

**DEN KGL. VETERINÆR- OG LANDBOHØJSKOLEN**  
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Frederiksberg, 2. juni 2006

Kære Eva Esmarch

Tak for forleden – det var en interessant og positiv oplevelse at deltage i jeres høring om fødevareresikkerhed.

Jeg vedlægger et par foldere om 'Trust in food' projektet, som jeg talte ud fra, såfremt nogen i udvalget skulle være interesserede. Som sagt omfatter projektet ret stort anlagte undersøgelser af udviklingen i institutionelle og politiske forhold med relation til fødevareresikkerhed, ernæring, fødevarerets kvalitet mv i EU, Danmark, England, Italien, Norge, Portugal og Tyskland. Desuden indgår en stor interviewundersøgelse med befolkningerne i de seks lande.

Yderligere oplysninger om projektets resultater kan fås på forskellige måder:

Fra projektets hjemmeside kan man downloade rapporter fra de studier af institutionelle og politiske forhold i de seks deltagende lande. Se under publikationer på [www.trustinfood.org](http://www.trustinfood.org)

Der er foreløbig udkommet to bøger fra projektet – begge omhandler de resultater af befolkningsundersøgelsen. Det drejer sig om:

C. Poppe og U. Kjærnes: Trust in Food in Europe. A comparative analysis, Oslo: SIFO 2003.  
U.Kjærnes, C. Poppe og R. Lavik: Trust, Distrust and Food Consumption. Oslo, SIFO 2005.

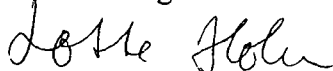
Der er flere videnskabelige publikationer undervejs. Således vil et kommende nummer af tidsskriftet *Appetite* indeholde en særlig sektion, som bringer resultaterne af de institutionelle analyser. Den kommer til at hedde "Shifting responsibility for food in Europe" - vi er i korrekturfasen, men hvornår den præcist udkommer har jeg ikke kunnet få oplyst. En bog der sammenfatter alle analyser – såvel de institutionelle som befolkningsundersøgelsen er planlagt til at udkomme i 2007. Den kommer til at hedde:

U. Kjærnes, M. Harvey and A. Warde: Trust in food in Europe.

Desuden vil der løbende komme enkeltstående videnskabelige artikler om udviklingen i ernæringspolitikken, om opfattelsen af forbrugers rolle, om politisk forbrug etc.

Skulle noget af alt dette have nærmere interesse står jeg gerne til rådighed med yderligere oplysninger.

Med venlig hilsen

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lotte Holm".

Lotte Holm

PS Enslydende brev sendt til Elisabeth Geday

# Consumer Trust in Food

Social and Institutional  
Conditions for Consumer  
Trust in Food in Europe

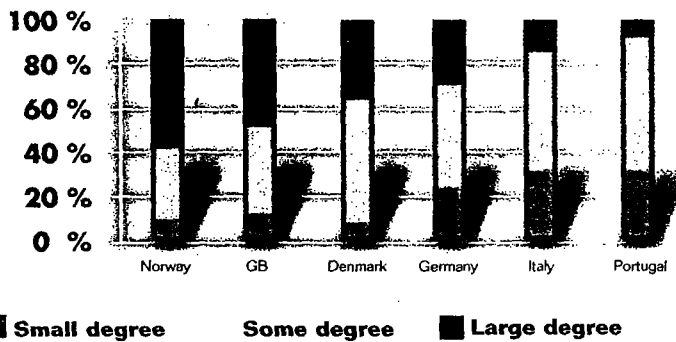




## Trust varies

Despite European harmonisation of regulations and market integration there is large variation between countries when it comes to trust in food and food institutions. Together with Norwegians and Danes, British consumers have high confidence in the food they bring home. Few Italian and Portuguese consumers have a high degree of confidence and many are distrustful. Germans occupy a middle position.

**To what degree are you confident that the foods bought for your household are not harmful?**

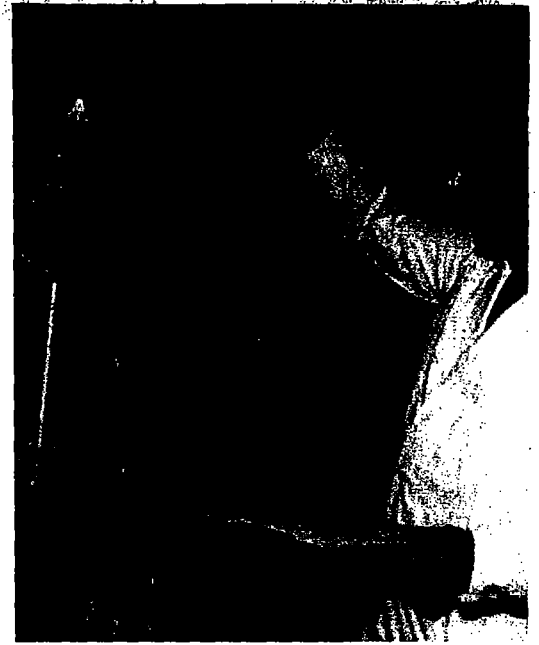


## A changing role of consumers

Consumers receive a lot of attention in today's food policy debates. But the understanding what a "consumer" is differs between countries. While British consumers fit best into the notion of active and conscious individual shoppers, Nordic consumers, and Norwegians in particular, rely much more on public protection. Consumers in the south are less active, but they do not trust public protection either, ending with a privatised consumer role, relying more on personal networks. The German consumer role comes out as most controversial, shifting between all of these positions.

The role of consumers seems to be changing. This is particularly evident at the EU level, but also in several countries. From being seen as private family members to be protected or as rational, individual shoppers, we see the emergence of a citizen consumer role with agency and concerns for personal as well as wider political and welfare issues.





## Division of responsibilities

Clear division of responsibilities between the state, various market actors and individual consumers seems to promote trust. Countries with low levels of trust show significant controversy between actors and fragmented responsibilities, while high consumer trust levels is reflected even in consensus and clarity when it comes to the division of responsibilities. This is particularly evident for public regulatory authorities.

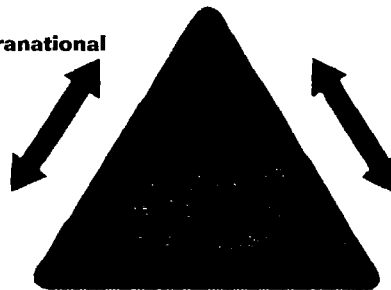
## An illustration of structures, actors and relations

### AUTHORITIES

Local, National, Supranational

### CIVIL SOCIETY

Experts, NGOs, Media



### SYSTEM OF FOOD PROVISIONING

Farmers, Processors, Retailers

### CONSUMERS

Shoppers, Eaters, Citizens



## Trust and power

Consumers faced with these different configurations of actors trust some actors more than others. Consumer organisations and food experts are most trusted to tell the truth in case of a scandal, followed by food authorities and the media. Market actors - farmers, the processing industry and the supermarkets - are significantly less trusted. Yet it is the market actors, along with the food authorities, that matter most for trust in food because they have the most power and control. In high-trust countries at least one or two powerful actors are trusted to tell the truth in case of a food scandal. Low-trust countries have no actors with significant power in whom the population have confidence.

## Trust and different distribution systems

High-trust countries have supermarket based distribution systems. Supermarket based distribution systems provide specific conditions for purchasing, with impersonal relations and emphasis on standardisation, routinization and pre-packaged, processed foods. This is very different from shopping from butchers, small shops and food markets which sell mostly fresh, unprocessed foods and where the exchange is relying more on personal relations. In general, countries where supermarkets predominate show higher levels of trust in food safety (UK, Denmark, Norway) whereas countries where other forms of food distribution are also

significant show considerably lower levels of trust. Trust may be associated with higher predictability, but it may also be due to lower expectations and less knowledge among supermarket shoppers.



## Trust is a moving target: from safety to nutrition?



When it comes to food safety public and private institutional reforms seem to have had positive effects in several countries. However, this does not mean that all trust problems are resolved. Consumer trust is not only referring to food safety but to a range of different food issues, like quality, nutrition, ethics and value for money. These different issues are handled differently and trust accordingly. For despite its widespread coverage in the mass media, food safety is not the issue that causes most worry. Other food issues emerging on the public agenda, for example nutrition, are associated with considerable uncertainty and controversy, and are characterised by unclear and fragmented responsibilities that may cause new waves of consumer distrust in food across Europe.





## **Consumer Trust in Food. A European Study of the Social and Institutional Conditions for the Production of Trust (2002 - 2004)**

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the social and institutional conditions for the production and maintenance of consumer trust in food. The study seeks to identify and analyse factors that shape trust in the food supply and in information sources. These factors include the roles of public authorities, consumer organisations, market actors, consumers, NGOs, and the mass media.

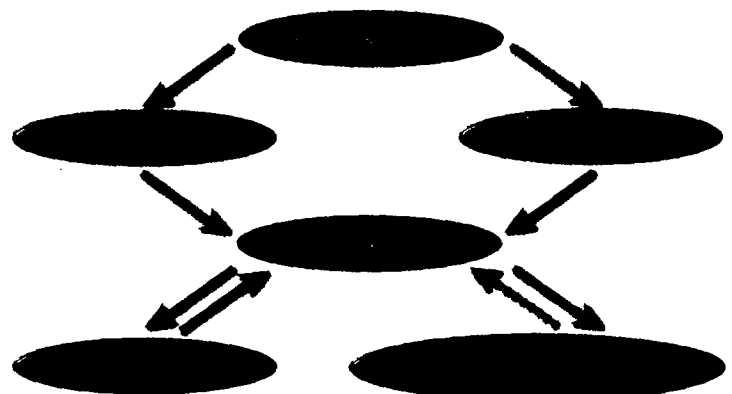
The analysis will integrate data from (1) a representative survey about how consumers handle challenges of trust and distrust in the routines of everyday life, and (2) qualitative enquiries (documentary analyses, key informant interviews) at various institutional levels (regional, national, EU) about the conditions for trust. A special focus on beef and tomatoes will more fully illuminate the relations between consumer trust and collective actors and institutions in the food system.

The project will provide a critical analysis of alternative strategies for handling trust and distrust under varying conditions throughout Europe.

The project expects to achieve a policy relevant appreciation of the role of citizens and consumer organisations in articulating the interests of consumers within the context of European food markets and food policy systems.



### **The structure of the study**



## Responsible partners

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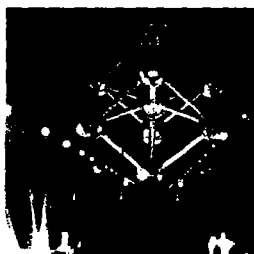
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## Further information

Find the country reports in the section Working Papers on [www.trustinfood.org](http://www.trustinfood.org)

**Laura Terragni**, 2004: Institutional strategies for the production of trust in food in Norway, Working Paper

**Maria Paola Ferretti, Paolo Magaudda**, 2004: Italy: Between Local Traditions and Global Aspirations, Working Paper

**Annemette Nielsen, Terkel Møhl**, 2004: A Decade of Change in the Danish Food System, Working Paper

**Corinne Wales**, 2004: Country report: United Kingdom, Working Paper

**Mafalda Domingues, Pedro Graça, M. Daniel Vaz de Almeida**, 2004: Portuguese Consumers Trust in Food: an institutional approach, Working Paper

**Thorsten Lenz**, 2004: Consumer first? Shifting responsibilities in the German food system in the light of European integration and the BSE crises, Working Paper

**Florence Bergeaud-Blackler**, 2004: Institutional Report: European Union, Working Paper

### About the **Consumer Survey**:

Christian Poppe and Unni Kjærnes, 2004: TRUST IN FOOD IN EUROPE - A Comparative Analysis, Working Paper

Further publications are planned. Please check the website for details.

You are invited to visit the study's website

<http://www.trustinfood.org>

and/or contact the Coordinator or other Partners directly.

This research project is supported by the **European Commission**, Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources Programme (QoL), Key Action 1 (KA1) on Food, Nutrition and Health.

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