THE EIT FOOD TRUST REPORT

Funded by the European Union

Foreword

WELCOME TO EIT FOOD'S FIRST TRUST REPORT.

"Citizens are at the heart of our mission to transform Europe's food system to be healthier and more sustainable; and helping to build trust between consumers and the food sector is critical for us to work together to improve food for everyone.

As the global population moves towards 10 billion by 2050, we need innovative technologies and collaborative approaches from farm to fork to deliver accessible and healthy food products in a sustainable way. At EIT Food we work with all parts of the food system to drive forward entrepreneurship and innovation through funding, partnerships, education and engagement, but the transformation can't happen without consumers. As the end users in the food value chain, their needs, wants and ideas are integral at every step of the innovation process, and a closer relationship between consumers and the key actors in the food sector is essential if we are to create a food system which is better for both our health and the planet.

For this reason, we developed the EIT Food TrustTracker® study with our partners in 2018 – an annual survey of European consumers to explore how much trust they have in the food system and what different parts of the sector could do to improve trust levels. In this report, we share results from our latest 2020 survey, conducted across 18 countries, which shows that consumer trust in all parts of the food sector is increasing - and with it the confidence they have in food products - but that there is still much work to be done.

Of primary importance is for all parts of the food system to improve their openness – being honest and sharing all relevant information with consumers – and to demonstrate that they care - listening to people and acting in the public interest. This trust-building work is particularly important to enable and accelerate people's healthy and sustainable food choices and their acceptance of novel food products, which the TrustTracker® shows are largely unchanged since 2018. Findings from our ongoing qualitative study, also included in this report, support these results and tell us more about the type of engagement and support people want to see from different parts of the sector.

Ultimately, to advance innovation and entrepreneurship and create a trusted, future-fit food system, we must bring the best ideas from all stakeholders together with a real understanding of consumer needs and wants, and put our citizens at the centre of the development, production, distribution and promotion of food. Many of our EIT Food projects work directly with consumers and the sector to increase transparency and traceability and to improve the clarity and usefulness of the information provided – empowering consumers to make healthy and sustainable food choices.

This is the constant cycle of transformation – we are making good progress and we will continue the work together to deliver positive change across the whole food system."

Saskia Nuijten
Director of Communication and Public Engagement at EIT Food

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2020, our largest ever TrustTracker® study was conducted with **19,800 consumers across 18 European countries**, to measure trust in the food system and confidence in food products, and to investigate what has changed since the TrustTracker® began in 2018 with a survey of just five countries.

MOST TRUSTED

The study reveals that all parts of the food system are more trusted than not by European consumers, but there is considerable variation. Consistently, farmers are most trusted – overall 67% of the European consumers asked in 2020 said they trust them, compared to just 13% expressing lack of trust. Retailers come next – overall 53% trust them vs 20% that don't. Then authorities (playing a regulatory role in the food system), which are trusted by slightly more people than food manufacturers – 47% vs 46% overall (but a higher number also lack trust in them at 29% vs 26%).

The good news is that when we look at our consistent 5-country sample (France, Germany, Poland, Spain, UK) surveyed between 2018 and 2020, we see clear improvements in trust levels for every part of the food system during this time – increases of 3-8%, despite levels of general trust in others being unchanged.

This also holds true for all parts of the food system when we examine how well consumers feel they do in terms of key trust criteria around competency, care and openness.

However, there is still a long way to go – with more positive change needed across the board and particular scope for improvement in openness and care behaviours. For example, less than half of those asked in 2020 believe that retailers, manufacturers or authorities: are honest about their role in the food system; share all relevant information; listen to ordinary people's concerns; or act in the public interest. Farmers do a little better but still don't score higher than 56% of respondents trusting that they do any of these things.

The TrustTracker® study also explores consumer confidence in food product integrity – measured by a combination of five factors: taste, safety, healthiness, authenticity and sustainability – and once again we see significant differences between the 18 countries surveyed in 2020. Overall, 62% of respondents said that food products are generally tasty (vs 16% not) and 55% that they are generally safe (vs 22% not). Only 43% think they are generally healthy (vs 30% not) and 40% think they are generally authentic (vs 34% not), whilst just a third of those asked think that food products are generally sustainable (vs 42% not). In general, men and younger people show more confidence in the food integrity indicators and in terms of overall food product integrity, the UK scores the highest and the Czech Republic the least. Once again, all these indicators show improvement since 2018 in our 5-country sample – as trust in the food system rises so does confidence in the integrity of food products – but there is much still to be done to increase confidence, particularly in some countries.

When it comes to people making healthy and sustainable food choices, the picture is encouraging but has changed little since 2018. Overall 71% of consumers asked in 2020 said that given the chance they pick the healthier option, while 63% make an effort to buy healthy food, and 47% have switched to healthier options. Slightly less (45%) said they have switched to more sustainable options, while 52% make an effort to buy sustainable products and 60% pick the sustainable option given the choice. However, 76% feel a moral obligation to use environmentally friendly products, so there is still a gap here between intentions and action - possibly in part a result of sustainable food options being less obvious and/or available than healthy options.

Another obstacle might be consumers' ambivalence towards buying and trying new and different foods. Overall 66% of Europeans we asked said they are very particular about the type of foods they will eat, while 42% are afraid to try new foods (rising to over half in Italy). On the counter side, 46% said they often look for new products and brands, 60% said they are constantly sampling different foods, and 61% said they will eat almost anything (rising to 79% in France).

None of these behaviours show much change since 2018. However, when we explored attitudes to food innovation with members of the qualitative study in a series of focus groups across 12 European countries between 2019-2020, many people saw it as an opportunity for industry and individuals, and were particularly positive about health-related and planet-friendly developments. This report includes some of their specific ideas for how the food system could further build engagement and trust with consumers and enable them to make healthier, more sustainable choices in future.

The 2021 TrustTracker® survey will investigate consumer attitudes towards food technologies and novel foods in more detail and explore how best to increase confidence in food integrity and support consumer acceptance and adoption of products that have a positive impact for individuals and wider society.

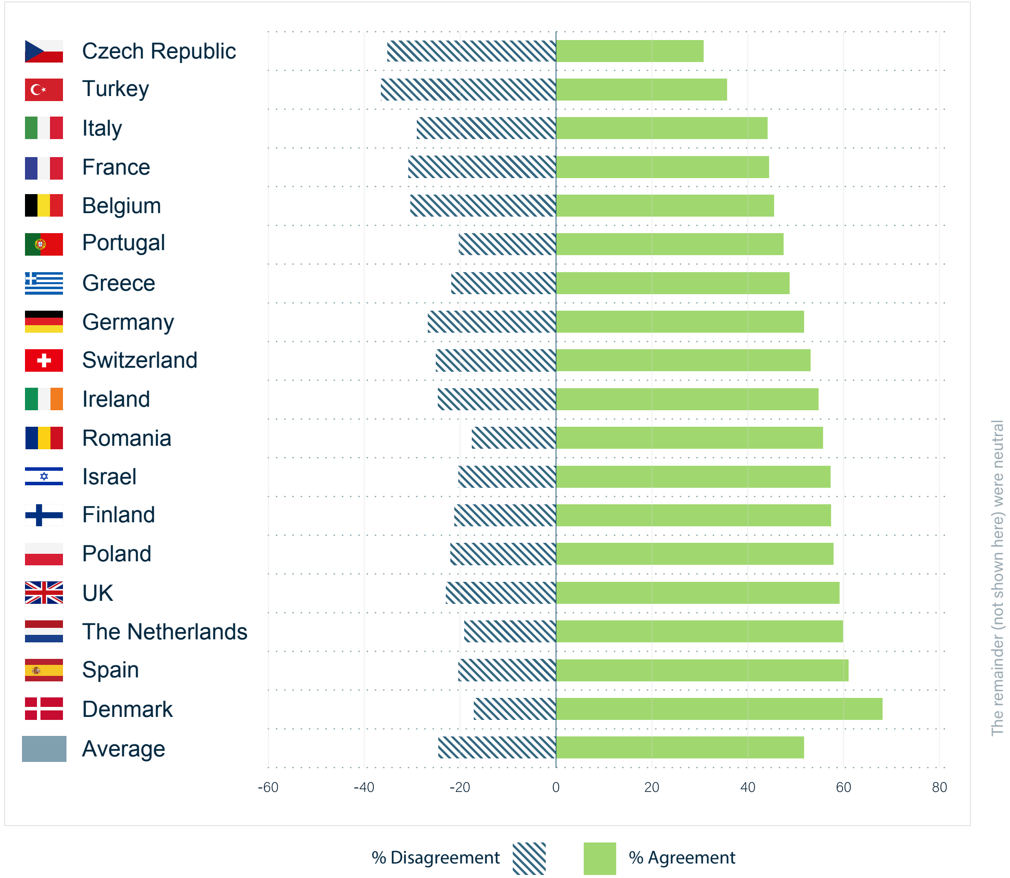
BENCHMARKING TRUST

We started the 2020 TrustTracker® study by asking our respondents about their general trust in others. This was in order to provide a benchmark to compare with their trust in the food system, and to enable us to interpret the food-specific responses from different countries in the context of their general levels of trust in others.

More than half (52%) of those asked, from 18 countries across Europe, say that they generally trust other people, while almost a quarter (24%) generally don't trust other people (the rest scored neither way). Overall, men tend to be a little more trusting – 54% of those asked in 2020 say they generally trust people (24% don't), compared to 50% of women (25% don't). Older people also appear to have higher general trust levels with 57% of the 55+ age group saying they trust other people (19% don't), compared to 49% of 35-54 year-olds (26% don't) and 48% of 18-34 year-olds (30% don't). In addition, general trust levels vary significantly by country.

When we look at our consistent 2018-2020 5-country sample we see no change in general trust levels during this time.

I generally trust other people

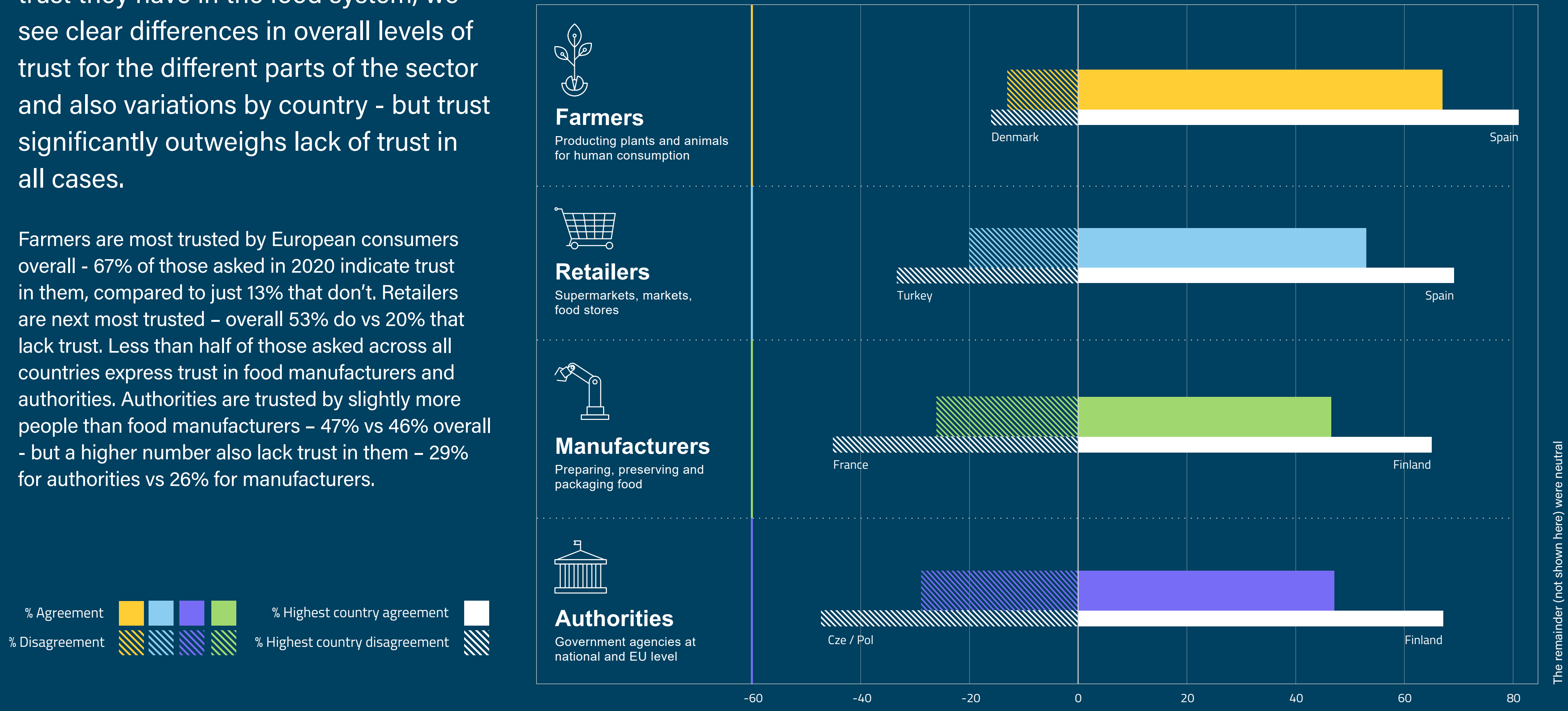


TRUST IN THE FOOD SYSTEM

When respondents are asked how much trust they have in the food system, we see clear differences in overall levels of trust for the different parts of the sector and also variations by country - but trust significantly outweighs lack of trust in all cases.

Farmers are most trusted by European consumers overall - 67% of those asked in 2020 indicate trust in them, compared to just 13% that don't. Retailers are next most trusted – overall 53% do vs 20% that lack trust. Less than half of those asked across all countries express trust in food manufacturers and authorities. Authorities are trusted by slightly more people than food manufacturers – 47% vs 46% overall - but a higher number also lack trust in them – 29% for authorities vs 26% for manufacturers.

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...



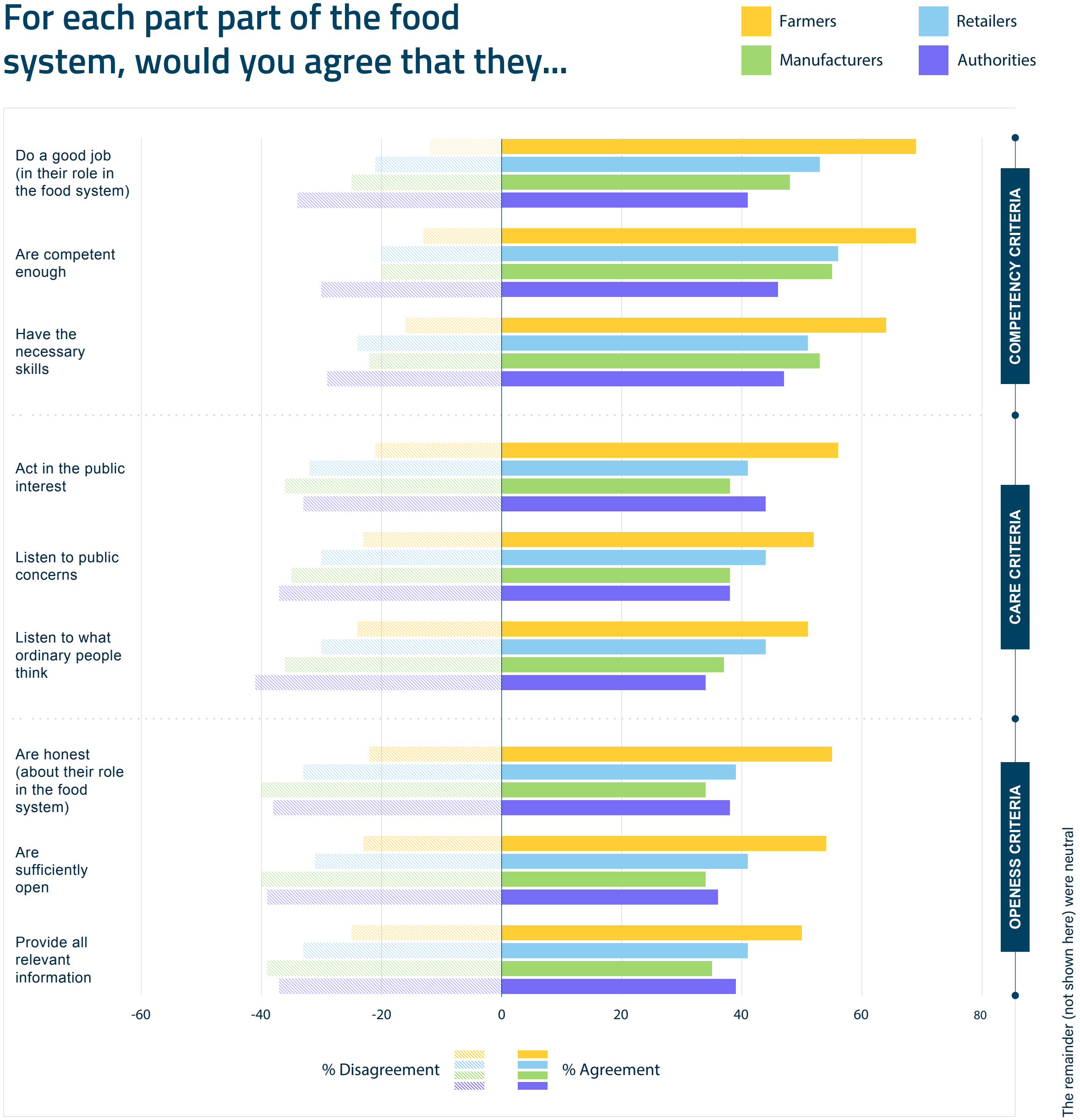
2018-2020 SHIFTS

When we look at our consistent 5-country sample surveyed over three years, we see that this mixed pattern of trust for different parts of the food system has been consistent, but we also see clear improvements in trust levels for every part of the food system since 2018 (overall increases of between 3% and 8% in those expressing trust, whilst levels of general trust in others are unchanged during this period).

Across the board there was a significant jump in trust for the food system between 2019-2020, which could be be associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the gratitude felt by some to the sector for maintaining food supplies and access.

Farmers show least improvement in overall trust levels since 2018 (possibly because they started at a higher baseline than the other groups). Trust in farmers has risen by 3% and lack of trust fallen by 2%, meanwhile retailers have the highest increase in overall trust, with a 7% rise since 2018 (and a 4% fall in lack of trust). Authorities show the most overall change - with a 6% rise in trust and a 6% fall in lack of trust - and manufacturers show a similar shift, with 5% more indicating trust and an equal fall in those not trusting them.

For each part part of the food system, would you agree that they...



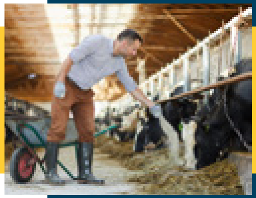
When consumers are asked about specific food system behaviours associated with the key trust determinants – competency, care and openness – we see considerable variation in how they rate these criteria by actor and by country, with scope for improvement across the board.

In every year, consumers score the food system most highly overall for competency criteria, for instance: 64% of respondents in 2020 think farmers have the necessary skills (vs 16% not); 53% think manufacturers do (vs 22% not); 51% think retailers do (vs 24% not); and 47% think authorities do (vs 29% not). Meanwhile, 69% of respondents say farmers are doing a good job (12% disagree), compared to 53% for retailers (21% disagree), 48% for manufacturers (25% disagree) and 41% for authorities (34% disagree).

When it comes to care criteria, less than half of Europeans asked believe that authorities (44%), retailers (41%), or food manufacturers (38%) act in the public interest, and around a third think they don't in each case (the remainder are undecided). Even for farmers, just 56% believe that they act in the public interest (versus 21% that don't), although this rises as high as 72% in the UK. Listening to public concerns scores even lower in most cases (retailers bump the trend with 44% thinking they do) – again farmers do best, being trusted to listen by 52% overall, while manufacturers and authorities tie bottom at 38% (and almost the same number say they don't listen). In the Czech Republic, 60% of those asked think authorities don't listen to public concerns.

Openness criteria show greatest room for improvement overall. When asked about the food system sharing all relevant information, exactly half of respondents think farmers do, compared to 41% for retailers, 39% for authorities and just 35% for food manufacturers. We see similar responses to whether they are honest about their role in the food system: 55% of Europeans asked think farmers are (vs 22% not); 39% say retailers are (vs 33% not), 38% say authorities are (but the same number disagree); and just 34% think that manufacturers are honest (vs 40% that think not – rising to 53% in Belgium).

Reflecting the rise in overall trust for the food system since 2018, we also see encouraging improvements in all these trust criteria scores over the three years when we look at our consistent 5-country sample.



Famers show 3-6% increase in trust for the competency criteria and an overall increase of 7% in trust across all the care and openness criteria (with smaller decreases in lack of trust).

Retailers show greatest overall improvement in trust, with increases of 6-8% across all trust criteria and decreases of 4-6% in lack of trust.

Manufacturers show significant increases in trust of 5-8% across all the trust determinants, with similar decreases in lack of trust.

Meanwhile authorities have the least improved trust levels, but still show 3-5% increases across the competency, care and openness criteria since 2018, and corresponding decreases in lack of trust.

INSIGHTS FROM OUR QUALITATIVE STUDY

Farmers

Almost all of those we spoke to across 12 European countries had high levels of trust in small farms. Many had an idealised, bucolic image of these farmers, calling them 'custodians of the land', 'the backbone of the food industry', 'hardworking', and 'passionate'. They also felt sympathy for them as 'the underdog', 'exploited' and 'underpaid',. There was far less trust in larger 'industrial' farms, with concerns voiced around intensive farming methods, animal welfare, GMO and the use of chemicals, pesticides & hormones – and a lack of information about these things.

Manufacturers

Our citizen participants had little empathy when it came to food manufacturers but trust was more of a mixed picture. Some large familiar brands do command a level of trust and there is some confidence in their competence in terms of safety and efficiency – 'image conscious and play by the book'. However, many people we asked saw manufacturers as profit-driven (even 'ruthless') and 'exploitative' of workers, suppliers and farmers. And they were also concerned about mass production of highly processed products with too many artificial additives, too much waste, and misleading claims.

Retailers

There was more ambivalence from the people we spoke to about food retailers. As with farms, we found high levels of trust and warmth expressed for small local retailers and far less for the chain stores. Larger retailers can come across as 'impersonal' and 'sterile'. They are often seen as the 'bad guy', unfairly pressuring farmers and suppliers, and manipulating consumers to buy too much of the wrong things. People also hold large retailers responsible for excess packaging and waste. On the plus side, many people said they saw them trying to adjust to consumer needs and improve sustainability.

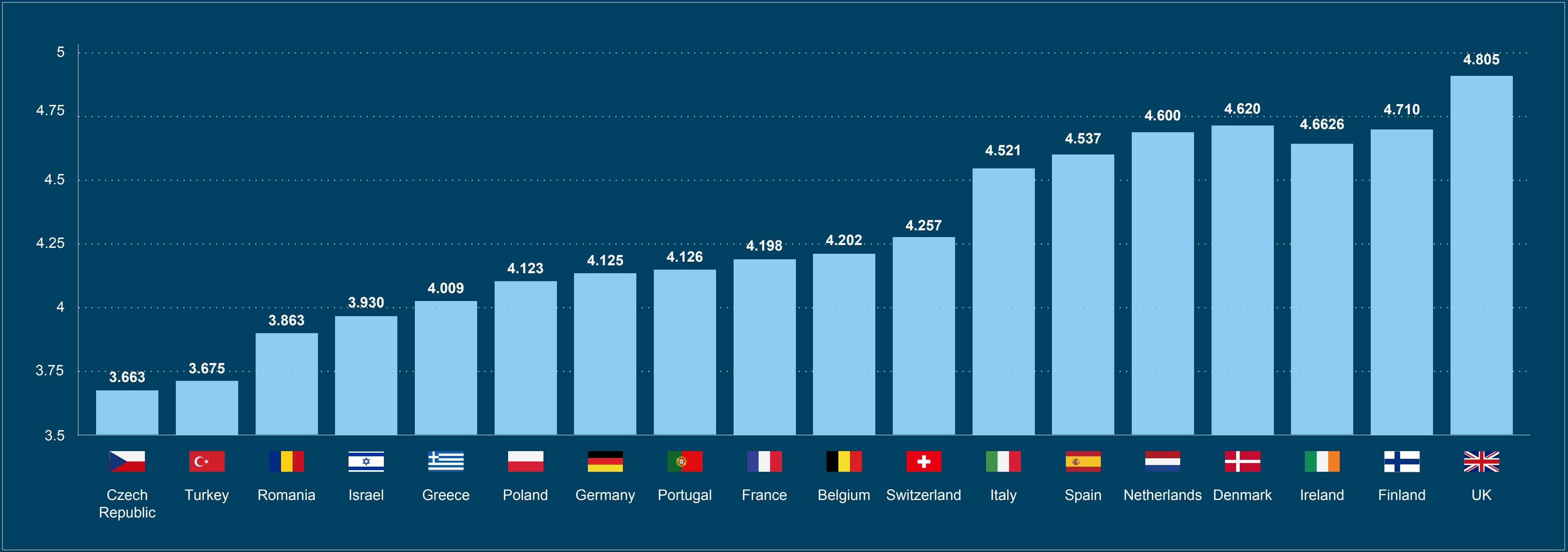
Authorities

Our European citizens had least to say about the authorities regulating food safety and standards. The general feeling was that the necessary regulations exist but that control and execution by the authorities could be better. While people expressed overall confidence in their basic competence, there were some concerns about them being too interest-driven (by policy makers and industry) and distant from the consumers they serve ('opaque', even 'absent'). Others said they were too reactive – not acting as the problem solvers or change makers that they could be.

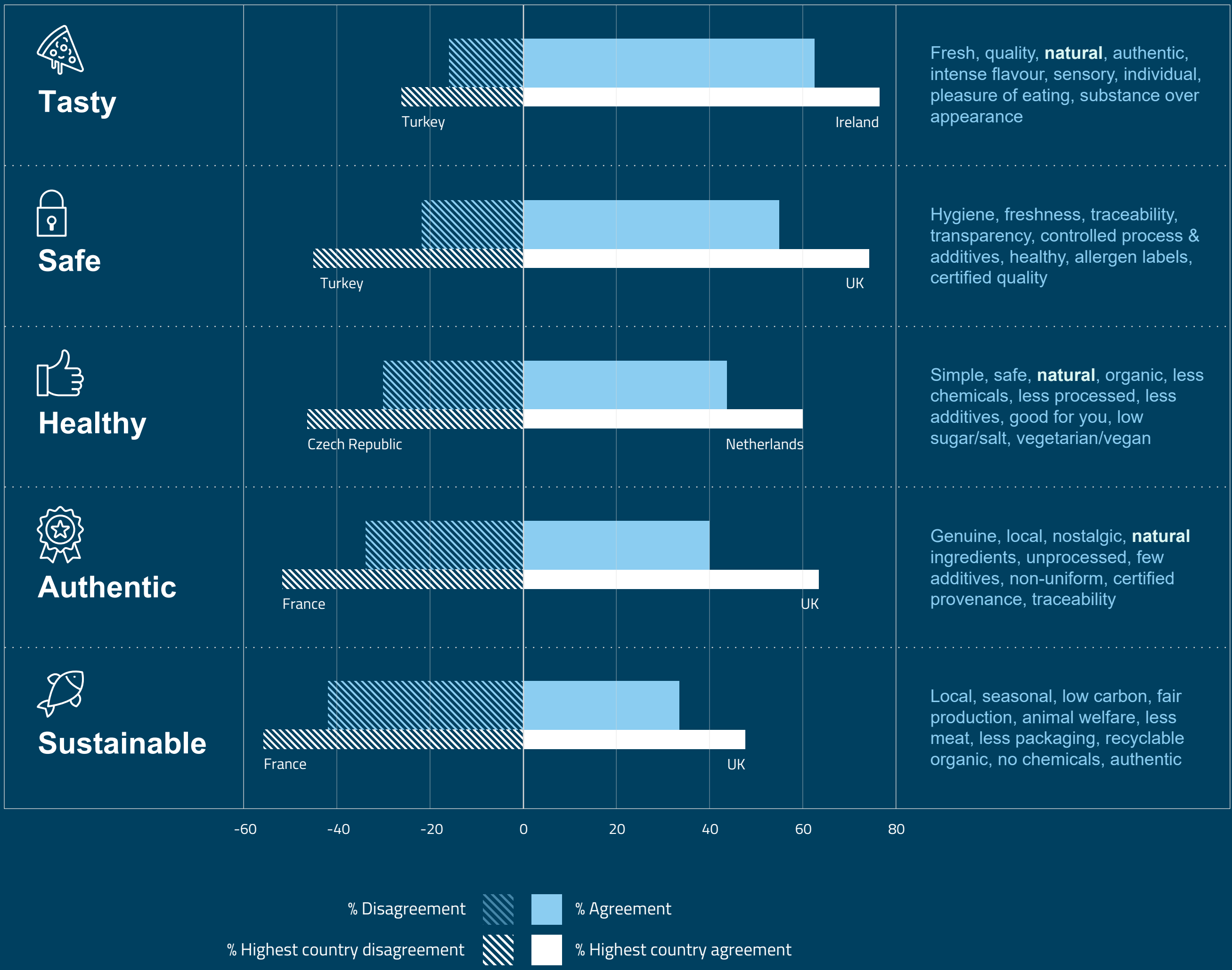
CONFIDENCE IN THE INTEGRITY OF FOOD PRODUCTS

The TrustTracker® also interrogates the trust people have in the food they buy. We do this by evaluating consumer confidence in food integrity – measured by a combination of five factors: taste, safety, healthiness, authenticity and sustainability – and once again we see significant differences between the 18 countries surveyed in 2020.

Overall confidence in food integrity



Generally food products are...



Taste scores highest with respondents overall – 62% are confident that food products are generally tasty vs just 16% thinking the opposite. Ireland scores highest at 76%, whilst less than half of those asked in the Czech Republic and Turkey agree that food products generally taste good. Safety scores next highest – in total 55% of European consumers think food products are generally safe (rising to 74% of consumers in the UK), but a concerning 22% of those asked think that food products are generally unsafe (and this rises to 45% of respondents in Turkey).

Overall, less than half (43%) of those we asked agreed that food products are generally healthy and almost a third (30%) thought the opposite. Most confident in the general healthiness of food products were those in the Netherlands (60% agreed) and least confident were those in the Czech Republic, (46% said food products are generally unhealthy). Next came authenticity – overall 40% have confidence that the food products they buy are generally authentic (real, honest, genuine, not fake or artificial) vs 34% that disagree. And bottom of the integrity indicators is sustainability (food products are produced in a sustainable way – i.e. environmentally friendly, resource efficient, ethically responsible), with just 30% of European respondents confident that food products are generally produced in a sustainable way (rising to 48% in the UK) compared to 42% that disagree (in Germany 56% disagreed).

Overall, men have slightly more confidence in every aspect of food integrity except taste (where men and women score the same), reflecting their higher general level of trust in others. It's a different picture when we look at age splits – the 18-35 year-olds, who were least trusting of others generally, show significantly higher confidence in the taste, authenticity, and sustainability of food than the older respondent groups, although the 55+ age group is most confident that food is generally healthy.

In terms of changes since 2018, when we look at our 5-country sample, we see that as trust in the food system rises so does consumer confidence in the integrity of the food products they buy. Most improved is people's confidence in food safety – 8% more say food is generally safe in 2020 than in 2018, with 5% less people believing the opposite. The proportion of people having confidence in the healthiness and authenticity of food is up by 5% and for taste and sustainability it is up by 4%, with corresponding drops across the board in respondents expressing a lack of confidence.

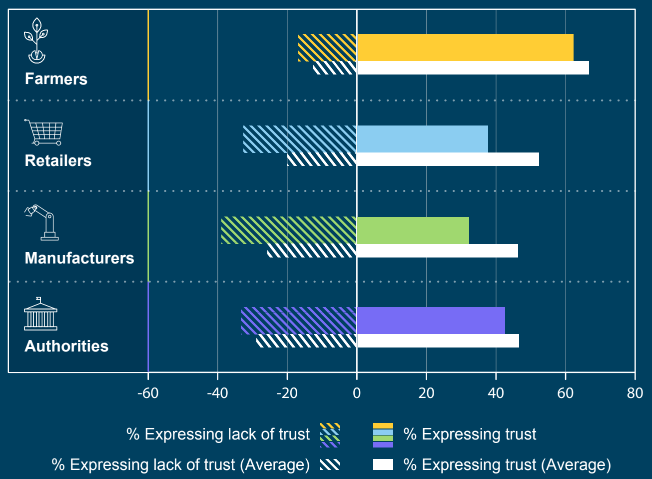
COUNTRY BREAKDOWN:

CONSUMER TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

TrustTracker® data revealed significant differences between the 18 European countries surveyed in 2020. In the next pages, you will find country-specific data for overall trust in the food system and confidence in the integrity of food products. Use the table of contents below to jump straight to your desired location.

Turkey

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...



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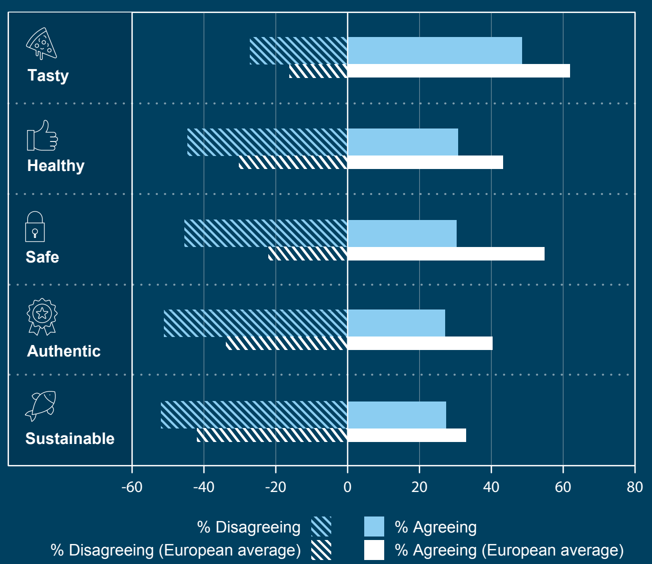

Romania

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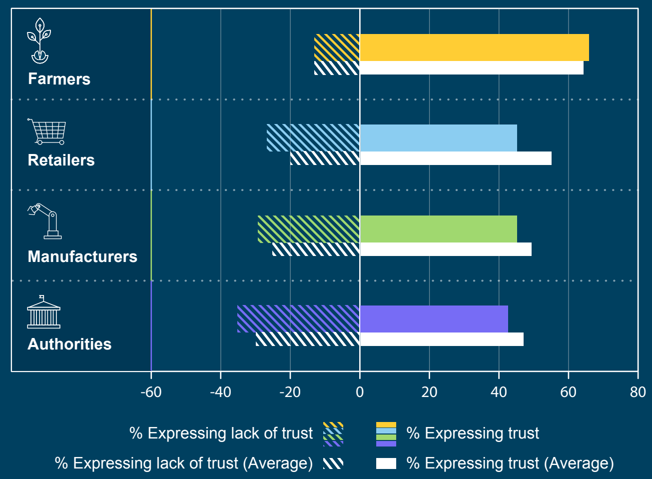

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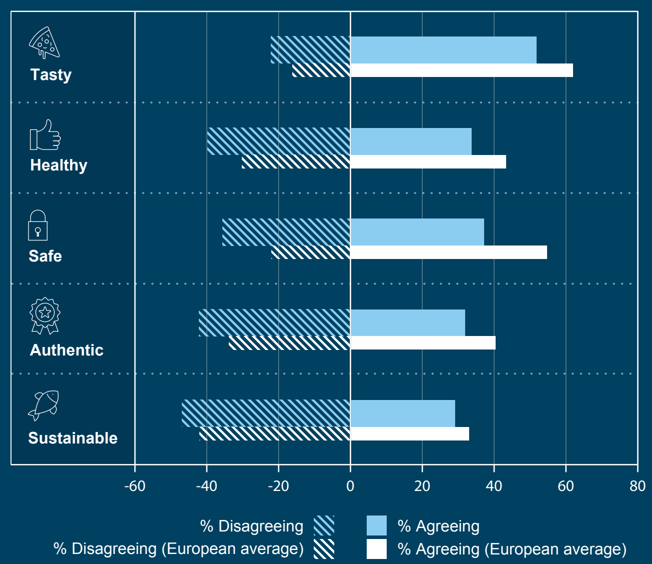

Portugal

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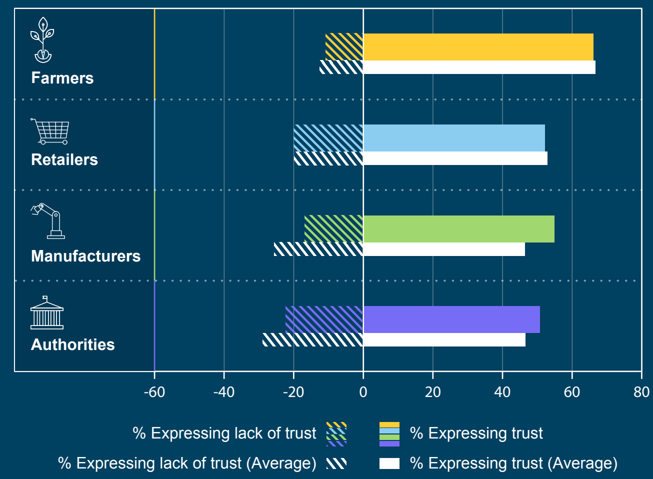

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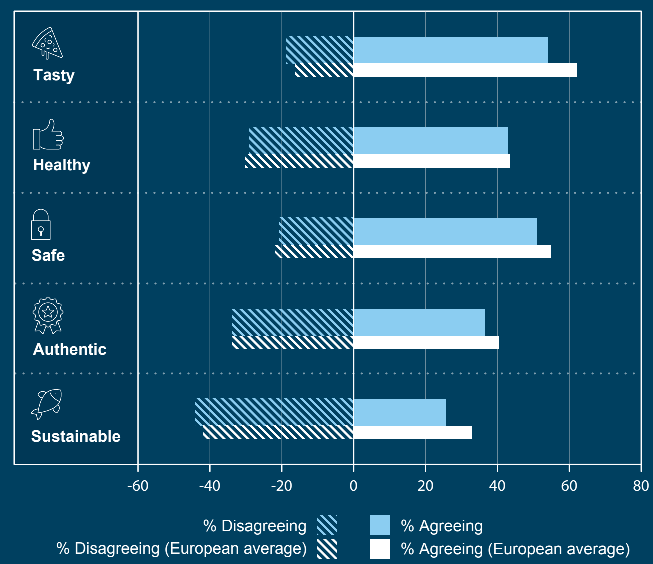

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Czech republic

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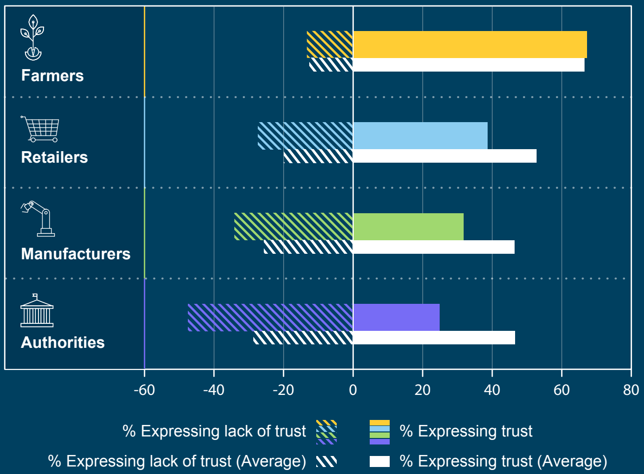

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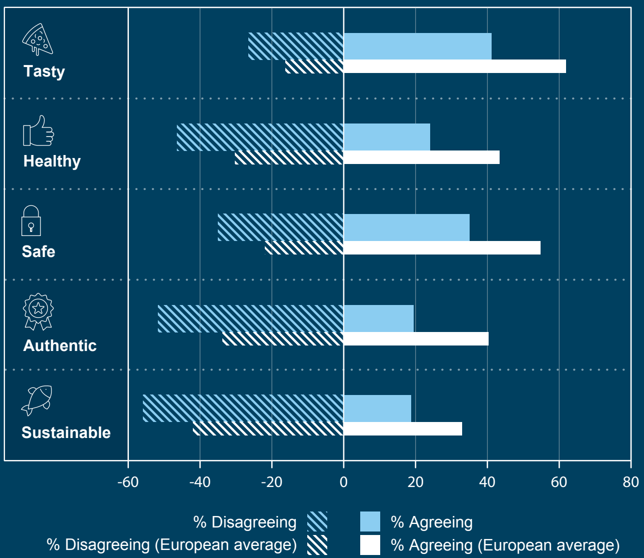

Netherlands

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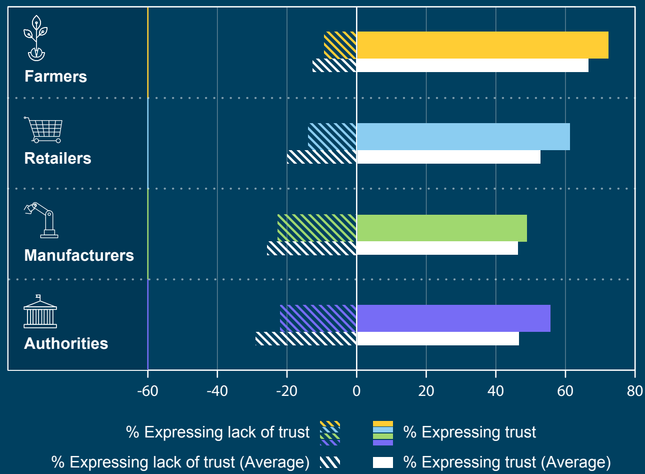

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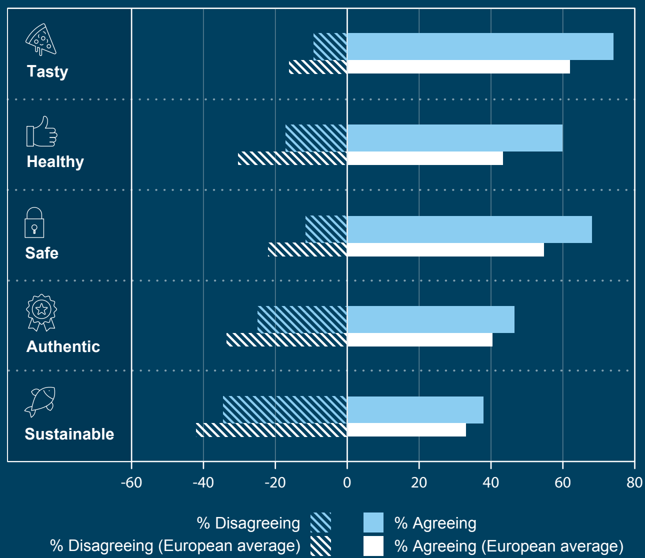

Switzerland

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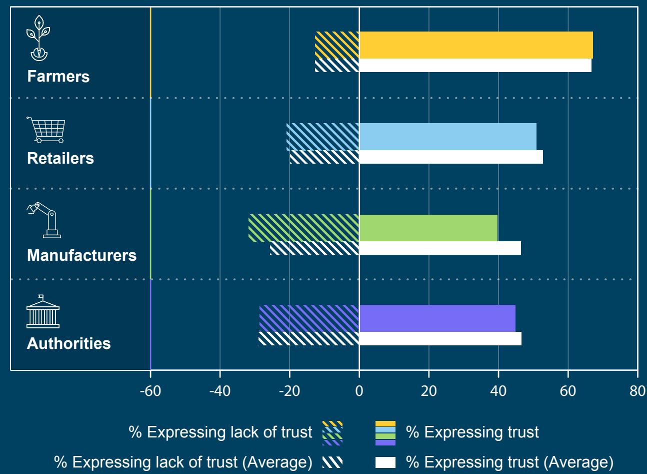

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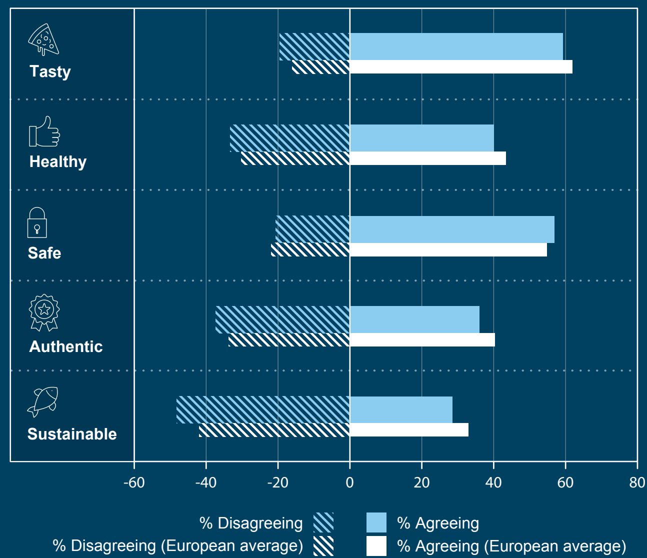

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Italy

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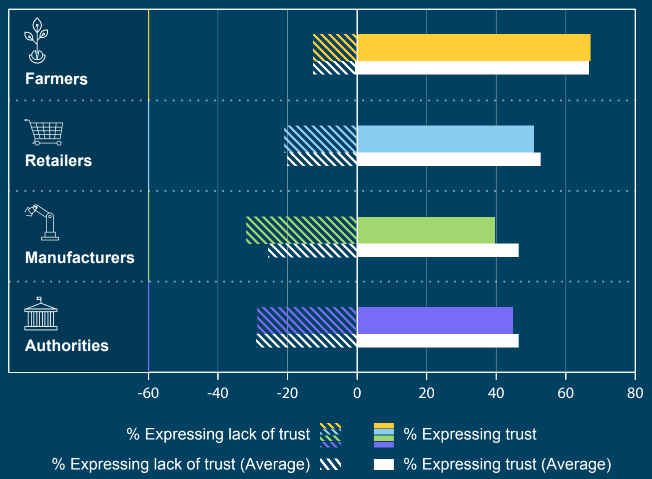

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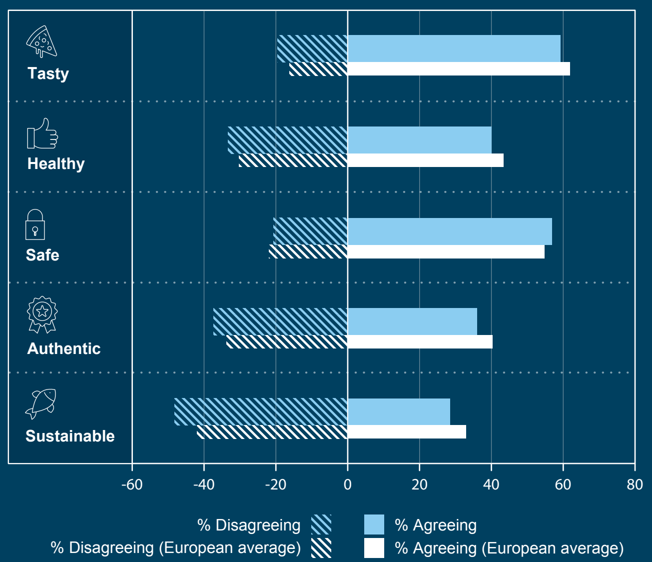

Israel

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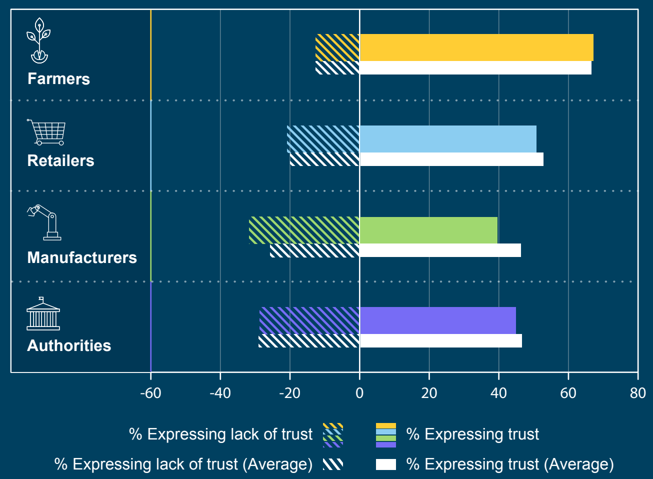

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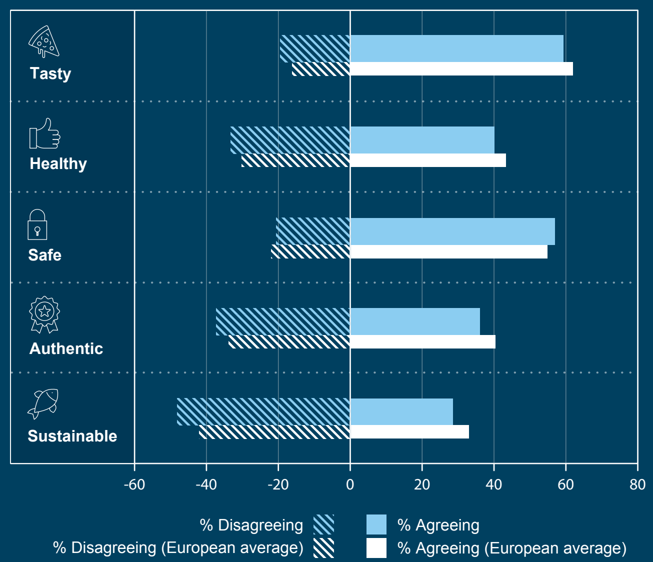

Ireland

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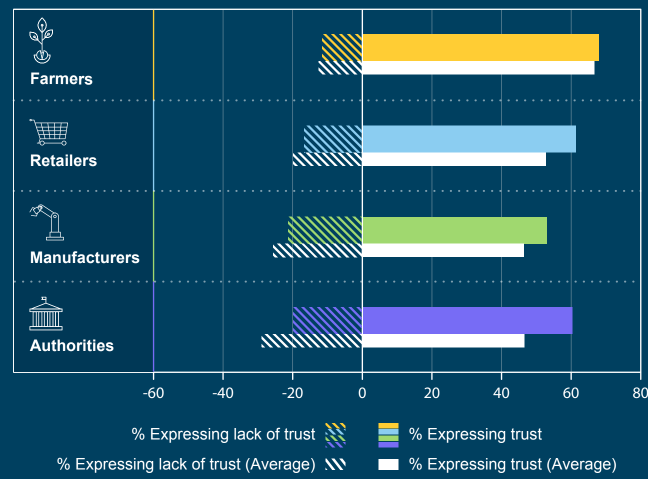

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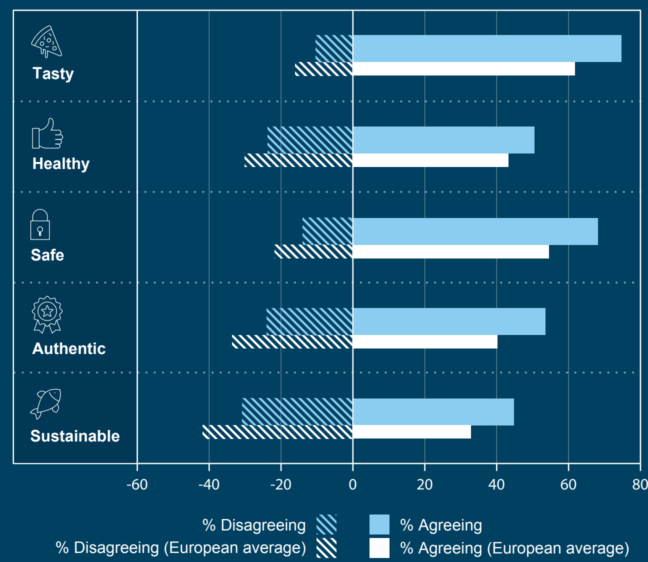

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Finland

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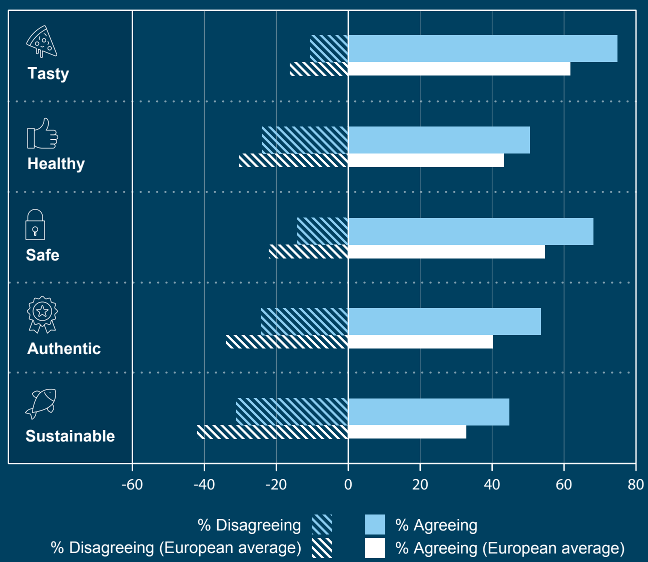

Denmark

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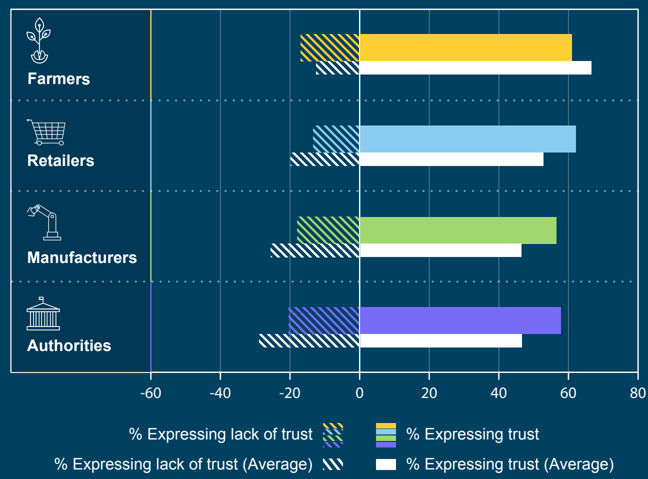

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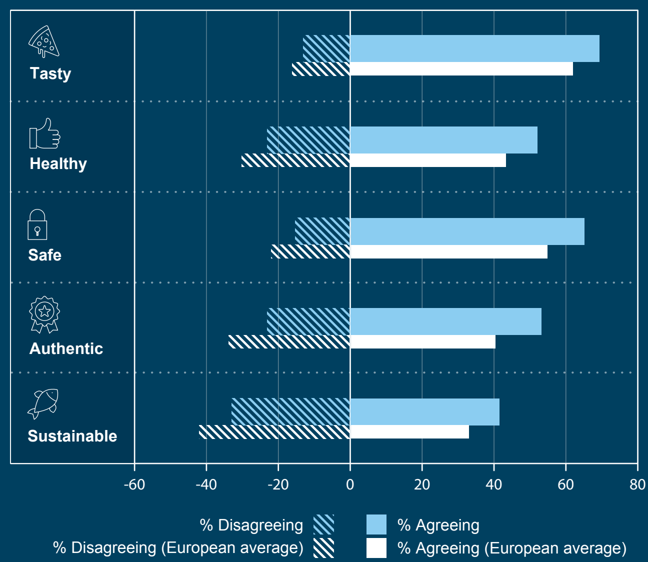

Belgium

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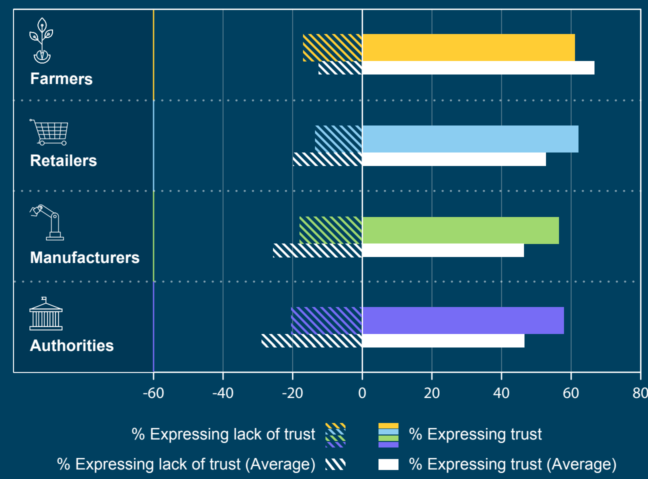

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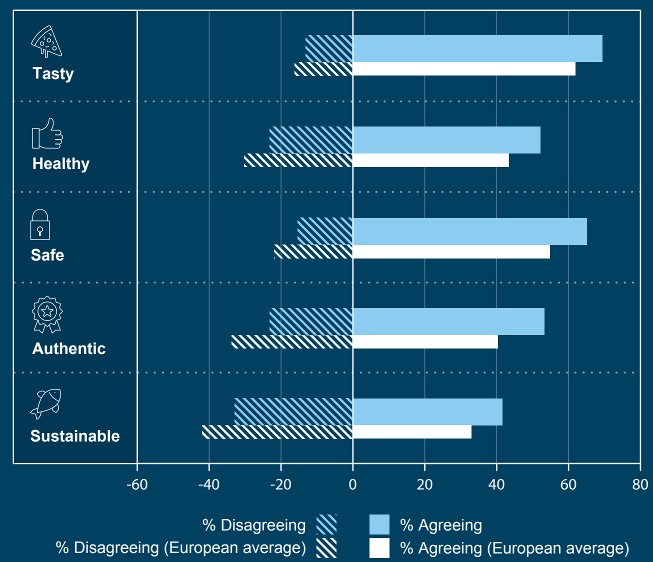

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UK

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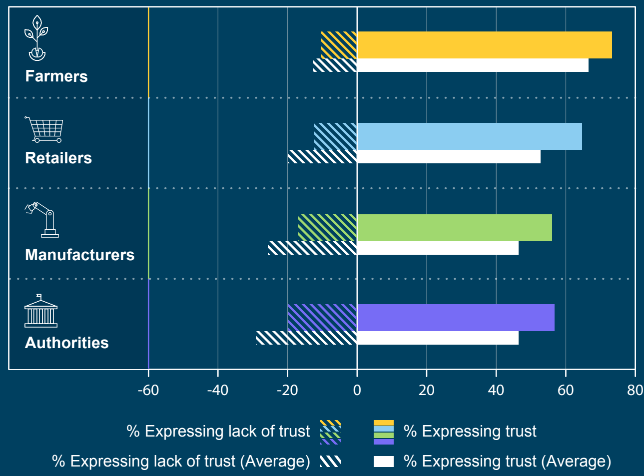

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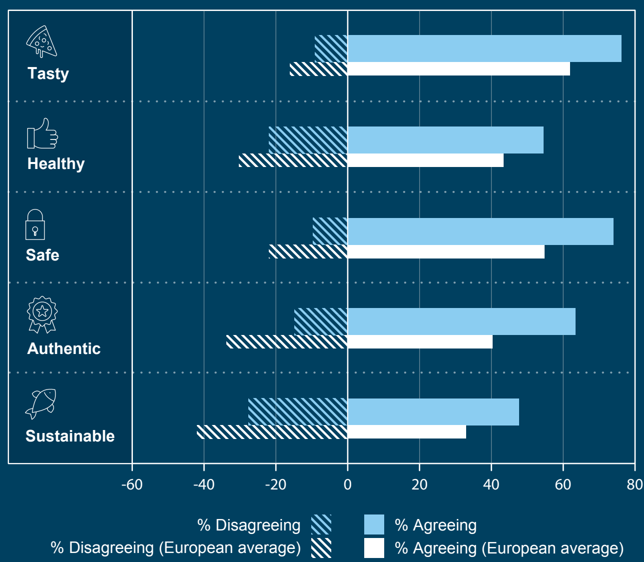

Poland

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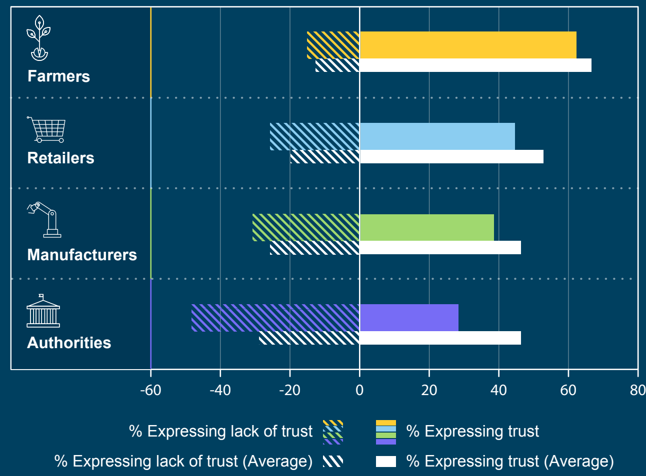

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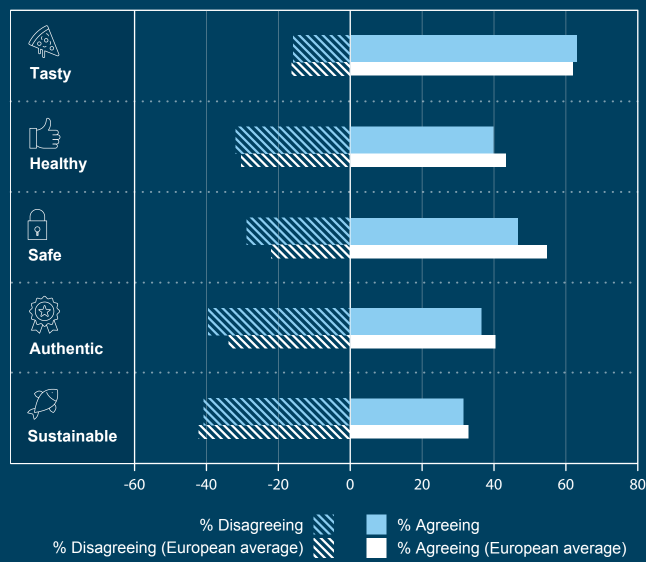
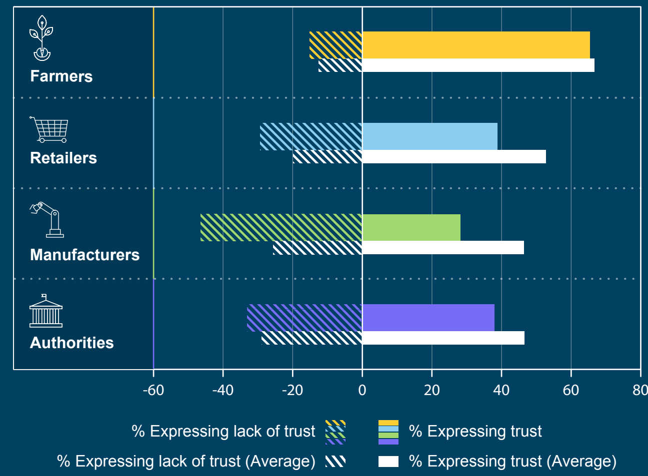


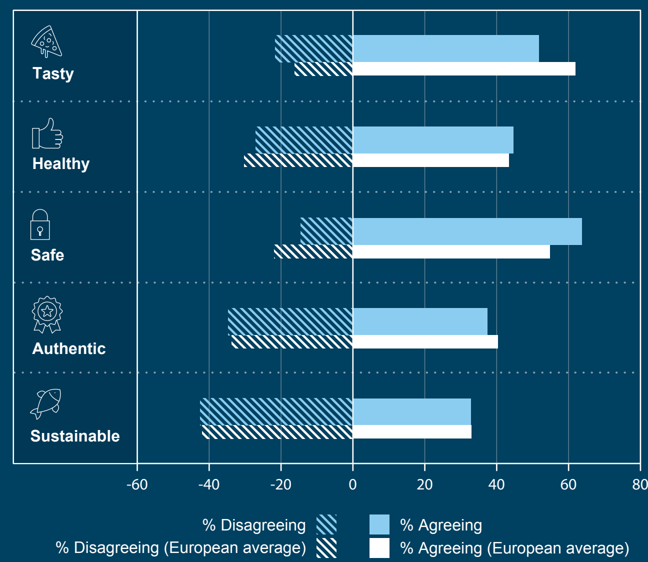
France

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...



The remainder (not shown here) were neutral

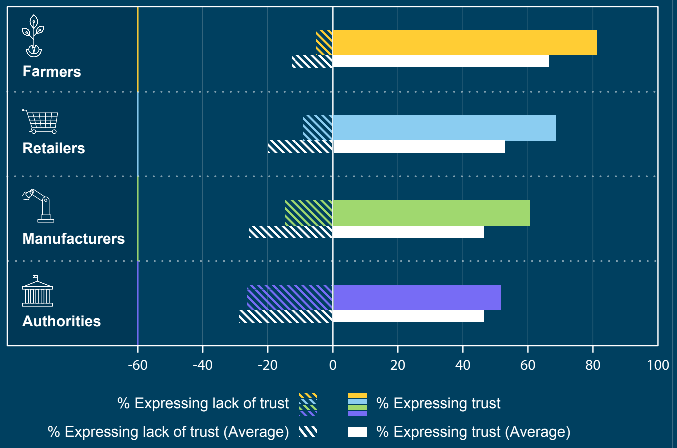
Generally products are...



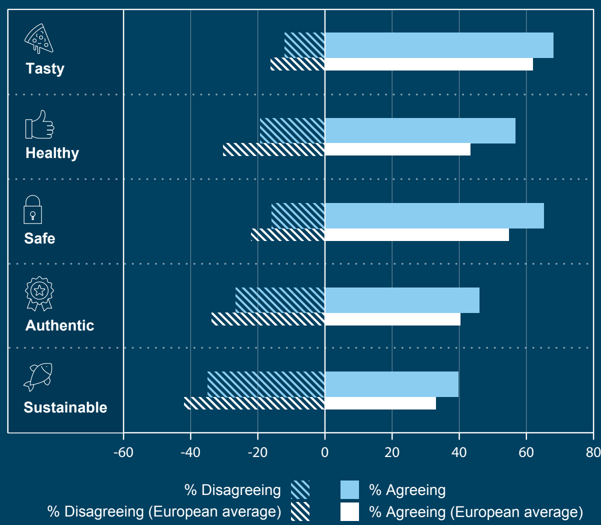
The remainder were neutral

Spain

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...

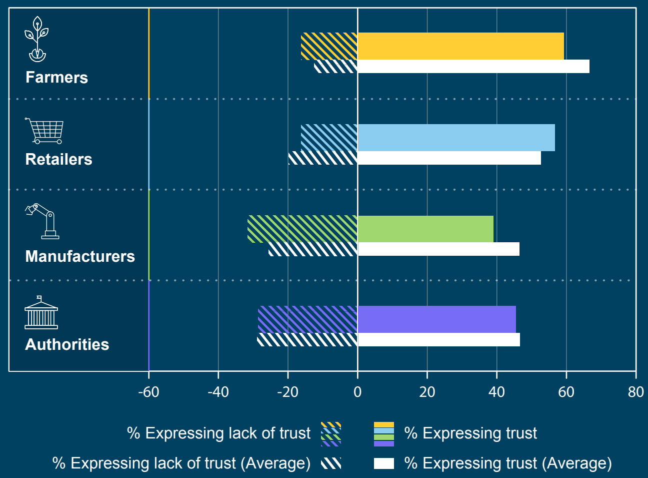


Generally products are...

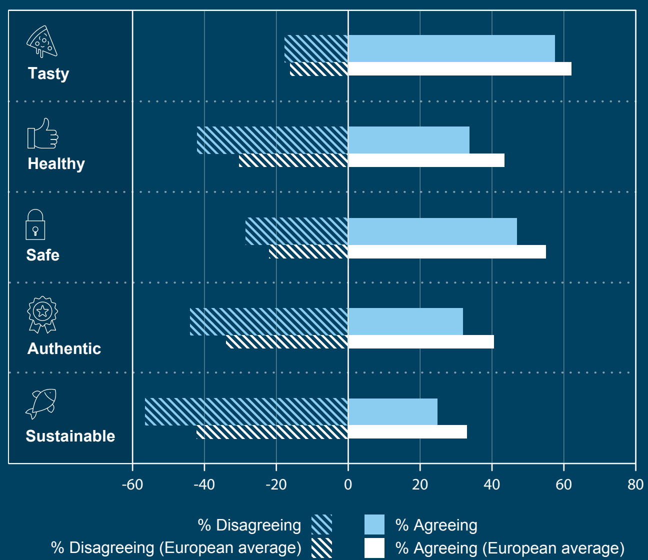


Germany

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...

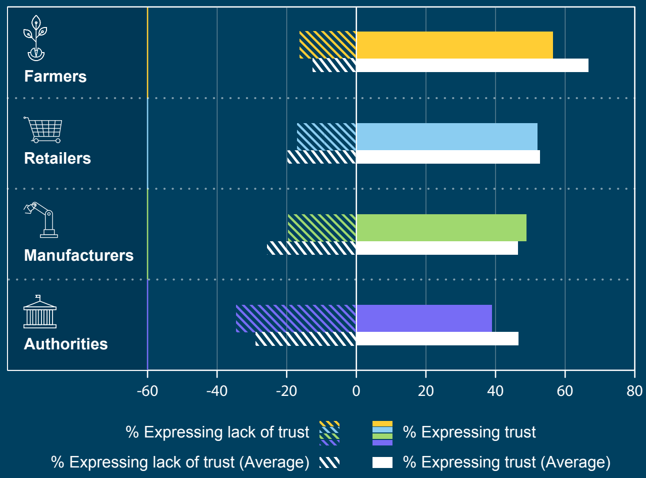


Generally products are...



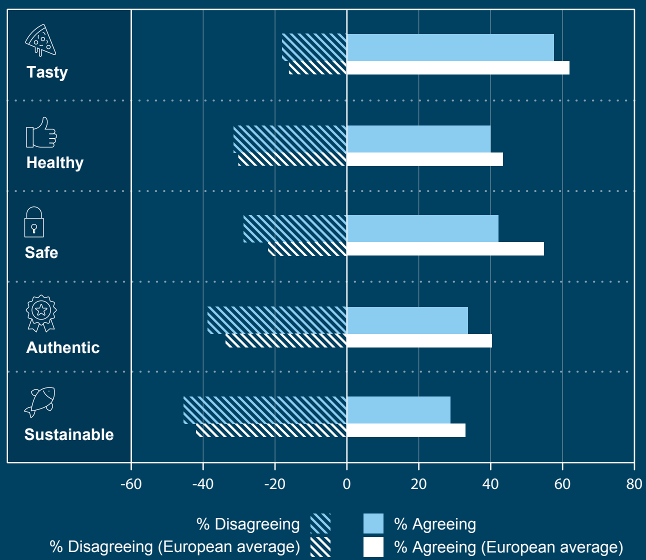
Greece

Within the food system, how much trust do you have in...



The remainder (not shown here) were neutral

Generally products are...



The remainder (not shown here) were neutral

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHOICES

When it comes to healthy and sustainable food choices, the attitudes and reported behaviours of European consumers show little change since 2018 and there is considerable scope for the food system to enable and support more positive future choices, particularly in the countries ranking lowest.

Overall, 63% of those asked in 2020 say they make an effort to buy healthy food (rising to 75% in Germany) – female respondents were significantly more likely to answer positively here, with 68% saying they do vs 15% not, compared to men at 59% vs 21%. Not surprisingly, older people were also more likely to make an effort to buy healthy products – 67% of the 55+ age group say they do (vs 15% not), compared to 62% of 35-54 year-olds (vs 18% not) and 59% of 18-34 year-olds (vs 15% not).

Meanwhile, 57% of total respondents say a low-fat diet is important to them (Portugal is highest at 70%), whilst 56% say they always follow a healthy, balanced diet (Poland and Spain are highest at 66%), and 47% have switched food products for health reasons (Poland again highest at 60%).

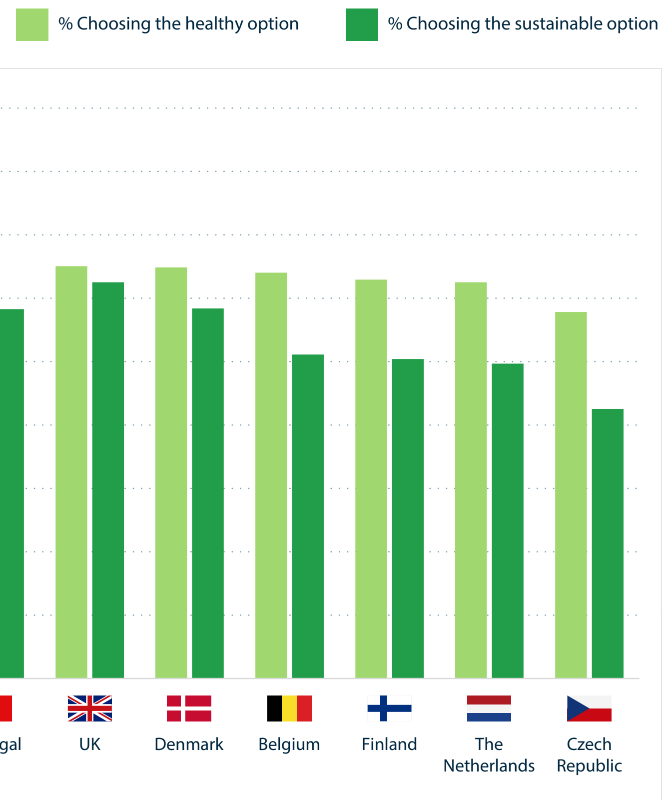
Slightly less people overall (45%) say they have switched to more sustainable food products (although we do see an encouraging 6% increase in this behaviour in our 5-country sample since 2018), whilst 52% make an effort to buy sustainable products (highest in Switzerland at 67%). As with healthy food, women are more likely to report making an effort to buy sustainably produced food, with 55% of female respondents Europe-wide saying they do (vs 21% not), compared to 48% of men (vs 27% not). Interestingly, age is not really a factor here, with all age groups reporting similar sustainability efforts.

It is worth noting that more than three-quarters (76%) of respondents overall say they feel a moral obligation to use environmentally friendly products and 79% are concerned that people don't care enough about the environment, yet only 60% of the Europeans we asked said that given the choice they will pick the sustainable option (19% said they wouldn't and the remainder were undecided).

This compares to 71% saying that if they are given the choice they will pick the healthy option (12% said they wouldn't and the remainder were undecided). These responses varied considerably by country but intention to choose healthy options won out everywhere. There is a clear gap between sustainable values and actions, which may in part be a result of consumer confusion about which products are sustainably produced and also because other factors such as price or health win out when it comes to making sustainable choices.

Would you agree that...

Given the option, consumers choose...



Some of the people we spoke to as part of our qualitative study told us that health feels like something they can make personal food choices about, as long as the food sector will listen to their needs and concerns and they are given the necessary information and good options at affordable prices. Sustainability felt more complex and removed - harder for them to affect as individuals shopping for food. People felt that there are so many different parts to sustainability, that the whole food system has to work together to find solutions - however more sustainable consumer choices can be guided by better education and simpler guidelines and labels.

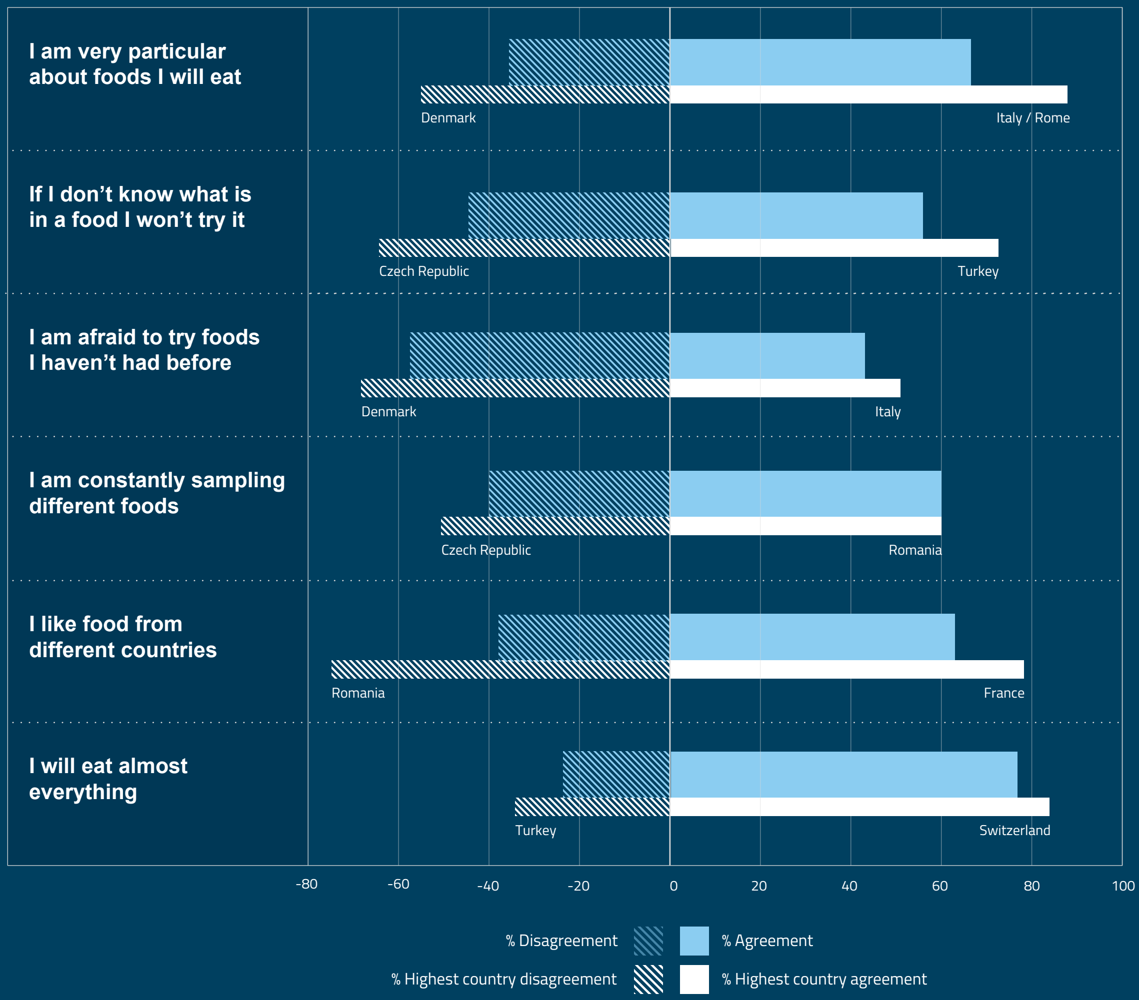
TRYING NEW FOODS

Part of the challenge in shifting these important food choices may come down to the fact that people have mixed feelings about buying and trying different food products, and we see no real shift in these somewhat change-resistant attitudes over the past three years when we look at our 5-country sample.

Overall 66% of Europeans surveyed in 2020 say they are very particular about the type of foods they will eat, while 42% are afraid to try new foods (rising to over half in Italy). Men are slightly more likely than women to say this (44% vs 40%) and 18-34 year-olds more than the older age groups (47% vs 40%).

On the counter side, 61% of total respondents say they will eat almost anything (rising to 79% in France) and 60% said they are constantly sampling different foods. There is little difference between men and women here, however younger people are much more likely to report sampling different foods (69% of 18-34s say they do vs 62% of 35-54s and 52% of the 55+ group) - despite also having a higher proportion of respondents afraid to try new foods.

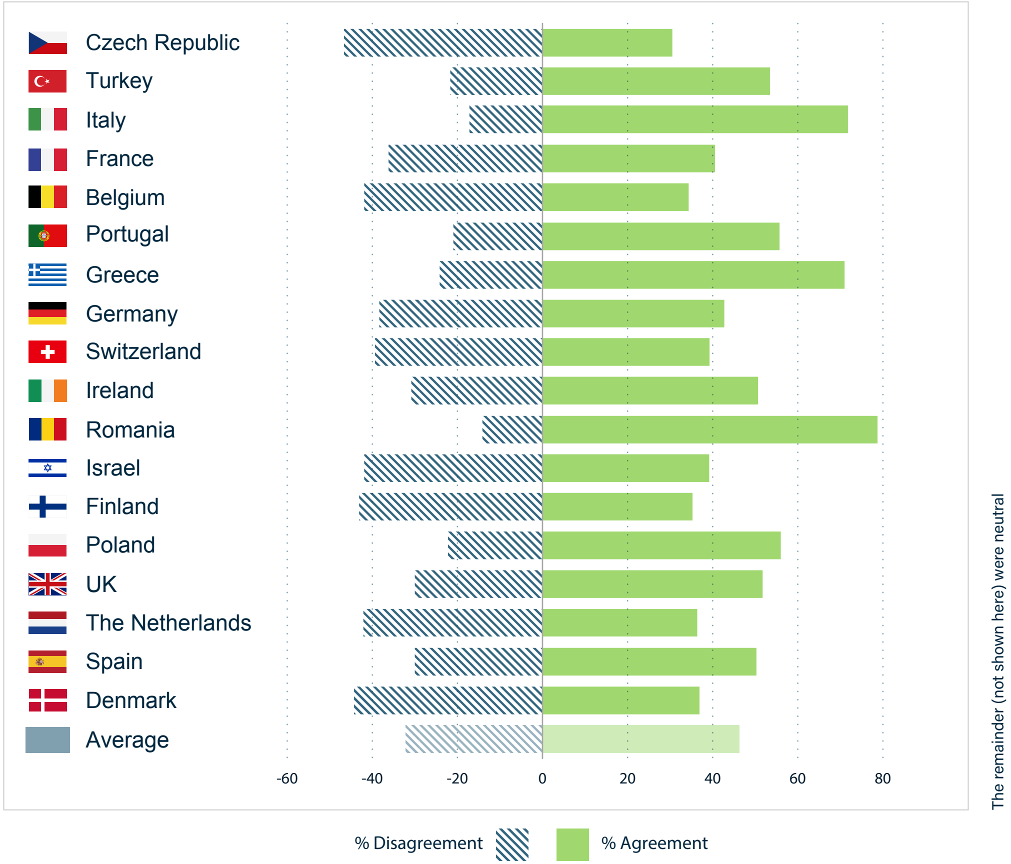
How adventurous are you with your food choices?



Overall, 46% of those we asked say that they often look for new food products and brands – women are more likely to report doing this (48% do) than men (44% do), as are younger people (53% of 18-35s do this compared to 48% of 35-54s and just 39% of the more steadfast 55+ age group). This reported novelty-seeking behaviour also varies considerably by country.

Despite the overall ambivalence towards new foods revealed by the TrustTracker® study, many of those we spoke to as part of our qualitative study saw innovation as a real opportunity for both the food system and individuals – saying it could deliver increased variety and quality and better meet consumer needs. When it came to specifics, these people were generally positive about innovation of plant-based food, low salt/sugar, high protein and healthier, more sustainable food. However, they were concerned about over-production, over-processing, additives, GMO/OGM, and loss of authenticity – 'we don't want food in capsules!'

I often look for new food products and brands...



BUILDING TRUST

Trust in the food system and confidence in the integrity of food products are critical if people are to be open to trying innovative foods and making more healthy and sustainable food choices.

We know that to achieve more trust in the food system, people need to have trust in each of its component parts. Ultimately the food value chain is only as strong as its weakest link and work is required across the board to deliver better against the criteria for trust that the TrustTracker® shows to be improving but still weak, in particular: being open & honest, providing relevant information, listening to people's concerns, and acting in the public interest.

In addition, our qualitative study panel in 12 European countries told us that trust for them was about: closer relationships, smaller businesses, shorter value chains, more focus on natural & local, better labelling, and transparency from farm to fork.

We asked citizens for suggestions about what each part of the food system could do specifically to help build trust.

Farmers

Farmers need to be more approachable and get closer to consumers. People suggested public-facing web pages and more opportunities for people to visit or meet with them at markets. Large farms particularly need far more transparency and honesty about their processes and practices and to show what they are doing to minimise the negative impact on animals and the environment.

Consumers find 'organic' a very useful trust signpost for ethical, sustainable and healthy practices.

Manufacturers

Manufacturers need to come clean about all of their ingredients, processes and additives and communicate in accesible language that consumers can easily understand. Clear and consistent information on packaging is critical to this. They also need to respond better to changing consumer expectations – reduce nasties and improve their quality, innovation, sustainability, and ethics.

Nutri-score (the popular 5-Colour nutrition labelling system) was mentioned as a helpful signpost. Better allergen information needed.

Retailers

Retailers must listen more to their customers and work directly with them to drive positive change in a way that supports farmers and suppliers. People want to see a product range that is more Fairtrade, more local, more seasonal, more organic – with less packaging and wasteful practices and offers. They should hero affordable, healthy options; increase traceability and take a stand on what they won't sell.

Stop unhealthy, wasteful offers (e.g. 2for1) and better signpost provenance of food products.

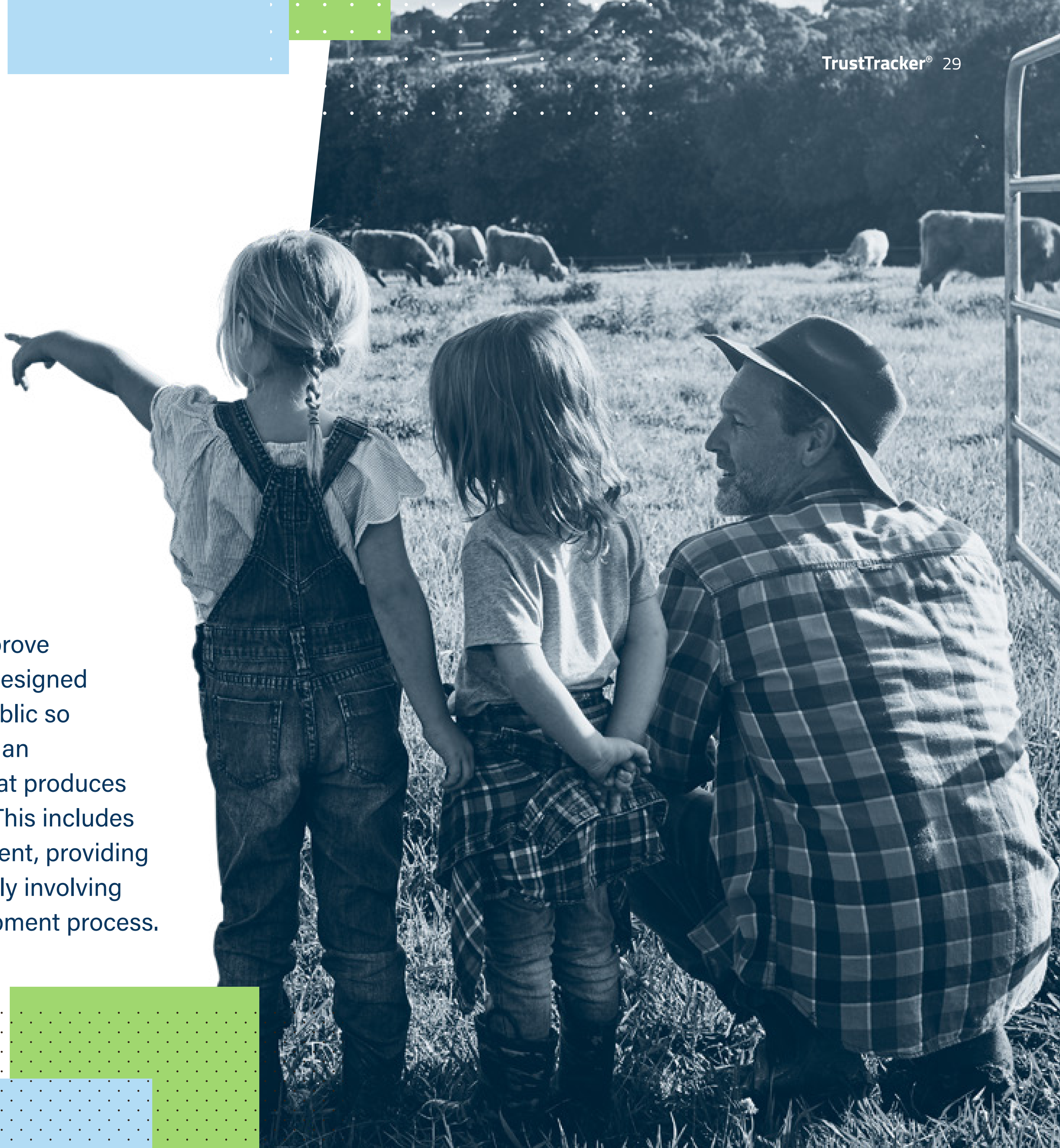
Authorities

Authorities should have more visibility and transparency. They need to demonstrate their independence and impose harsher sanctions for rule breakers. People want them to be less interest driven by politicians and industry lobbyists and to show more leadership and humanity. It is important that they are proactive and drive change across the food chain for the common good.

Provide/endorse consumer symbols to shortcut decision making and help people make healthy food choices.

WHAT IS EIT FOOD DOING TO HELP?

We believe that we are all responsible for, and connected to, the food that we eat, so we all need to work together to improve it. Many of our activities and projects are designed to engage directly with members of the public so that they can become agents of change in an innovative and transparent food system that produces food that is both sustainable and healthy. This includes creating platforms, dialogue and engagement, providing clear information and guidance, and directly involving citizens in the food innovation and development process.



Here is a small selection of EIT Food funded consumer focused projects:

FoodUnfolded®

FoodUnfolded® is our public platform reconnecting people with the origins of their food. Its mission is to unfold how food is produced and to educate and inform on the future of food sustainability – covering everything from organic farming and digital traceability, to the science of shelf life and plant-based diets. FoodUnfolded® enables an open dialogue on food between the public, academia, startups and industry and is increasingly seen as the place to share the latest innovations in our food system. Check it out at:

www.foodunfolded.com
and on Instagram
@food.unfolded

Robin Food

The pandemic has resulted in enormous amounts of surplus leftovers such as vegetables and fresh fruits, causing difficulties for farmers. At the same time, a growing number of people do not have enough resources to feed themselves and their families due to the economic shock and rising unemployment caused by the COVID-19 crisis. EIT Food, together with four partners - enVie, Rikolto, RIMO and Riso - launched Robin Food, a project to transform leftovers into new food products, for example tomato soup. To ensure the feasibility of the project, Eroski carried out market research to find out more about the target consumers who might be interested in buying these types of 100% social products, the aim of which is to create job opportunities and increase the employment of people at risk of social exclusion by promoting conscious and responsible consumption.

https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/robin-food

Los Salvacomidas

Los Salvacomidas (Foodsavers) seeks to help vulnerable families with children that have been affected by the Coronavirus outbreak, providing them with nutritious meals and educating them on healthy eating habits. The initiative is open to collaboration of the entire agrifood sector and has used a network of industry and consumer volunteers. The bags delivered to families also include games and activities to encourage healthy eating habits. The website **salvacomidas.com** was also launched, with downloadable educational elements.

FutureLearn

EIT Food are equipping learners all over Europe and beyond with the skills and knowledge they need to make a lasting impact on a rapidly evolving sector.

Through the flexible online courses, and with the support of a global network of learners, researchers, experts and entrepreneurs, participants will be inspired by some of the brightest minds the sector has to offer. Learners will be given the freedom to immerse themselves in ground-breaking research which is at the forefront of innovation.

If you share the vision of a food industry that works better for everyone, start shaping it with EIT Food Education. Find out more at:

https://www.futurelearn.com/partners/food

Annual Food Agenda

The Annual Food Agenda is a consumer-centred set of events, to encourage public debate and interaction between citizens and the different food system stakeholders. This yearly initiative organises a variety of activities such as interactive exhibitions, scientific cafes and hands-on activities marquees focusing on four topic areas: Circular Food Systems, Alternative Proteins, Sustainable Agriculture and Targeted Nutrition. Activities are designed to inspire debate and to foster dialogue between experts and consumers, using dynamics of co-creation to encourage exchange among academia, industry, producers and consumers in every-day environments such as museums, research laboratories or production plants, as well as in shopping centres or metro stations. Find out more at:

www.annualfoodagenda.com

Consumer Engagement Labs

Consumer Engagement Labs are an innovative form of cooperation between food producers and individuals, funded by EIT Food and designed to cocreate exciting new food products that meet the specific needs and behaviour patterns of their target consumers. The 2019 pilot labs brought together senior consumers aged 65+ with local companies representing different segments of the food industry: retailers, producers and innovative startups. The consortia also included scientific institutions and NGOs. Through this work, the team developed an innovative co-creation methodology, which is ready to deploy in multiple commercial and societal contexts. Lab scripts, toolsets and guidelines - tested in the field in four countries - can be easily adapted to other consumer segments. The participants have also created new, often fascinating, food products – with four market introductions in 2020.

https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/ris-consumer-engagement-labs

Increasing consumer trust and support for the food supply chain and for food

This consumer-focused project runs forums across seven countries to enable consumers' concerns and wants about the food they buy to be heard by food companies and other stakeholders (industry bodies, non-governmental organisations, regulatory authorities and policy makers, media). In these forums, consumers and food industry representatives can directly debate issues around trust in the food system, and explore and co-design engagement and trust building initiatives that food companies can implement to meet consumer needs and forge a closer and more coactive relationship. Consumers drive the process at each stage, from sharing concerns and co-design of initiatives to evaluation of success.

www.eitfood.eu/projects/increasing-consumer-trust-and-support-for-the-food-supply-chain-and-for-food-companies-2020

METHODOLOGY

The EIT Food TrustTracker® is an evidence-based, peer-reviewed tool for measuring consumer trust.

It maps European consumers' trust in the food value chain by country and over time using validated measurement scales - including beliefs about the competency, care and openness of its actors, and confidence in the integrity of food products (authenticity, health, safety, sustainability and taste). In its first year, 2018, the TrustTracker® surveyed over 5,000 consumers online across 5 European countries. In 2019 this expanded to over 11,000 consumers across 13 European countries, and in 2020 to 19,800 consumers across 18 European countries: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and the UK. The latest survey was conducted in June 2020 by means of computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI). As in previous years participants were European food consumers over 18 years old that were evenly split across the 18 countries and nationally representative in terms of age, gender and region. The study was conducted by a consortium of pan-European academic partners including the University of Reading, the European Food Information Council (EUFIC), Aarhus University, KU Leuven, and the University of Warsaw.

The survey was conducted in June 2020 by Ipsos. Participants were European food consumers over 18 years old that were evenly split across the 18 countries and nationally representative in terms of age, gender and region. In order to compare changes over time we use the consistent 5-country sample that has been surveyed by the TrustTracker® every year since 2018: France, Germany, Poland, Spain, UK.

Alongside the survey, EIT Food also carried out a qualitative study engaging with individuals across Europe to better understand citizens' needs, wants, perceptions, intentions, questions, concerns and ideas around food products and the food system. The insights featured in the report were drawn from two qualitative studies undertaken at the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020, covering 12 countries in total. The qualitative studies were carried out in partnership with Trust4Food, a collaboration between the University of Turin, specialised technological centre AZTI and the University of Reading, and market research company Schmiedl Marktforschung GmbH.

ABOUT EIT FOOD

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, with the aim to create a sustainable and future-proof food sector.

The initiative is made up of a consortium of key industry players, startups, research centres and universities from across Europe. It is one of eight Innovation Communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

EIT Food aims to collaborate closely with consumers to develop new knowledge and technology-based products and services that will ultimately deliver a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for all European citizens.

EIT Food has created the RisingFoodStars Association, which serves as an umbrella for high potential agrifood startups and scaleups, to support and nurture a select group of young companies. The Association is a partner of EIT Food and as such allows its members to participate in all EIT Food activities, thus contributing to the delivery of EIT Food's strategic objectives.

You can follow EIT Food via our website
www.eitfood.eu

or via social media:
Twitter, **Facebook**, **LinkedIn** or **YouTube**.

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