

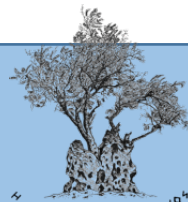
***Towards farms with zero carbon-, waste- and water-footprint. Roadmap for sustainable management strategies for Balkan agricultural sector***

**“Perspective of Greek farmers and policy makers towards agribusinesses**

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Heraklion, 27-06-2019**

Project co-funded by the European Union and National Funds of the participating countries



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## **Which are the obstacles that farmers face towards implementing sustainability practices?**

Balkan agricultural sector faces strong challenges in terms of unsustainable resources management and GHGs emissions.

GAP analysis was performed in order the most crucial gaps for adoption of sustainable agricultural and products processing practices to be identified and critically discussed.

Emphasis was given to extract issues of current knowledge and future needs of sustainable agriculture in Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Albania.

## Which are the obstacles that farmers face towards implementing sustainability practices?

The e-survey took place for two months.

### **Two target groups:**

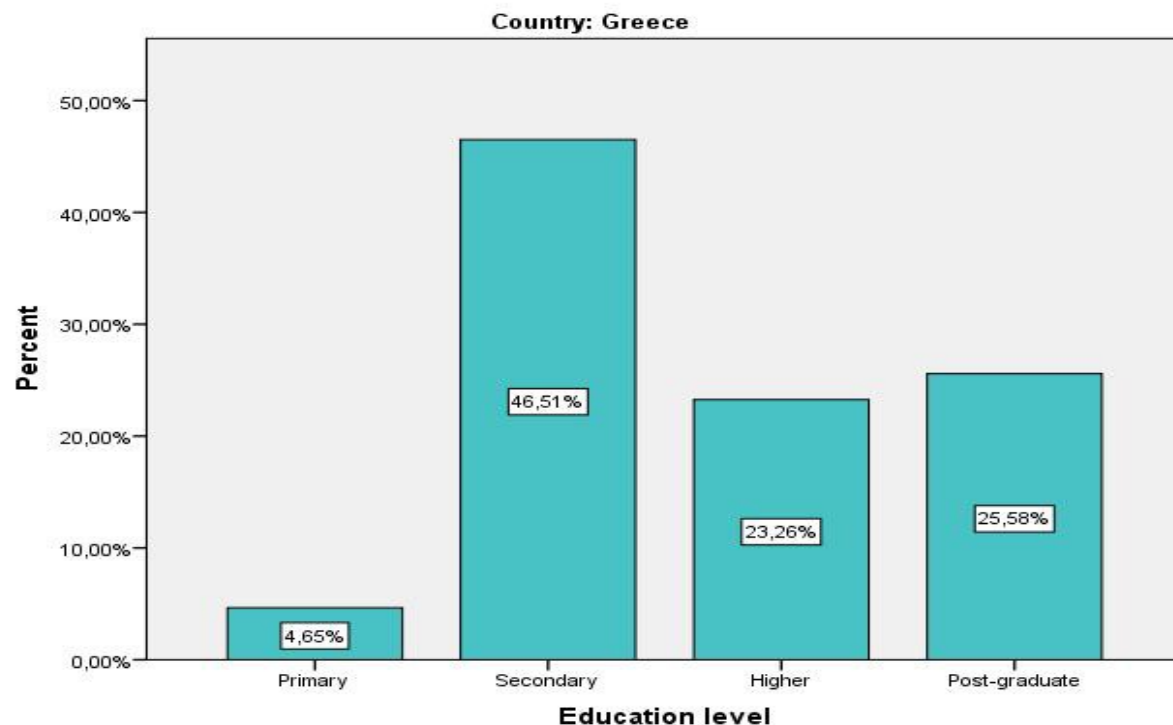
**TG-1:** managers/heads of farmers cooperatives/agronomists as persons/links between the government and the farmers. Part of the first target group were also individual farmers/producers of different agricultural products.

**TG-2:** policy makers and regional authorities, such as leaders and heads of local authorities, representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, decision makers, state agencies and other stakeholders.

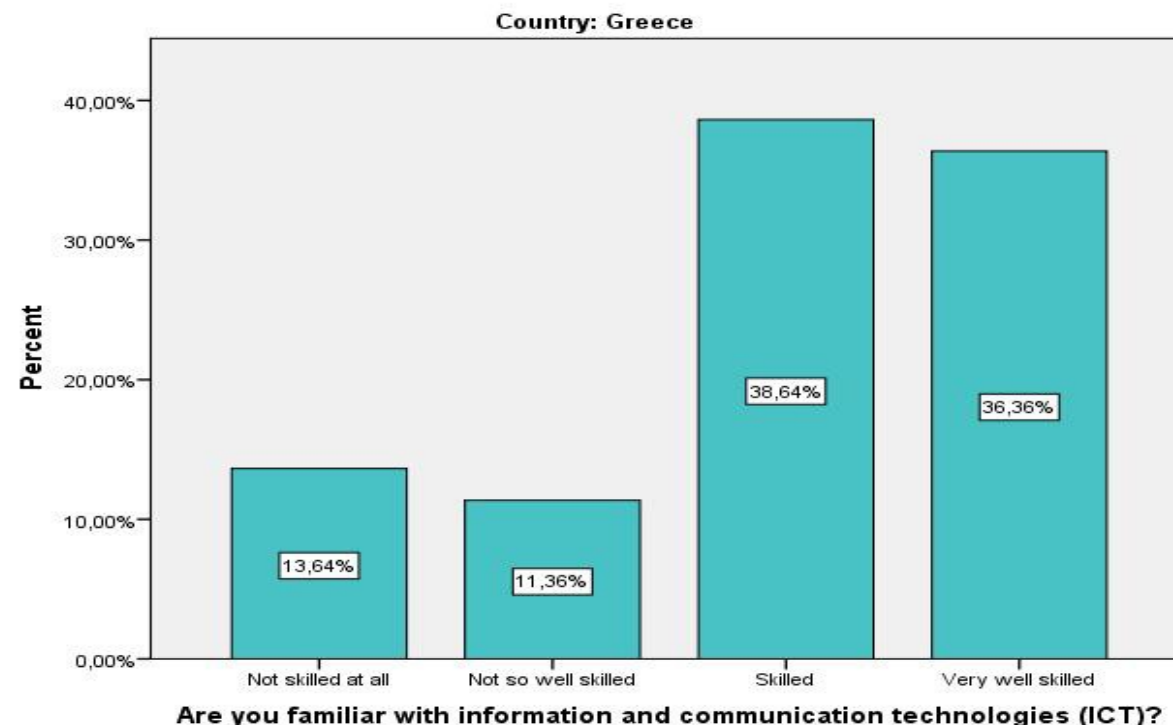
## Greece

**In total, 42 farmers and 8 policy makers were participated in the survey by filling in the respective e-questionnaires.**

Education level of the interviewees

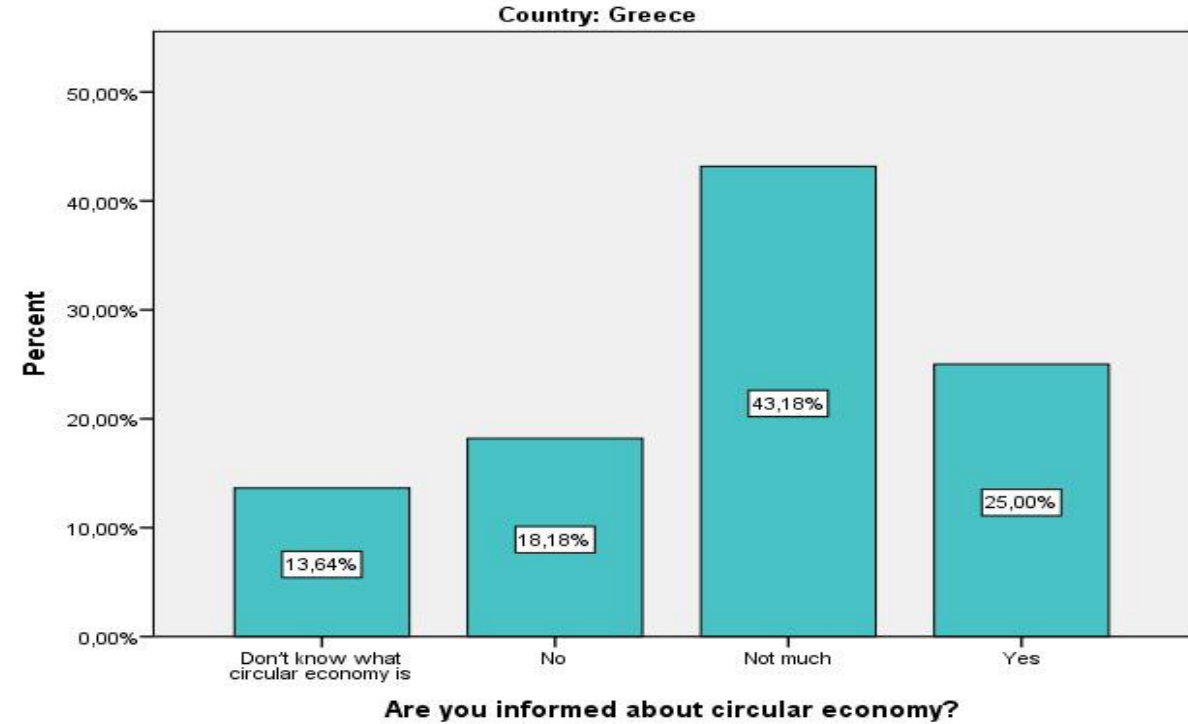
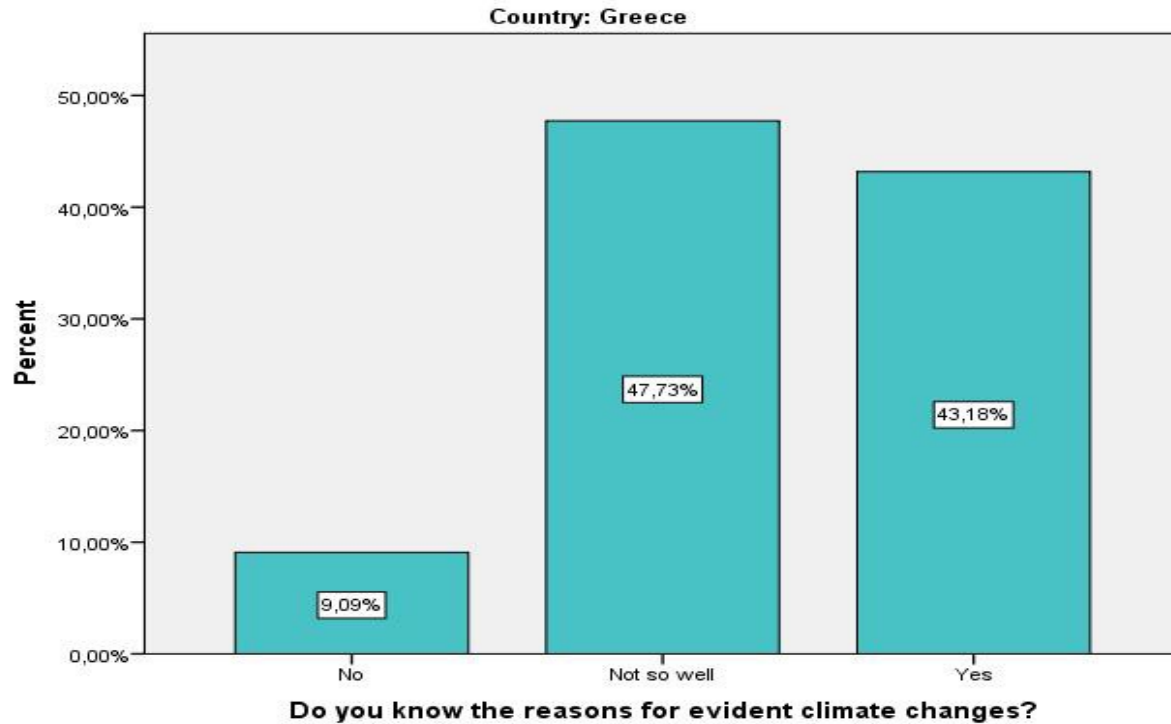


Familiarity of the interviewees of TG-1



**The educational level of Greek farmers and people who own different types of agribusinesses raised compared to the past years. Although secondary education level dominates. Familiarity with ICT skills can be also characterized as very satisfactory.**

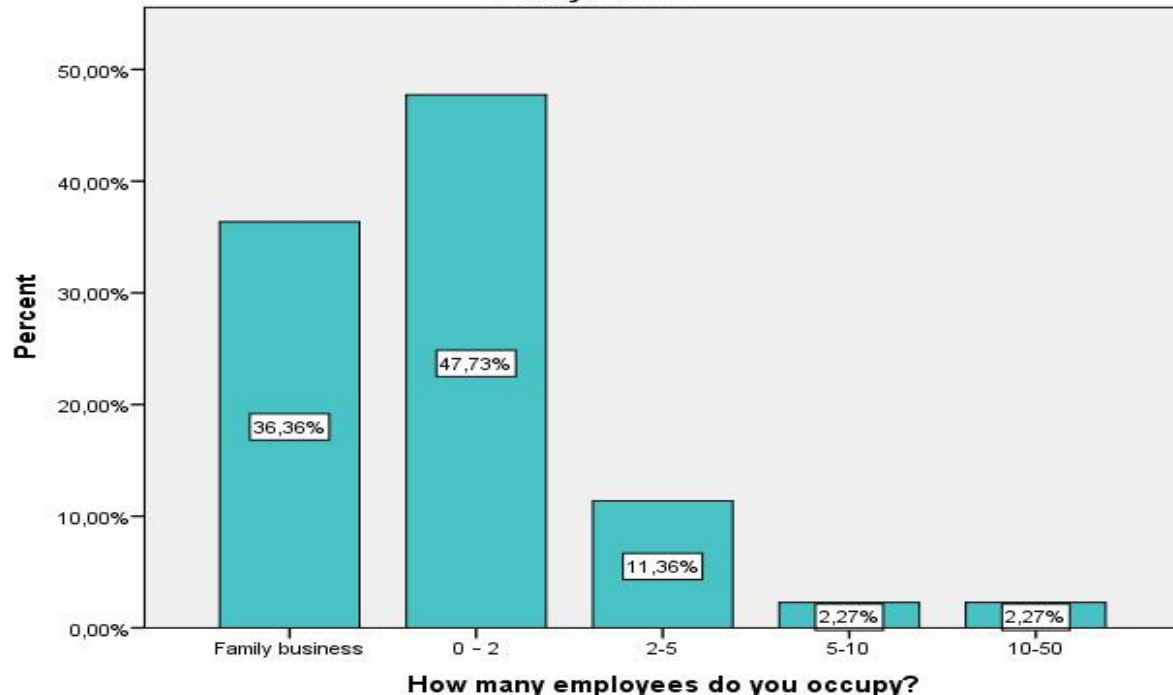
amiliarity of the interviewees of TG-1 with climate change and familiarity of the interviewees of TG-1 with circular economy



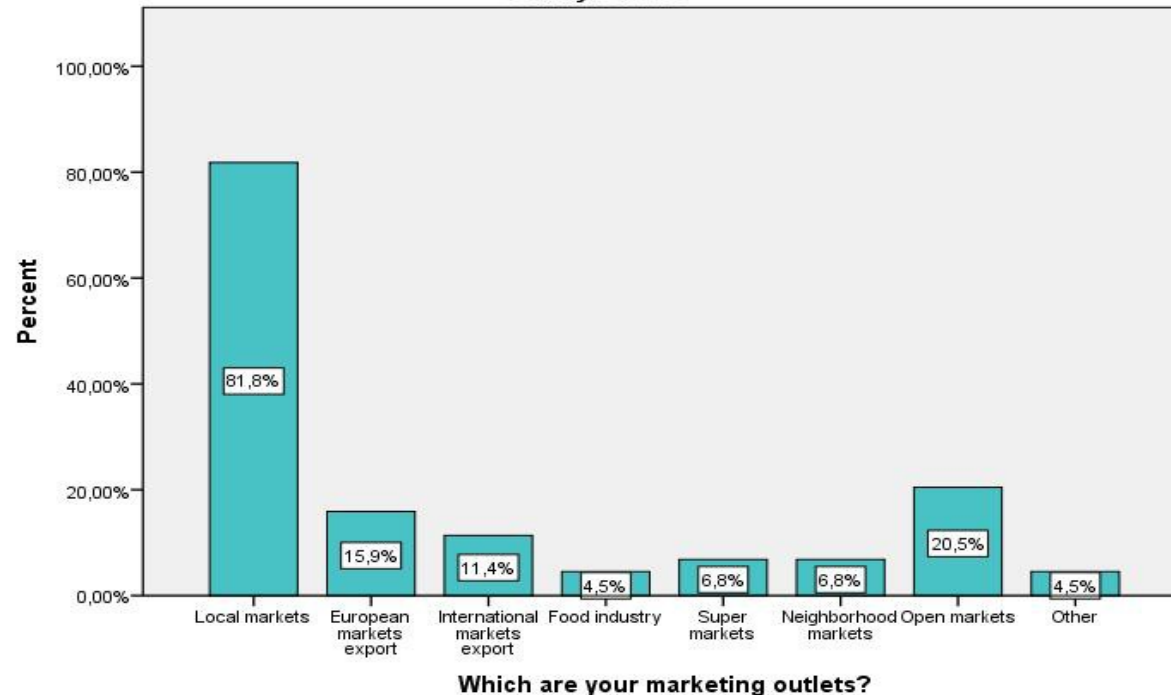
**The awareness level of interviewees of TG-1 about climate change, impacts of agriculture and circular economy is satisfactory. It is mentioned that TG-1 receives information and knowledge mainly from the web sites.**

Employees occupied by farmers or agribusinesses Marketing outlets used by the interviewees of TG-1

Country: Greece

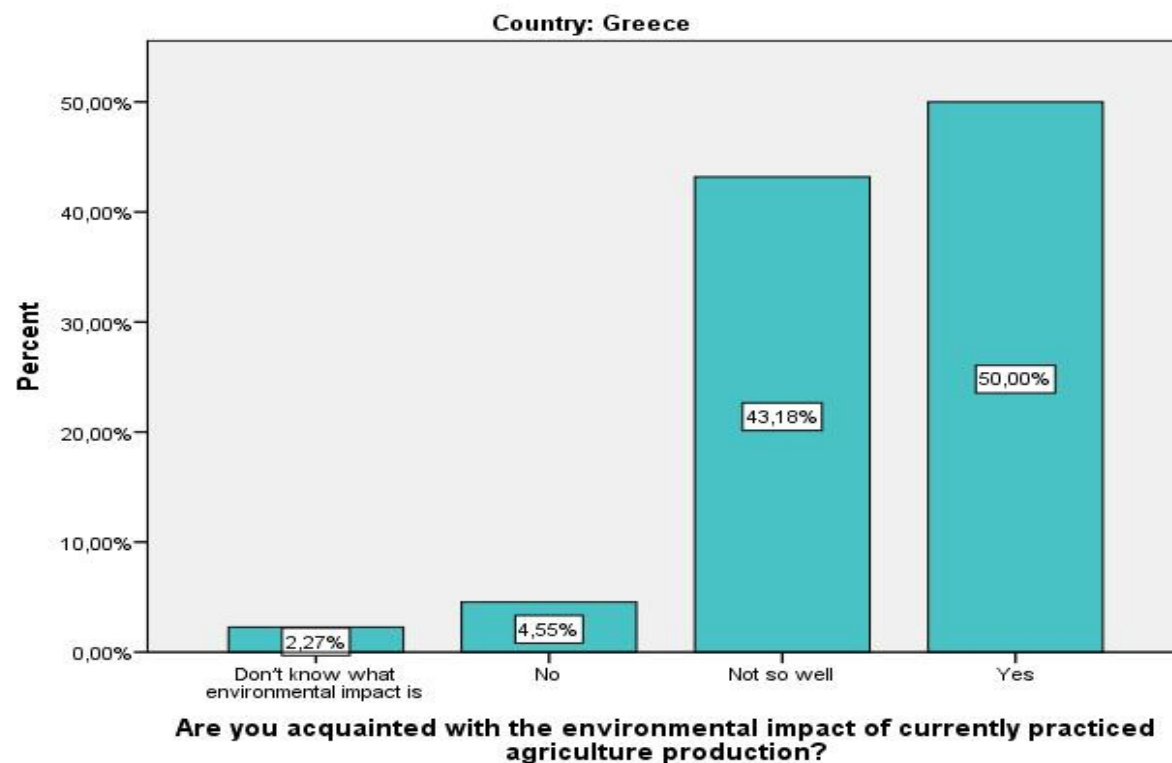


Country: Greece



**Small holdings, family businesses and enterprises employing small number of employees are the main characteristics of the Greek agricultural sector. Local markets absorb mainly the agricultural products. Open markets and European markets also absorb a significant percentage of the products.**

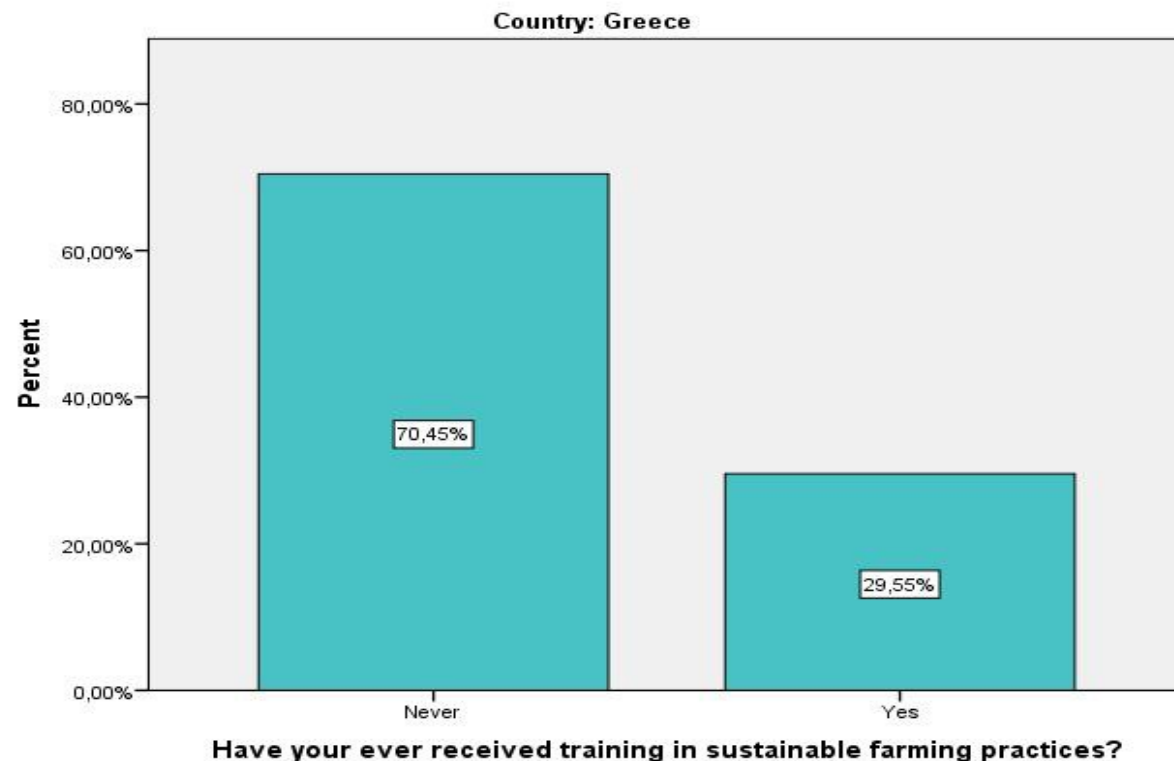
Familiarity of the interviewees of TG-1 with the  
environmental impact of currently practiced agricultural  
production



The majority of the Greek agricultural producers are acquainted with the environmental impact of the currently practiced agricultural production. An extremely small percentage of the producers (2,27%) don't know about the environmental impacts of agriculture.



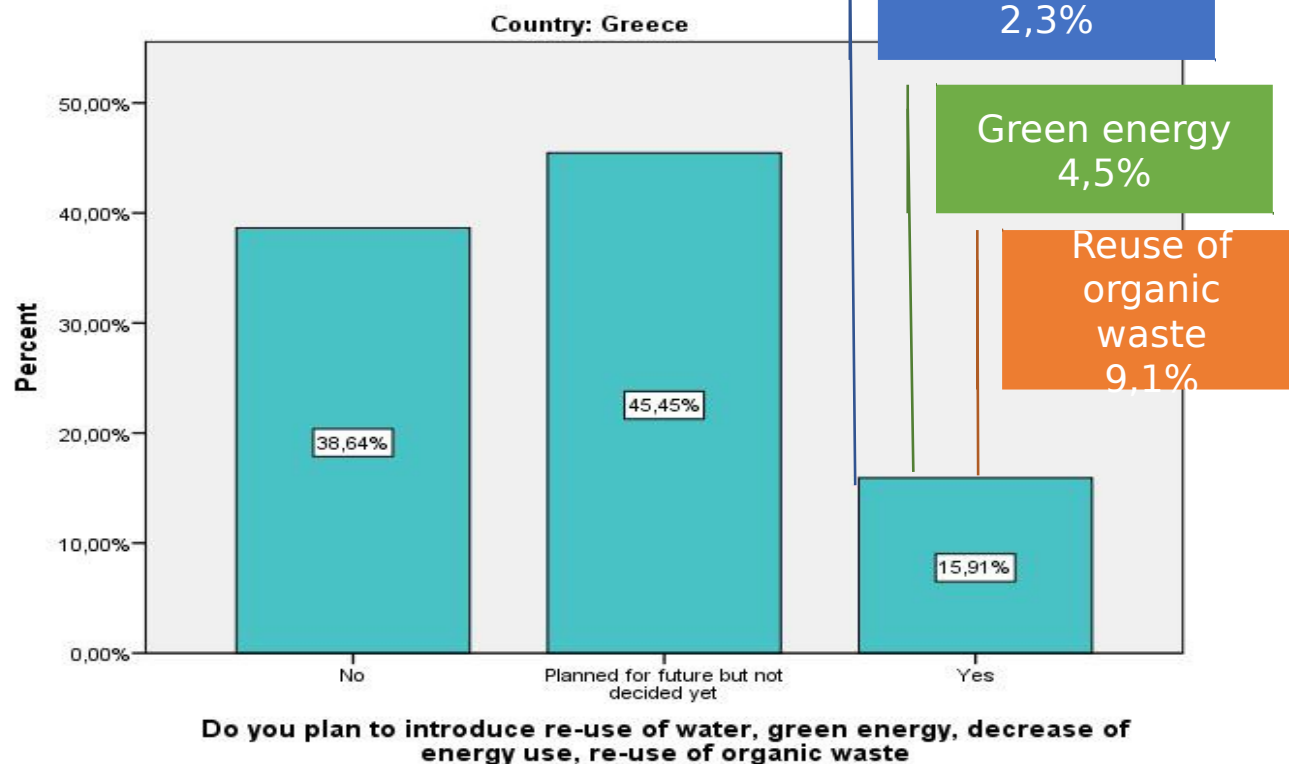
Answers of the interviewees about whether they have received training on sustainable practices



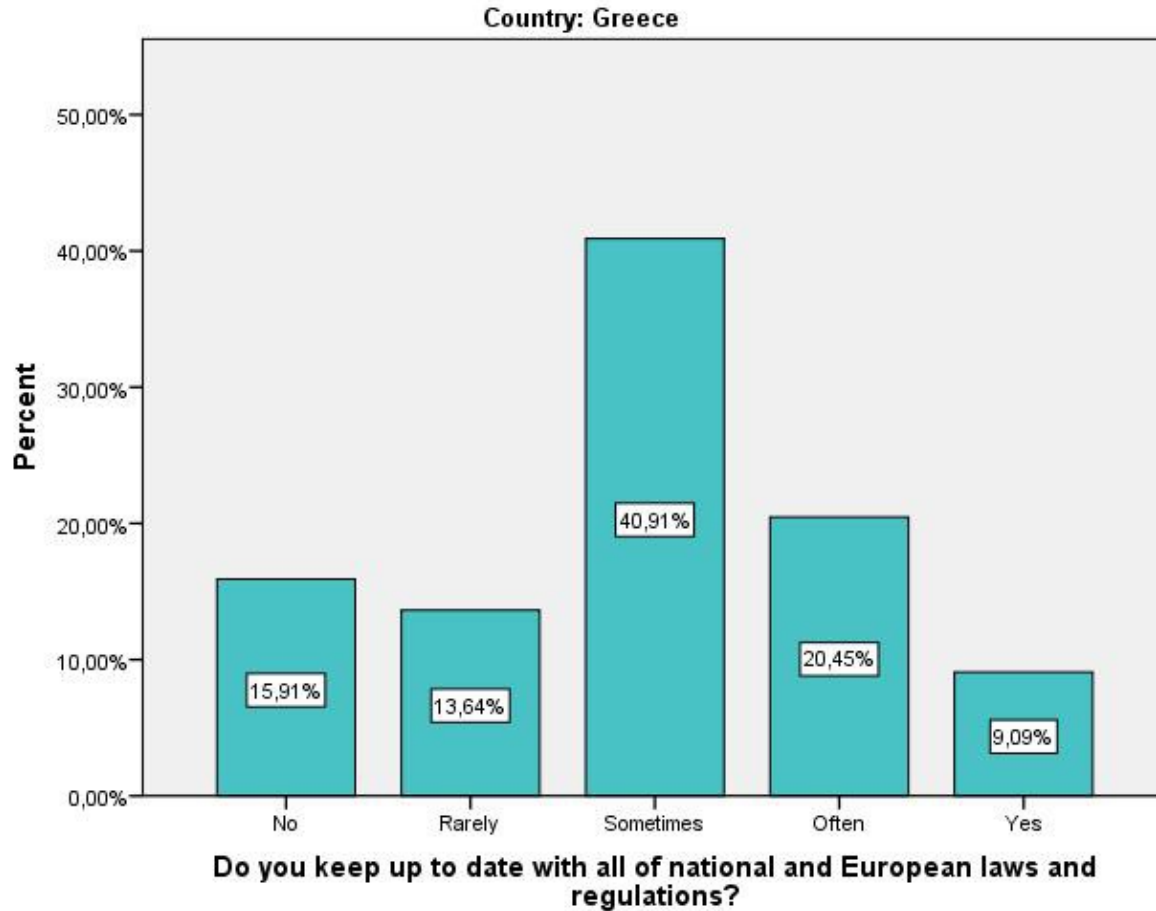
A significantly high percentage of Greek farmers, has not been trained about sustainable farming practices. However, the majority of the young farmers would like to be trained about sustainable agriculture, to learn about new practices, to acquire new skills, so they can apply them to any cultivation.



Answers provided to the question whether the interviewees plan to introduce re-use of water, green energy, decrease of energy use and re-use of organic waste.



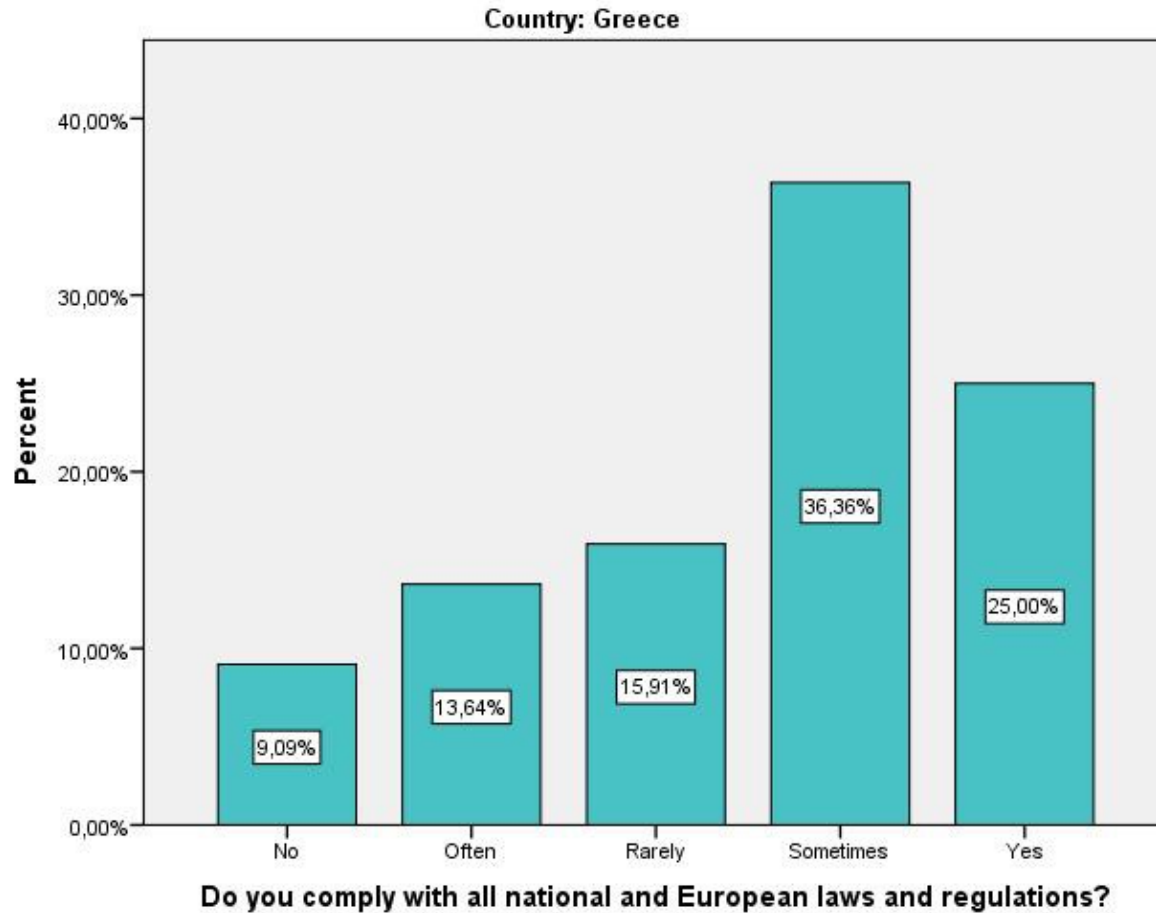
Almost the 16% of the Greek farmers are positive to adopt sustainable practices at the near future. 2,3% are interested in the reuse of the water, 4,5% in green energy and 9,1% in the reuse of organic wastes. However, a significant percentage of the interviewees (38,64%) are not aware of the existence of know-how.



Answers of the interviewees of TG-1 about whether they keep themselves up to date with national and European laws and regulations.

29,5% always / often they keep themselves up to date  
40,9% sometimes they keep themselves up to date  
29,6% rarely / never they keep themselves up to date

Answers of the interviewees about whether they comply with national and European laws and regulations

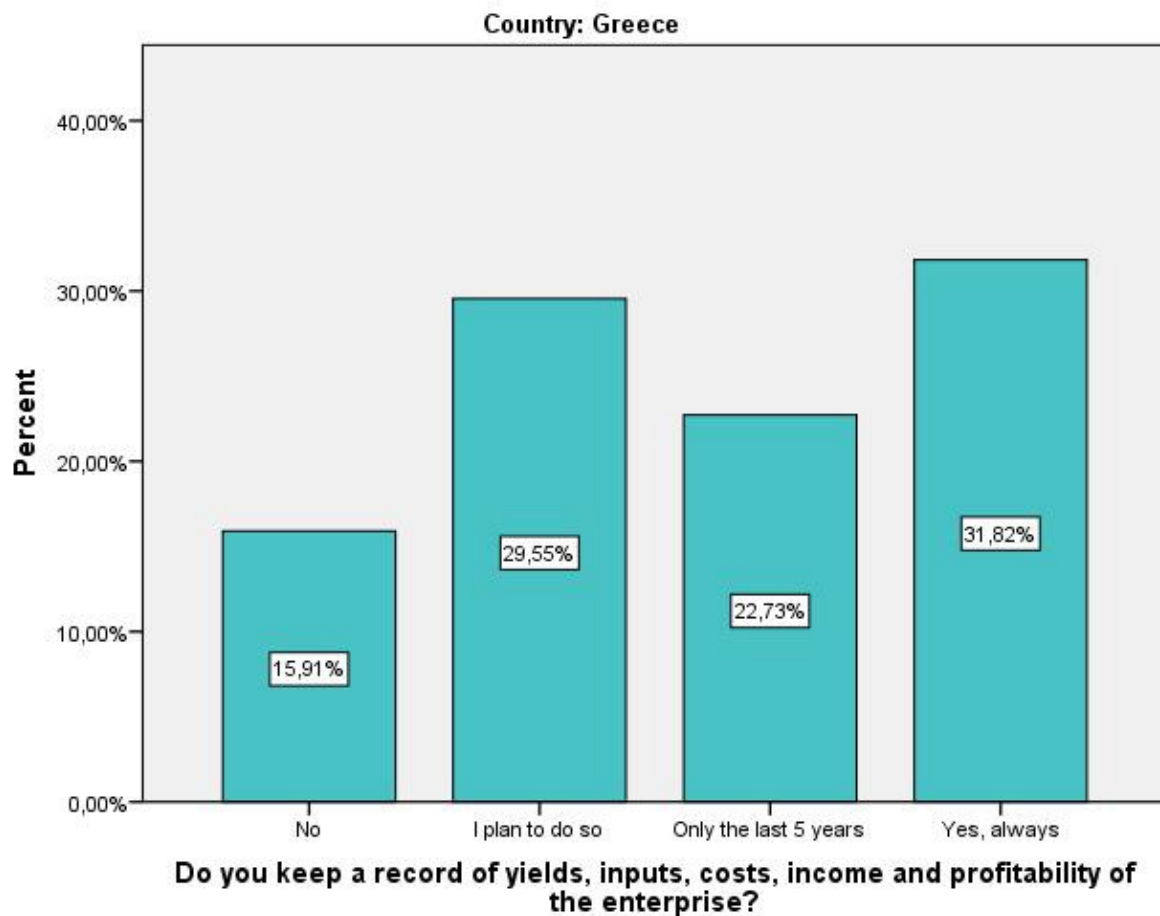


Answers of the interviewees about whether they comply with national and European laws and regulations.

38,6% always / often they comply with national and European laws and regulations

36,4% sometimes they comply with national and European laws and regulations

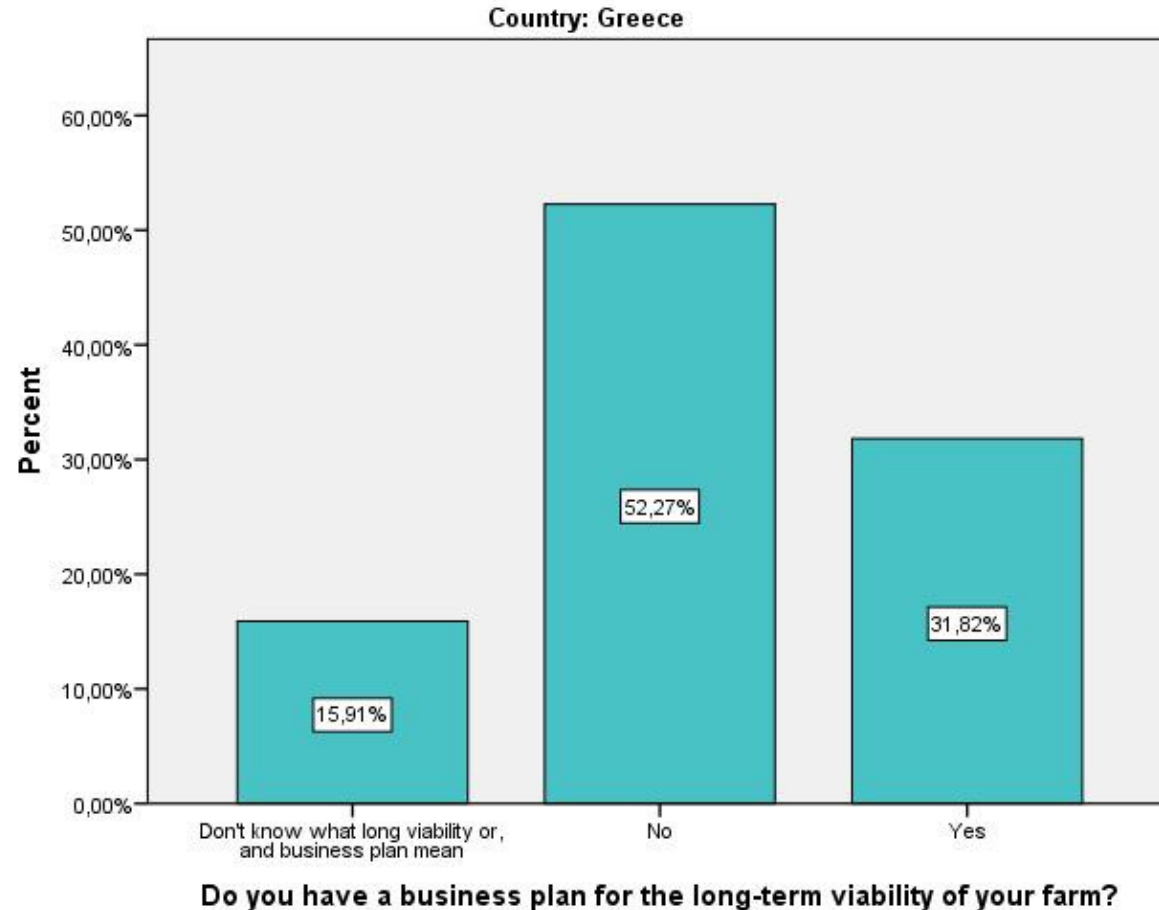
25,0% rarely / never they comply with national and European laws and regulations



Answers regarding monitoring of the farms/enterprises (i.e. recording of yield, inputs, costs, income and profitability of the enterprise).

Almost the 1/3 of the interviewees always keep recordings of yield, inputs, costs, income and profitability of the enterprise.

Answers regarding the existence of business plan for the long-term viability of farms and enterprises



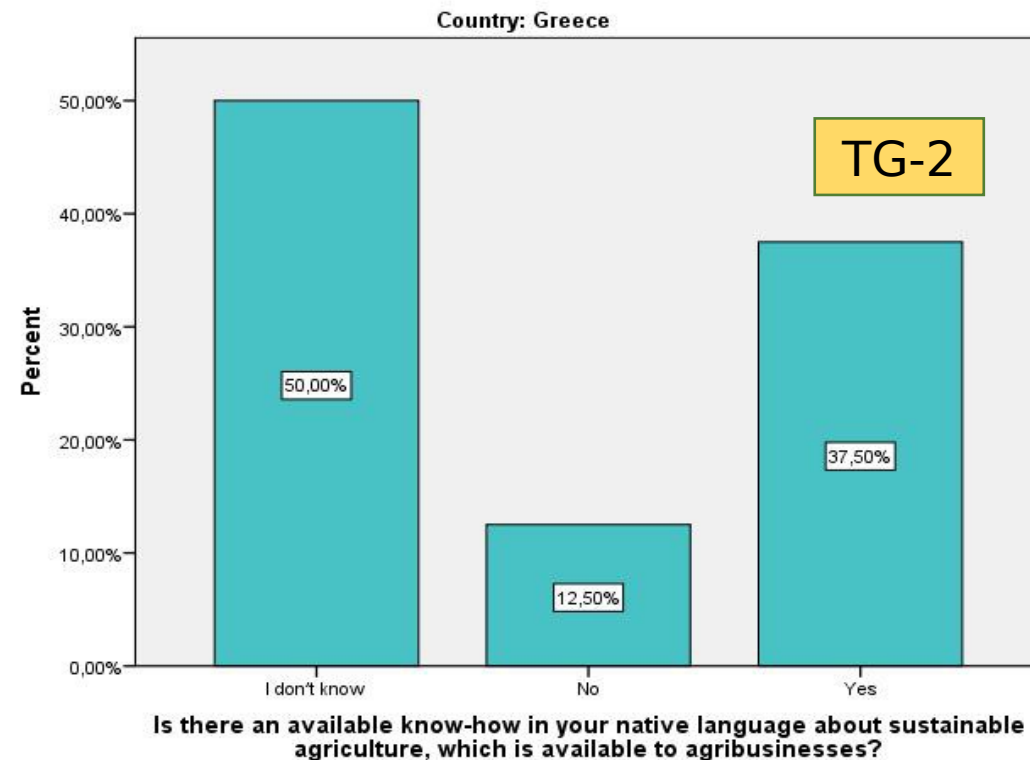
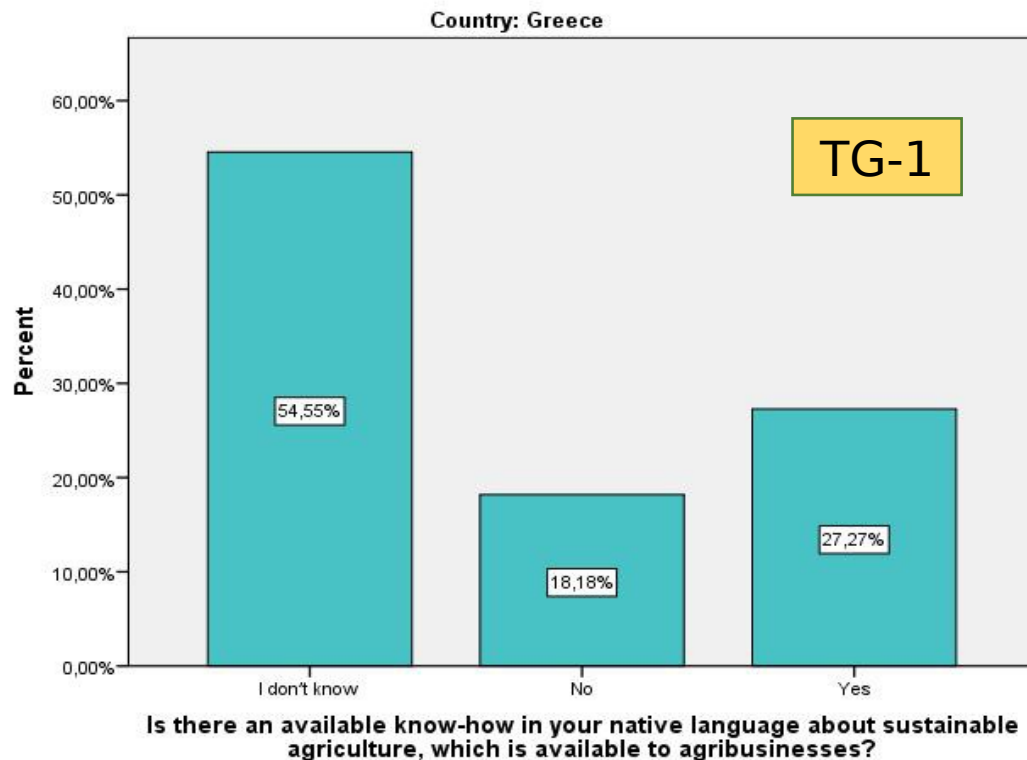
Answers regarding the existence of business plan for the long-term viability of farms and enterprises.

Over half of the interviewees don't have business plan for the long-term viability of their farms.

1/3 of the interviewees have a business plan about their farms.

A significantly percentage (almost 16%) of the interviewees don't know about the business plan.

**Question: Are you aware of available know-how in your language.**



Answers regarding the availability of know-how about sustainable agriculture, which is available to agribusinesses.

TG-1: 27,27% answer "Yes"

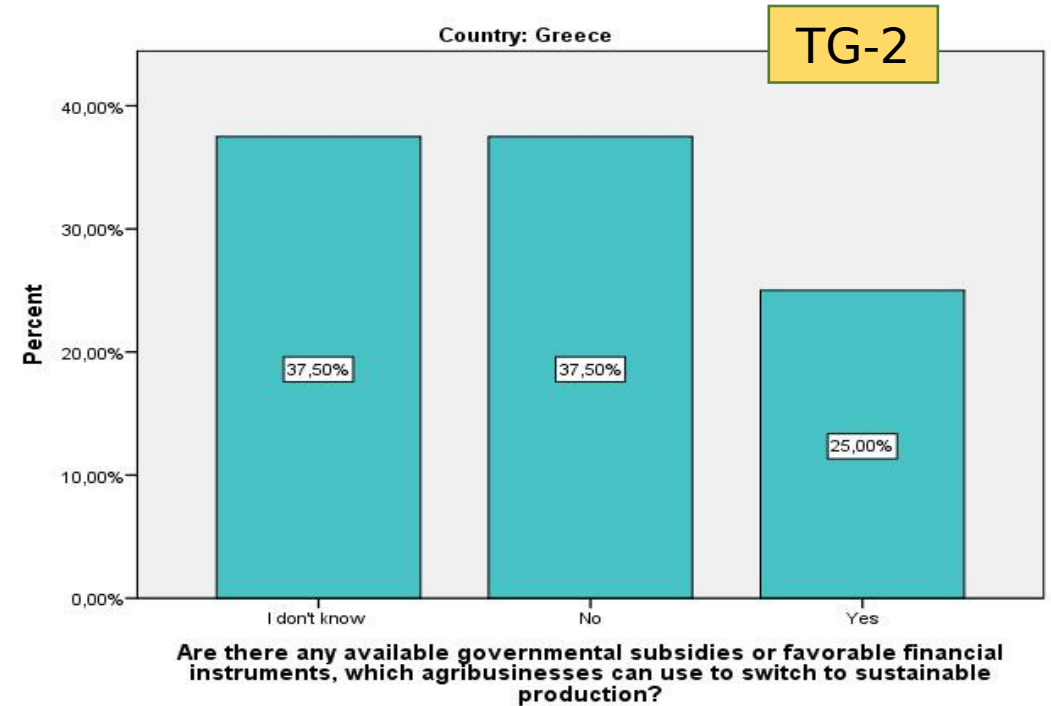
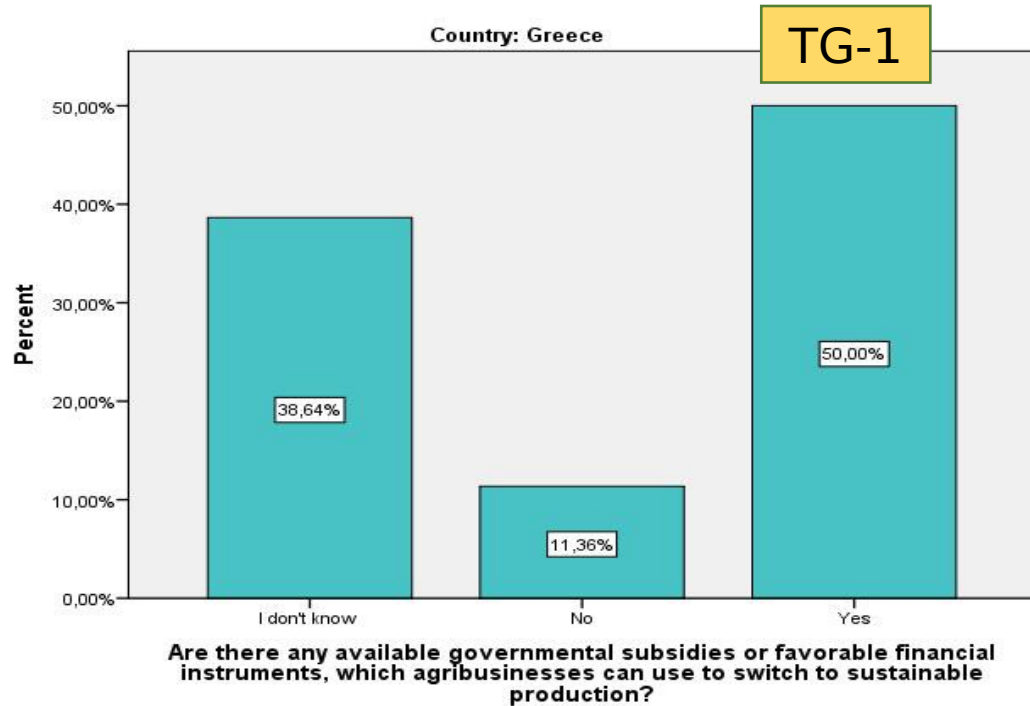
TG-2: 37,50% answer "Yes"

Because of the age of the Information Society, the percedages are still low.

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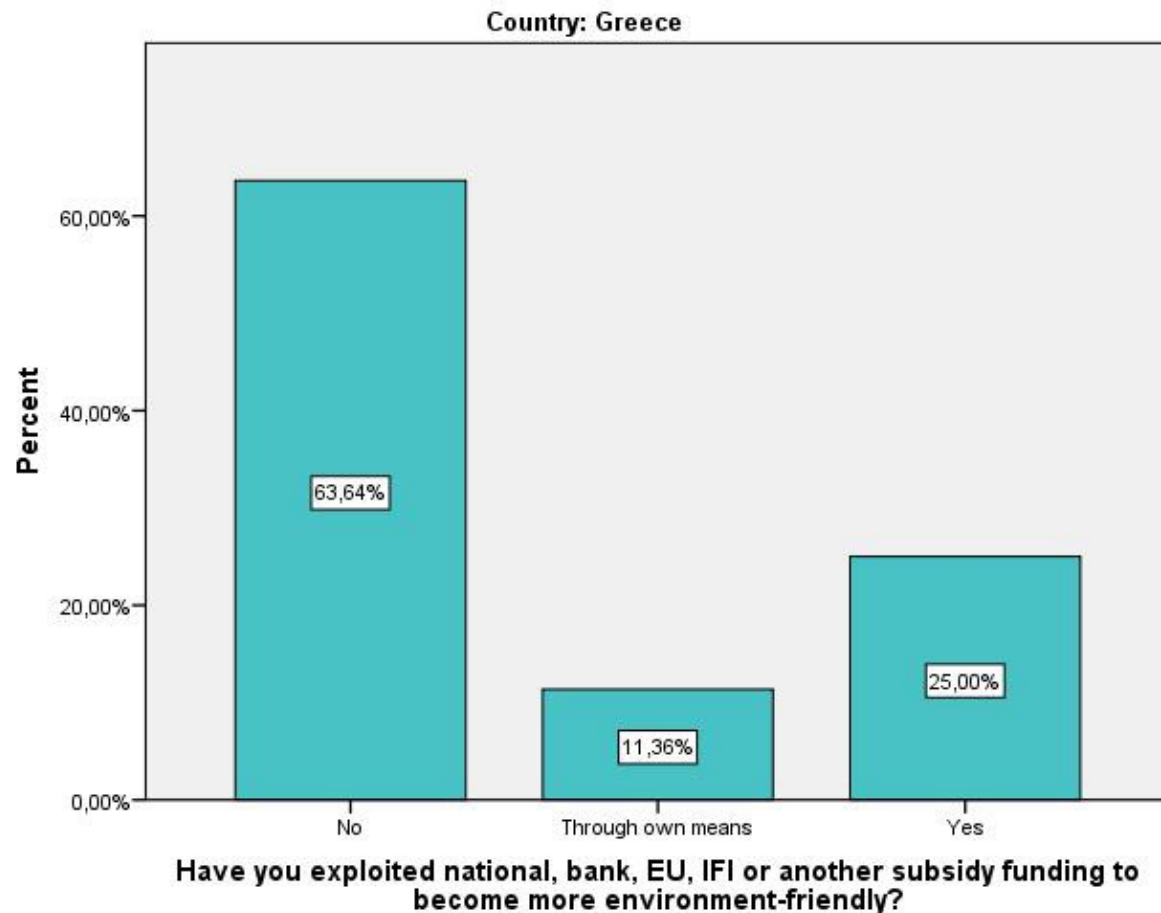
**Question:** Are you aware of any available governmental subsidies or favorable financial instruments, which agribusinesses can exploit to switch to sustainable production.



Answers regarding the available governmental subsidies or favorable financial instruments, which agribusinesses can exploit to switch to sustainable production.  
The 50% of the TG-1 interviewees and only the 25% of the TG-2 interviewees know about that.



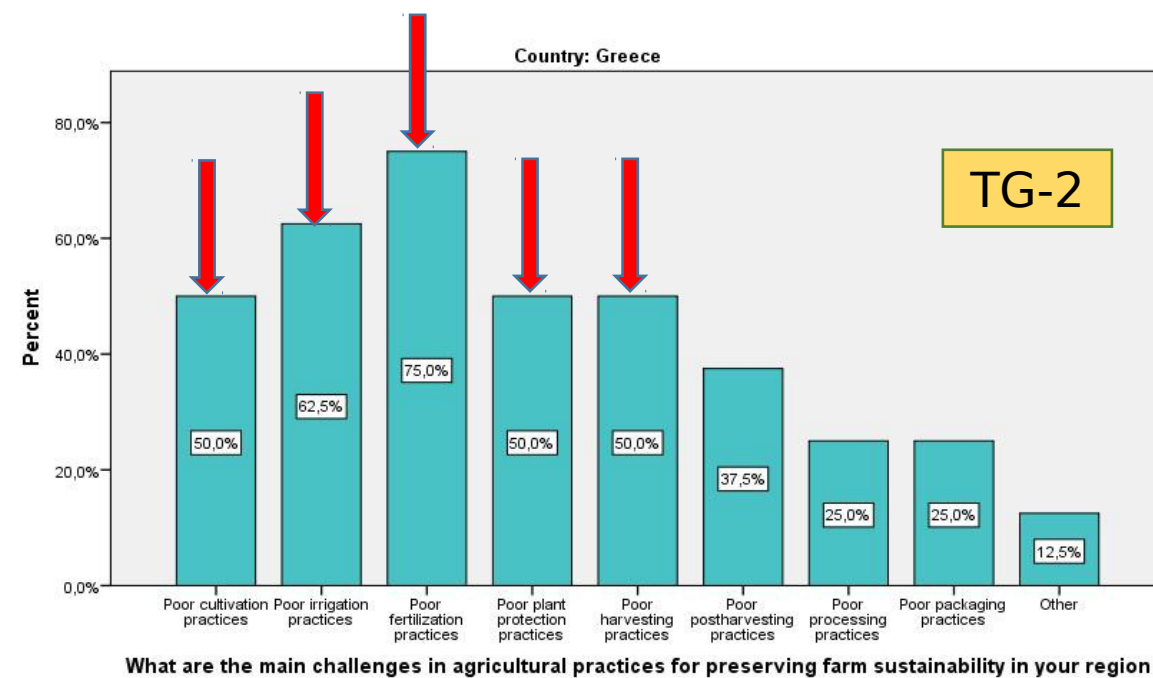
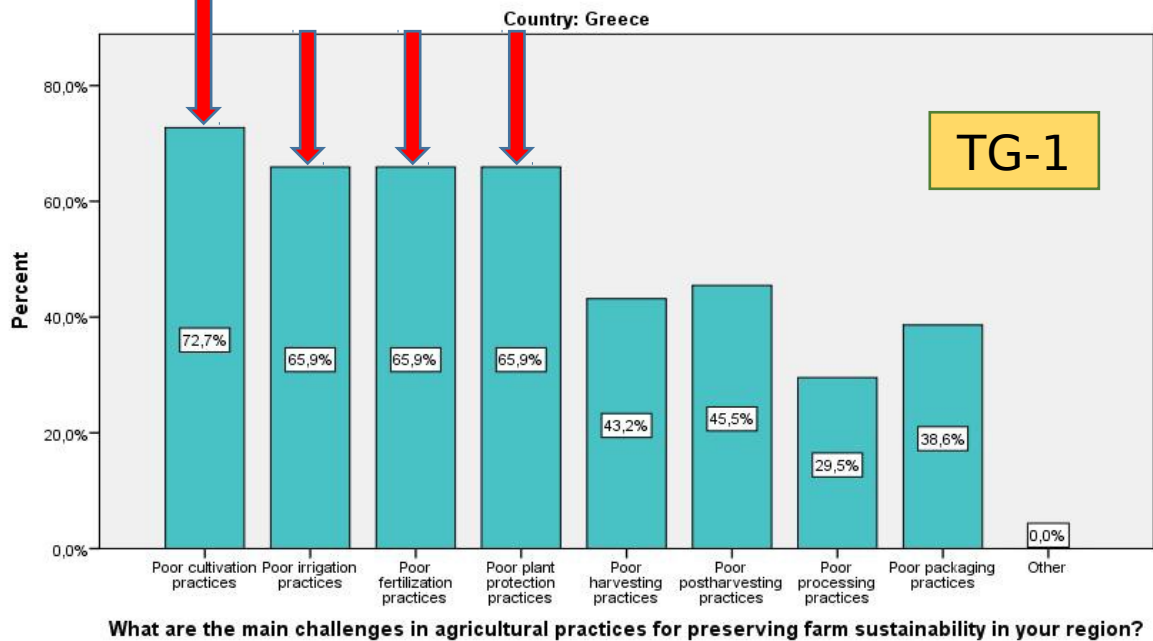
**Question:** Have you ever exploited bank, national, EU, IFI or other subsidy funding to become more environment friendly?



A share of 63,64% of the interviewees have never exploited bank, national, EU, IFI or other subsidy funding to become more environmentally friendly.

Only the ¼ of the interviewees have exploited funding to become more environmentally friendly.

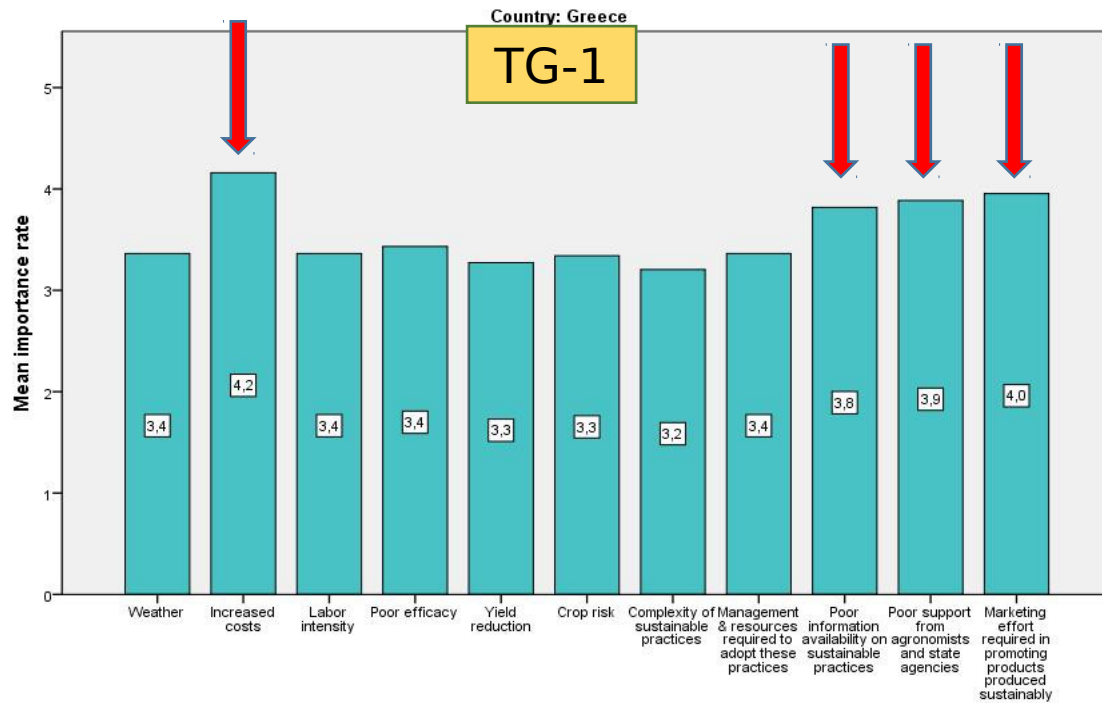
**Question:** What are the main challenges in terms of agricultural practices for preserving sustainability



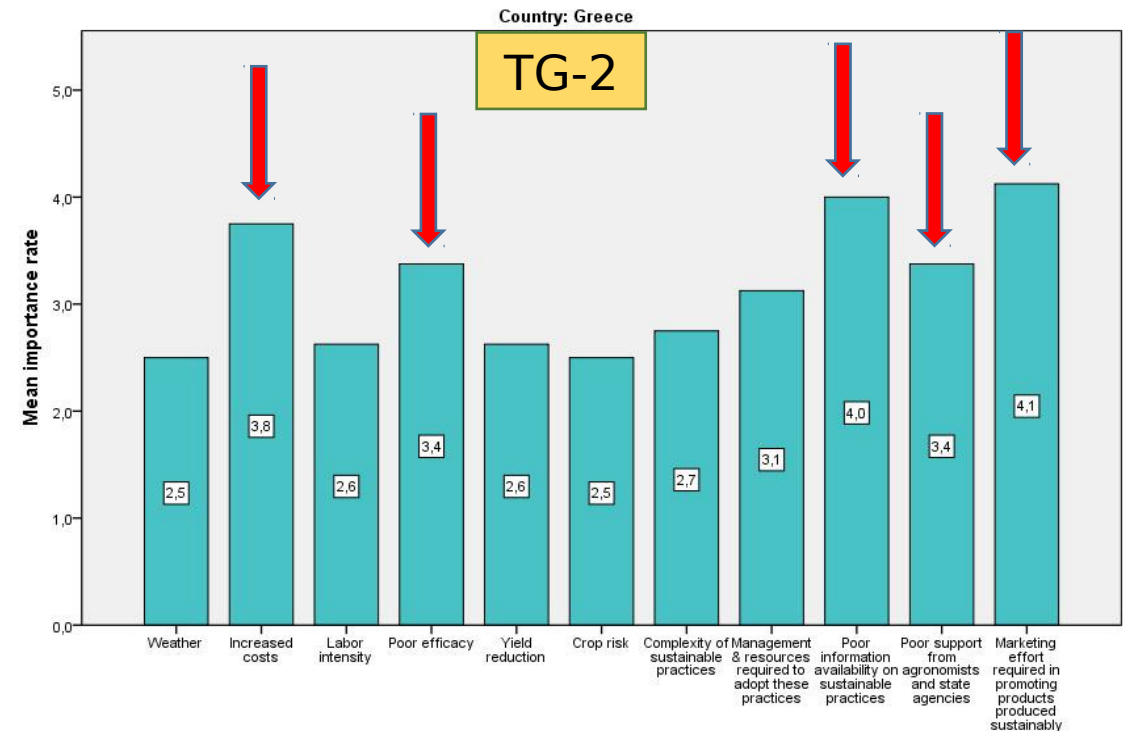
Poor practices currently implemented for cultivation, irrigation, plant protection and fertilization were prioritized as challenges for preserving sustainability by the interviewees of TG-1.

Poor practices currently implemented for cultivation, irrigation, plant protection, fertilization and harvesting were prioritized as challenges for preserving sustainability by the interviewees of TG-2.

**Question:** Which factors do you consider as obstacles for producers to implement sustainable practices?



Which are the obstacles that farmers face towards implementing sustainability practices?

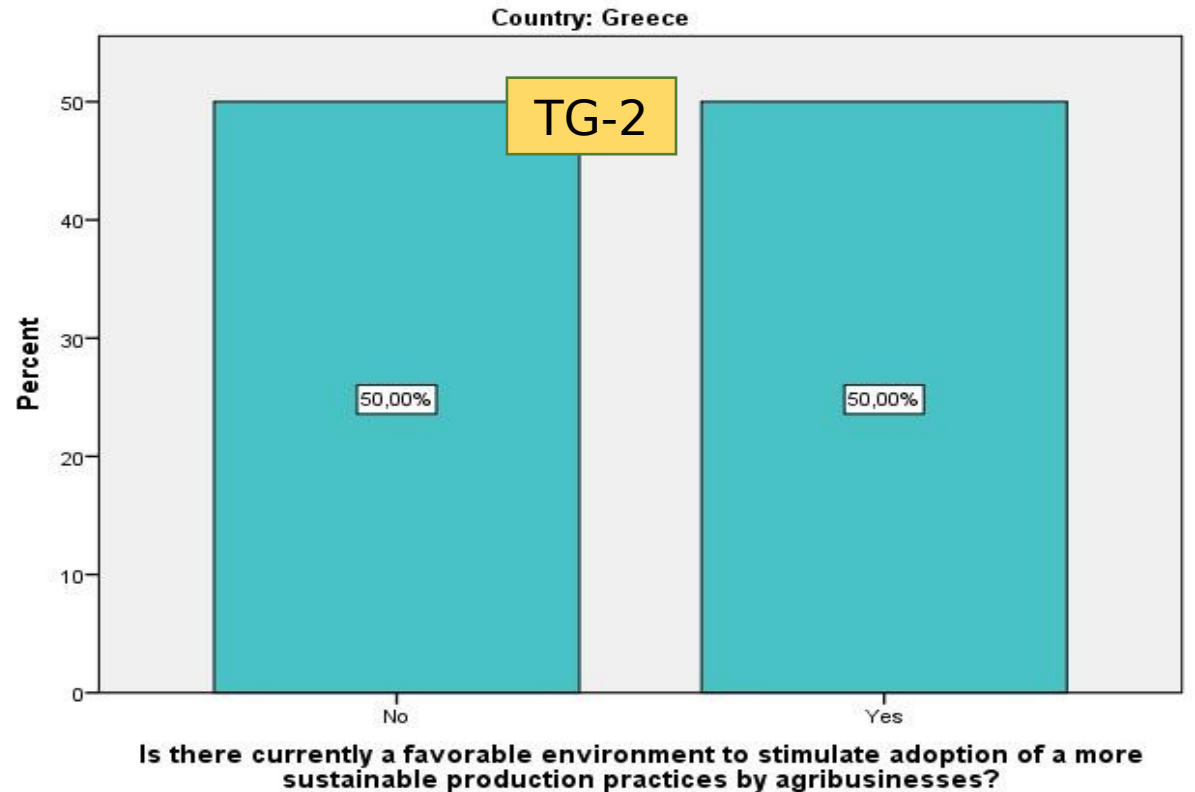
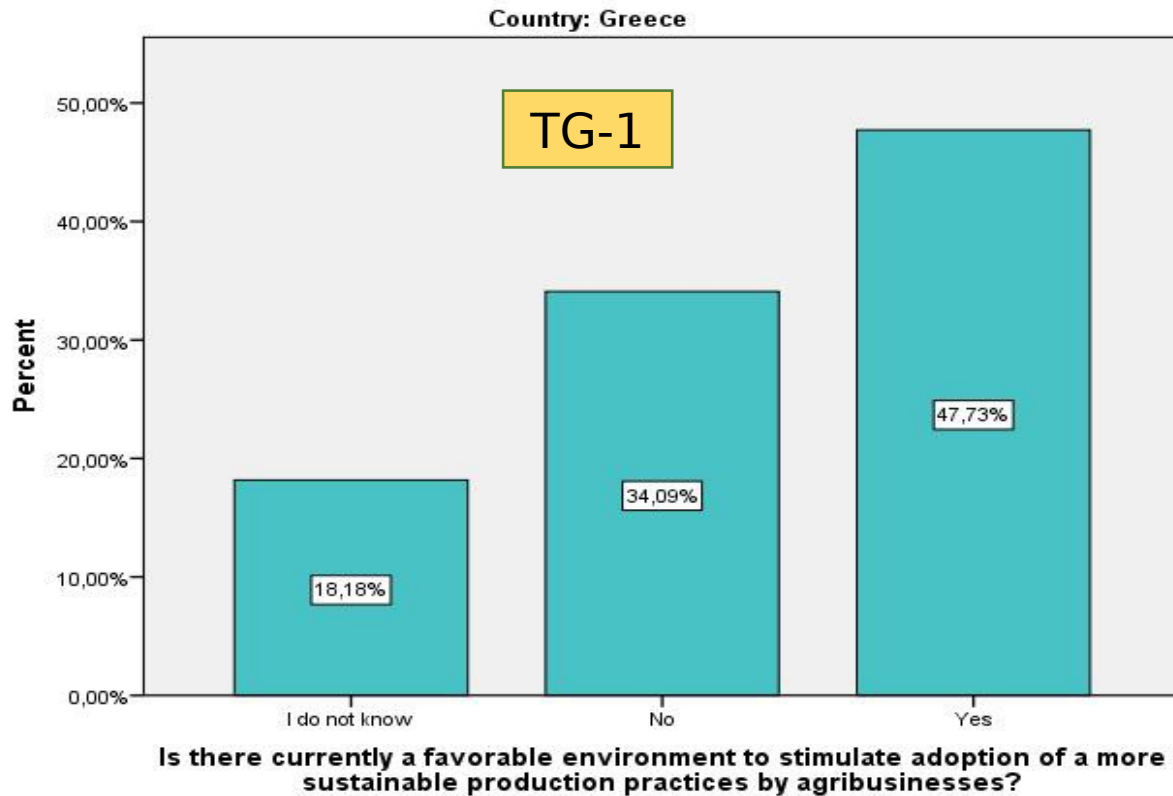


Which are the obstacles that farmers face towards implementing sustainability practices?

Many of the obstacles for producers to implement sustainable practices, as were defined by TG-1, owed to: lack of information flow from the competent authorities to producers, lack of support from governmental agencies, poor information, poor support from local agronomists and weak support for orienting sustainable agriculture products to the markets.

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**Question:** Is there currently a favorable environment to stimulate adoption of more sustainable p



Almost 50% of farmers / agribusinesses and policy makers agree that there is currently a favorable environment to stimulate adoption of more sustainable production practices

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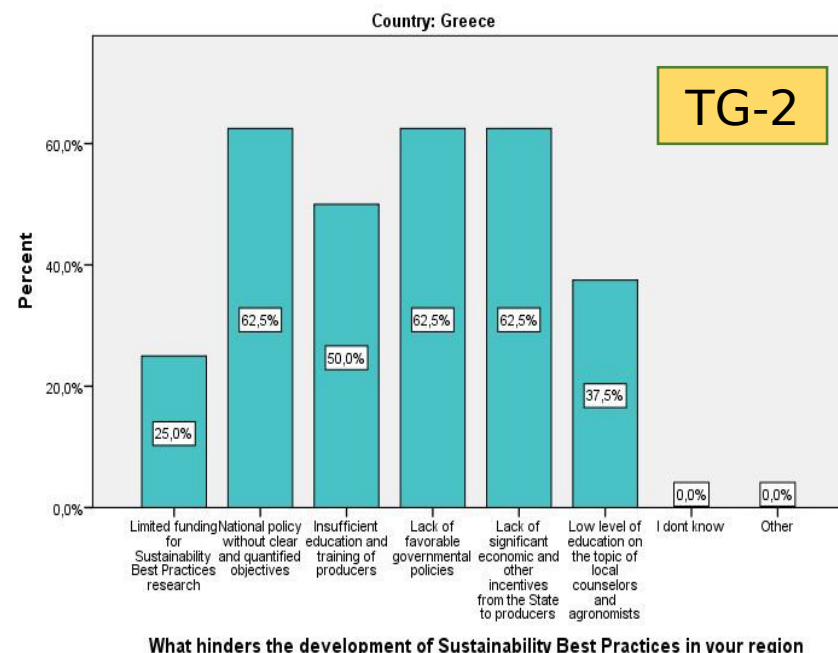
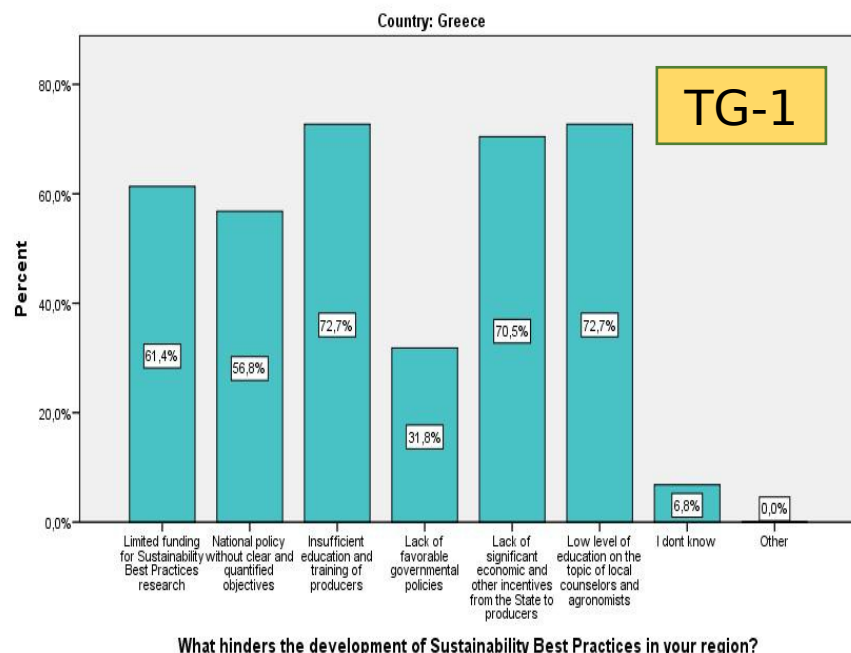


Factors defined by both

groups:

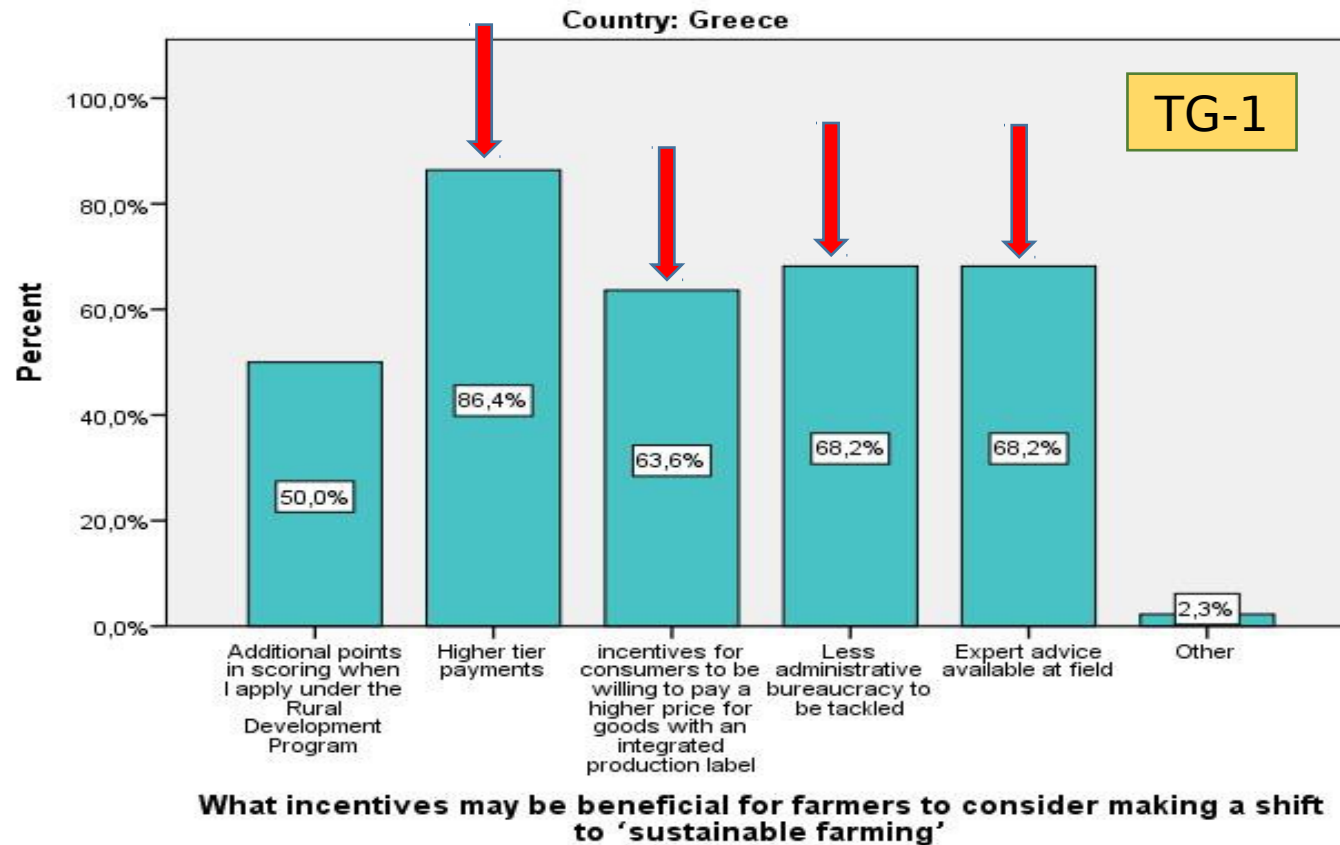
- limited funding for sustainability best practices research
- national policy without clear and quantified objectives
- insufficient education and training of producers
- lack of significant economic and other incentives from the State to producers
- low level of education on the topic of local counselors and agronomists
- lack of favorable governmental policies

**Question:** What hinders the development of sustainability best practices at your region?





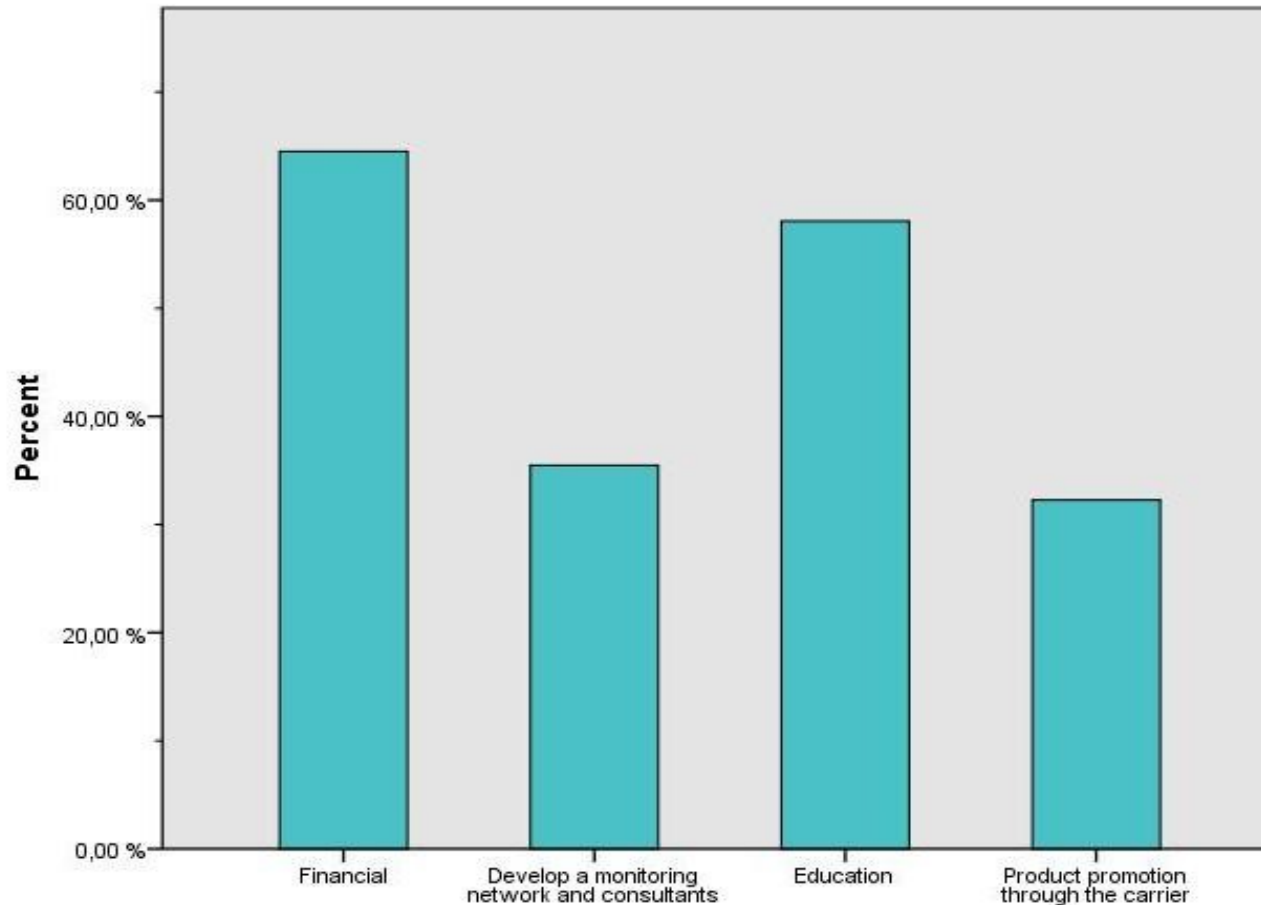
Incentives that the interviewees of TG-1 may consider beneficial in order to shift to sustainable farming.



According to farmers, significant incentives that could boost shift to sustainable farming could be:

- higher tier payments,
- experts advice at field,
- bureaucracy limitation.
- Incentives for consumers to pay a higher price for goods with an integrated production.

Answers provided by the interviewees of TG-2 regarding incentives that are planned by their sector for farmers, who will make a shift towards sustainable farming.



Positive steps have been already made according to the participating policy makers, who declared that in cases that plans have discussed and decided to be implemented, these include as top priorities

- financial incentives,
- farmers education,
- development of a monitoring network and consultants and
- products promotion.



## Significant conclusion

There is a lack of an effective plan by the governmental agencies to train and educate producers on sustainable agriculture issues and also to communicate effectively

1. the measures taken and implemented so far to support the transition to sustainable production systems and

## Proposal

The competitiveness of the agricultural sector must be improved by:

- Training on sustainable practices
- Training at fields
- Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture
- Education on general environmental issues
- Education on circular economy
- Education on legislative issues and ways of implementation
- Development of a monitoring network and consultants

GAP analysis creates a useful picture of the Greek farmers and policy makers perspective towards sustainable improvement of agriculture and its marketing / business sector and provides a building block for two way communication



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# Thank you!

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