

## **DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN FOOD QUALTY LABELS IN HUNGARY**

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Food is a credence product therefore the information asymmetry between the producers and the final consumers should be decreased. Beside food safety issues, food labels are known as effective tools for promoting also food quality. On community level, the European Union has several food quality labels playing an important role in the European food quality policy. The EU organic label was introduced in 1991, while the system of the geographical indications (Protected Designation of Origin - PDO, Protected Geographical Indications – PGI and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed – TSG) exists since 1992.

Parallel with the EU food quality labels all EU member states have their own label. In Hungary dozens of such labels try to attract the consumers, many of them are managed by the government, but some successful labels are result of private initiatives. The two most well-known state owned Hungarian food quality labels are the “Quality food from Hungary” and the “Traditions-Flavours-Regions”. Both labels were introduced in 1998 and by the end of 2017 had 59 and 170 registered products, respectively.

The aim of this paper is to measure the differences between the recognition of the selected four EU and the two Hungarian food quality labels among the Hungarian consumers. Therefore, results of previous consumer surveys for the EU labels conducted by the Eurobarometer are compared with the results of our survey, a special attention given to the differences between the Hungarian and the EU labels. As part of a H2020 research project an online consumer survey (n=1.019) was implemented during the second half of 2017.

Results show that among the Hungarian consumers the recognition of the national labels are much higher than the EU labels. This significant difference can be explained by numerous reasons. First, the Hungarian consumers are less aware of the EU community level food quality system. As far no relevant marketing campaign was implemented in Hungary to draw their attention. On the other hand, the EU food quality scheme contains only a limited number of registered Hungarian products and even the registered products are often not labelled with these EU logos.