruit, vegetables and cereals		Animal cloning for food products		Nano-ingredients in food	
	survey	experts	survey	experts	survey	experts
	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %
Very	73,5	51,1	71,9	46,8	41,1	25,3
Rather	22,3 (∑ = 95,8)	34 (∑ = 85,1)	16,3 (∑ = 88,2)	23,4 (∑ = 70,2)	30,9 (∑ = 72)	36,2 (∑ = 61,5)
No	4,2	14,9	10,7	21.3	15,4	23,4
I do not know	0,0	0,0	1,2	8,5	12,6	14,9

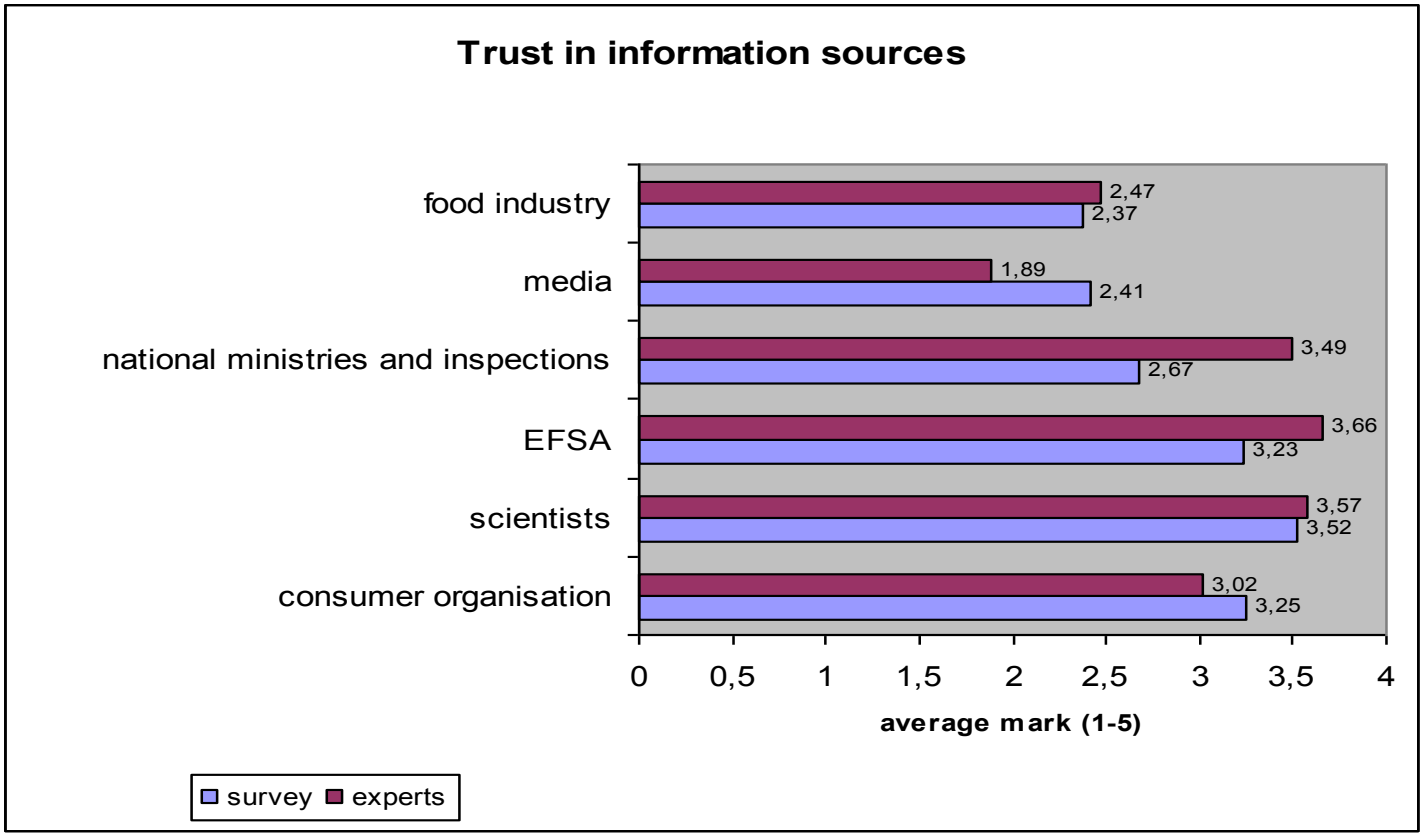
Levels of concern regarding the safety of food

Levels of concern regarding the safety of food						
	Genetically modified food		Additives such as colours, preservatives or flavourings used in food and drinks		Quality and freshness of food	
	survey	experts	survey	experts	survey	experts
	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %	N/ %
Very	58,4	27,7	56,4	29,8	51,1	27,7
Rather	29,9 (∑ = 88,3)	34,0 (∑ = 61,7)	30,7 (∑ = 87,1)	46,8 (∑ = 76,8)	35,4 (∑ = 86,5)	53,2 (∑ = 80,9)
No	11,4	34,0	13,5	21,2	12,3	14,9
I do not know	0,2	4,3	0,4	2,1	1,3	4,3

Constitutes risk to human health



Trust in information sources



Thank you for your attention!