

IMPLEMENTATION OF A QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR TRAINING IN ORGANIC FOOD RETAIL – EcoQualify III

**(Work Package 4)
Evaluation of the Quality Handbook
at National Level
(ROMANIA)**

Within the Work Package No:4 of the EcoQualifyIII Project, EcoR Partener Association was conducting the assessment of the three target groups:

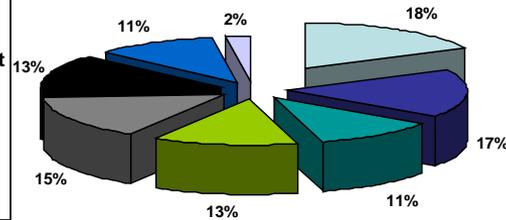
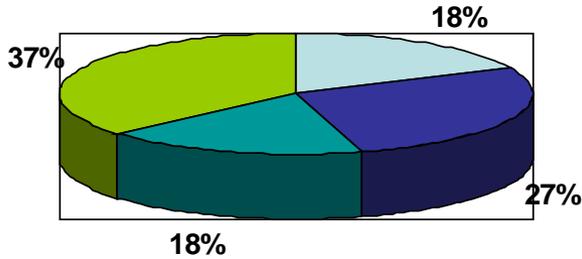
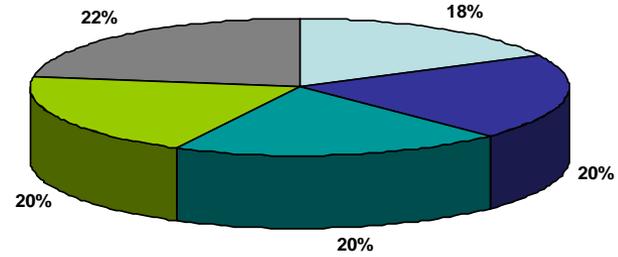
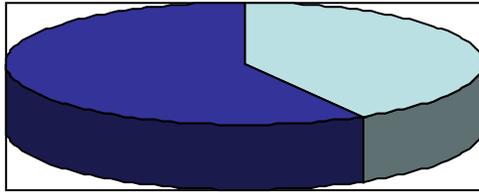
- **Retailers and Stakeholders of Organic Products**
- **Training Providers**
- **Auditors of Quality Assurance Systems**

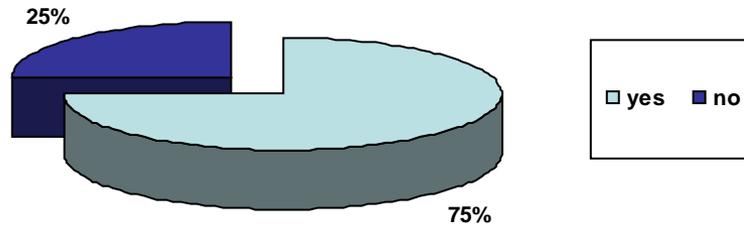
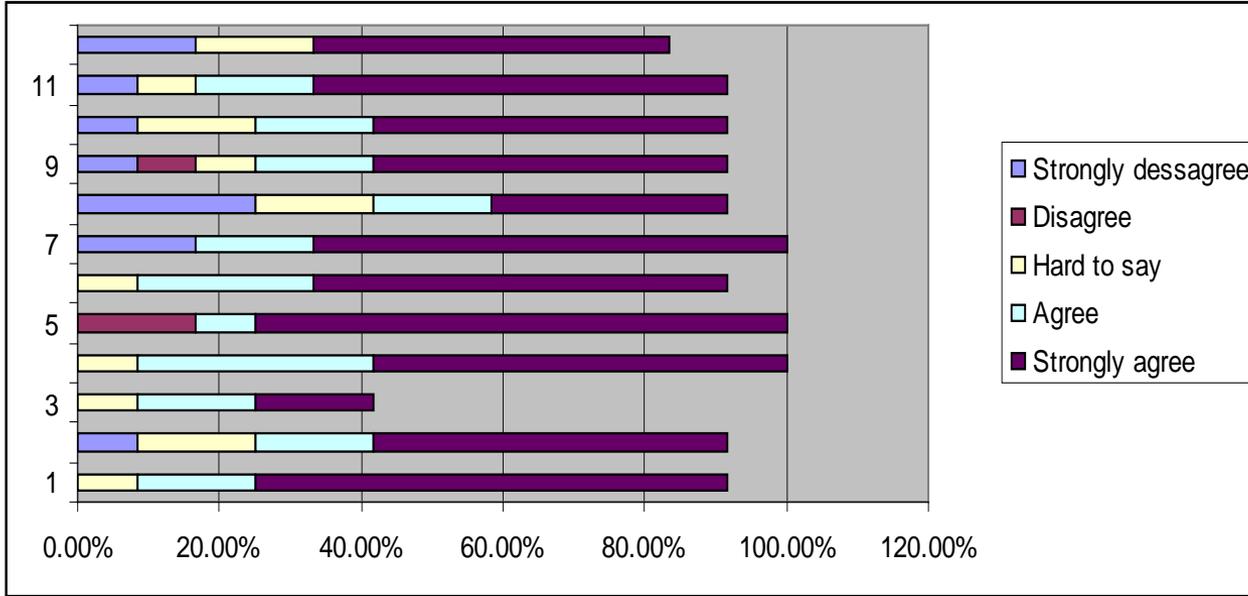
1. Retailers

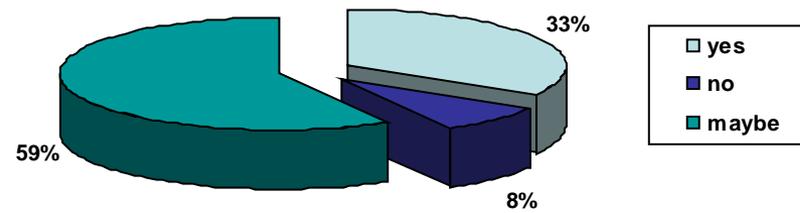
The category of retailers that was targeted by EcoR Partner in the assessment was a number of organic shops characterized by a large number of products and a high diversity of organic and natural products.

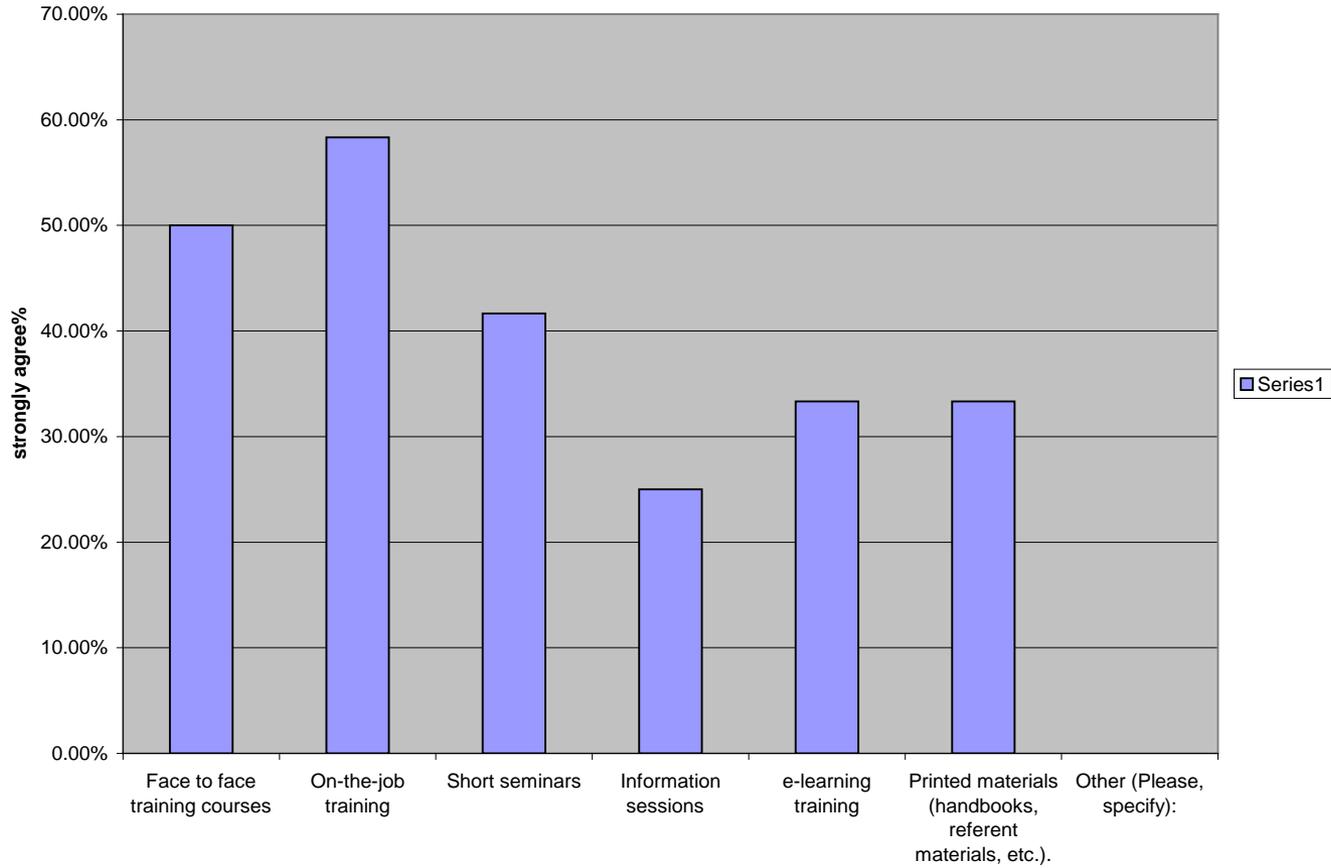
Most of the shops are situated in Bucharest but we have asked also online shops which actually are developed within last 3 years.

Out of 80 shops invited to answer we have received just 12 replies maybe also due to the difficult economic situation. We have learned that a large number of shops were closing down because of the continuous decreasing buying capacity of the Romanians









Generally, the retailers interviewed did like the Quality Handbook as a whole and the idea of introducing the Quality Assurance System (QAS) in organic retail training was welcomed.

Other remarks – following our open questions some remarks were added. The synthesis of those is bellow:

they need specific legislation (eg. requirement that state consume organic products a percentage of consumption)

Benefits of organic products - compared to other classes of similar products (traditional, natural, etc.);

Products traceability (how it is done, what guarantees there etc).

store promotion

ECO products business opportunities in fields.

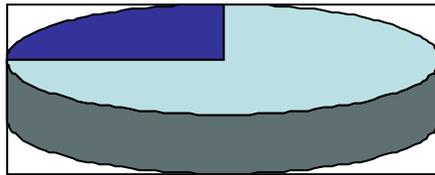
**Extension of communication between University; Producer:
Consumer: Authority**

audit methods in organic

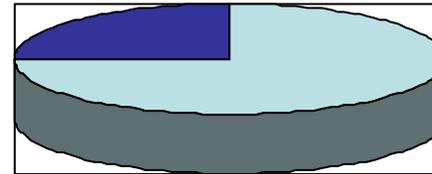
Methods for training

2. Auditors

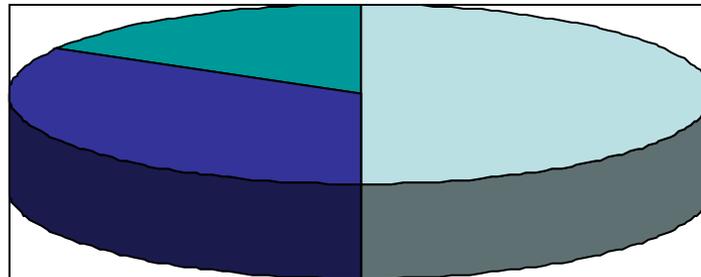
In Romania, the national authority for the accreditation of Auditors is the CNFPA (www.cnfpa.ro). Unfortunately, what the category of auditors in organic farming / food-production / retail is concerned, there is an utter lack of capacities. In fact, we have had a very hard time identifying any auditors remotely related to our specific area. We have also failed in reaching any retail specific-oriented auditors and were forced to declare ourselves content with having auditors that have expertise on general quality management answer the questionnaires Four such auditors have filled-in and resent the questionnaires out of a total of 12 to whom it has been sent.



□ Female(s)
■ Male(s)



□ Interesting
■ Very interesting



□ bread and bakery,
milk & dairy,
organic eggs and
GMO-free products

■ vegetables and fruit,
dairy, soy-beans
derivates,
stimulants, baby
food, fish and

■ Other

In conclusion, what the results prove beyond any doubt is that the auditors in Romania share very little familiarity with the specific contents of the Quality Handbook.

A need for specialization is definitely identifiable and there also seems to be a manifest interest therefore. While analyzing this target group, perhaps more than with the other two, it has become clear that there is a huge gap between Romania and the donor countries and that the analyzed categories are inter connected.

With the development of the training needs and the increase in numbers of trainers, auditors in the specific field of organic farming and/or organic retail should be spurred as well.

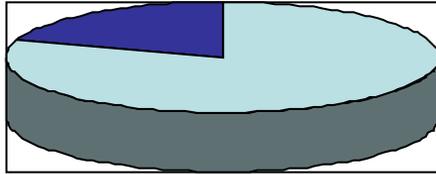
3. Trainers

The category of trainers in organic farming / food-production / business that was targeted by the EcoR Partener team comprises teachers and researchers from the academic and vocational milieu in Romania and vocational trainers from the private sector. Six such trainers have filled-in and resent the questionnaires out of a total of 25 to whom it has been sent.

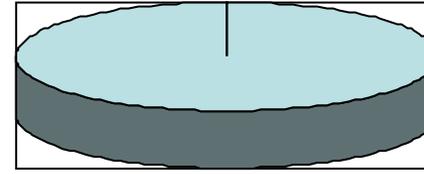
At academic level, in Romania, new subjects such organic farming are being accredited at BA level by the national authority ARACIS (www.aracis.ro) after a period of at least 8 years and relevant field data concerning the importance of establishing such trades. Therefore, in the case of organic farming and/or food production, there is only one course at M.Sc level available with the University of Iasi (North-East Romania) and some elements of organic farming are included at the same M.Sc level within training curricula for sustainable farming.

What secondary public vocational education is concerned, organic farming is not to be found as a teaching curricula. What private vocational training is concerned, there is no specific offer concerning organic farming and/or food production. Instead, sporadic seminars and information sessions are offered by several associations or foundations concerned with environment protection and organic food.

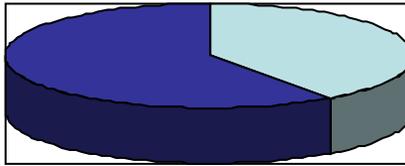
Teachers, researchers and trainers are therefore in need of training themselves in order to be able to offer professional services. Organic retail is still regarded as an obscure subject and therefore our work is of an essential importance in order for them to include it as an optional topic in various courses and training offers.



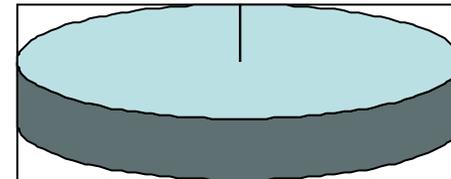
□ Female(s)
■ Male(s)



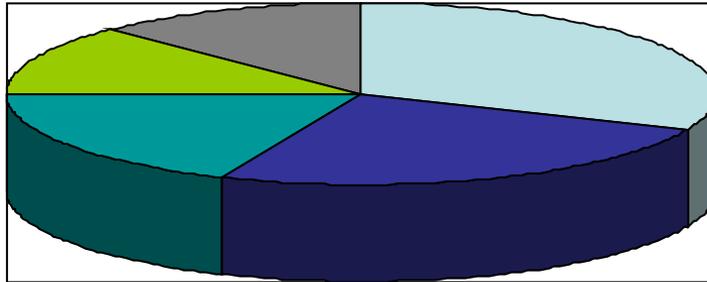
□ Academic
Studies



□ Relevant
academic
degree
■ No relevant
degree



□ Practical
training



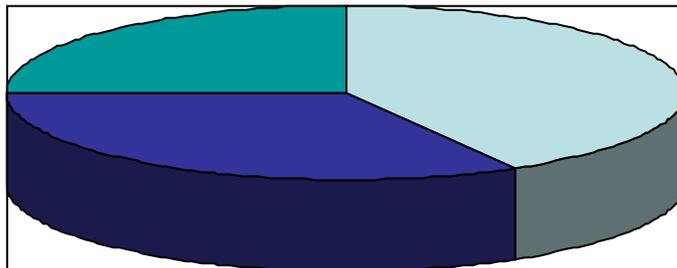
■ **Product Knowledge**

■ **Marketing tools**

■ **Sales
Communications**

■ **Hygiene & Safety**

■ **Marketing&Sales**



■ **Organic Agriculture,
Product Know-How,
Tech Knowledge and
Organic Food
Production**

■ **Good storage,
environmental
protection and
standardization,
processing, packaging**

■ **Basic knowledge, fair
trade, hygiene and
safety, communication
skills and care of goods**

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Thank you for your attention!

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