



Deliverable D1.1

# TRAIN CE FOOD PROJECT

Analyses of the competencies on circular economy food supply chains,  
entrepreneurship, and cooperatives

Cyprus, July 2020



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As argued by the European Commission Europe's economic growth and jobs depend on its ability to support the growth of enterprises. Entrepreneurship creates new companies, opens up new markets, and nurtures new skills. Thus, the Commission's is encouraging people to become entrepreneurs and try to make it easier for them to set up and grow their businesses. Furthermore, the Commission discussed the importance of the circular economy (CE), bringing major economic benefits, contributing to innovation, growth, and job creation. Circular economy encourages sustainability and competitiveness in the long term, and helps saving costs for European industries, unlocking new business opportunities, and creating local low and high-skilled jobs. Food issues were defined as a priority area, promoting circular economy. On May 6th, 2019, the Commission reported that each year around 20% of food produced in the EU is lost or wasted, causing unacceptable social, environmental, and economic harm. EU is committed to solving this problem and putting its food system onto a sustainable path.

**TRAIN-CE-FOOD** objective is acquiring innovative specialized competences for young people, by empowering them to make use of entrepreneurship and cooperative skillsets and mindsets, which will enable them to create much more efficient cooperative solutions and business models in the field of CE and food supply chains via open online learning, face-to-face workshops, and in-depth remote coaching. We will establish also a new network providing upskilling opportunities with more personalized learnings to implement CE business models and cooperatives. The goal is also to empower youngsters and make them more informed and aware about opportunities in cooperatives, entrepreneurship and CE business models. An attention will be given to the transferability of competencies – to be applicable not only in one particular situation, but in many other situations and contexts, as cooperative and entrepreneurship opportunities are infinite.

A first step towards **TRAIN-CE-FOOD** goal is to realize the specific objectives, which depend also on the so-called background activities, where one of them is Analyses of competencies.



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The objective of this report - Analyses of competencies – is to generate an understanding for youth entrepreneurship and cooperatives in a specialized field circular economy business models and food supply chains in European Union context. This further comprehends and extensive analysis of the state-of-the-art competencies (WP1, Task 1.1), which will be the basis of the work in WP2, WP3, and WP4.

This report represents:

- ✓ Mapping the level of knowledge about CE food supply chains and entrepreneurship and cooperatives in six partner countries by using a self-assessment competency on the targeted audience (secondary school students/university students, trainers/teachers/professors, other interested stakeholders e.g. training centers, businesses) and identification of the common competency gaps on international scale.

## 2. METHODS and APPROACHES

Project partners firstly prepared together a draft questionnaire in English, discussed the questions and corrected, improved them. When the questionnaire was finalized partners reviewed a questionnaire once again and approve it. Then a tested version was prepared in English language and tested on five cases. After successful testing processes, the questionnaire in English was sent to partners for translations. Partners have chosen various online tools to carry out a survey (e.g. Vprašalnik 1KA, Google survey, etc.). Then in all six countries, questionnaires were launched. Partners get in contacts with the universities, NGOs, secondary schools and other stakeholders to gather the inputs.

When the inputs were received, they were sent in .xls version to iED for further in-depth analyses. iED was also responsible to prepare a report and send it to MIITR for the quality approval as well as to EPEKA.

During the initial stage of the [TRAIN-CE-FOOD](#) project, each partner conducted a countrywide survey outlining the situation of circular economy business models in the food supply chains, entrepreneurship and cooperatives in Slovenia, Austria, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia, and Spain.



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### 3. RESULTS

This section represents the results obtained from the questionnaires.

In total, 328 individuals from the target groups contributed to the survey, where 149 of them were men and 179 were women, see Fig.1.

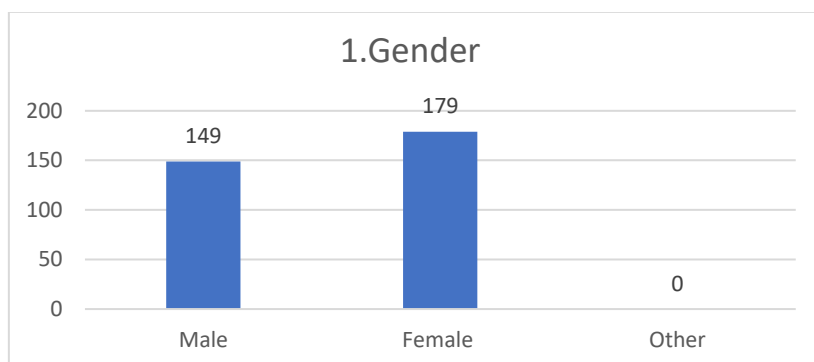


Fig. 1: Gender distribution in the survey.

Fig. 2 represents a distribution of participants per country. The number of participants in Slovenia, Croatia, Spain, Austria, and Cyprus were more or less balanced, ranging from 56 (Slovenia) to 65 (Croatia). The target was at least 50 participants per country. However, Paragon Europe faced difficulties in gathering responses due the Covid-19 issues. Thus, other partners provided additional inputs from their countries, and the overall target  $n=300$  was exceeded, as we have obtained 328 responses.

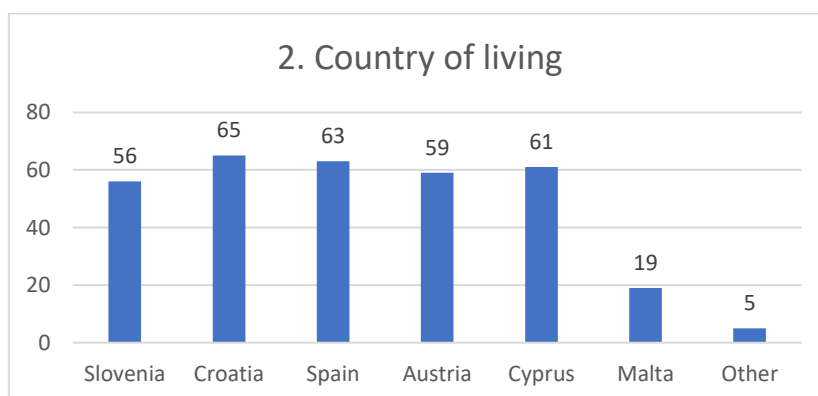


Fig. 2: Distribution of participants per country.



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The interested parts in this survey did not aim at gathering information only from experts on the field of circular economy and food supply chains. They intended to have a spherical image of people's knowledge and opinion on the topic from various target groups, such as students, from secondary or higher education, educators, and trainers from various levels and (social) entrepreneurs. In the chart below, the percentage of every group is demonstrated, see Fig. 3. Most of the responses were obtained from the teachers, professors, and trainers, followed by the (social) entrepreneurs, NGOs, cooperatives, and higher education students, and target groups are more or less balanced.

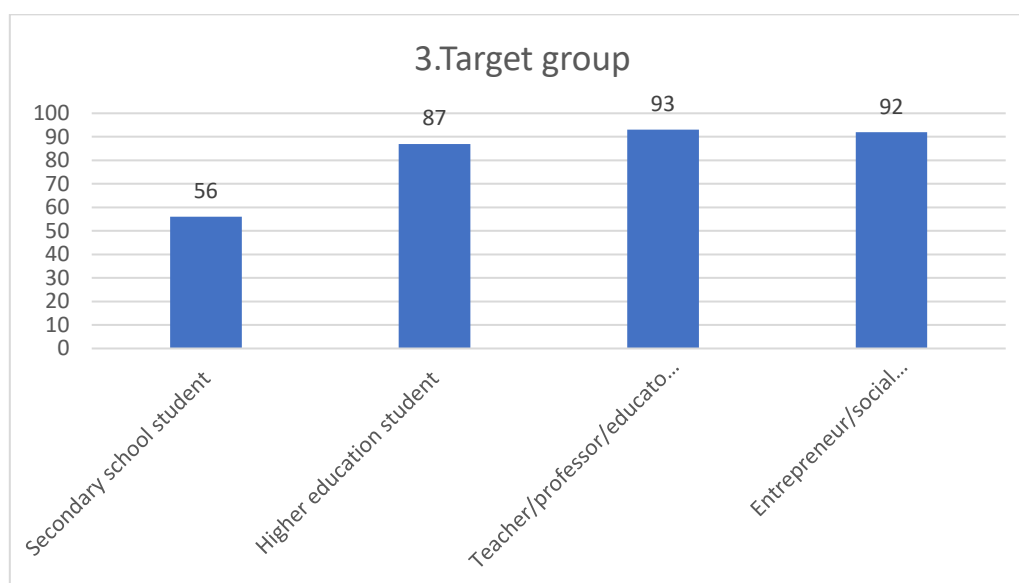


Fig. 3 A distribution of responses between the target groups.

Before proceeding with more specific questions, it was necessary to understand the participants' level of knowledge regarding circular economy and how familiar they were with some terms used within this framework. Taking into consideration that the meaning of the rates in the chart below, are 1=Very poor, 2= Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, and 5=Excellent, it is concluded that participants are aware of circular economy and related terms. Their level of understanding is not excellent but most of them are familiar with the subject more than the average (as most responses were collected among level 3 to 4). More specifically, as presented in Fig. 4 below, regarding the term of circular economy, it seems that the vast majority of the respondents (112 and 100 out of 328), had either a good understanding of the term either an average

understanding of it, which indicates that they are partly familiar with the term. 45 of them had a poor level and 27 of them a very poor understanding of circular economy. As for the term social entrepreneurship, 122 of the respondents, had a good understanding of the term and 85 of them rated their understanding with level 3, which is the average level. From the other side, 47 and 27 of them had either a poor either a very poor level, accordingly. Regarding the term of food supply chains, 117 of them had, a good understanding of the term and 98 of them an average level and only 16 of them had a very poor level of understanding and 52 a poor level. In the term circular economy business model, 82 of the respondents, mentioned that they had a good level of understanding and 102 of them an average level. However, regarding this term, 77 of them had a poor understanding of the term and 42 of them very poor, which means, that they need to obtain further information and knowledge on those terms. Last but not least, regarding the term of cooperatives, 101 of them had a good understanding of the term and 91 of them an average level. From the other side, 63 of them had a poor level of understanding regarding cooperatives and 23 of them very poor. To sum up, as a conclusion from Fig. 4, the terms that respondents had a high level of understanding, were mostly in social entrepreneurship, circular economy and food supply chains, and the respondents had a low level of understanding, regarding circular economy business models and cooperatives.

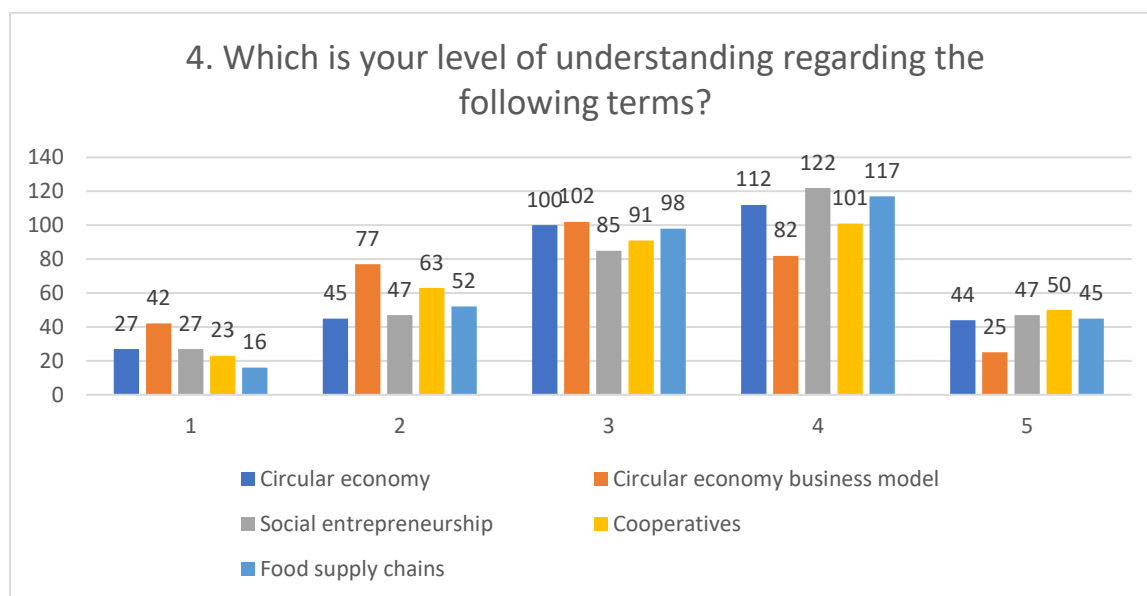


Fig. 4: A level of understanding of the terms listed.



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Also, in terms of the participants' level of knowledge, they were asked to choose one out of three definitions on how they define circular economy. The most prevailing definition is the one describing circular economy as “an economy where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste is minimized”, which is also an official definition of circular economy, according to this [article](#)<sup>1</sup>. The fact, that 257 of the participants, answered corrected the definition of circular economy, indicates that they are aware of the “ingredients” that the term circular economy, contains and that it's not only about recycling, which is a common wrong perception from people regarding the term, see Fig. 5.

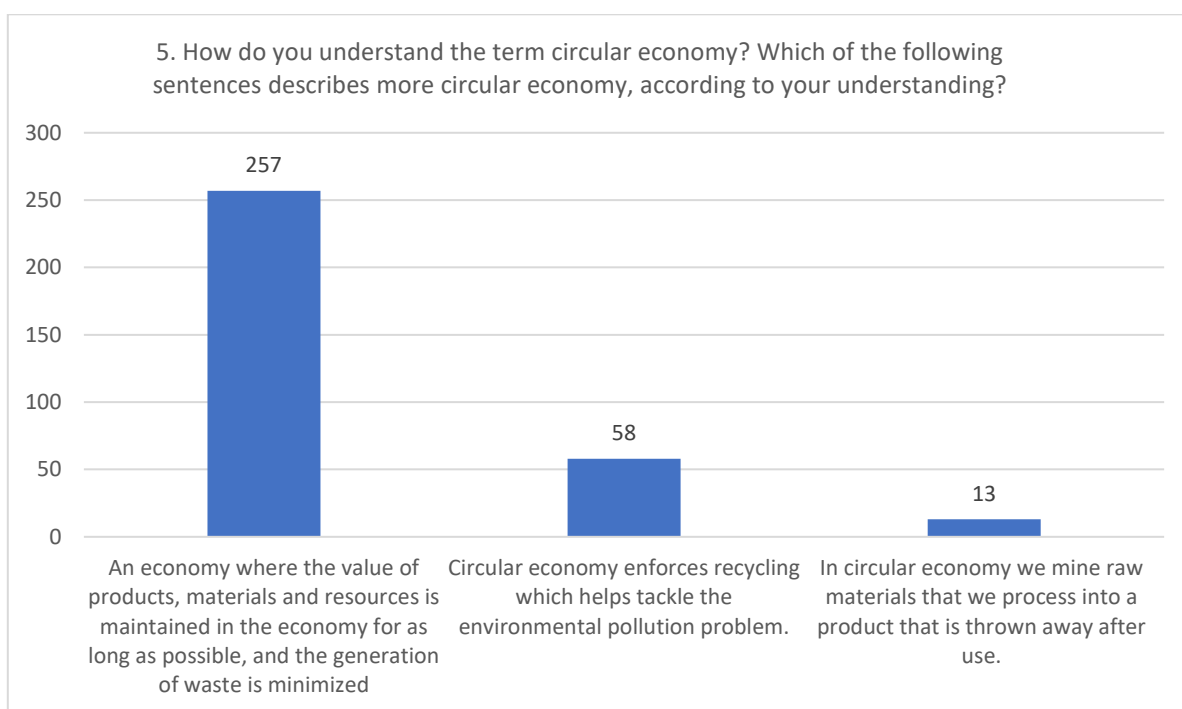


Fig. 5: Circular economy definition and its understanding.

Moving on, the survey examined the level that circular economy is applied in the partner countries, according to the understanding of the respondents and in which specific areas. More specifically, the areas that have been examined, are available in

<sup>1</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11625-017-0502-9>

the chart below, in Fig. 6, from which it is also easily understood that there is medium application of circular economy in all the below areas, ranging from 'Rarely' up to 'Often' while the 'Never' and 'Always' options are the minimum rates. So, it is sensible to reach the conclusion that these countries are already quite knowledgeable about circular economy in action, too.

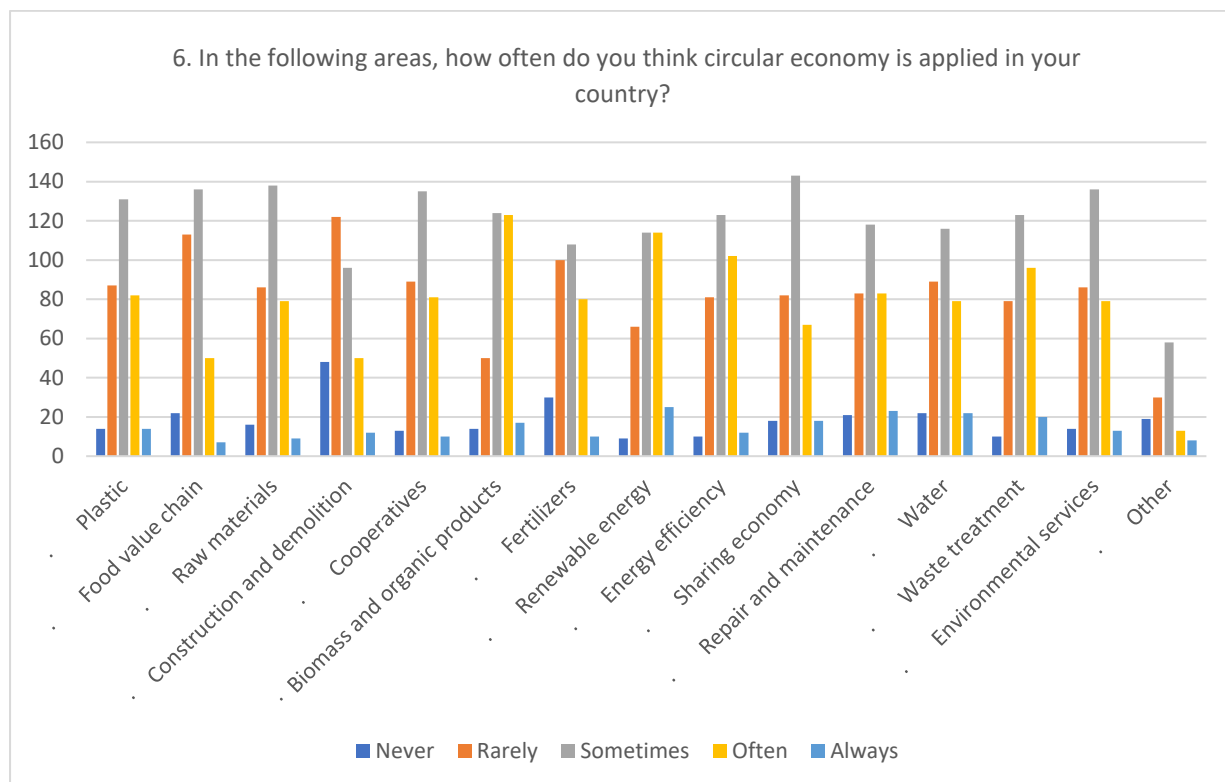


Fig. 6. Circular economy application in partner countries.

So, starting from a national level, participants were also asked to continue to a personal level by answering which is their relation with circular economy and which categories and on what degree they apply circular economy practices themselves, as seen in Fig.7. The fields where they apply circular economy is most often or even always on energy saving habits, recycling, improving waste management, and product repairing. Also, the majority of the participants sometimes apply circular economy by using products as services, through their work, and through their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

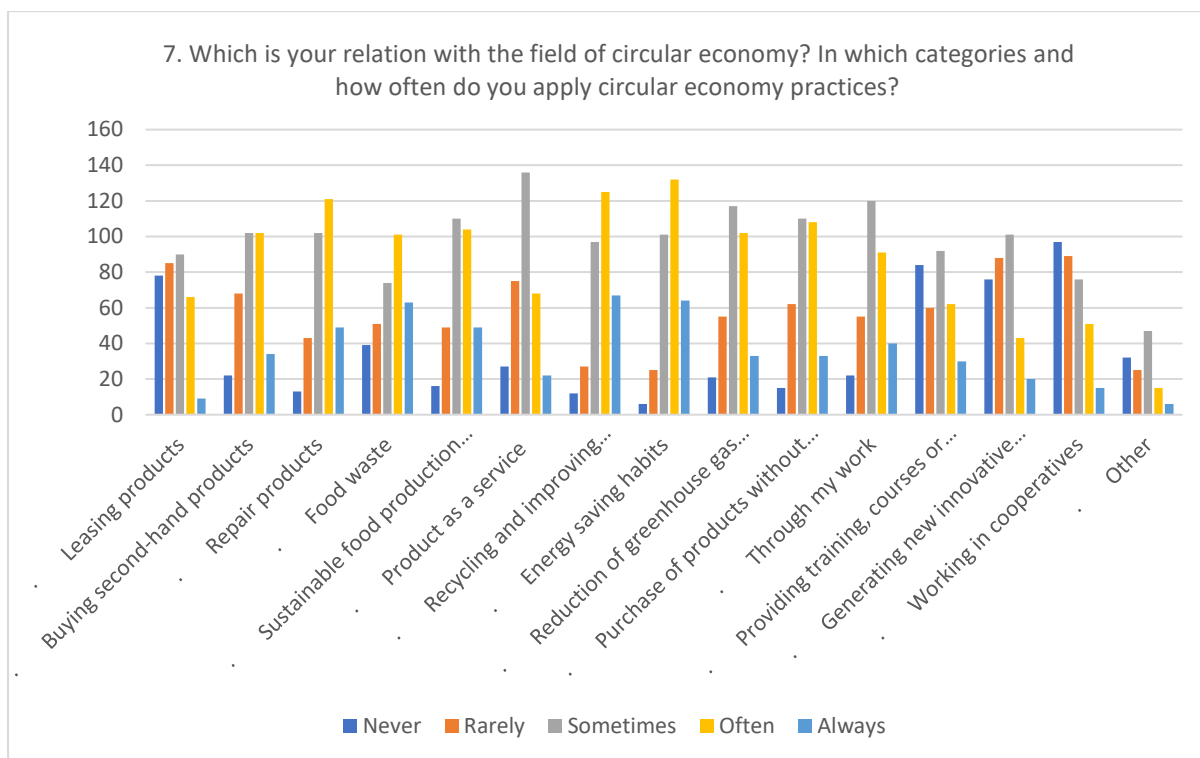


Fig. 7: A relation to the CE of the survey participants.

In the following 6 charts below, the conclusions from each participating country are presented.

As presented in Fig. 7.1, below, the relation of the Austrian participants, in relation to the different categories of circular economy, is mostly *sometimes*. More specifically, out of the 60 responses that the Austrian survey gathered, the categories of repairing products (31 responses), product as a service (31 responses) and through my work (30 responses), has been rated with level 3 (sometimes). Surprisingly enough, was the fact that 31 of them, rated the category leasing products, as a practice that is never applied in Austria, as well as, the practice of providing training, courses or workshops, which gathered 27 responses. From the contrast, the practice of energy saving habits, 31 participants, declared it as a practice, that it is applied often in Austria.

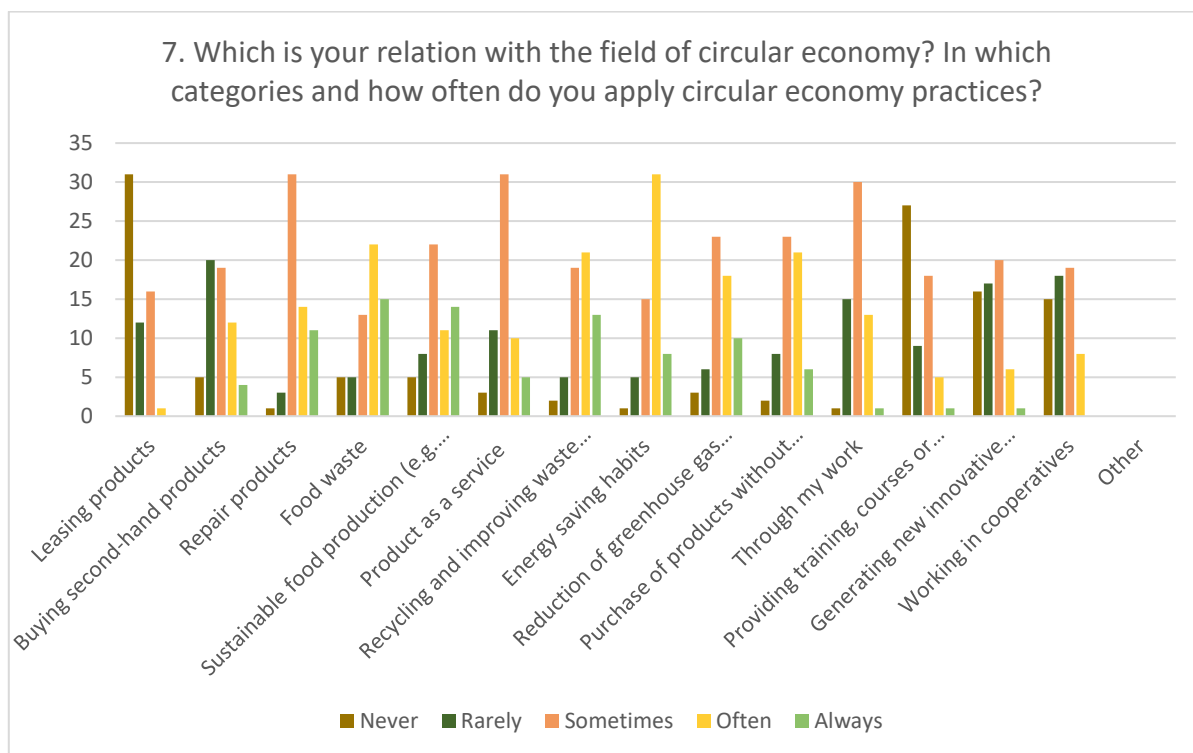


Fig. 7.1.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Austria

As for Croatia, as presented in Fig. 7,2 below, the categories of Product as a service (30 responses), buying second hand products (28 responses) and purchase of products without packaging (28 responses), gathered the most responses and have been rated as practices that are sometimes applied in Croatia. The practices of recycling habits and energy saving habits, gathered 21 responses each and have been rated as practices that are often applied in Croatia. The practice of leasing products in Croatia, has been rated as a practice, that it is either rarely either never applied (18 and 20 responses respectively).

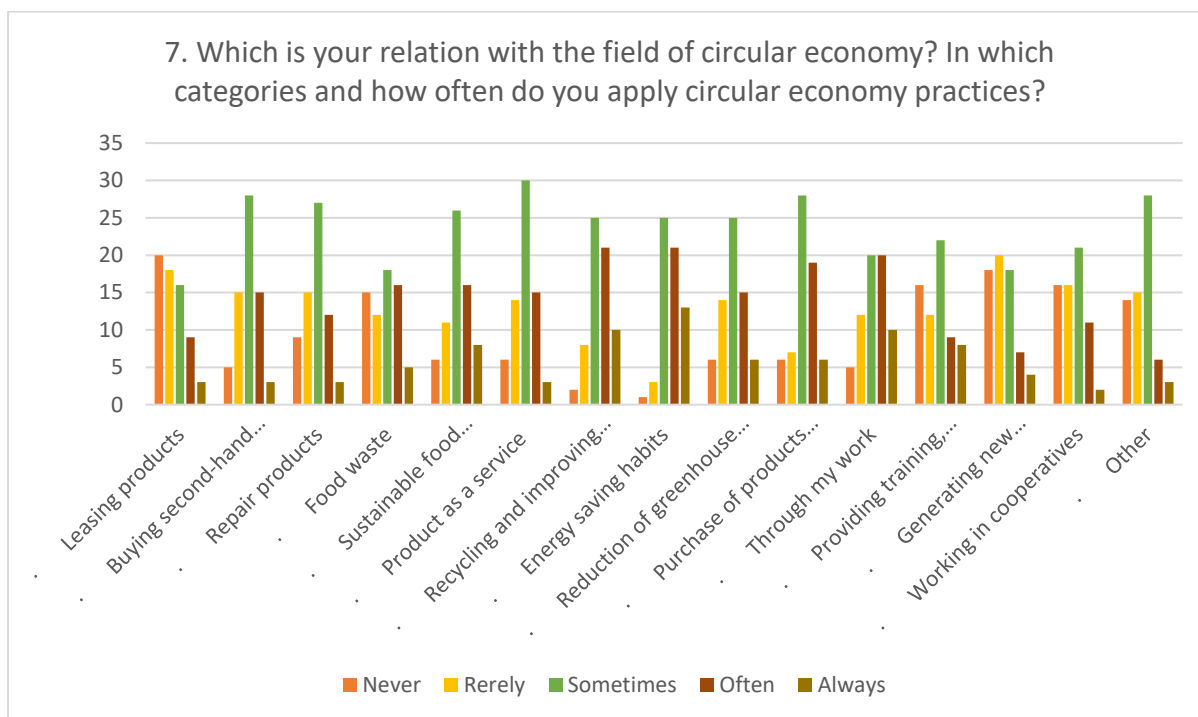


Fig. 7.2.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Croatia

In Fig. 7.3. below, the results from Cyprus, indicate that the practice of repair product (33 responses) and buying second hand products (28 responses) and food waste (26 responses), are the practices that are applied often in Cyprus, based on the participants point of view. The practice of product as a service (28 responses), the practice of recycling and improving waste management (28 responses) and the practice of energy saving habits (24 responses), are the 3 practices that have been rated as a practice that is applied sometimes in Cyprus. Working in cooperatives, is a practice that has been rated from 18 participants out of 61 in Cyprus, as a practice that is never applied. In a similar wavelength is also the practice of providing training courses or workshops, as it has been rated with 12 responses as a practice that is never being applied in Cyprus and with 12 more responses as rarely.

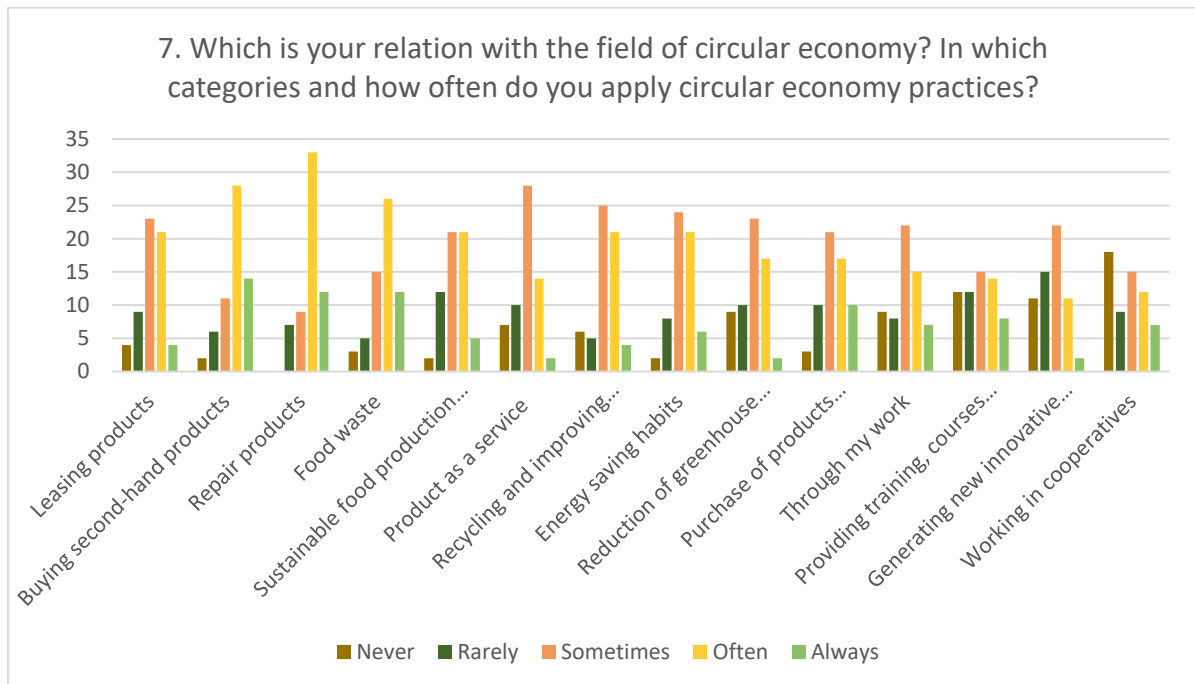


Fig. 7.3.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Cyprus

In the Fig. 7.4. the results from Malta are presented. Food waste, is a practice that as 10 out of 19 participants indicated, is always applied in Malta. From the opposite side, the practice of working in cooperatives, is a practice that is never applied in Malta, based on the knowledge of 12 participants. In a similar situation is also the practice of leasing products, which has been rated as a practice that is never applied by 9 participants. The practice of purchase of products without packaging is a

practice often applied in Malta (10 responses).

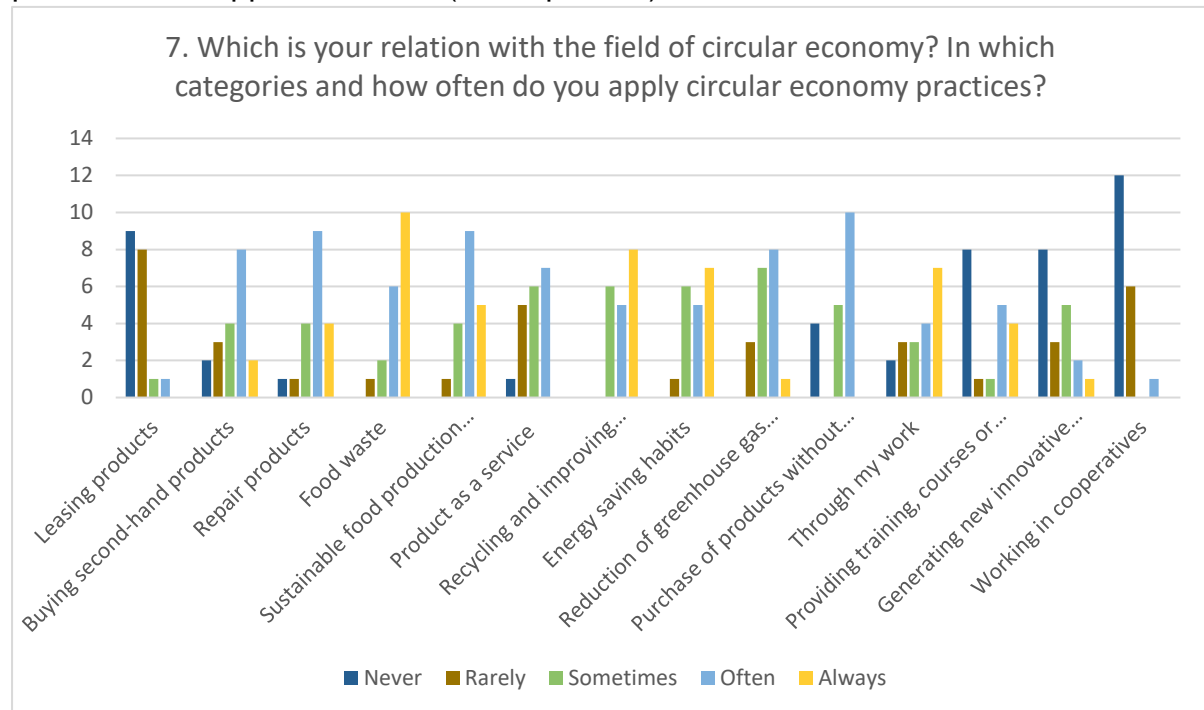


Fig. 7.4.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Malta

As for Slovenia, the practices of recycling and improving waste management (31 responses), energy saving habits (30 responses) and sustainable food production (28 responses), have been evaluated as practices that are often applied in Slovenia. Regarding the practices product as a service and through my work, which gathered 24 responses each, are practices that are sometimes applied in Slovenia. The practice of purchase products without packaging (22 responses) and working in cooperatives (19 responses) are practices rarely applied.

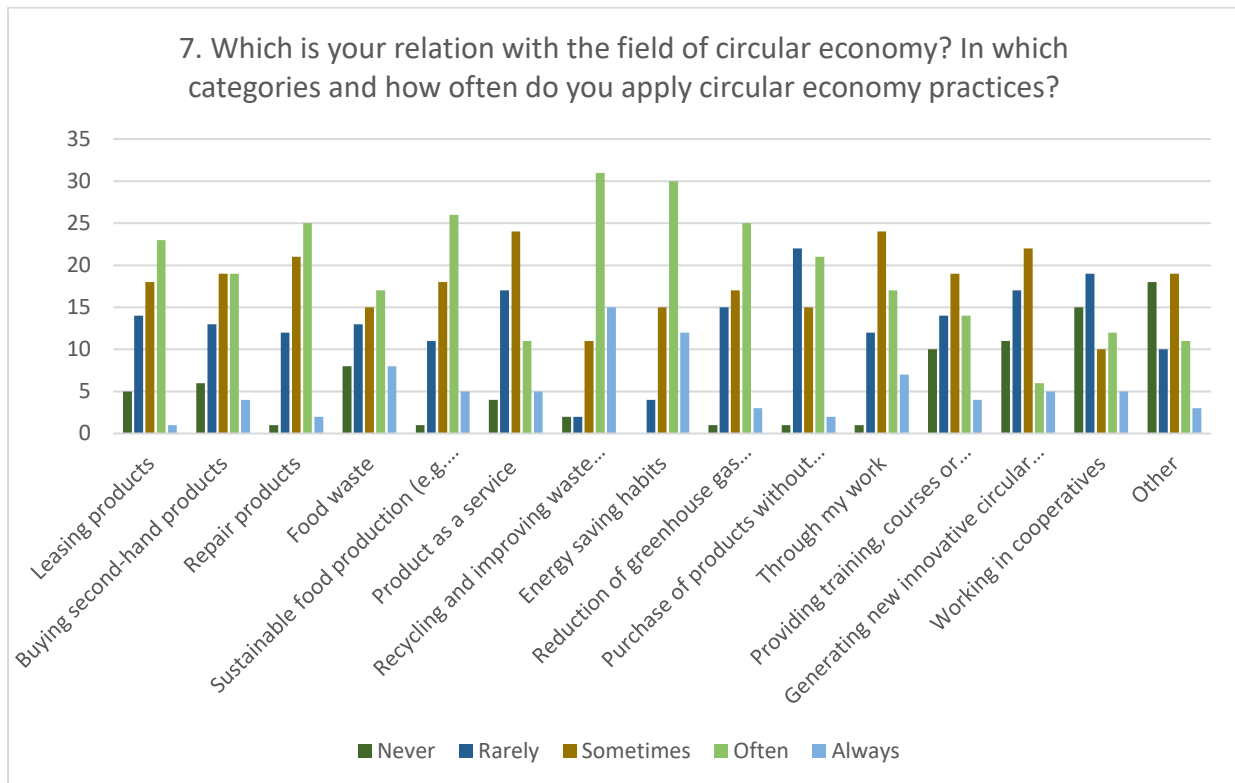


Fig. 7.5.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Slovenia

Last but not least, in the Fig. 7.6, are presented the results from Spain, related to the practices of circular economy that applied in the Country. More specifically, 28 participants in each of the practices of repairing products and recycling & improving waste management, declared that those are two practices that are often applied in Spain. Next to them, the practice of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (27 practice) is a practice often applied in Spain. The practice of working in cooperatives, is a practice that has been rated with 21 responses a rarely applied practice and with 19 responses as a practice that is never applied in Spain.



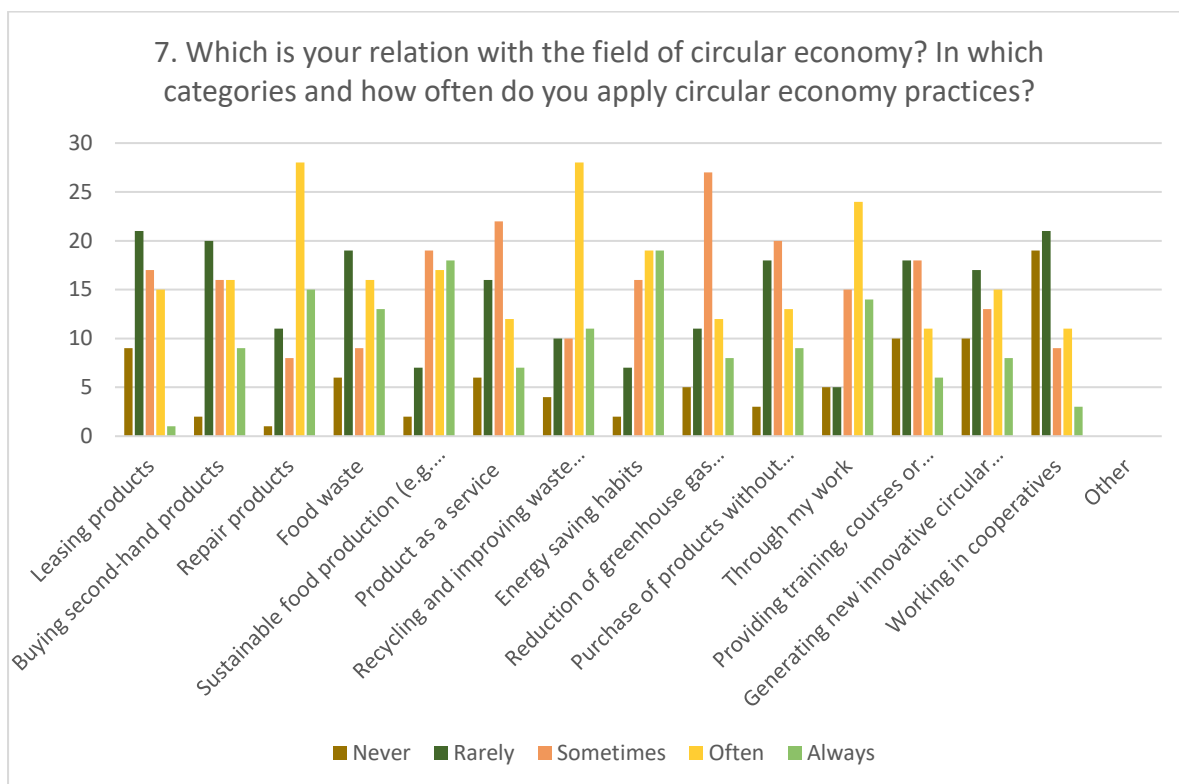


Fig. 7.6.: A relation to the CE of the survey participants, results from Spain

The next question, in Fig.8. in the survey examined the level of participants' knowledge on the differences among the features of food supply chain in the food co-operatives in comparison with the features of food supply chain in general. They were asked to answer on how important they consider the procedures in food production, collection and storage, processing and packaging, distribution, markets, packaging waste and food waste in the field of circular economy and food supply chain to compare it with the field of food supply generally. From the following chart, it becomes obvious that the target groups consider these differences of paramount importance for the different aspects to be differentiated, probably because they feel that these are the elements that need to be modified in order to move towards circular economy.

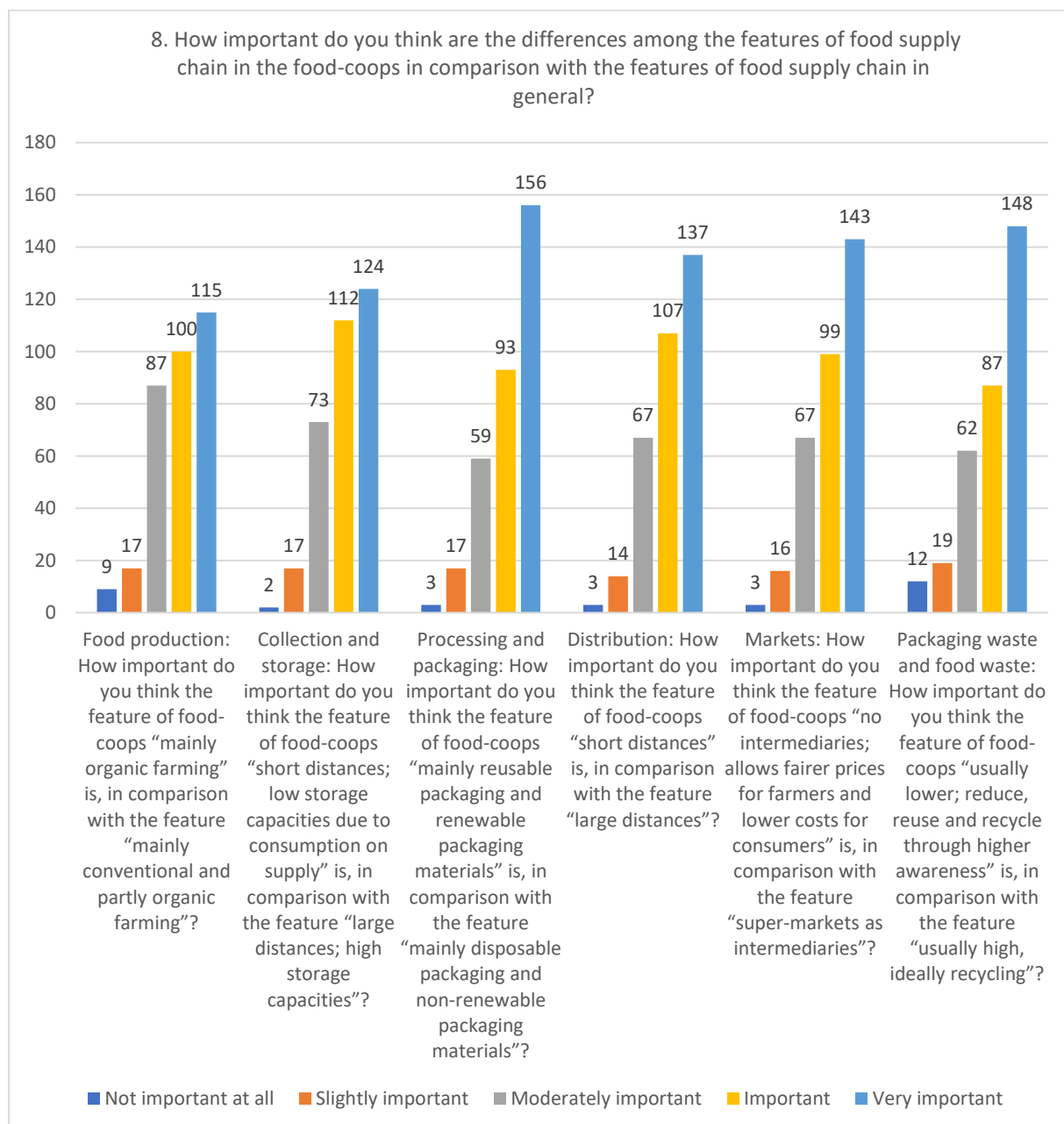


Fig.8: Differences among features of food supply chain.

Since participants are able to recognize the differences between the above-mentioned fields, it is not peculiar that they also recognize the Level of Development of the Circular Economy food supply chains related to cooperatives and social entrepreneurship in their country. The biggest part of them answered that *it needs improvement* (36 responses from Austria, 34 from Spain, 44 from Croatia, 31 from



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Slovenia, 13 from Malta and 18 from Cyprus) followed by the second part which considers that the level of development is *still in primary stage* (25 from Spain, 4 from Malta, 32 from Cyprus, 5 from Slovenia and 10 from Croatia). The number of participants that consider their countries as quite advanced, are 23 and they are from Austria (7 answers), Spain (2 answers), Cyprus (2 answers) and Slovenia (3 answers).

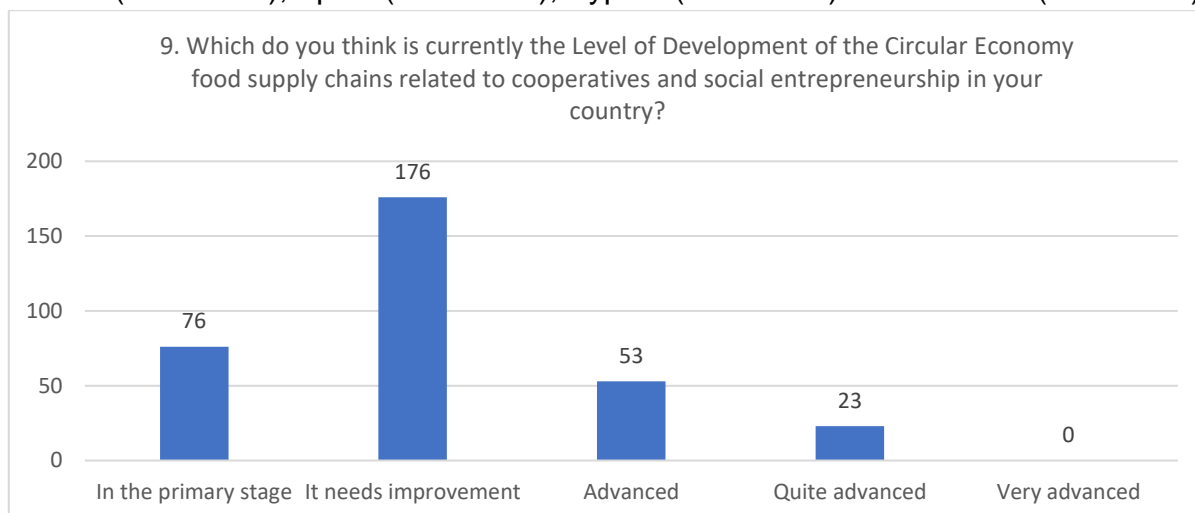


Fig. 9: The level of development of CE.

Going deeper in the survey, the following question was asking the participants to evaluate the rate that the certain circular economy models are used mostly in their country. According to that, the following 5 graphs (Fig. 10.0 until 10.04) are indicating some circular economy models which are adapted, and the participants were called to rate how often each one of them is used in their own country. Depending on the answers presented on the chart, it can be assumed that all these models are mostly used *occasionally*. The rate 'Sometimes' is the most rated answer regarding the frequency of circular models use. The second most frequent one is 'Rarely', so combining these answers with the participants' opinion that the development of Circular Economy food supply chains needs improvement might make us wonder about the changes that need to be implemented to increase these models' efficiency and more tentative presence in economy.

To start with, in Fig.10.0, the frequency of the circular food suppliers in each partner country is indicated. As seen in the chart below, in Croatia, 31 out of the 65 respondents answered that it is used sometimes, following by Austria (30 out of 60) , Cyprus (27 out of 61), Slovenia (27 out of 56), Spain (24 out of 63) ana Malta (8 out of 14).

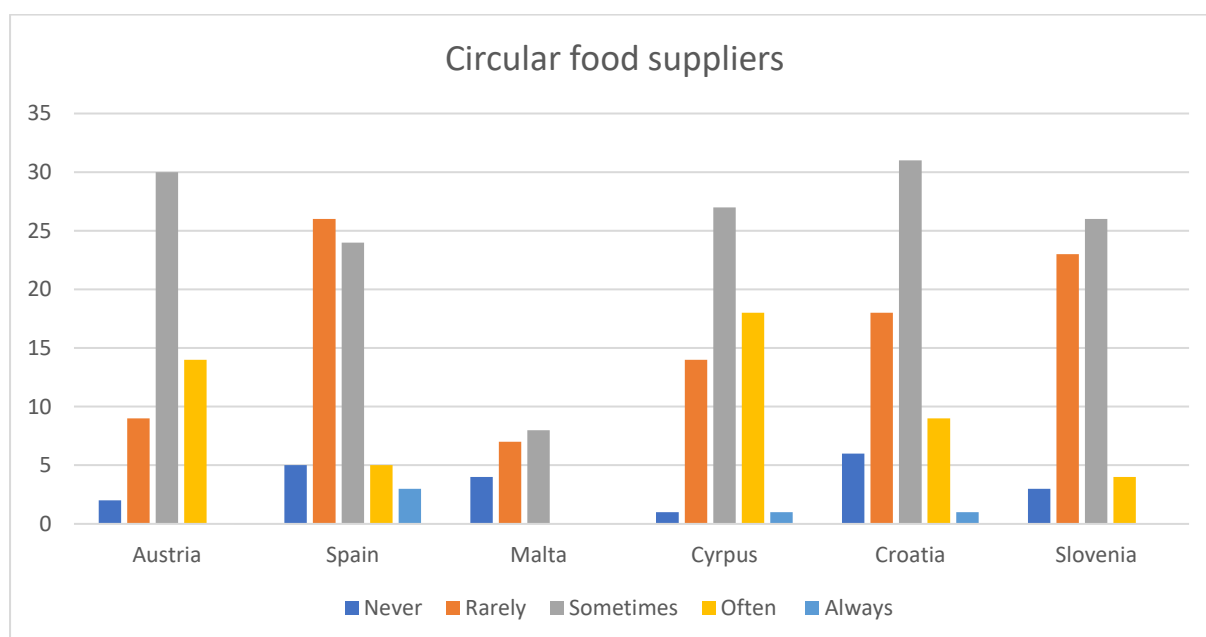


Fig. 10.0: The frequency of circular economy models used in the countries (circular food suppliers).

In a similar wavelength is also the use of new innovative business models in the food sector, as presented in Fig. 10.1. All partner countries are mostly *sometimes* use these models, apart from Spain, where more than the half of the respondents (33 out of 63), declared that they are rarely used.

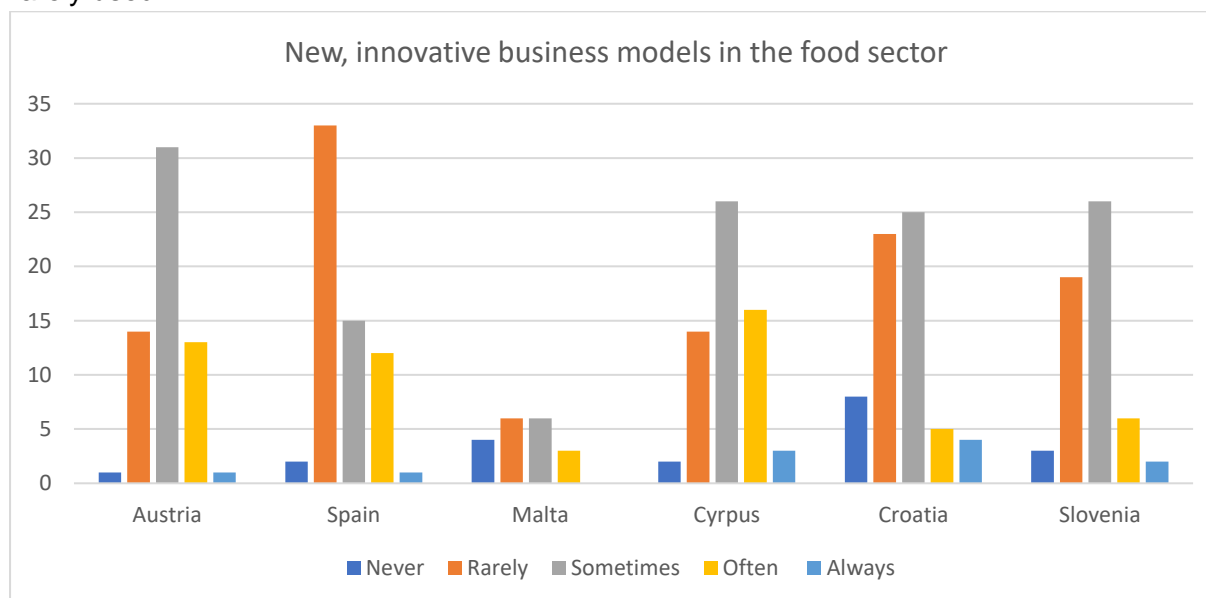


Fig. 10.1.: The frequency of circular economy models used in the countries (new innovative business models in the food sector).

High levels of frequently use are seen also in the circular economy models, regarding food related cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, where almost 50% of each country, declared that they are used sometimes.

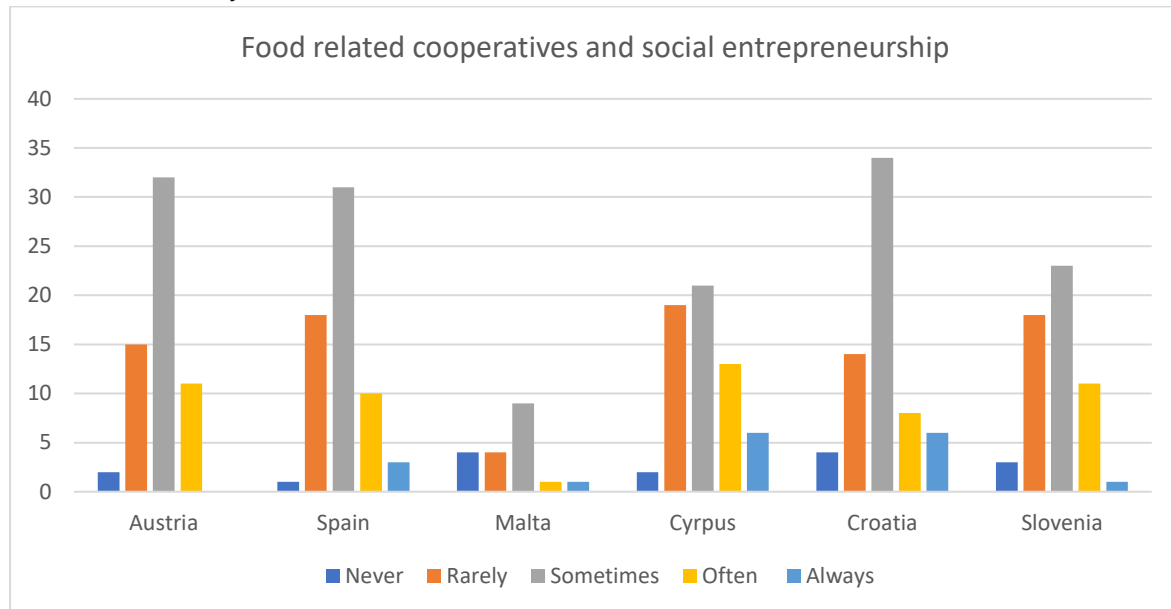


Fig. 10.2.: The frequency of circular economy models used in the countries (Food related cooperatives and social entrepreneurship).

The responses regarding the use of the model “reducing food waste” have been divided in all countries among rarely and sometimes, as it is presented in Fig. 10.3 below, which indicates that the use of this model, is not so frequently. The only country that seems to use more this model, is Slovenia, as 26 participants out of 56, declared that the use of this model is frequently.

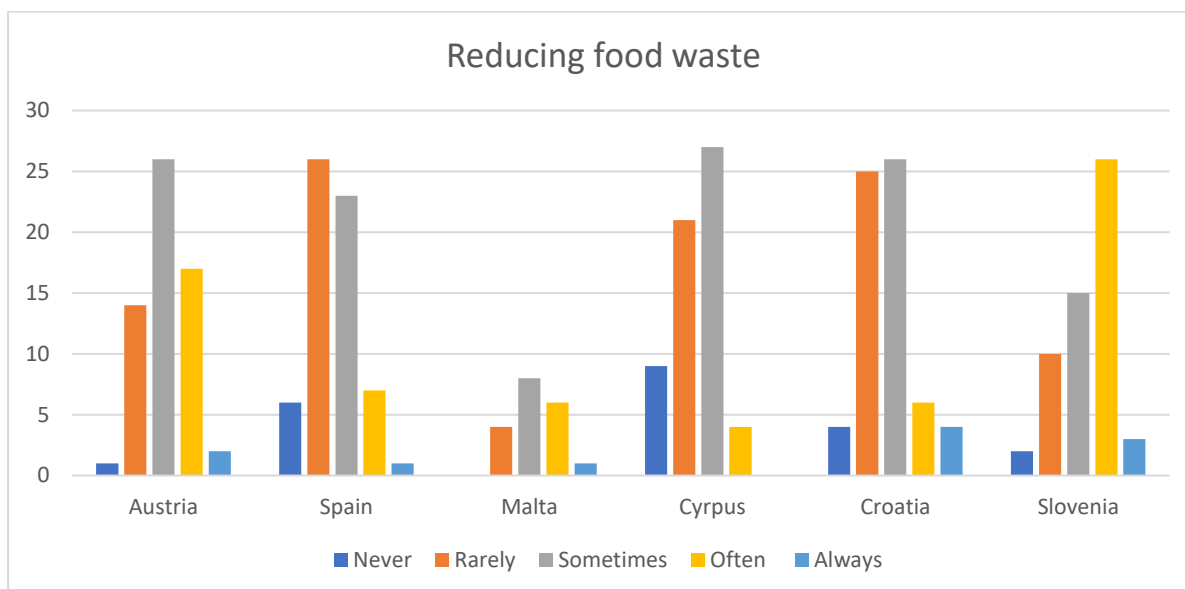


Fig. 10.3.: The frequency of circular economy models used in the countries (reducing food waste).

The last circular economy model that has been examined at this point, was the use of the circular food catering model, in which the more respondents in all partner countries declared that it is used sometimes, apart from Spain that 30 of them mentioned rarely, and from Malta that 10 of them mentioned also rarely.

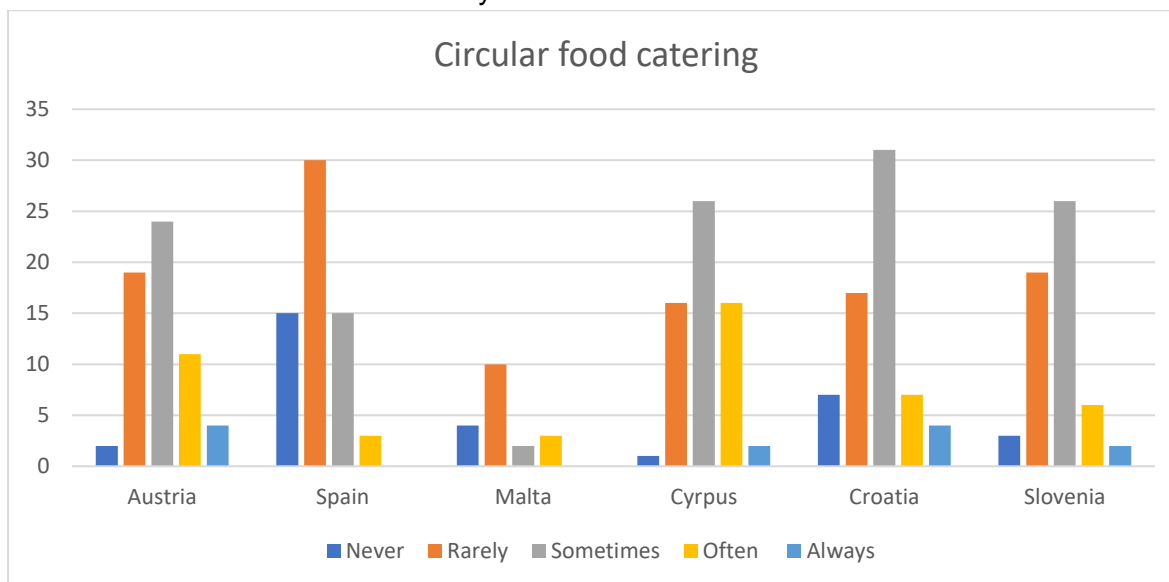


Fig. 10.4.: The frequency of circular economy models used in the countries (circular food catering).

For this reason, a question concerning the reasons why many individuals or businesses are still not interpreting Circular Economy Business Models in the food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship followed. Citizens' ideas on why not use these specific models vary greatly, but most of them are connected with lack of certain factors (e.g. lack of knowledge or lack of resources) or with the comprehension of this field's potential impact on society. For all the countries, the reasons that are considered 'Very important' or 'Important' for not implementing circular economy models are *every country's mentality on the topic*, the *lack of infrastructure for their development*, the *citizens' not realizing the benefits of their implementation* and of course *the lack of proper information* regarding the environmental impact by the implementation of such practices and the lack of resources. On the other hand, the reasons that are considered the *least important* are the little *consumer interest on that field*, despite the fact that all reasons attract great attention for the implementation of the models.

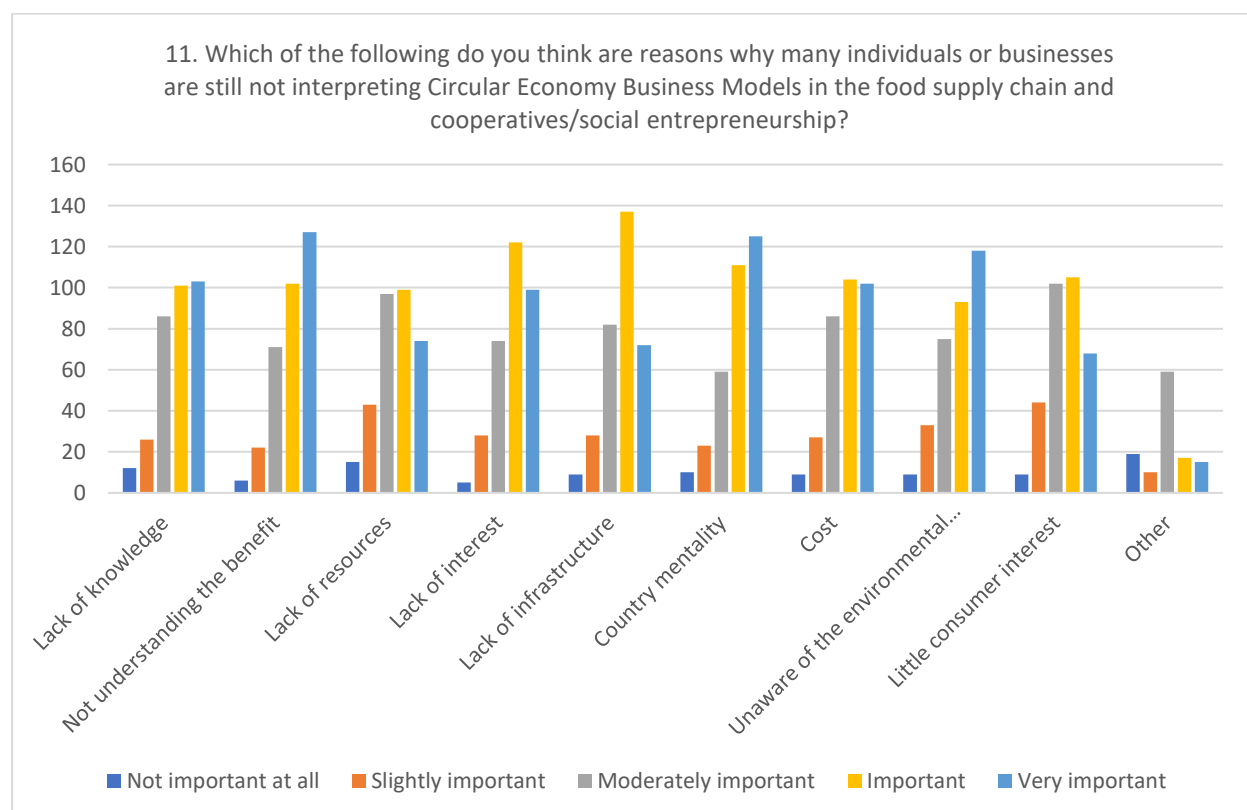


Fig. 11: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship.

In the following 6 (Fig. 11.1 – 11.6) charts below, the results from each partner country are also been indicated separately.

In Austria, the top three choices from the participants, in level of importance, were:

1. Country mentality
2. Not understanding the benefit
3. Lack of interest,

However, all of the responses gathered many votes ranging mostly from slightly important to important.

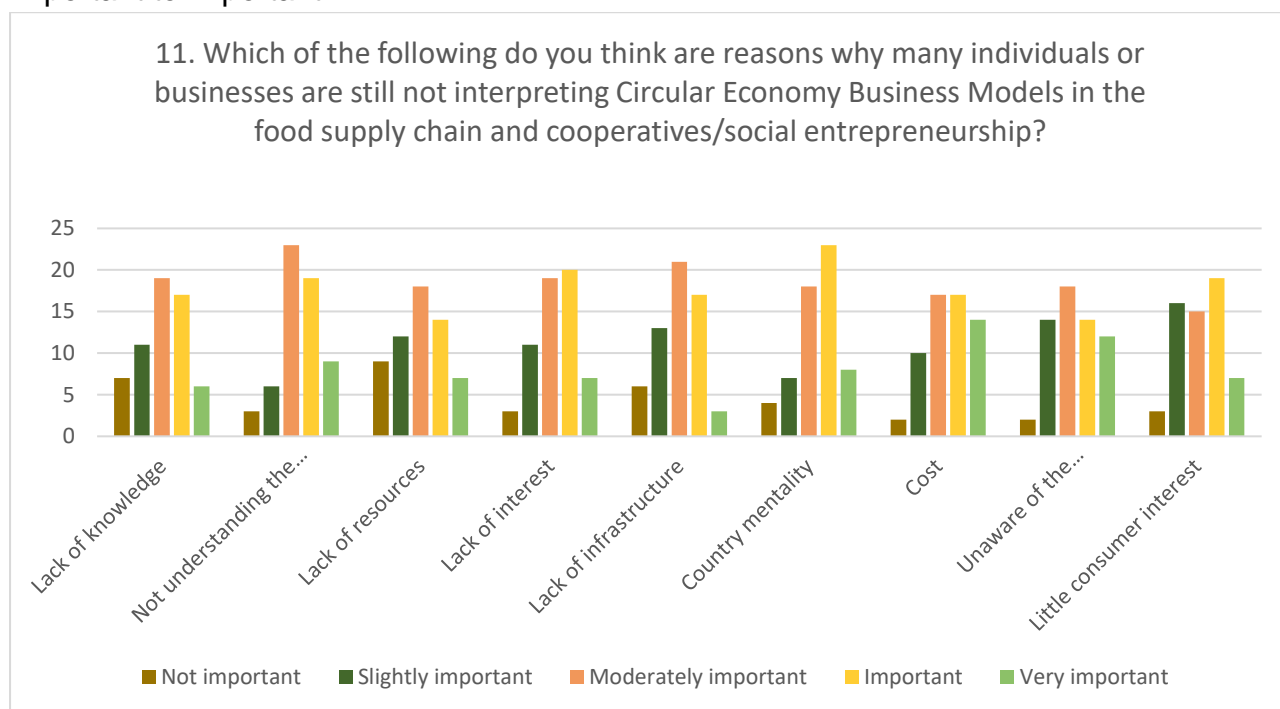


Fig. 11.1.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Austria

As for Croatia, the top three choices from the participants, in level of importance, were:

1. Country mentality
2. Lack of resources
3. Lack of interest,

While many of the respondents mentioned also that there are also other reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship in Croatia.



11. Which of the following do you think are reasons why many individuals or businesses are still not interpreting Circular Economy Business Models in the food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship? (Rate with 1=Not important at all, 2= Slightly Important, 3= Moderately Important, 4= Important, 5= Very important)

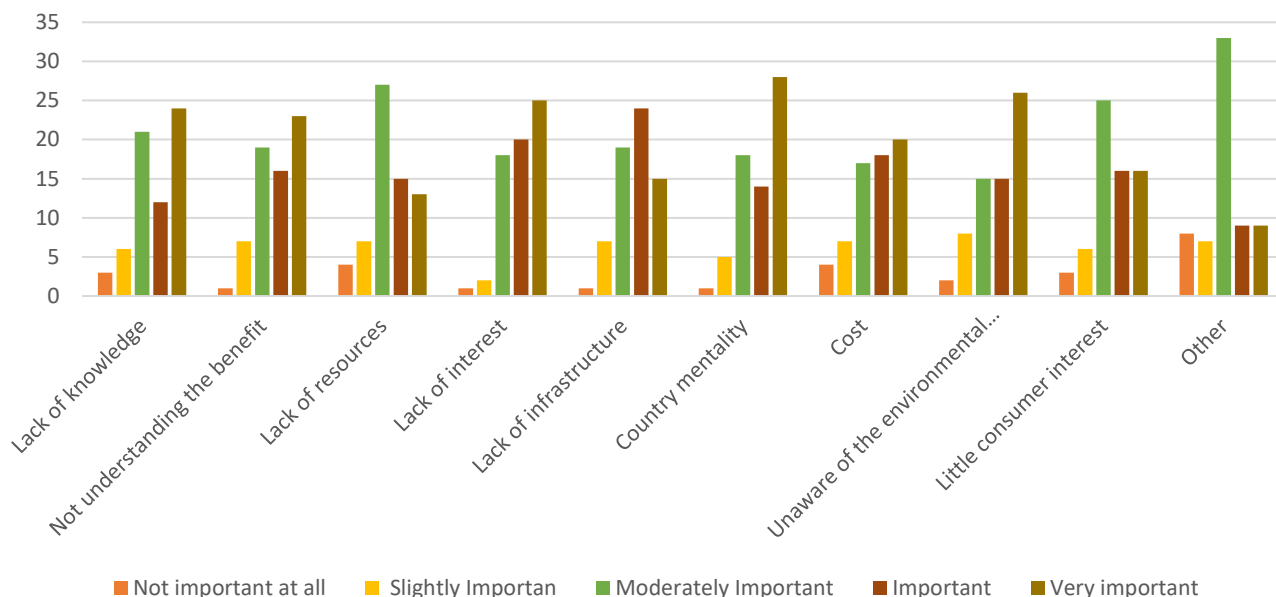


Fig. 11.2.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Croatia

Regarding Slovenia, all of the reasons have been rated as important, with the most important reasons, according to the respondent, were:

1. Lack of interest,
2. Not understanding the benefit
3. Lack of knowledge

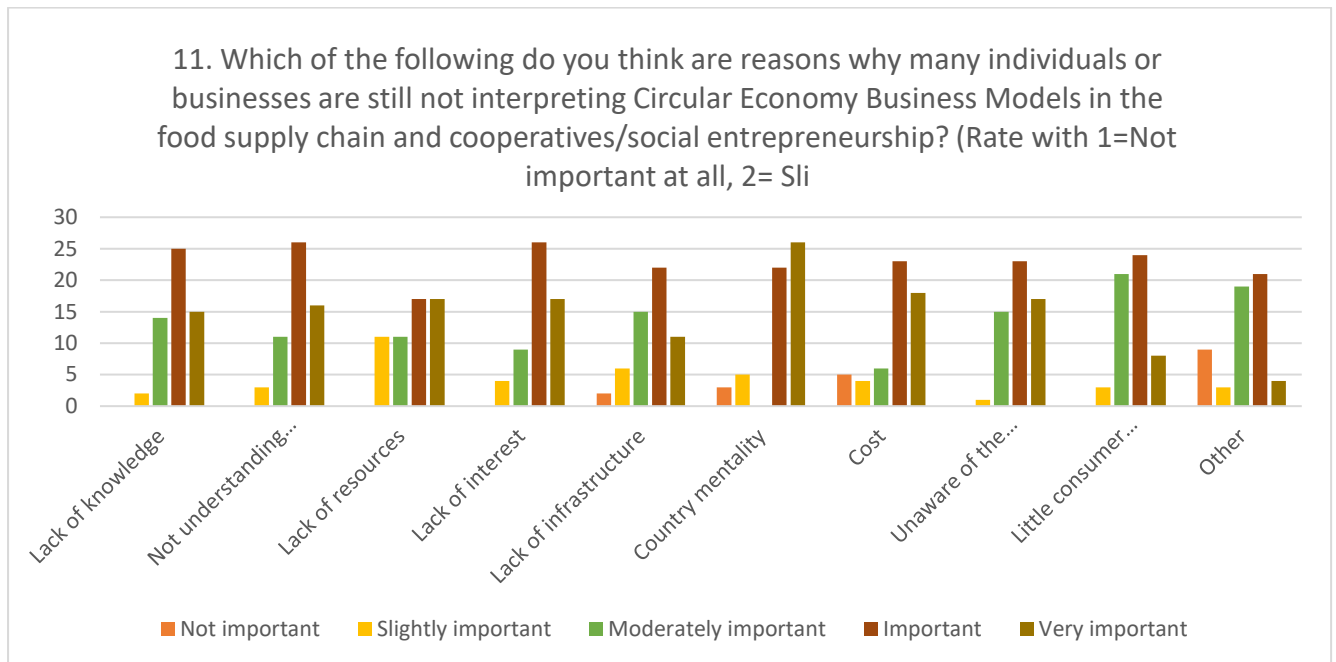


Fig. 11.3.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Slovenia

As for Spain, as presented in Fig. 11.4, the most important reasons are:

1. Not understanding the benefit
2. Lack of infrastructure
3. Lack of interest

11. Which of the following do you think are reasons why many individuals or businesses are still not interpreting Circular Economy Business Models in the food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship? (Rate with 1=Not important at all, 2= Sli

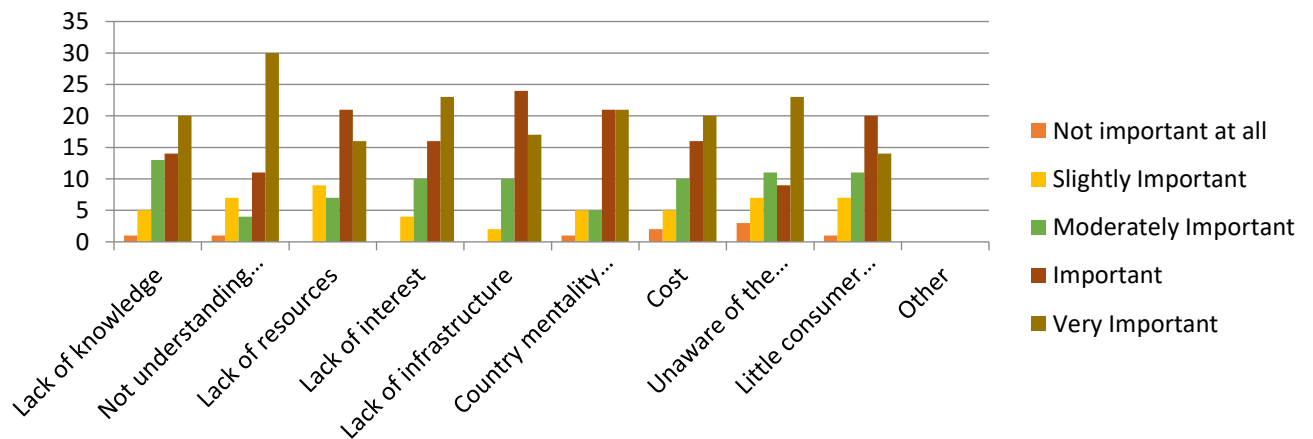


Fig. 11.4.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Spain

According to the respondents from Cyprus, the three most important reasons that they mentioned, were:

1. Lack of infrastructure
2. Country mentality
3. Lack of resources/ lack of knowledge

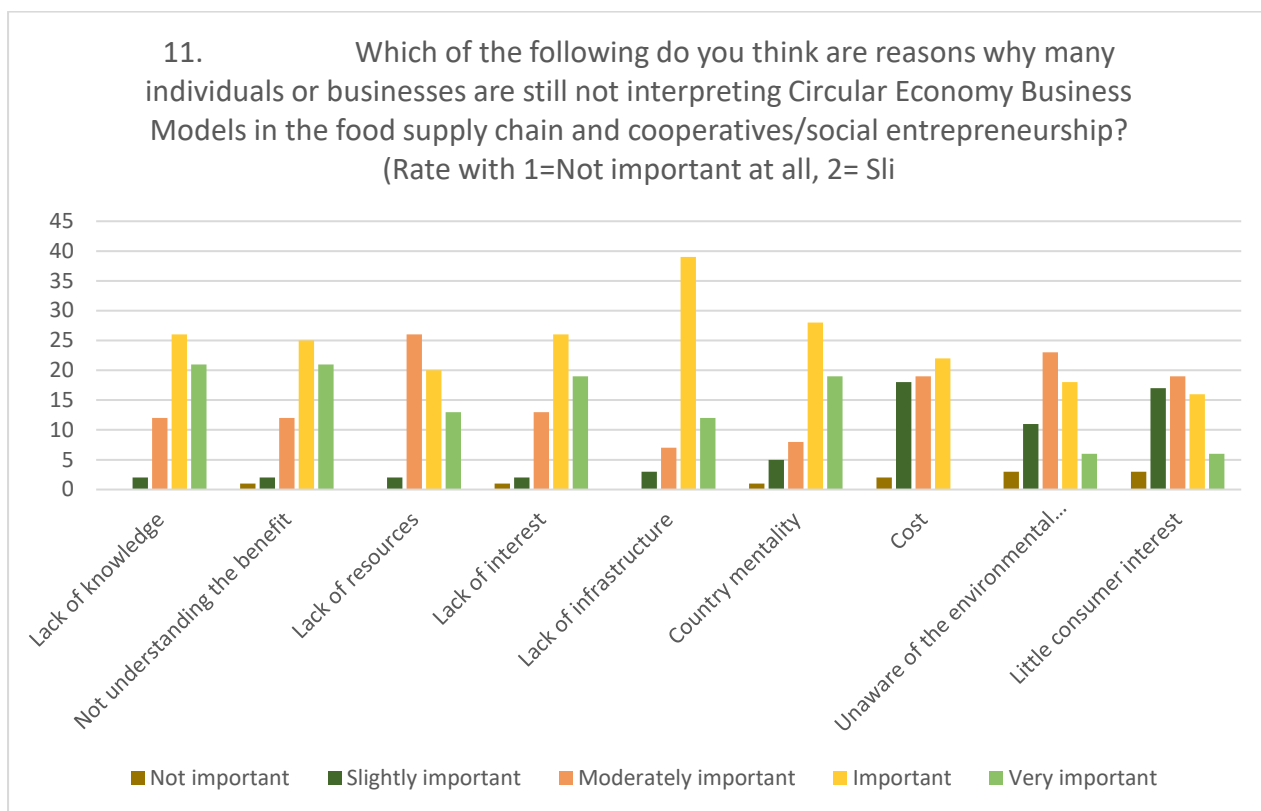


Fig. 11.5.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Cyprus

According to the respondents from Malta, the three most important reasons that they mentioned, were:

1. Country mentality
2. Lack of knowledge
3. Lack of infrastructure

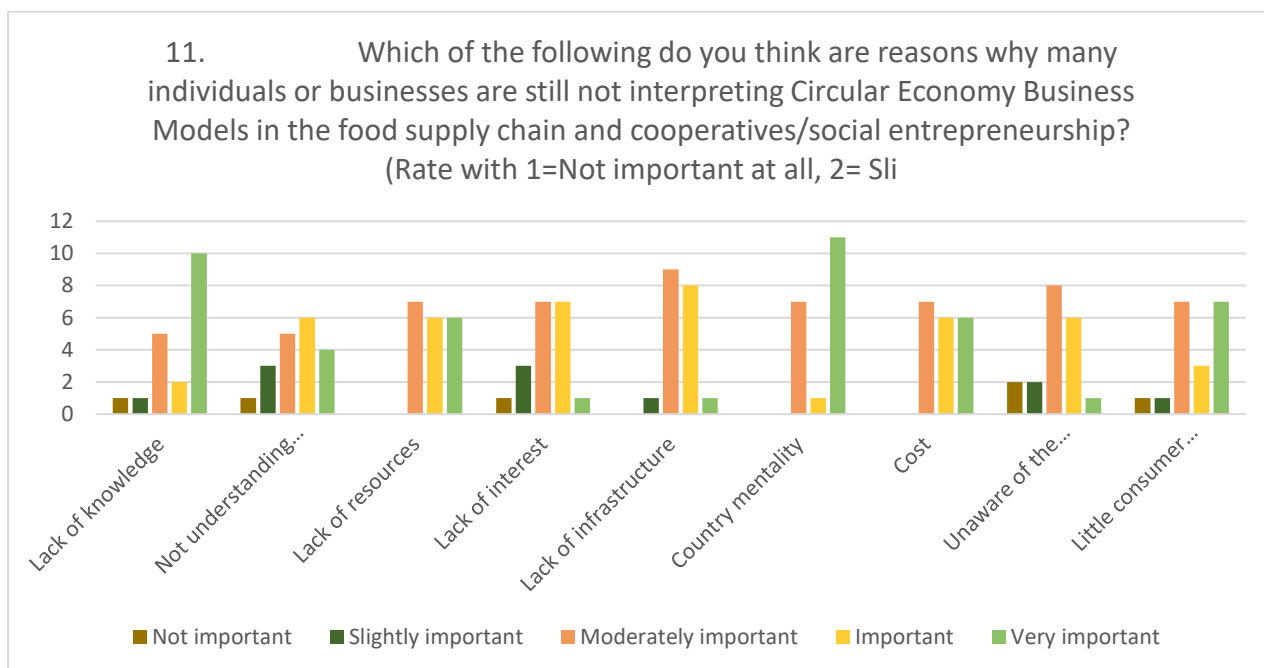


Fig. 11.6.: Reasons for not integrating CE models in cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, in Malta

Furthermore, the participants were asked to choose five benefits in using Circular Economy business models of a list provided. The most voted advantage is the *reduction of the waste* generated in the food chain with 194 votes, the second and the third advantages, with only a small difference in votes (164 and 162), are the *opportunity to address sustainability issues* and *the revitalizing of rural economies*. Saving money, access to fresh, fairly priced foods, and the security and price stability of a supply chain are the benefits following in the list for participants with 148, 147, and 143 responses, respectively. Other important benefits that will be gained, according to participants, are the design and market of healthier food products (139 votes), the making the most out of food (by-products into bioeconomy) (137 votes), and the capture of more value from products and resources (133 votes).

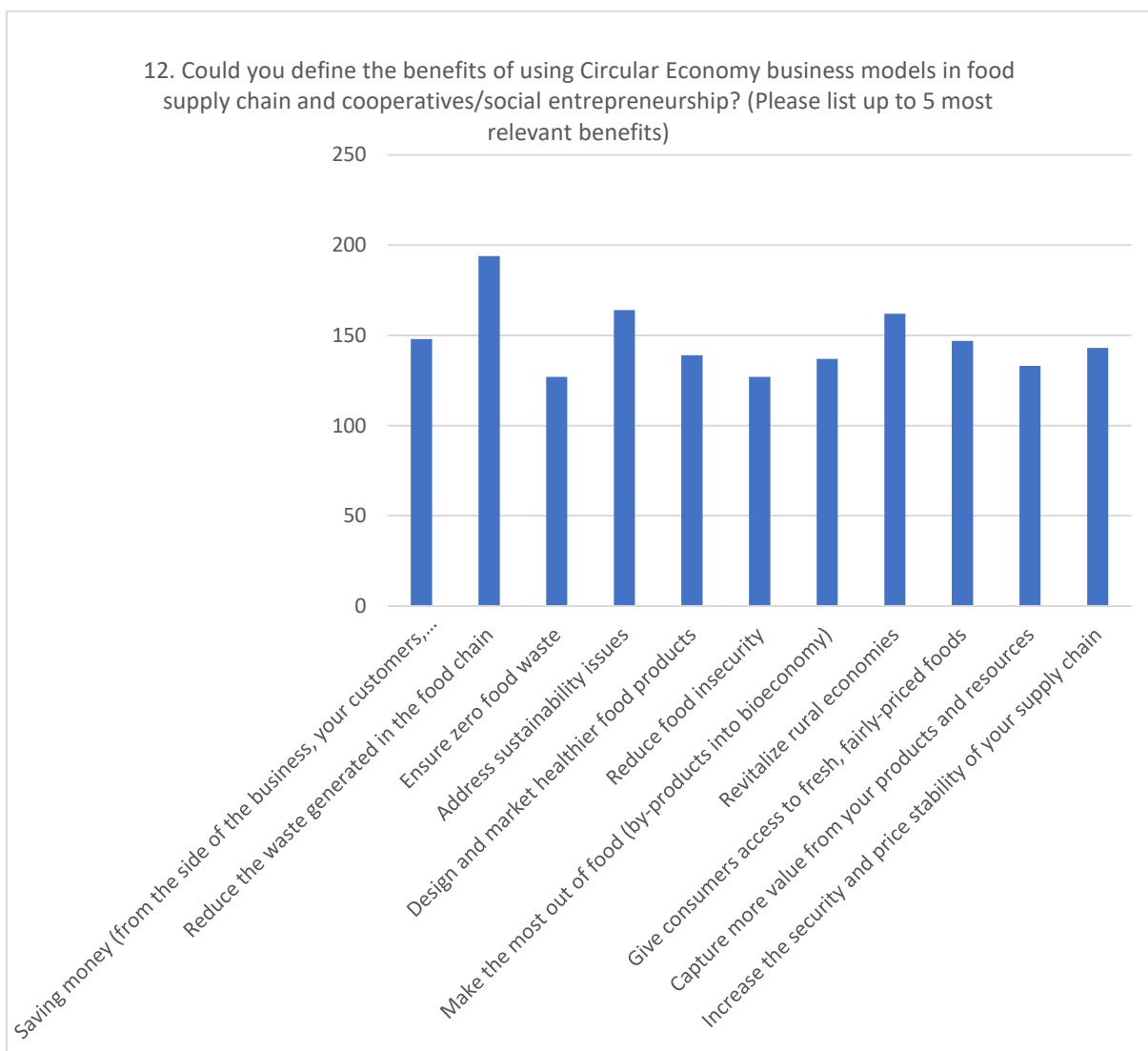


Fig. 12: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain.

In the following 6 figures, are presented also, the results from each country separately.

To start with, the results from Austria, indicate that the most rated benefit is that it *increases the security and price stability of your supply chain*, following by the benefit of *capturing more value from your products and resources* and that it *gives consumers access to fresh, fairly-priced foods*.

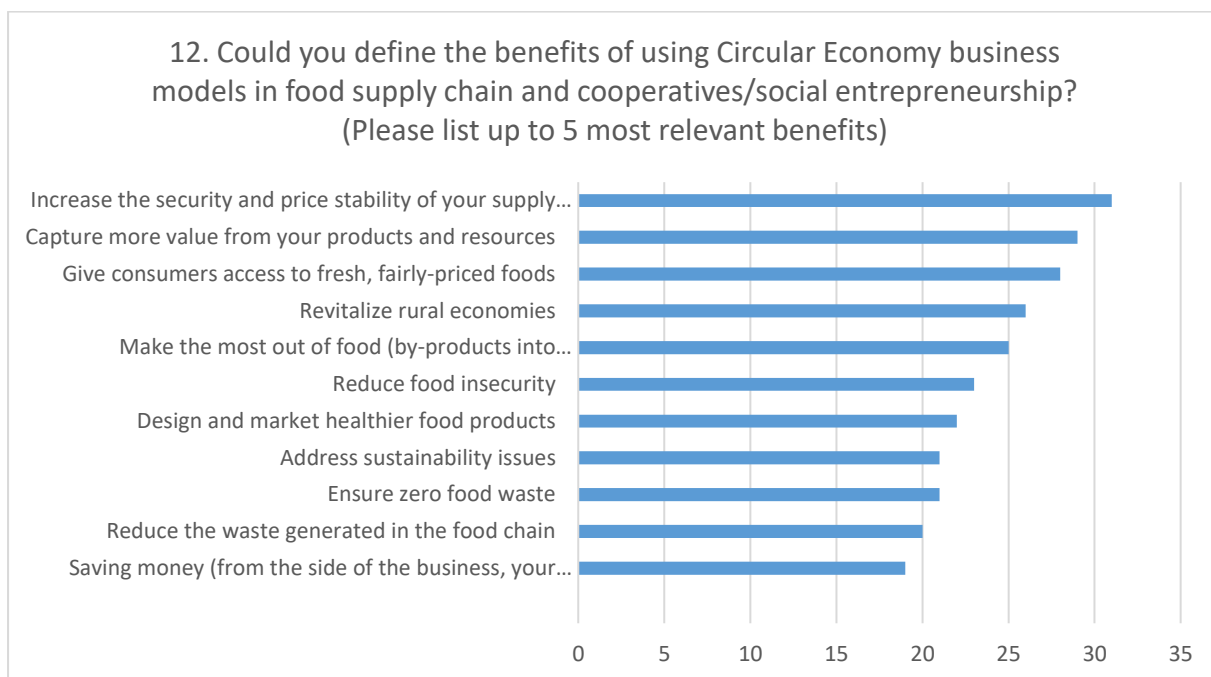


Fig. 12.1.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Austria

Regarding the benefits that participants mentioned regarding Slovenia, they start with mentioning mostly the *reduce of the waste generated in the food chain*, following by *revitalization of rural economies* and the *addressing of sustainability issues*.

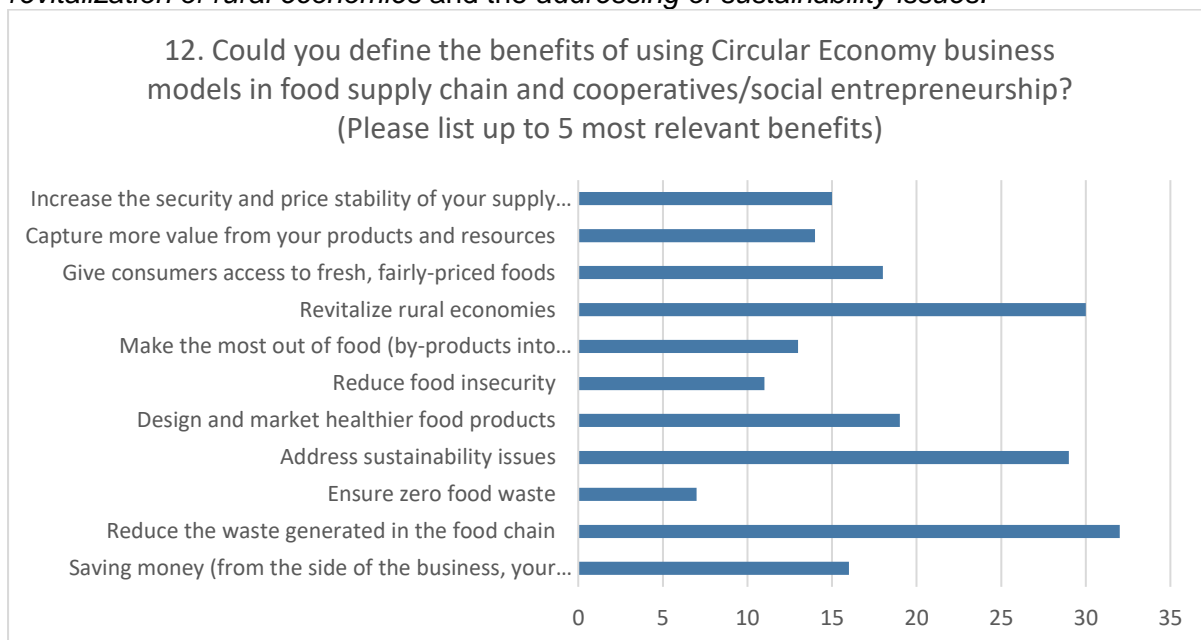


Fig. 12.2.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Slovenia



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As for Cyprus, the most rated results, were *the revitalization of rural economies* along with the *addressing of sustainability issues*, following by the *reduce of waste generated in the food chain*.

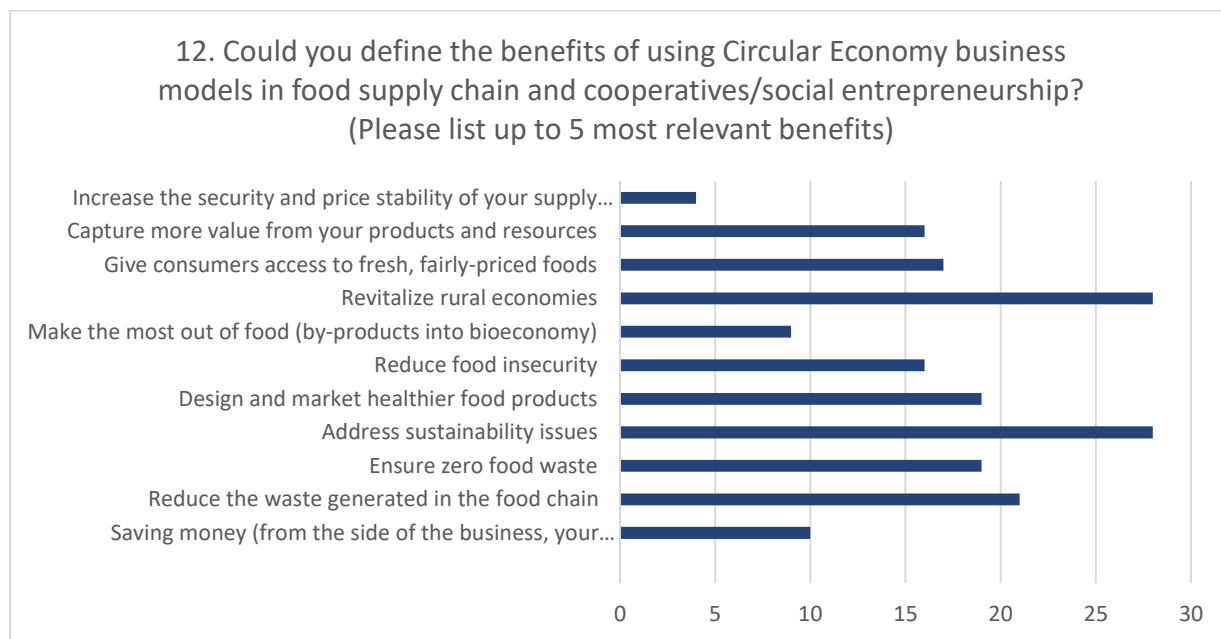


Fig. 12.3.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Cyprus

As for Croatia, the most rated choices, were the *reduce of waste generated in the food chain* along with *saving money (from the side of the business, your customers, and your suppliers)*, following as well with the *revitalization of rural economies*.



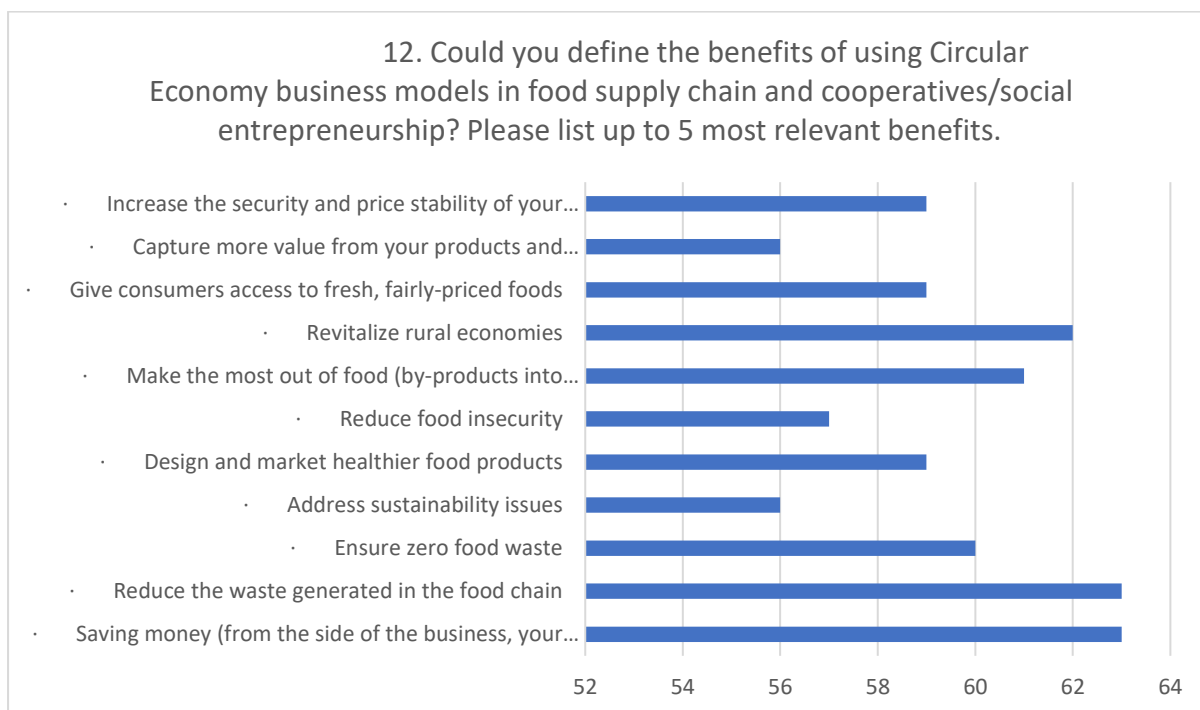


Fig. 12.4.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Croatia

As for Spain, the results are more or less similar with the other countries, with the three most rated benefits were, the *address of sustainability issues*, the *reduce of waste generated in the food chain* and the *revitalization of rural economies*.

12. Could you define the benefits of using Circular Economy business models in food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship?  
Please list up to 5 most relevant benefits.



Fig. 12.5.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Spain

Similarities with the other countries are also in Malta, with the three most rated benefits were, the *address of sustainability issues*, the *reduce of waste generated in the food chain* and *saving money (from the side of the business)*





Fig. 12.6.: Benefits of CE model in the supply chain, in Malta

The next pillars of this survey are the skills and competences demanded (or at least needed) for the implementation and development of circular economy throughout its whole circle of life.

In the next chart, some **skills** for the proper and complete implementation of Circular Economy models are presented, such as a *deeper understanding of circular economy*, more thorough *understanding of cooperatives and social entrepreneurship*, *system thinking*, *innovation*, *collaboration* and *creating a join value*, *value optimization* and others. The participants had to point out which are the most important ones. It seems that *all of them* are considered of *high importance* for the citizens, this is why they were all rated mostly as 'Important' or 'Very important'.



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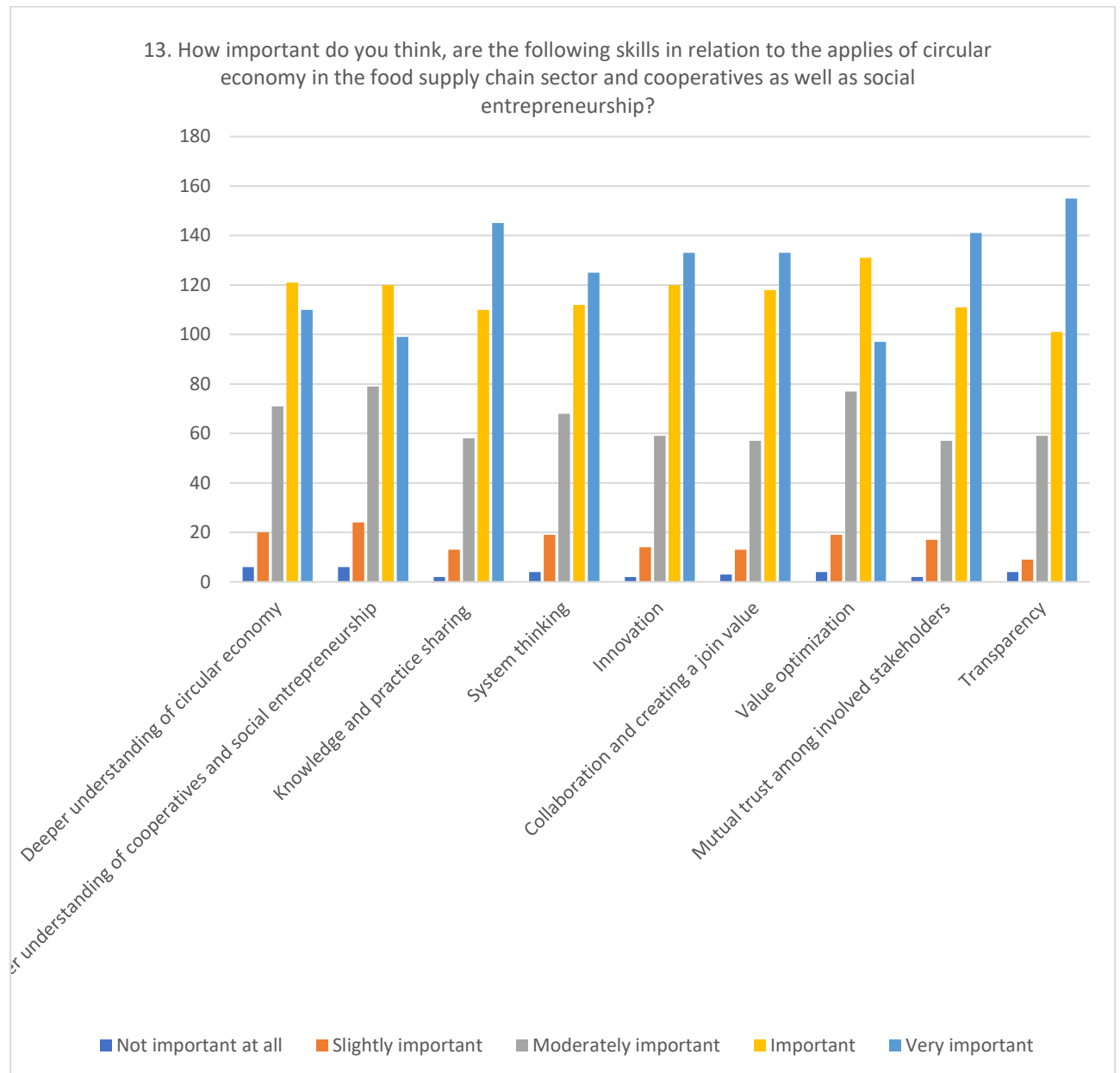


Fig. 13: Importance of various skills to implement CE.

In order to be clearer, in the following 6 figures, the results of each country are presented, where the most important skills of each country are presented.

While reviewing the Fig. 13.1., it is easily understood, that Austrian participants, rated the skills of *mutual trust among stakeholders*, *collaboration and creating a join value* and *value optimization*, as the skills that are important to implement CE (either moderately important either important).



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13. How important do you think, are the following skills in relation to the applies of circular economy in the food supply chain sector and cooperatives as well as social entrepreneurship?

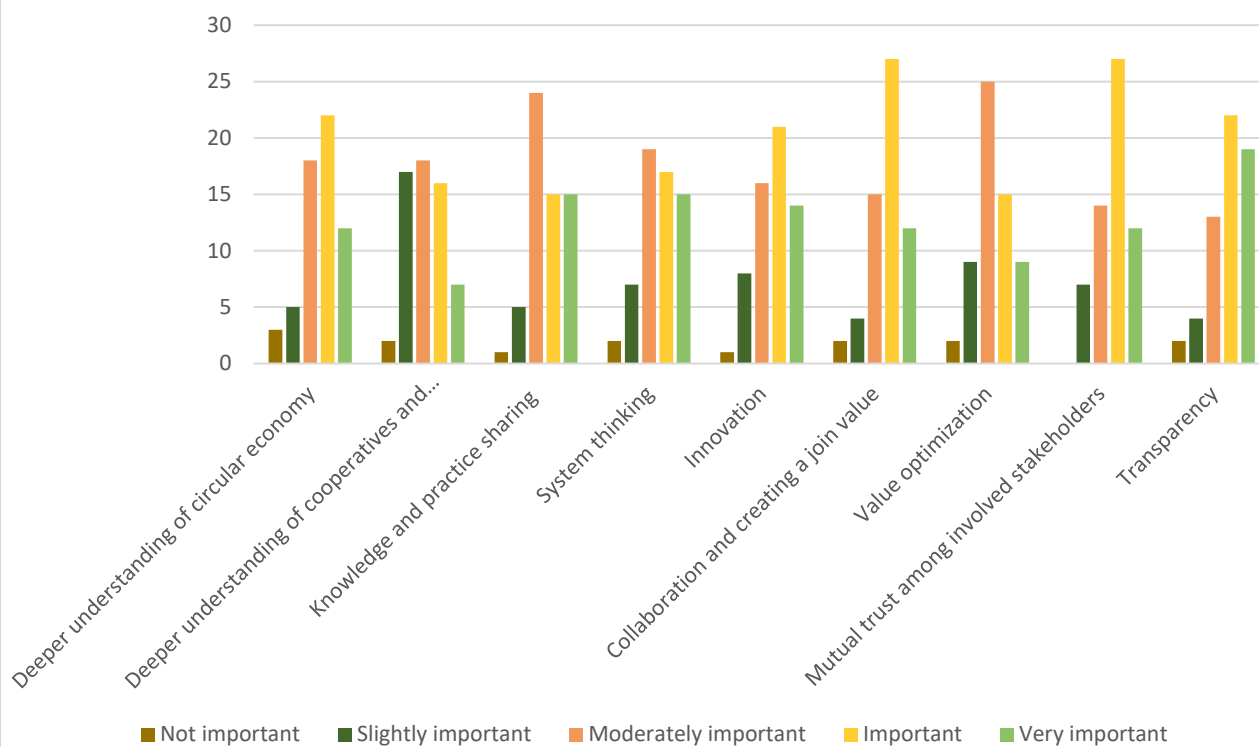


Fig. 13.1: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Austria

Regarding Spain, the most rated skills were the following:

1. Transparency
2. Mutual trust among stakeholders
3. Knowledge and practice sharing

13. How important do you think, are the following skills in relation to the applies of circular economy in the food supply chain sector and cooperatives as well as social entrepreneurship?

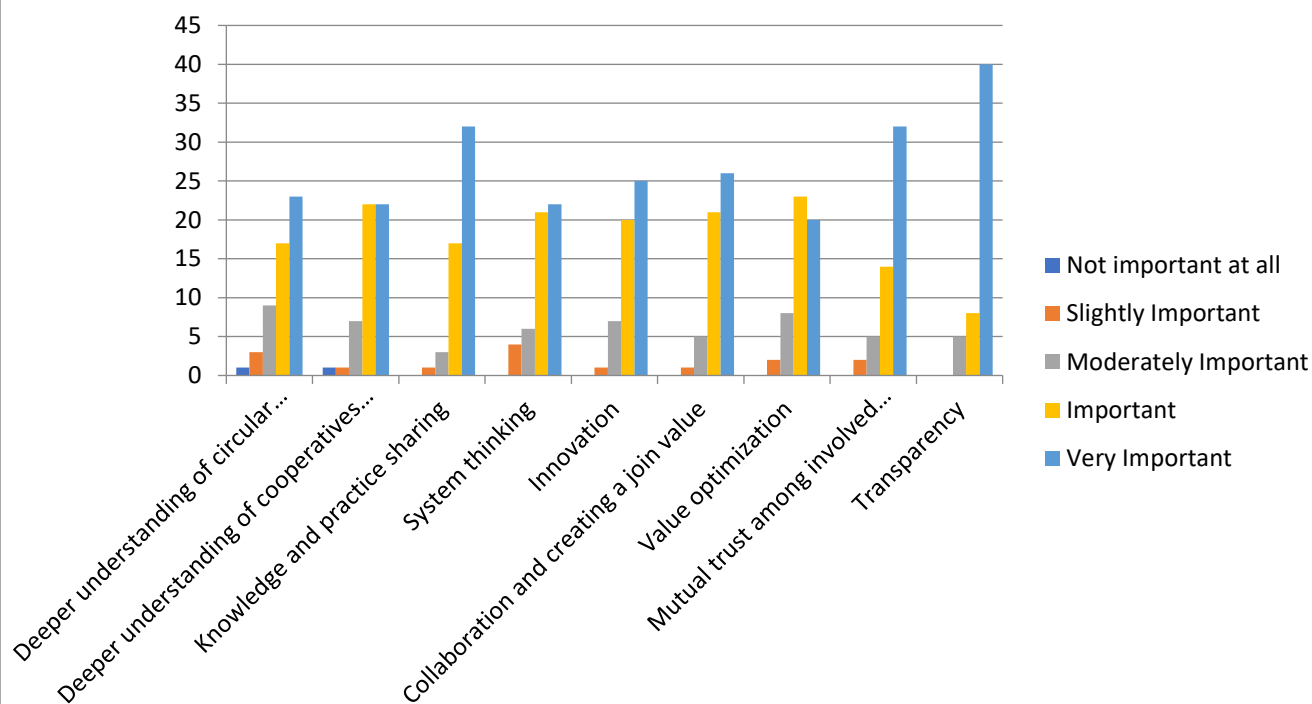


Fig. 13.2: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Spain

As for Croatia, the skills that have been mostly rated by participants, are exactly the same with Spain, as the participants declared the following:

1. Transparency
2. Knowledge and practice sharing
3. Mutual trust among stakeholders

So, it is easily understood that Spain and Croatia, have similar needs from the aspect of skills in order to implement CE.

13. How important do you think, are the following skills in relation to the applies of circular economy in the food supply chain sector and cooperatives as well as social entrepreneurship? (Rate with 1=Not important at all, 2= Slightly Important, 3=Modera

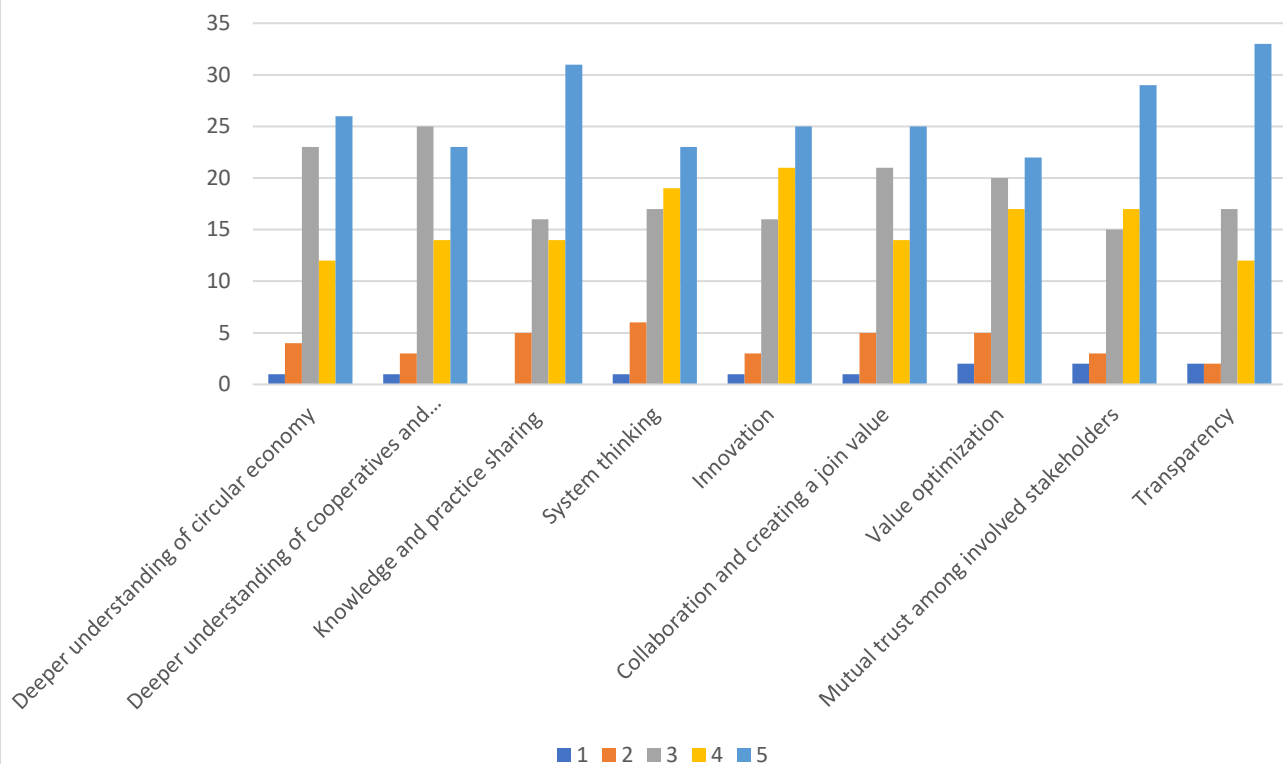


Fig. 13.3: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Croatia

As for Slovenia, the most rated skills, were the following:

1. Deeper understanding of circular economy
2. Innovation
3. Knowledge and practice sharing

13. How important do you think, are the following skills in relation to the applies of circular economy in the food supply chain sector and cooperatives as well as social entrepreneurship? (Rate with 1=Not important at all, 2= Slightly Important, 3=Moderately Important, 4=Important, 5=Very important)

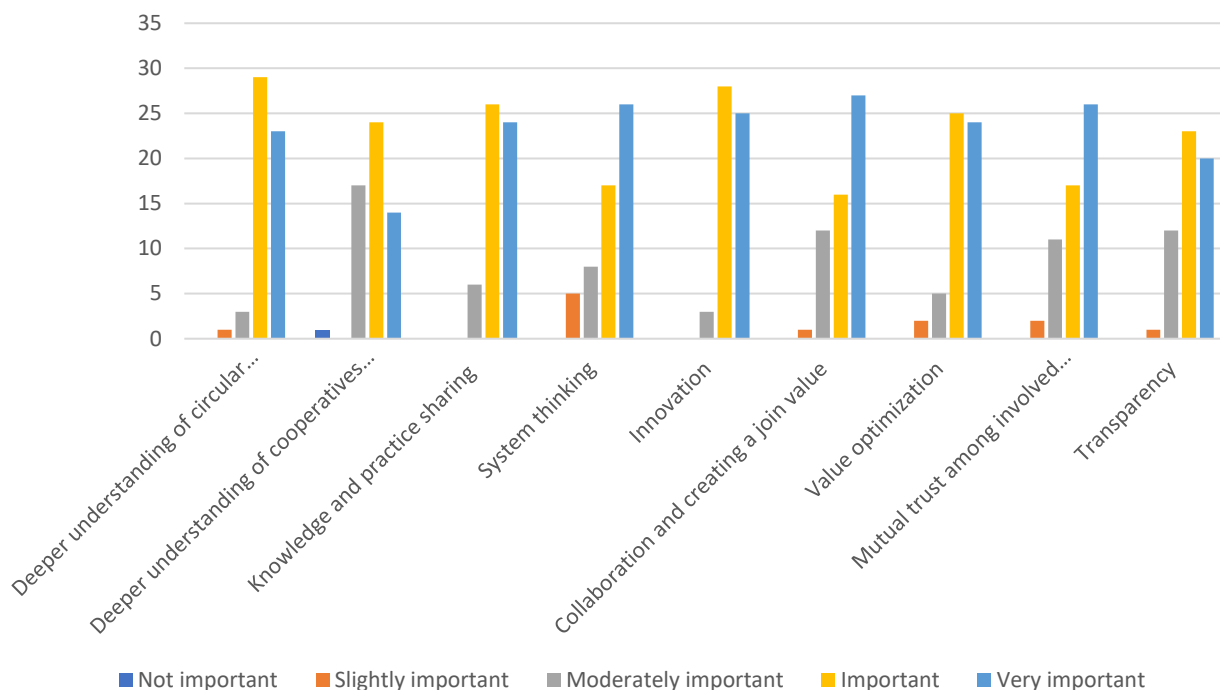


Fig. 13.4: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Slovenia

In Fig 13.5, the results of Cyprus, regarding the skills indicated the following:

1. Knowledge and practice sharing
2. Deeper understanding of cooperatives and social entrepreneurship
3. Innovation / value optimization



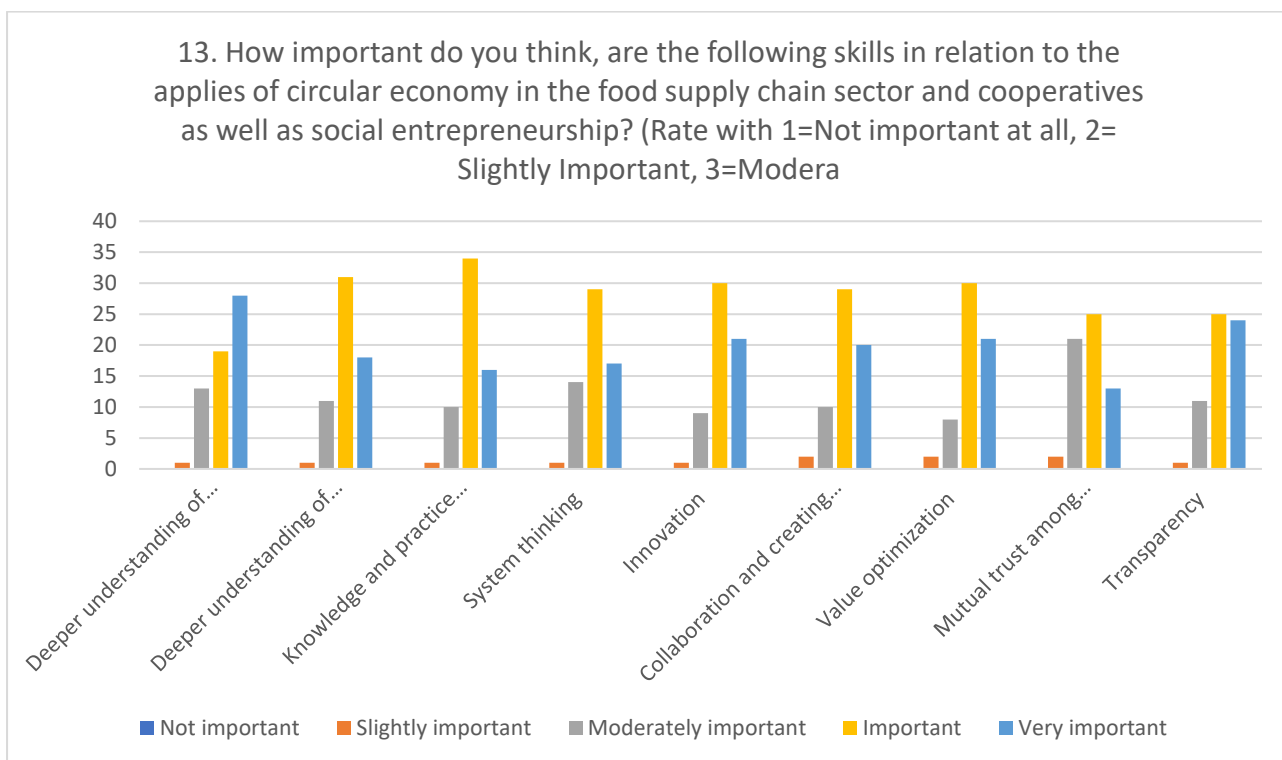


Fig. 13.5: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Cyprus

Last but not least, In Fig 13.6, the results of Malta, regarding the skills indicated the following:

1. Value optimization
2. Knowledge and practice sharing / Transparency
3. Deeper understanding of cooperatives and social entrepreneurship

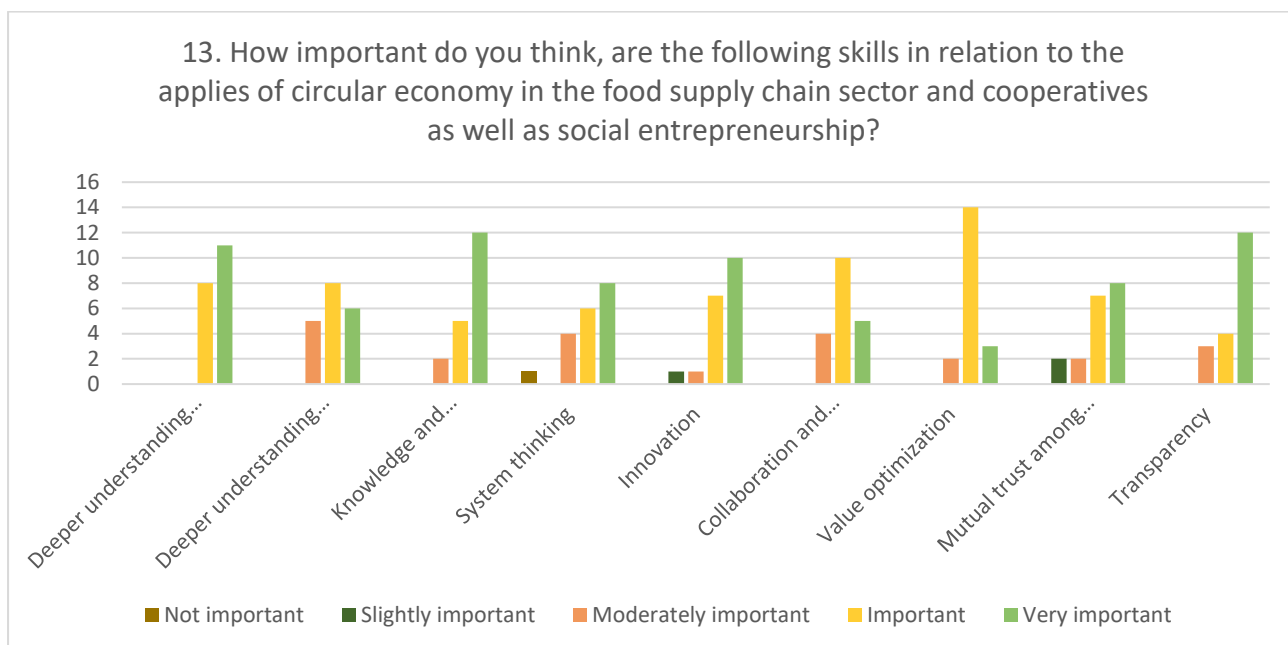


Fig. 13.6: Importance of various skills to implement CE, in Malta

Moreover, as far as the competences possessed (Fig.14) and the competences needed (Fig.15) for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains, there follow two charts. Within these charts, the participants had to evaluate and vote which of them are more crucial for the description provided.

The three competences that are met mostly among people, based on the following charts below, are the *identification and recognition of new circular economy food supply chain business models*, the *minimization of the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains*, and the *implementation of food recycling and reuse*.

Accordingly, similar competences are characterized as the most necessary competences for this field. The identification and recognition of new circular economy food supply chain business models and the minimization of the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains, apart from possessed, are also very important, however, the development and commercialization of innovative food related technologies along with the analysis, measurement and considering circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts) are the most needed ones, according to the response in the questionnaire.

Thus, people identify the necessary factors that contribute to the circular economy business models establishment in the field of food supply chains and try to enhance them at a personal level, too. So far, the survey findings show that citizens are quite



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aware with the field, the terms and the elements needed so it is natural that they try to develop themselves and get more acquainted with it and all its aspects.

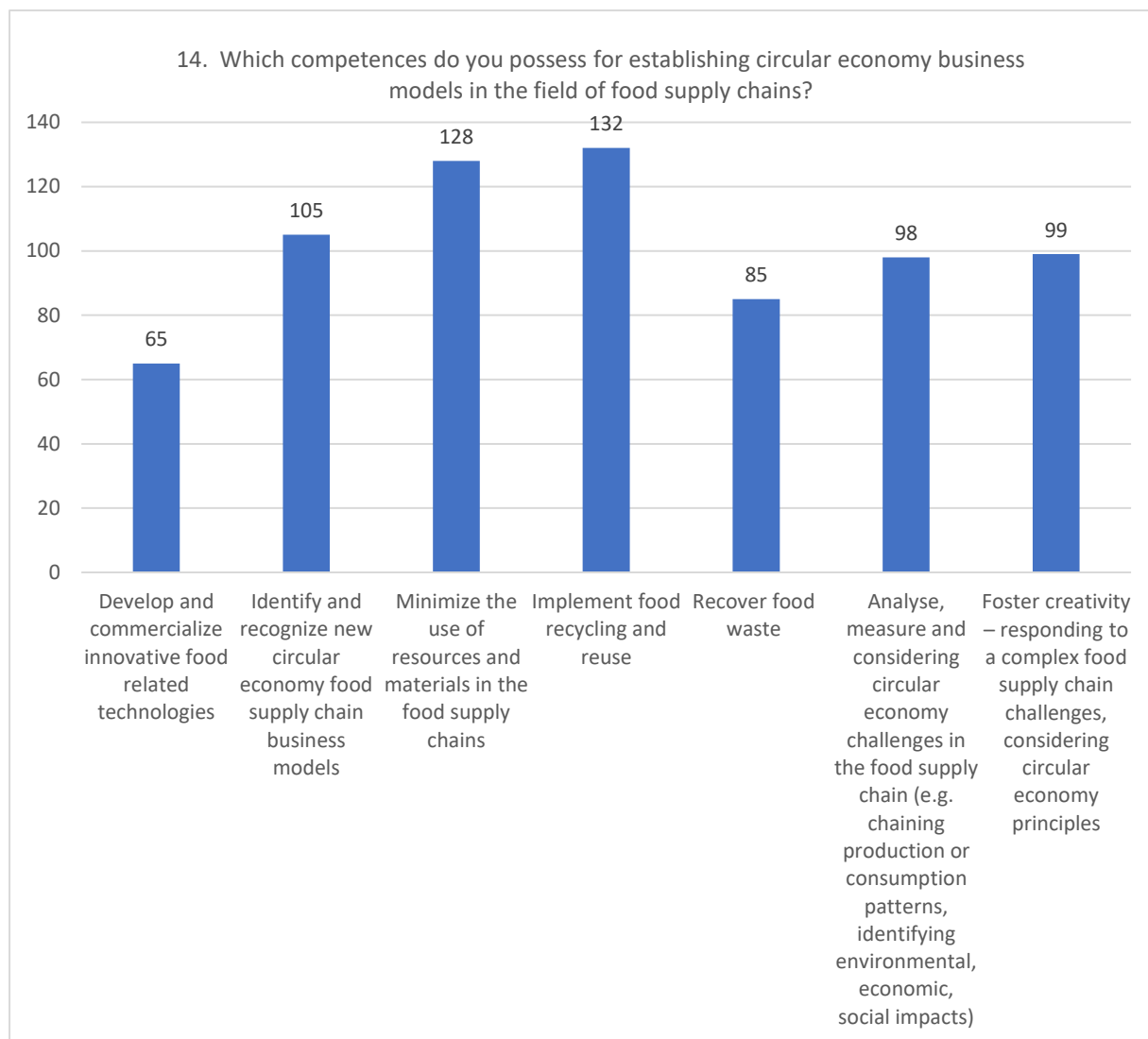


Fig. 14: competences do you possess for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains?

In the Fig. 14 (14 up to 14.6) the charts below represent the total findings and the findings from each country, regarding the competences that participants possess for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains.

For Austria, the competences that the participants possess mostly for the establishment of circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains, are:

1. Implement food recycling and reuse
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains
3. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models



Fig. 14.1.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Austria

As for Slovenia, the competences that participants mostly possess, are:

1. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains
3. Implement food recycling and reuse

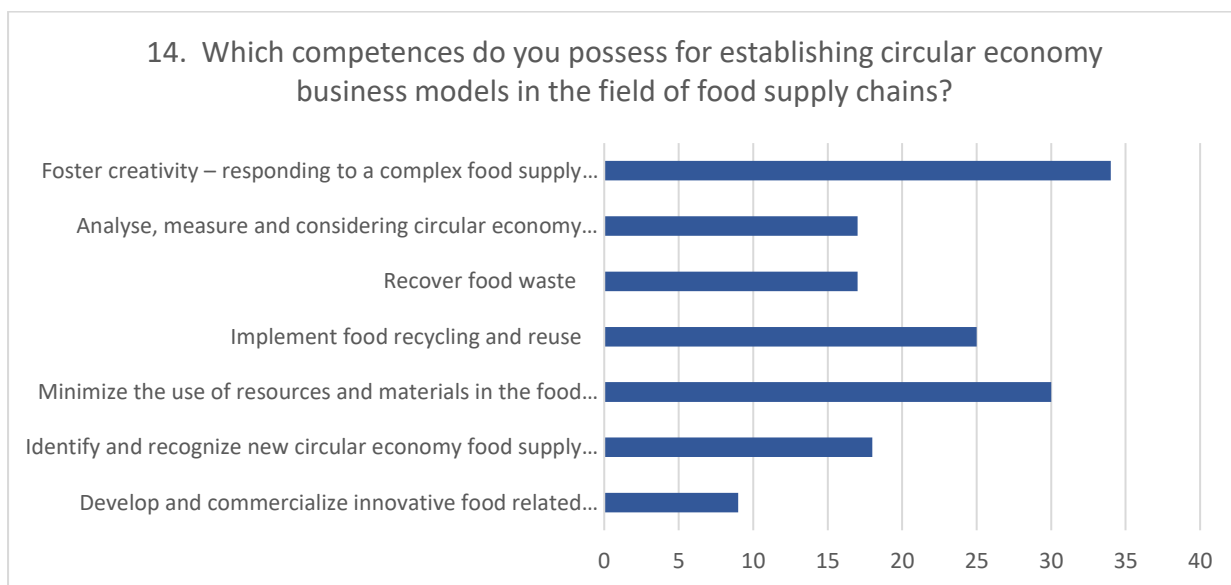


Fig. 14.2.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Slovenia

Regarding Cyprus, the choices regarding the competences range among:

1. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models
2. Implement food recycling and reuse
3. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles / Analyse, measure and considering circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts)

#### 14. Which competences do you possess for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains?

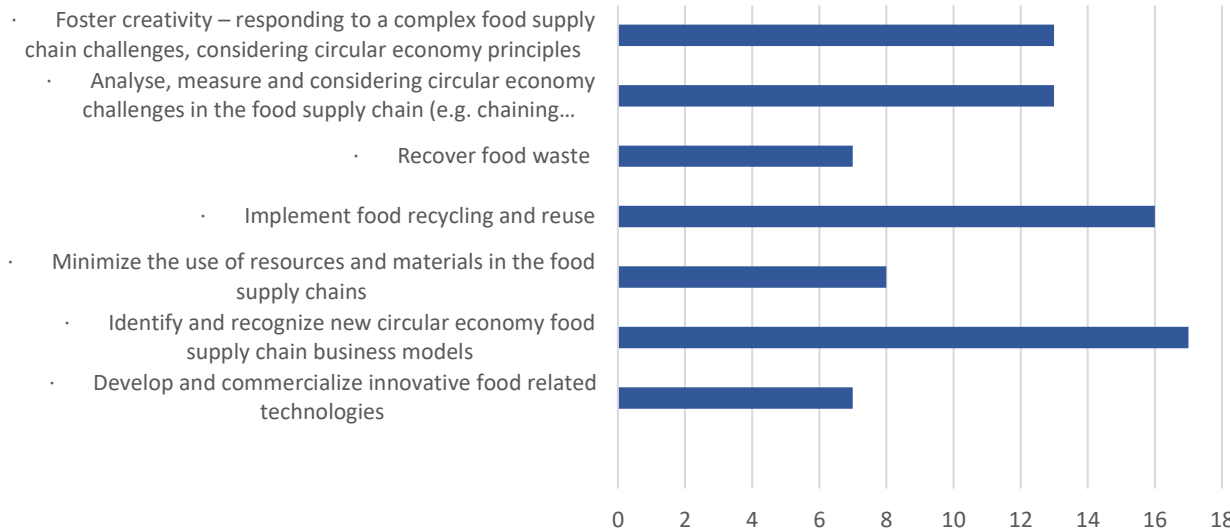


Fig. 14.3.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Cyprus

The results from Croatia, were the following:

1. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains
2. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles
3. Recover food waste

#### 14. Which competences do you possess for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains?

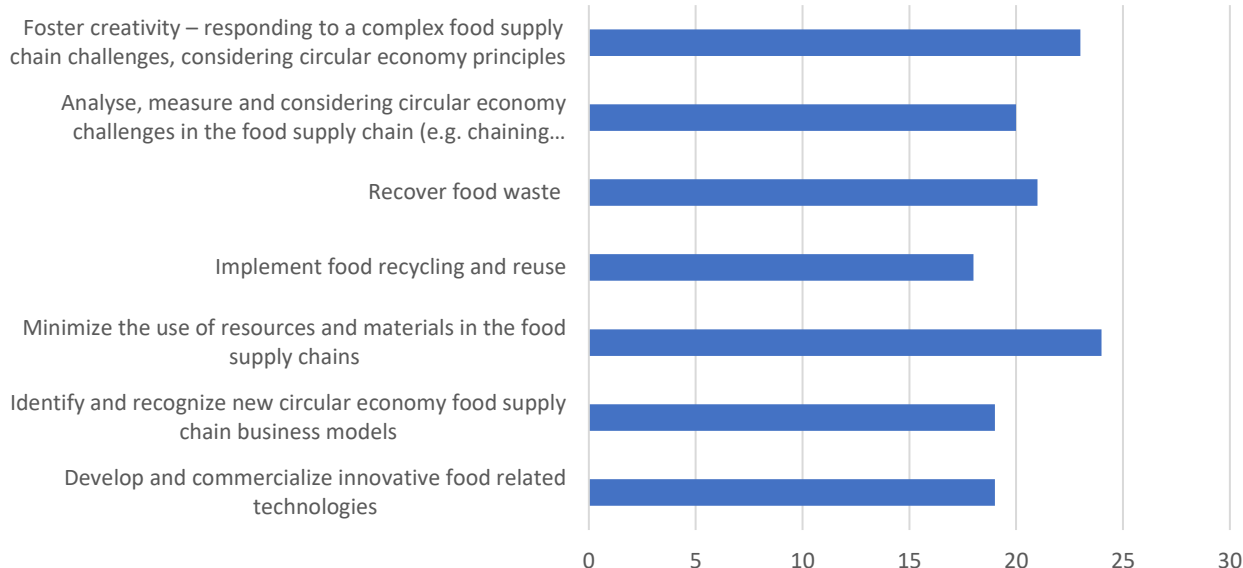


Fig. 14.4.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Croatia

Regarding Spain, the competences that they possess, range among others, to the following:

1. Implement food recycling and reuse
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains
3. Analyse, measure and considering circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts)

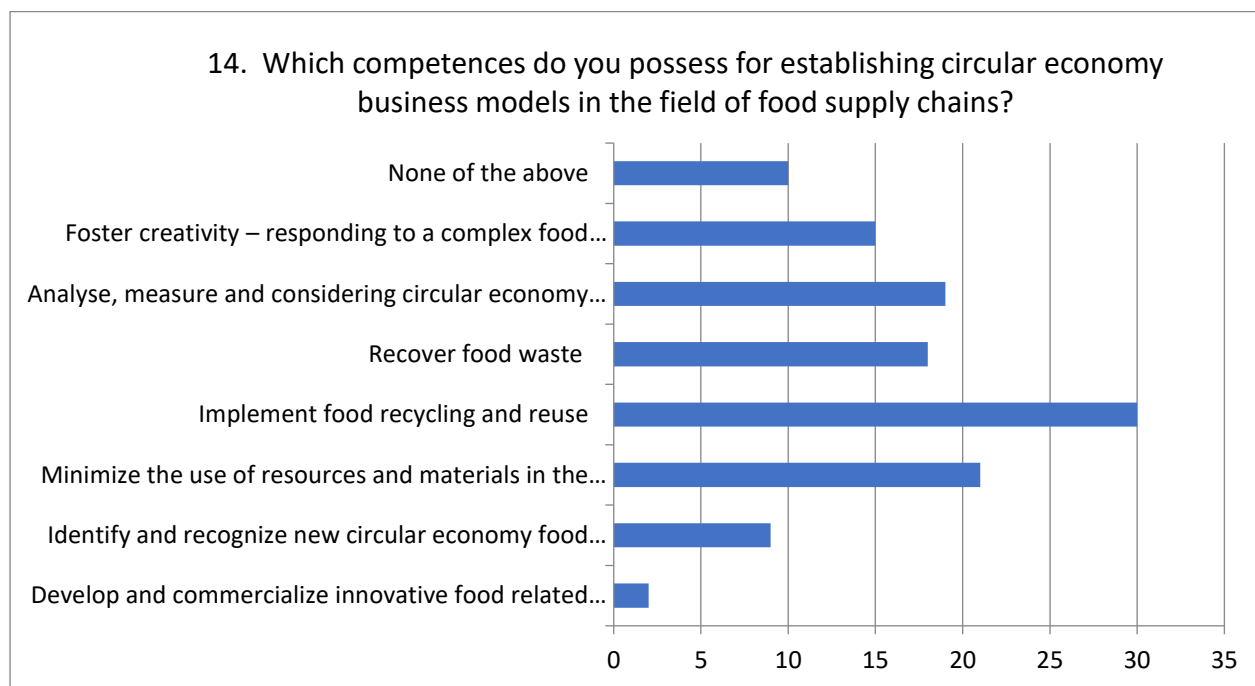


Fig. 14.5.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Spain

As for Spain, the competences that they possess, range among others, to the following:

1. Implement food recycling and reuse
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chain
3. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models



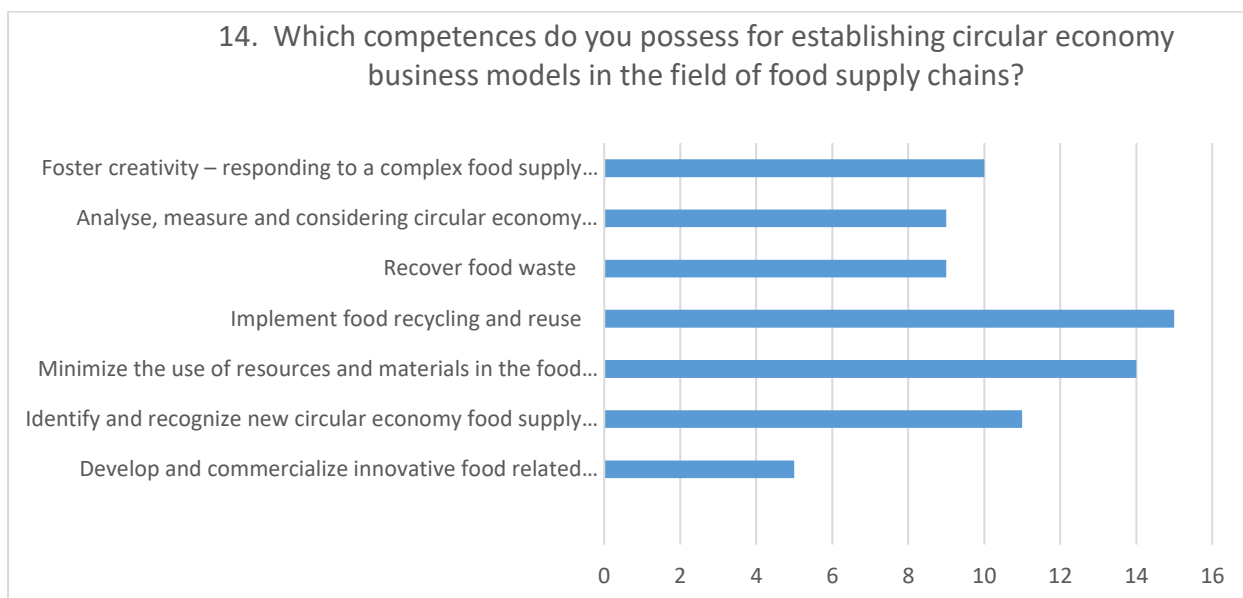


Fig. 14.6.: Competences for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains in Malta

As a complementary above figures, the next figures below, starting from Fig. 15 up to 15.6, represent the total findings and the findings from each country, based in the opinion from participants that are needed for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains.

Overall, participants, the three most rated competences that are needed for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains, are the *identification and recognition of new circular economy food supply chain business models*, the *Analysis, measurement and consideration of circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts)* following by the *Development and commercialization of innovative food related technologies*.

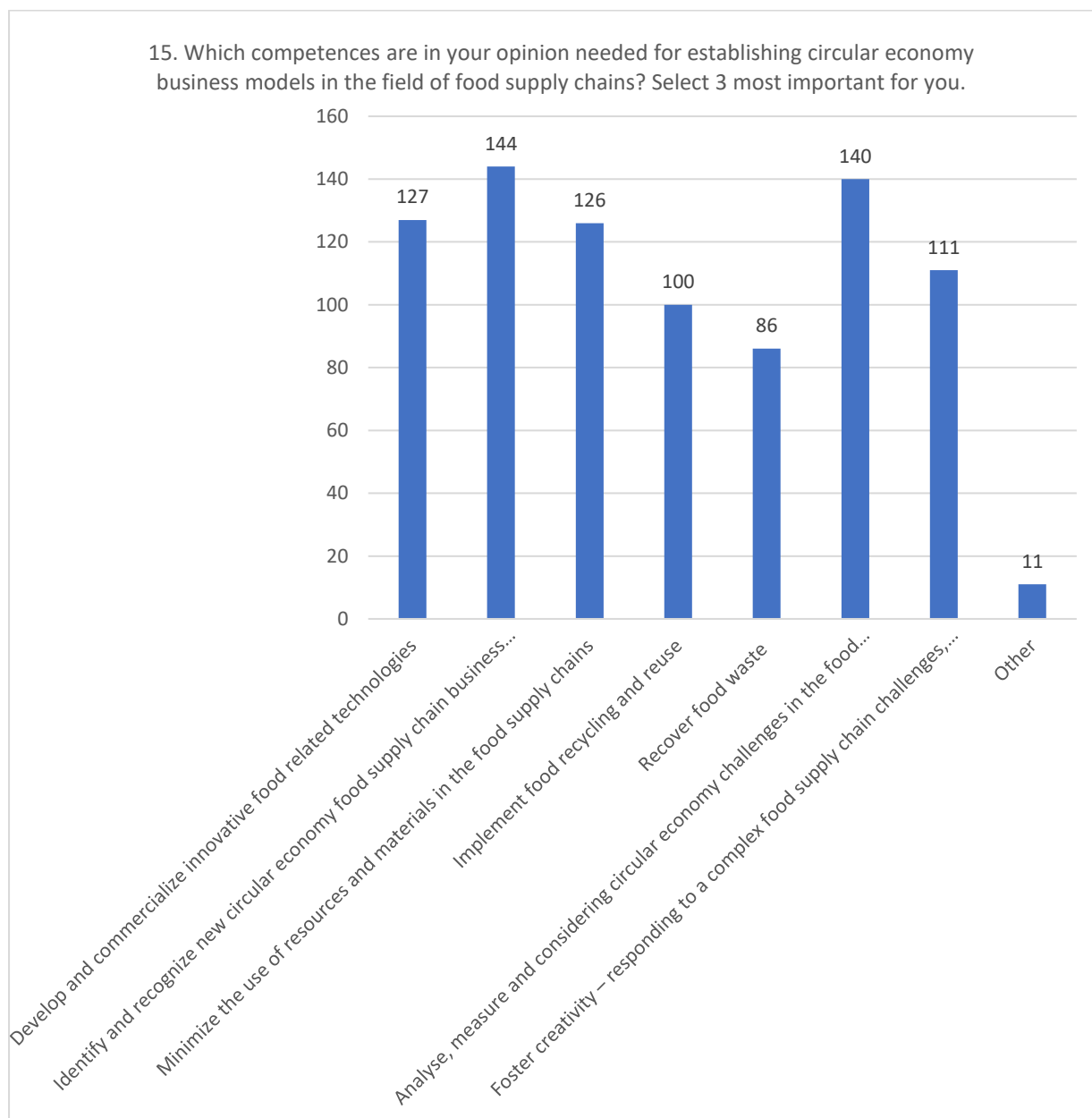
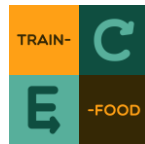


Fig. 15.: Competencies needed for the CE

In Fig.15.1, the competences needed for the CE in Austria, are presented. Based on the results from the participants, the most rated results were the *Analysis, measurement and consideration of circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social*



impacts) , the minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains and the development and commercialization of innovative food related technologies.

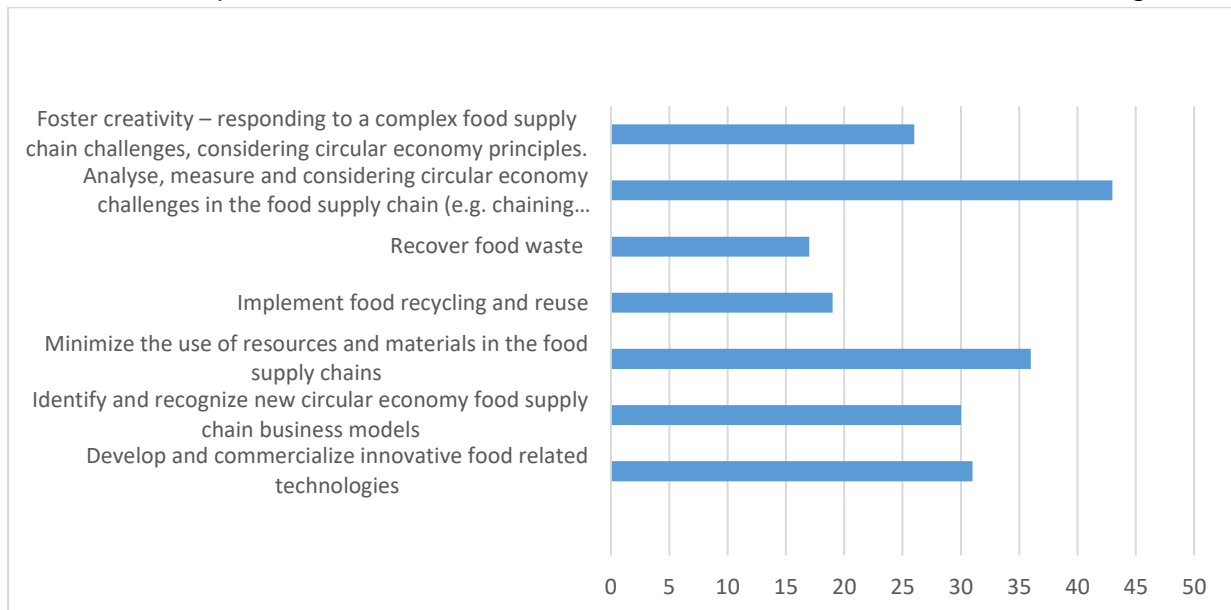


Fig. 15.1.: Competencies needed for the CE in Austria.

As for Slovenia, the three most rated results here, were the same as in Austria above.

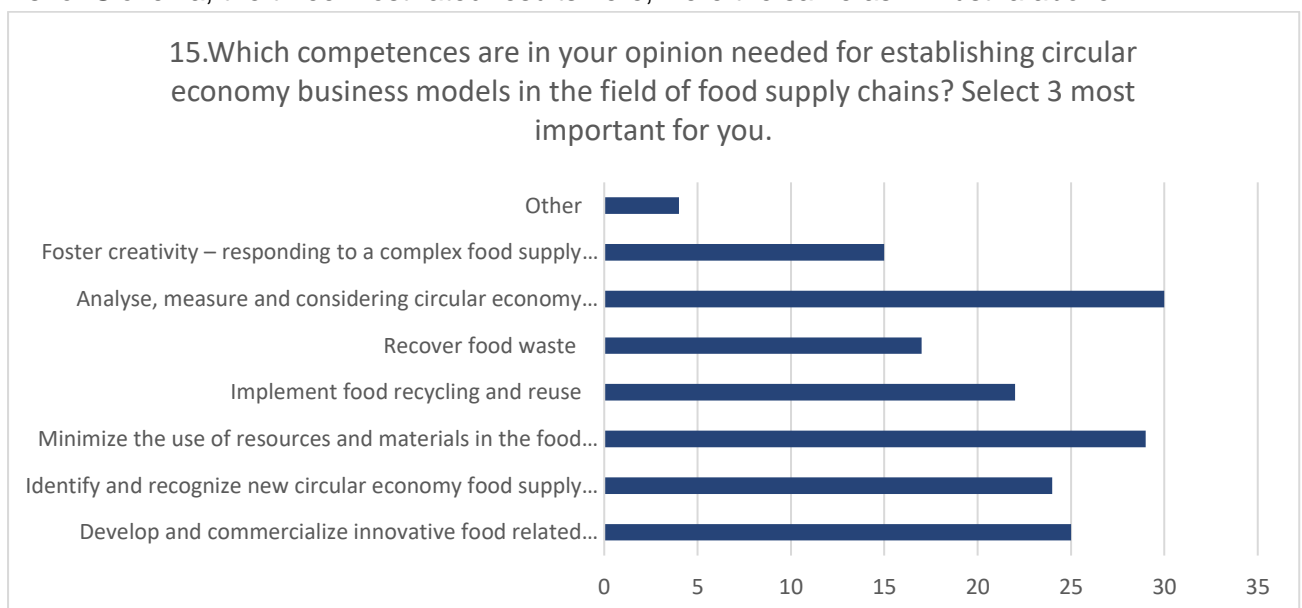


Fig. 15.2.: Competencies needed for the CE in Slovenia.

In Cyprus, the most three rated competencies were:



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1. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models
2. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles.
3. Analyse, measure and considering circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts)



Fig. 15.3.: Competencies needed for the CE in Cyprus

As for Spain, the participants, indicated the following competences:

1. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles.
2. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models
3. Develop and commercialize innovative food related technologies



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15. Which competences are in your opinion needed for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains? Select 3 most important for you.

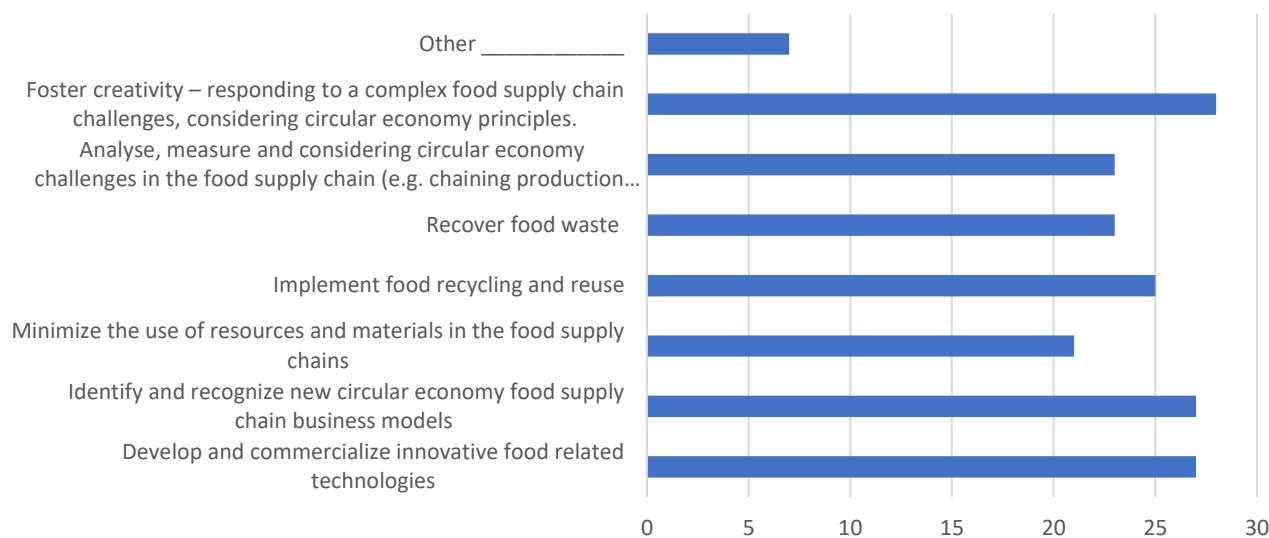


Fig. 15.4.: Competencies needed for the CE in Spain

From the side of Croatia, the participants, indicated the following competences, as in Spain. With other words:

1. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles.
2. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models
3. Develop and commercialize innovative food related technologies



Fig. 15.5.: Competencies needed for the CE in Croatia

Last but not least, the participants from Malta indicated the following competences:

1. Implement food recycling and reuse
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains
3. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models



Fig. 15.6.: Competencies needed for the CE in Malta

It is widely known that circular economy moves within the frames of social entrepreneurship. So, it has attracted the attention and interest of social entrepreneurs and a big percentage of them is occupied with several aspects of this field. *But which skills are indispensable for social entrepreneurs?* This is a question that is answered in the survey and gives very useful feedback for the experts on this field and on social entrepreneurship generally.

The most overrated skills for this kind of professionals are *social responsibility, entrepreneurial mind-set and attitude, creativity & innovation, and teamwork*. It is a fact that these skills are crucial for any branches or activities of entrepreneurship, so it is assumed that the foundations of implementing circular economy are placed on the overall concept of entrepreneurship. As we can see in the chart, too, problem solving and democratic decision-making, product development, and communication with interpersonal relationships management are also must-have for social entrepreneurs. All these skills combined with the appropriate knowledge on the field of food supply chain and the required social sensitivity are the tools that a social entrepreneur can use to go further in this field. (Fig. 16 up to Fig.4).

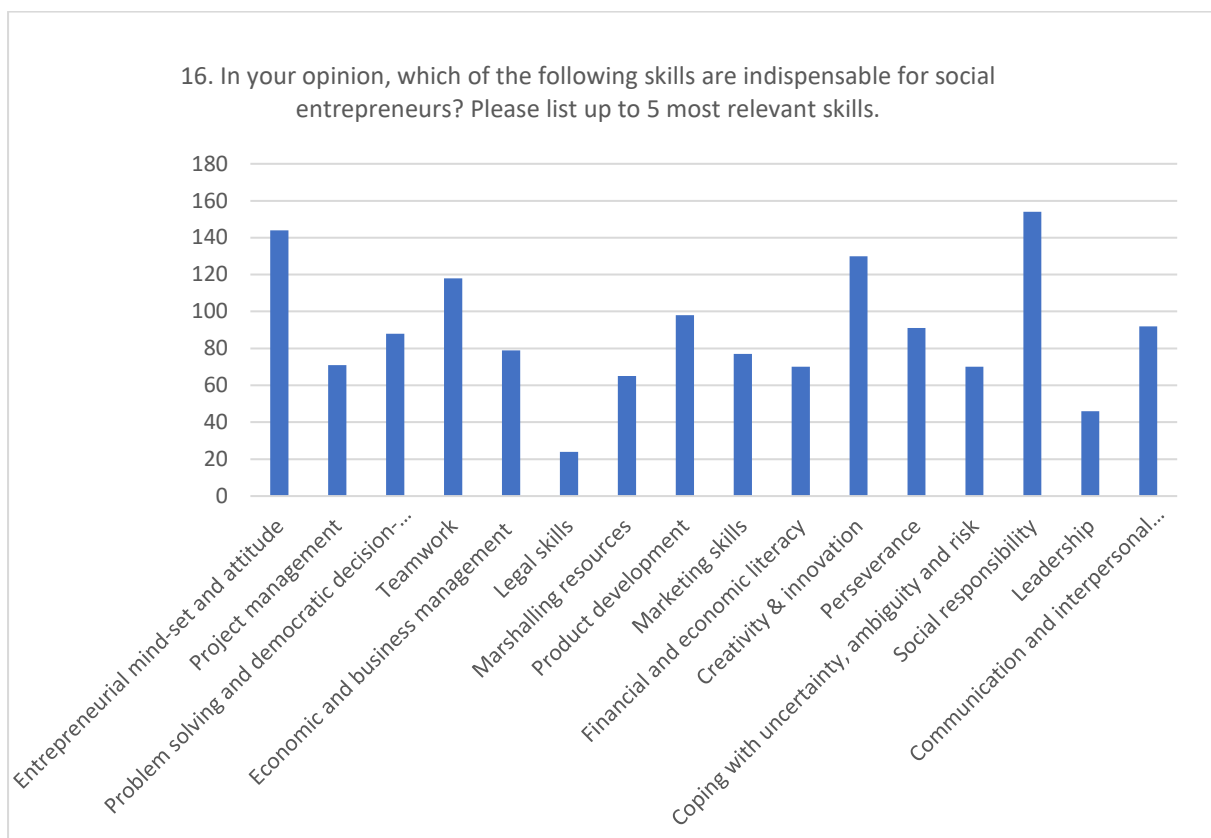


Fig. 16: Indispensable skills.

By reviewing the following 5 figures, the results that have been voted mostly among Austria were, *Social responsibility*, *Creativity & innovation* and *Communication and interpersonal relationships management*. (Fig. 16.1)

As for Slovenia, in Fig.16.2., they were *Teamwork*, *Social responsibility* and *product development*.

Regarding Croatia in Fig.16.3., they were *Teamwork*, *Creativity & innovation* and *product development*.

Following by Cyprus in Fig. 16.4, the most rated results, were *Social responsibility*, *Entrepreneurial mind-set and attitude* and *Economic and business management*.

As for Spain, in Fig. 16.5. voted mostly, *Entrepreneurial mind-set and attitude*, *Teamwork* and *Social responsibility*.

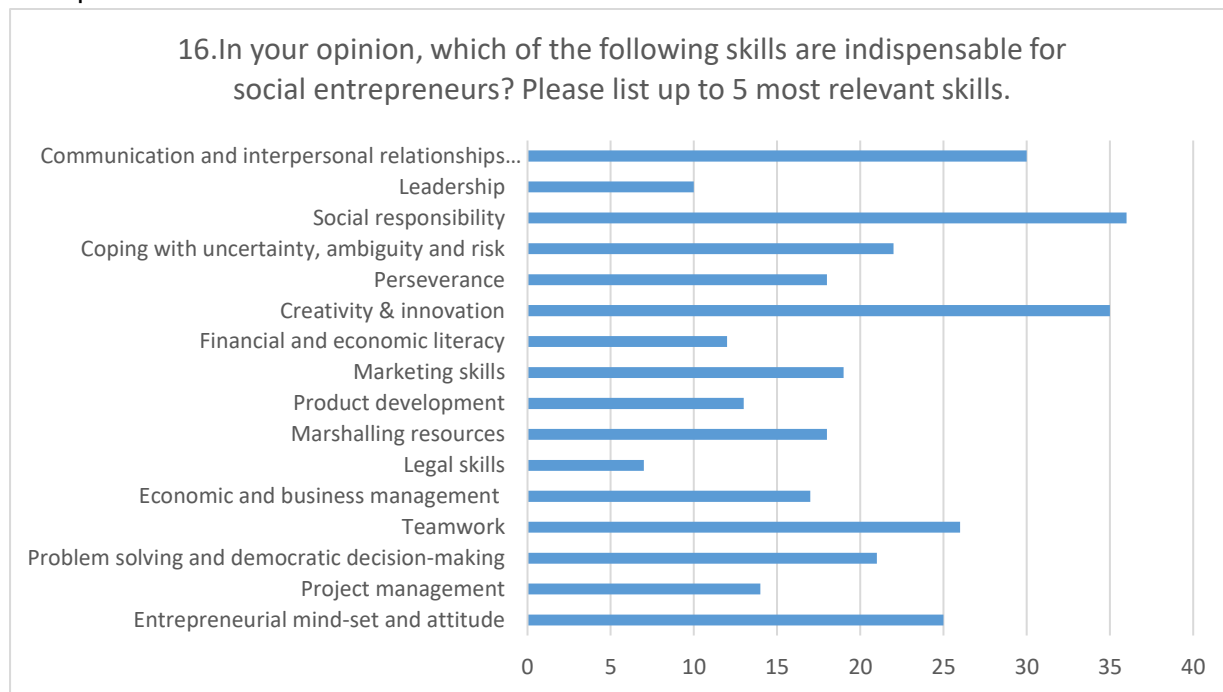
Last but not least, Malta, in Fig. 16.6. voted mostly, *Entrepreneurial mind-set and attitude*, *Teamwork* and *Creativity & innovation*.



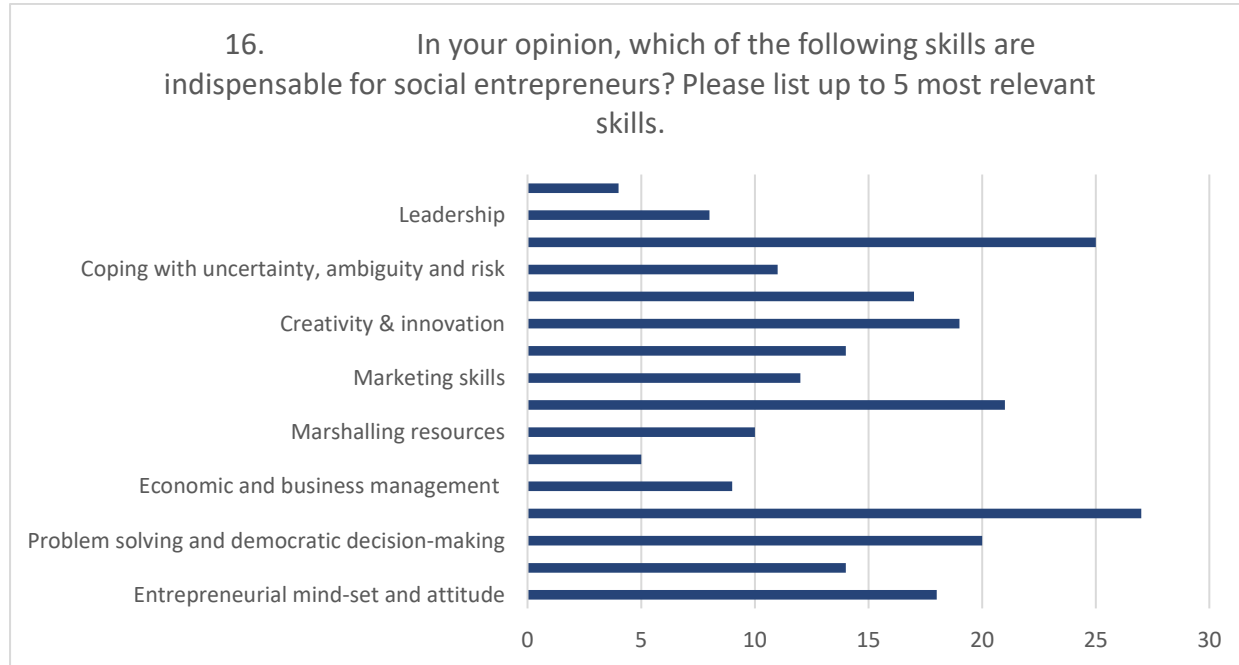
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All of the countries, presented more or less, the same skills as indispensable for social entrepreneurs.



#### 16.1. Indispensable skills in Austria

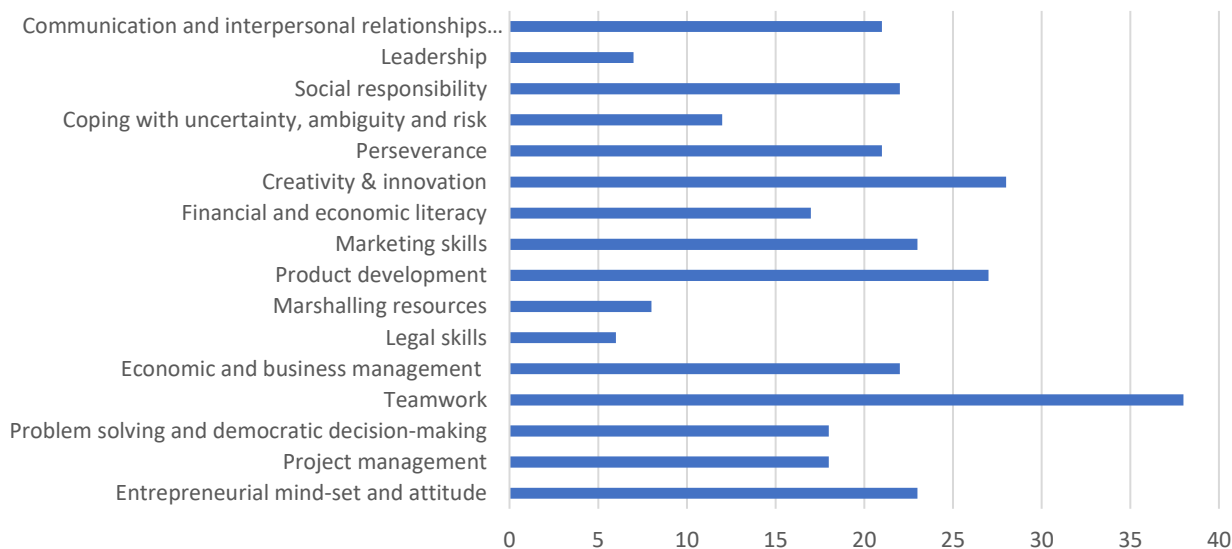


#### 16.2. Indispensable skills in Slovenia



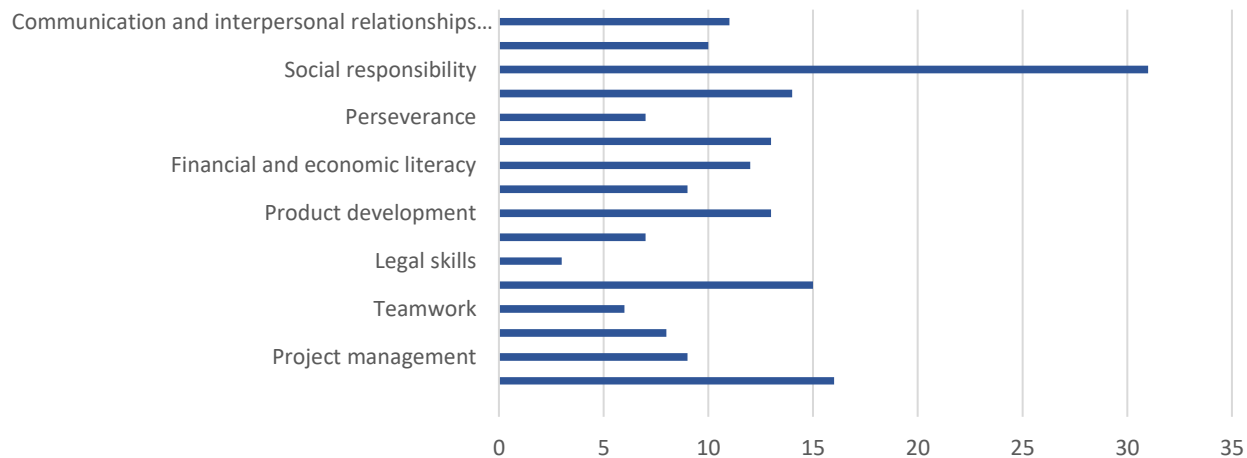
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16. In your opinion, which of the following skills are indispensable for social entrepreneurs? Please list up to 5 most relevant skills.



16.3. Indispensable skills in Croatia

16. In your opinion, which of the following skills are indispensable for social entrepreneurs? Please list up to 5 most relevant skills.



16.4. Indispensable skills in Cyprus

16. In your opinion, which of the following skills are indispensable for social entrepreneurs? Please list up to 5 most relevant skills.



16.5. Indispensable skills in Spain

16. In your opinion, which of the following skills are indispensable for social entrepreneurs? Please list up to 5 most relevant skills.



16.6. Indispensable skills in Malta

Checking the chart for question 17 which concerns the reasons why many people do not buy products from social enterprises in their area, it is concluded that the lack of information is the source of this tendency. Locals usually do not have access to social enterprises products, or they do not have many options. Also, it is a common phenomenon not to even know which are social enterprises and which are not so as



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to support them. Last but not least, the more expensive products of this category are deterrent for many buyers, and the primary stage of circular economy development and lack of awareness might be to blame for these answers.

By reviewing the figure below, Austria participants, are not buying from social enterprises in their area due to their consideration that they have *more expensive offers*. In Spain and Croatia, people, seems that they are *not able to recognize which are social enterprises and which are not*, while in Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus, people have *less accessibility and choice by social enterprises*.



Fig. 17: reasons for not buying from social enterprise in your area.

Taking into consideration all the results concluded from the questions so far, participants needed to answer some further questions which reflect their personal opinion and involvement with the topic. Looking at everyone's monthly budget spent on locally sourced products, most consumers spend less than 10% or 5% of their budget on social products (232 answers in total) and only 96 of them more than 10% of their budget. It is undeniable that this percentage can and ought to be increased, if local economy is to be supported.

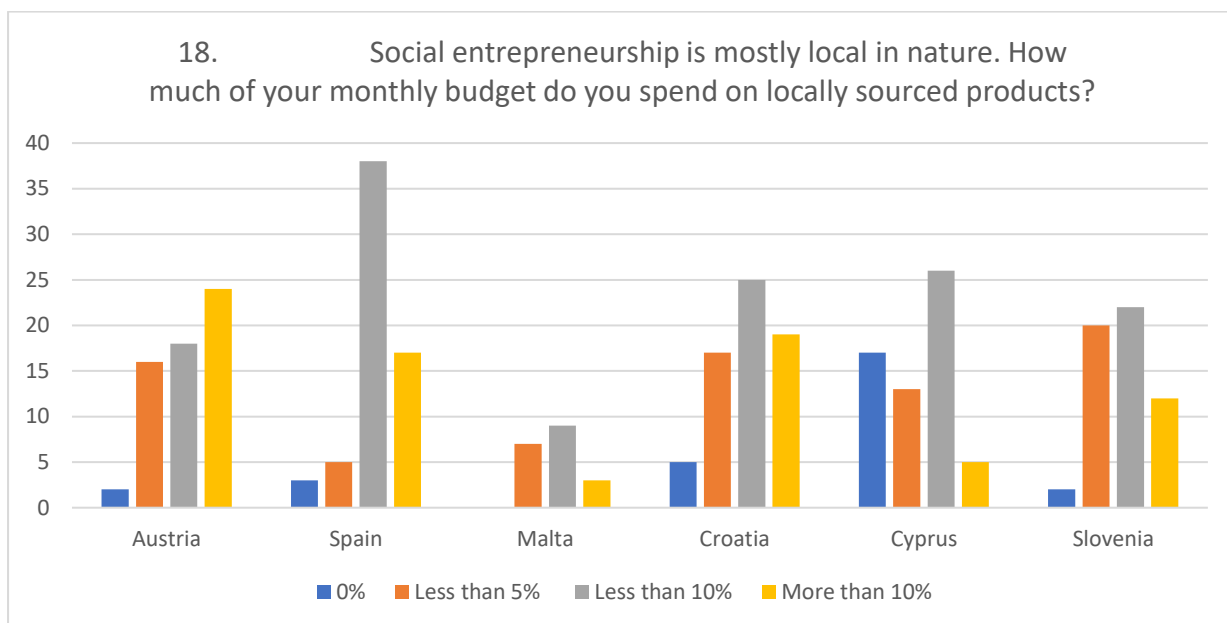


Fig. 18: Monthly budgeted spent on local products.

Question 19 addresses some up-to-date problems due to corona crisis which have led to further concerns regarding the local markets and the financial issues in the field of economics. It seems that the biggest percentage of participants is aware of all the changes and knowledge sharing (whether positive or negative) that have come up with all this situation. From the Fig. 19. it is easily understood, that all countries, are aware of the importance of the local market in relation to the modern war in the field of economics.

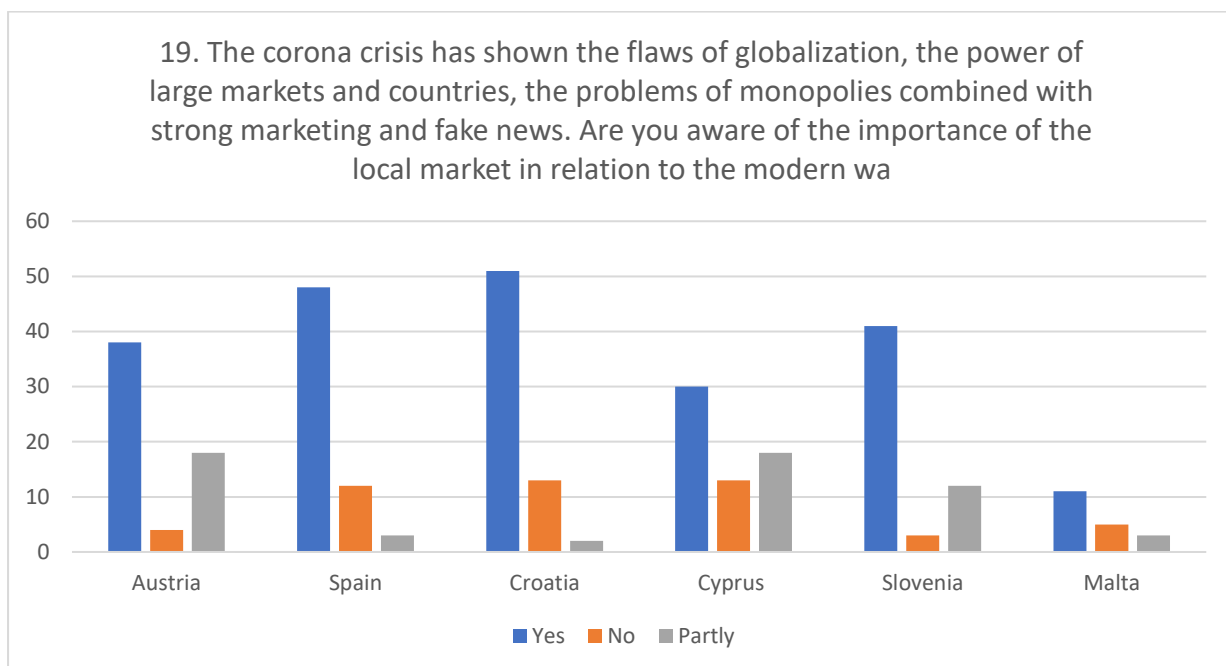


Fig. 19: Awareness of the importance of the local markets.

In the same direction, the next chart elicits participants' point of view on the circular economy as a solution to some of the issues that Europe deals with. Most participants think that the circular economy, and generally the support to local, regional, EU markets in cooperation with the fair-trade economy, can be the solution, or they partly agree with this perception.

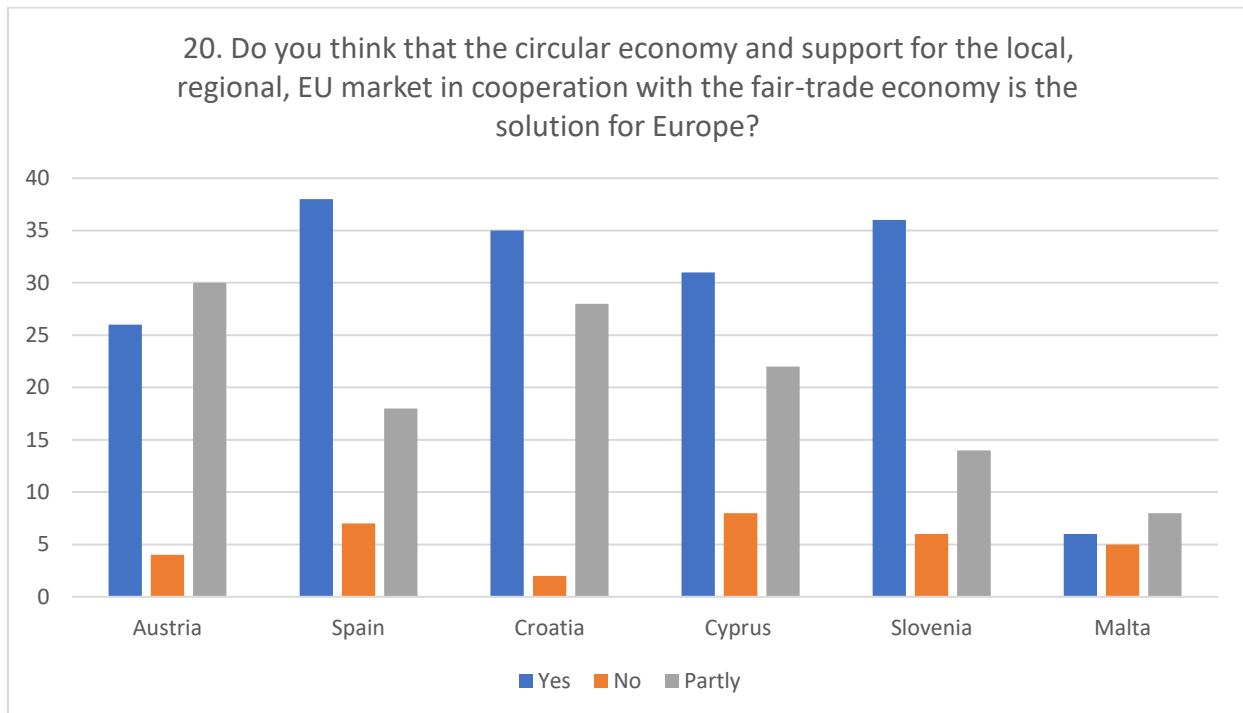


Fig. 20: Circular economy as a solution.

The two last questions concern participants' experiences and interests. From Fig. 21, it can be inferred that only a few people (33 responses among 328) are not willing to exchange their present lifestyle with a more self-sufficient one with less consumption of products.

The circular economy and social entrepreneurship are not based on profit, but on completely different foundations than just earnings. Are you willing to live a life like the way our ancestors did, where consumption was much lower and self-sufficiency

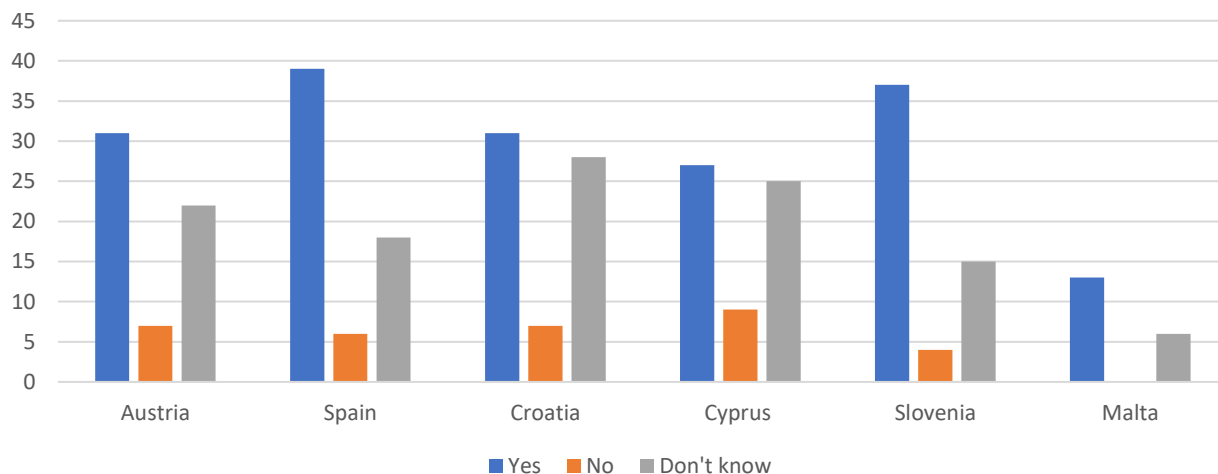


Fig. 21. Change the live of your life

Finally, most of the people that took part in the survey showed their interest in learning even more about circular economy business models and the food supply chain sector, cooperatives, and social entrepreneurship, as it is been indicated in Fig. 22.

Would you be interested in receiving a training in Circular economy business model and particular in the food supply chain sector, cooperatives and social entrepreneurship?

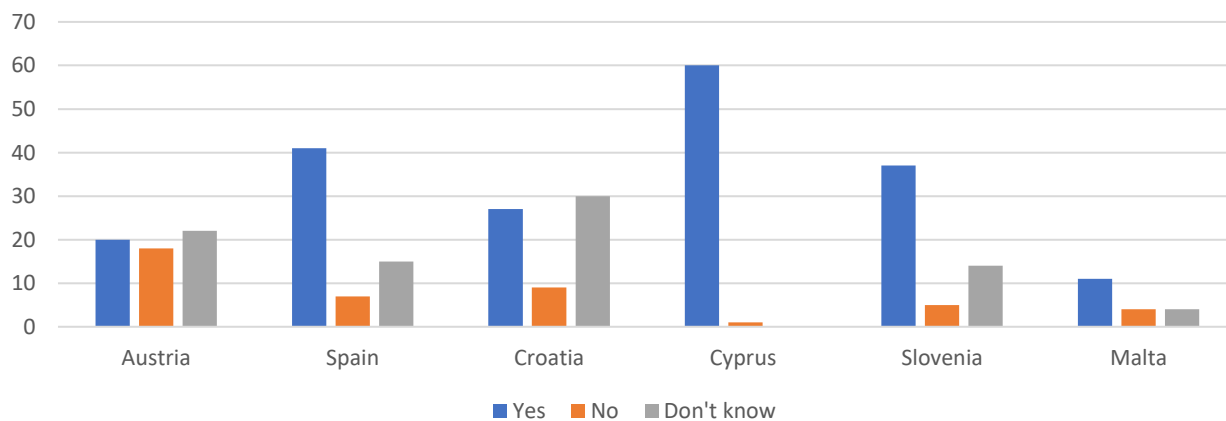


Fig. 22. Training in circular economy business models





At the end of the survey, and after having answered to the whole questionnaire, all the participants were invited to share their ideas on what topics they would like to be further informed or trained. *Most of the topics suggested were related to circular economy and its sub-categories.* Other topics requested for a further expansion of the topic, by broadening the questions that can be asked through its development or by connecting it with other topics and/or demands. Below there is a list with 50 suggested topics on behalf of all the target groups:

1. Marketing
2. Better media presence - how to share the stories of the circular economy with a wider audience
3. Supply chains, environmental impacts, and product design
4. Circular economy in relation to the cost-effectiveness of products
5. How to show to general public that they will be benefited from it
6. How social entrepreneurship and cooperatives work
7. The importance of lifelong learning
8. How each individual can contribute to circular economy
9. Young people with fewer opportunities and circular economy
10. Legal basis, conditions, and operation in practice
11. How food security is ensured in the winter months if long-term storage is curtailed
12. Social system of the future in the context of sustainable development
13. Tax system, pension system etc.
14. Ability to work in a team, social skills
15. Organisation as a living organism (Frederique Laloux), public welfare economy, regenerative agriculture
16. Agriculture
17. Effects of political actors and market monopolies
18. Alternative food networks as best practice examples
19. Limits of audits; does the whole thing make sense if you have >100 labels and the consumer can no longer perceive it?
20. Education, informing society
21. All aspects of circular economy, social entrepreneurship and cooperatives
22. Legal Issues
23. What is circular economy and how it can be applied to improve sustainability in Food.



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24. Food Technology in relation to Circular Economy
25. How to go about convincing the land owners (including the church land) to turn to productive organic and social enterprises instead of just leaving it idle or using the conventional methods of agriculture which is not very sustainable in terms of cost and health
26. Circular economy, entrepreneurship
27. TTIP
28. Strengthening of a sector such as agriecology in a region, such as Sierra de Guadarrama, where the agricultural sector has gone from important to nil
29. North-South inequality
30. If the Circular Economy is going to be explained, it would be good to explain the rest of the economies, such as the prevailing capitalist economy
31. Inclusion of other types of companies that are not in the food industry but that can collaborate with those that are
32. Organic production, GIS technologies, resource inventory
33. Plant production
34. Ecological protection against pests and diseases in production
35. Plastic recycling
36. Communication skills, legal and economic literacy
37. Composting, ecobuilding and permaculture, innovative solutions and sustainable energy sources
38. Employment of young farmers through social entrepreneurship
39. The importance of social entrepreneurs
40. Ways of improvement motivations and the obstacles of creating a social enterprise
41. Definitions of the circular economy, its benefits, its dimensions, and the ways in which it can be achieved
42. What are the most effective actions to raise public awareness about the benefits of the circular economy?
43. The role of social enterprises and cooperatives and the social benefit they provided
44. Real Case studies
45. Good practices from countries that apply business models to food supply chains and their results
46. Ways that the circular food catering can be done



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47. Analyse, measure and considering circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts)
48. The importance of the circular economy, cooperatives, food supply chains and how they all relate to each other
49. The importance of the circular economy and the ways in which everyone can contribute during the daily life
50. About innovative business models for food supply chains

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Taking into consideration all the topics analyzed within this countrywide survey, it's clear that the level of understanding for youth entrepreneurship and cooperatives in the specialized field of circular economy business models in the food supply chains still needs improvements (especially common among Austria, Spain and Cyprus), while in some countries is still in a primary stage (such as Malta, Slovenia and Croatia). and there are topics that the targeted audience (secondary school students/university students, trainers/teachers/professors, other interested stakeholders e.g. training centers, businesses) would like to receive a training.

The reasons that the participants of the survey, believe that many individuals or businesses are still not interpreting Circular Economy Business Models in the food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship are mostly due to *country mentality* (first choice in Austria, Croatia, Malta and second in Cyprus) and *lack of interest* (apparent in Austria, Croatia, Slovenia. Malta and Spain) , while other reasons such as *not understanding the benefit*, *lack of resources*, *lack of knowledge* are reasons that are appeared in all partner countries.

However, participants, seems to be aware of the benefits that the use of Circular Economy business models in food supply chain and cooperatives/social entrepreneurship offer, as there was a *similarity* among the choices of the participants from all countries. For example, the *reduction of the waste generated in the food chain*, was among the preferable benefits in Slovenia, Cyprus, Croatia, Malta and Spain. Apart from this benefit, participants from Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta and Spain, commonly indicated the *opportunity to address sustainability issues*.



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Regarding the important skills in order to implement CE, participants from Austria, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia, commonly voted (more or less) *transparency, mutual trust among stakeholders, knowledge and practice sharing*, as the most needed.

Moreover, participants also mentioned some competences that they possess for establishing circular economy business models in the field of food supply chains. In Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain and Malta, the most voted competences, were varying among:

1. Implement food recycling and reuse (Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta)
2. Minimize the use of resources and materials in the food supply chains (Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Malta, Spain)
3. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models (Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Spain)
4. Foster creativity – responding to a complex food supply chain challenges, considering circular economy principles (Slovenia, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain)

As for the competences that are needed for CE, participants from all partner countries, voted mostly the following:

1. Analysis, measurement, and consideration of circular economy challenges in the food supply chain (e.g. chaining production or consumption patterns, identifying environmental, economic, social impacts) (Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus)
2. Develop and commercialize innovative food related technologies (Austria, Slovenia, Spain)
3. Identify and recognize new circular economy food supply chain business models (Cyprus, Spain, Malta)

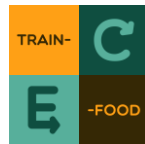
Another aspect that all of the countries, were on the *same wavelength* are the skills that are considered as indispensable for social entrepreneurs. According to participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Spain and Malta, *teamwork* is a necessary skill. *Social responsibility* is a very indispensable skill for social entrepreneurs according to Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, and Spain and Malta.

Bases on the results presented also regarding the reason that people are not buying from social entrepreneurs, which were due to the fact that in Austria participants, are considering them that they have more expensive offers, In Spain and Croatia, that they are not able to recognize which are social enterprises and which are not and in Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus, people have *less accessibility and choice* by social enterprises it is easily understood, that people need to be more aware of the term



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social entrepreneurship and the impact that they have to society. However, all participants, from all countries, seems to be aware of the importance on supporting local markets, especially now, after the pandemic of corona crisis.

Based on all these information, the consortium of the [TRAIN-CE-FOOD](#) project, will proceed to the development of an innovative curriculum, covering all these aspects and thus leading to a better understanding of circular economy business models in the food supply chain, entrepreneurship and cooperatives and the necessary skills.

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