

Implementation of the EEC- Regulations on organic livestock farming in different countries

Georgios Arsenos

School of Veterinary Medicine,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

WP 4. Standard Development

Objectives

- To harmonise organic standard development in Europe
- To identify problem areas caused by the diversity in different regions in Europe
- To collate and formulate recommendations for the development of organic livestock standards in Europe
- To communicate these recommendations to policy makers and certification bodies

**Questionnaire relevant to
specific paragraphs of the EU-Regulation
regarding animal health and food safety**

Question 1:

- **Is there a problem with the implementation of this specific paragraph at the farm level in your country?**

Question 2:

- **If there is a problem, what are the reasons and the background for problems with the implementation?**

Response – Results

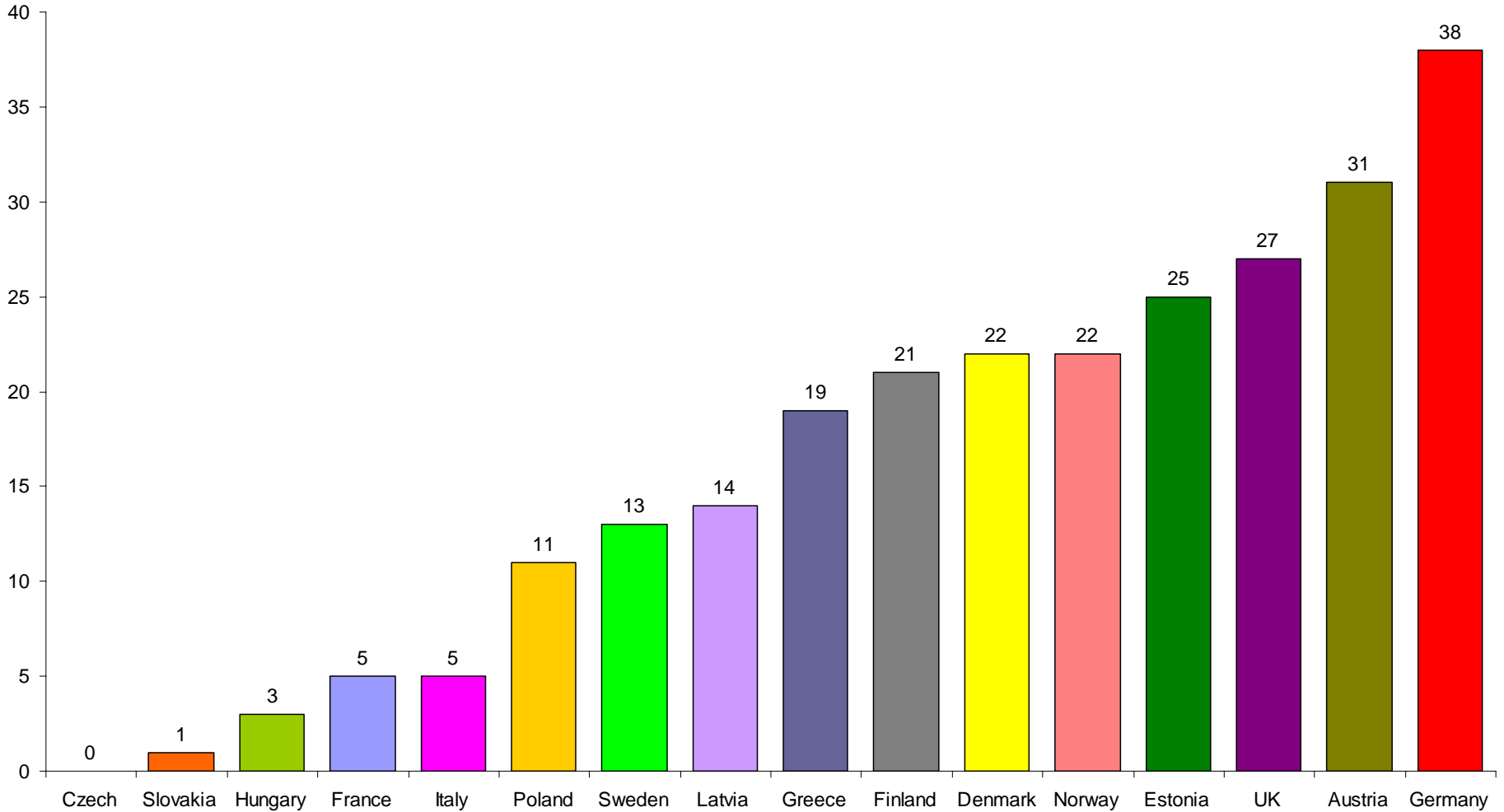
16 out of 23 countries

- Austria
- Czech
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Latvia
- Norway
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Sweden
- UK



Question 1

"YES" Answers



What is the problem?

Disease prevention

1. Selection of appropriate breeds

- absence of breeding goals and organic breeding index
- Difficult to find 'suitable breeds' for outdoors (e.g. poultry)
- **Suggestions**
 - Crossbreeding to increase robustness (pigs, cattle)
 - Simplify the wording of regulation – educate the farmer for its implementation

Disease prevention

2. Animal husbandry practices for resistance and prevention

- Failure to control mastitis and endoparasites – lack of practical prevention schemes
- Lack of expertise in grazing management
- Cost benefit analysis of housing systems – old buildings
- Large variation in hygiene measures between farms – poor status
- Converting farmers are carrying ‘old attitudes’
- Mixed farms
- Definition of good bio-security plan and preventive schemes are missing in standards

Disease prevention

3. High quality feed, exercise, access to pasturage

- Definition of high quality feed is subjective, demands can be compromised
- Access to pasturage is not always available due to huge differences in climatic conditions (i.e. Norway – Greece)
- Specific problems with organic pig and poultry production

Disease prevention

4. Density of livestock housing

- Flock size can result in problems for both the use of housing and grazing areas
- Poultry stocking densities in the UK are about to change earlier compared to the EU regulation

Appropriate treatment of diseased animals

1. Time and type of treatment (isolation)

- Significant delays in treatments of sick or injured sheep in mountain areas
- Absence of valid information and control regarding the times of treatment.
- The issue of early disease diagnosis and initiation of proper treatment is questioned
- Low importance of animals as individuals (e.g. pigs, poultry)

Appropriate treatment of diseased animals

2. Veterinary medical products, Phytotherapeutic, homeopathic products

- Lack of knowledge about “alternative treatments” Reluctance of vets to use them
- Cooperation and assistance of specialized veterinarians
- The Swedish law paradox of vets not being able to prescribe ‘alternative methods
- Registration of Phytotherapeutic, homeopathic products for legal use – Common authorization procedures – The need for Reasonable pricing
- Problem with “imports” of Phytotherapeutic, homeopathic products

Food safety issue

1. Number of treatments and Withdrawal periods

- Significant differences between countries (i.e. longer periods in Sweden, exception for parasite treatments in Norway)
- Doubling of withdrawal periods, based on conventional experience, may be unnecessary long
- Problems with standards misinterpretation regarding the number of treatments – lack of relevant information for different animal species
- Problems with the use of hormones for oestrus synchronization

Availability of robust breeds and strains

- Adaptability and disease resistance are no explicit breeding goals
- In most countries breeding populations of animals are too small to have separate lines for organic production
- Problems depend on what animal species are used in organic production
- The wording (e.g. 'suitable breed') is subjective
- Indigenous breeds are of very low production capabilities raising issues of financial viability in organic farms
- Serious concerns for Organic poultry and pig production

Feedstuff availability and ration formulation

- Problems with on farm production of feeds – monitoring of the latter is poor in most countries
- The issue of maximum pasturage use is again questioned
- Ration formulation and Quality assessment of rations
- Supply of adequate protein and vitamins particularly for monogastrics
- High prices of organic feedstuff especially in Countries where the organic sector relies heavily on imported feedstuffs
- Better definition of 'natural milk' and detailed description of feeding of young mammals

Appropriate housing conditions

- Tether systems of cattle as part of traditional husbandry practice (e.g. Austria)
- Maintaining of traditional shed constrains natural ventilation and light
- Lack of experience and ideas for practical solutions among advisors on organic farming
- Absence of detailed parameters regarding microclimatic conditions of shed and barns in the regulation
- Absence of research on what are the animal needs and what is 'optimal' environment on farm level that complies with the regulation

Specific aspects concerning mammals

- Housing of livestock varies significantly between northern and South European countries
- Tethering of particular animals (bulls) is suggested (i.e. as a measure of safety for the farmer, Poland, and in small scale systems in Scotland, UK)
- Parasites and zoonotic diseases for pig and poultry
- Shortage of bedding material, particularly straw

Specific aspects concerning poultry

- Artificial breeds
- Extremely difficult to maintain vegetation in out door areas for laying hens
- Shortage of information on good management practices
- High stocking rates and infrastructure problems
- Absence of open air runs

Animal welfare issues

- The need to formalize welfare assessment – management tool
- Provision of artificial light in organic poultry
- Social order and hierarchy in mixed farms
- Dock tail in Sheep and Castration of pigs and beef cattle
- Dehorning and/or tethering as a general practice (e.g. Norway, Germany, Estonia, Denmark, Austria)
- Housing of animals in Individual pens or boxes
- Inappropriate transport of organic livestock

Many thanks to:

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- all those that responded to the questionnaire