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THE AWARENESS OF THE EU FOOD LABELLING SYSTEM AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract. A high level of competition combined with food safety related risks gives cause for producers to offer and consumers to seek means of reducing the risk involved in transactions. One such means is a food labelling system. The article presents the results of research aimed at determining the awareness of the food labelling system among young people. A diagnostic survey method was used in the research and a tool constituted an anonymous questionnaire that was completed by 451 students. The awareness may be described as low. The symbol of a green leaf (called EURO-LISTEK in Polish) was recognized by a fifth of the respondents. The awareness of quality symbols was much lower. A few of the respondents named the product on which a symbol was put and the greatest difficulty was to specify the content which a given symbol delivered. The fact that the system of labelling food products is hardly known is particularly troubling since the research was conducted two years after the Agricultural Market Agency launched a campaign promoting the EU system of symbols called “Three Symbols of Taste”. It is recommended that advertising campaigns are designed in such a way as to inform young consumers about the advantages of certified food products as well as to carry out educational activities targeted at young consumers.

Keywords: certification, logo, logotype, labels, food, quality policy

INTRODUCTION

Due to a high level of a market competition and a significant degree of food safety concerns, both producers

and consumers look for some instruments to reduce the risk of a trade exchange. One instrument of this kind is food labelling. The European Commission has also introduced solutions of this type. The oldest among them are organic farming marks and food quality symbols: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG). Despite the potential benefits the further years of functioning on the community market, labelling has resulted in a low awareness of these symbols and a lack of explicit profits (Agricultural..., 2009; Komunikat..., 2009; Zielona księga..., 2008). So, in 2007 the European Commission made a decision about changes both in the ecological and the quality policy. Council Regulation (CE) No. 834/2007 has repealed a previously applicable one and replaced a complex and not much associated organic logo with a new one, commonly described as the “Euro-leaf”. Regulations on quality schemes of 2006 (Rozporządzenie 509/2006; Rozporządzenie 510/2006) replaced Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 1151/2012 and Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 1144/2014. The latter contains a commitment of the European Commission to an intensification of promotional and informational activities aimed at increasing a level of consumer awareness about the advantages of the EU agricultural products and their manufacturing methods, as well as improving a recognition of the EU labelling in the quality systems.

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This article presents results of the research aimed primarily at an assessment of the awareness level of EU food labelling amongst young people. The detailed objectives are as follows: an evaluation of the degree of subjective and objective awareness of EU food labelling, a comparison of a recognition of the EU and national food labelling systems, and the approach of Polish students towards certified food products in the context of their attitudes connected with a level of food safety and its positive impact on preserving health.

RESEARCH METHOD

For many years people have read the food labels seeking, first of all, information concerning its ingredients and manufacturing methods (Case, 2002; Kristensen et al., 2013). However, as it is noticed by García and Jukes, as well as Dörnyei and Gyulavári, after the crisis related to food safety and in connection with an increasing pressure for the pro-environmental behaviours, also within a scope of a consumption, the consumers more and more frequently pay attention to the labelling just due to these two factors (García and Jukes, 2004; Dörnyei and

Gyulavári, 2016). This aspect is also noticed by: Baltas, 2001; Cheftel, 2005; van Trijp and van der Lans, 2007; Grunert et al., 2010; Hall and Osses, 2013; Beruchashvili et al., 2014; Drichoutis et al., 2006. The research results presented in the article constitute a part of the larger survey, realised considering the noticed behavioural tendencies among the purchasers. The research focuses on, among others, the issues related to health and safety felt by the young generation of the Poles. Therefore, in the part related to the food labelling it was taken into account – besides awareness and recognition of the particular symbols – also the issues linked to a perception of the certified food within a context of health and safety. An impulse to include in the research the issues connected with the food labelling was also an ongoing promotional campaign aimed at increasing recognition of the EU labelling among the consumers.

The research was conducted within a period between March to May of 2015 in a group of 451 students from 3 Polish public universities. A diagnostic survey method was a tool that constituted an anonymous questionnaire, completed by 451 students. A research sample was adjusted considering conclusions that contained

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents
Tabela 1. Charakterystyka respondentów

| Socio-economic characteristic Cecha społeczno-ekonomiczna | Variant Wariant | Number Liczebność | Percentage Udział % |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Sex – Płeć | female – kobieta | 275 | 61.0 |
| | male – mężczyzna | 176 | 39.0 |
| Age – Wiek | up to 25 years – do 25 lat | 409 | 90.7 |
| | 25 years and more – 25 lat i więcej | 42 | 9.3 |
| Disposable monthly income Miesięczny dochód do dyspozycji | up to 600 PLN – do 600 PLN | 149 | 33.0 |
| | 601–800 PLN | 95 | 21.1 |
| | 801–1200 PLN | 83 | 18.4 |
| | 1201–1600 PLN | 31 | 6.9 |
| | 1601–2000 PLN | 38 | 8.4 |
| | above 2000 PLN – powyżej 2000 PLN | 43 | 9.5 |
| | lack of data – brak danych | 12 | 2.7 |

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

the special Eurobarometer report No. 410 of December 2013 which determines that an identification of the EU symbols were higher among young people (15–24 years old) and those who continued learning up to 20 years old or longer (Special..., 2014). A similar link was noticed by K. Zander in her research dedicated to an awareness of organic food symbols (Zander, 2014) and authors of the Brand Recognition report of 2011 (Rozpoznawalność..., 2011). The subjective knowledge about the labelling was assumed on the basis of the answer to the question if the respondents were previously aware/had met the indicated graphic symbols, similarly as during the research conducted by V. Scott and A.F. Worsley, as well as Festila et al. (Scott and Worsley, 1994; Festila et al., 2014). A convenience sampling was used as a sampling method.

Characteristics of the studied population has been presented in the Table 1.

A majority of respondents has been women, persons aged up to 25 years, who have had at their disposal a monthly budget up to 600 PLN.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research consists of two stages. In the first part, respondents have been asked to assume an attitude towards statements which characterise certified foodstuff. They have been asked to consider based on a level of a sense of security and foodstuff quality with labelling in relation to conventional products and to which extent respondents pay attention to whether they purchase certified foodstuff and what part of their purchases constitute products of this type. At the second stage, the respondents have been presented selected logos and asked to describe which of them they have seen and on which product, if they know them from media, and about what a concerned logo informs. Table 2 contains a summary of a sample size and percent shares of the respondent answers related to certified foodstuff.

As much as 70.3% respondents think that certified products are safer than those without labelling. More than a half of the respondents (52.0%) finds them healthier, too. With regard to paying attention to labelling while

Table 2. Respondents' opinions about certified food products
Tabela 2. Opinie respondentów na temat certyfikowanej żywności

| Statement Stwierdzenie | Yes Tak | | Rather yes Raczej tak | | No opinion Ani tak, ani nie | | Rather not Raczej nie | | No Nie | |
|--|------------|------|--------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------|------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Certified food products are safer than non-certified Żywność certyfikowana jest bezpieczniejsza od niecertyfikowanej | 143 | 31.9 | 172 | 38.4 | 95 | 21.2 | 24 | 5.4 | 14 | 3.1 |
| Certified food products are healthier than non-certified Żywność certyfikowana jest zdrowsza od niecertyfikowanej | 66 | 14.7 | 167 | 37.3 | 178 | 39.7 | 25 | 5.6 | 12 | 2.7 |
| Considering purchase of food I take labels into account Rozpatrując zakup żywności, biorę pod uwagę czy i jakie oznaczenia posiada | 34 | 7.6 | 99 | 22.2 | 171 | 38.3 | 108 | 24.2 | 34 | 7.5 |
| Certified food products are significant part of my shopping Produkty certyfikowane stanowią istotną część moich zakupów żywnościowych | 19 | 4.2 | 68 | 15.2 | 203 | 45.3 | 93 | 20.8 | 65 | 14.5 |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

buying foodstuff, opinions of the surveyed students are divided. The largest part of the respondents (38.3%) has no unequivocal opinion on this; 31.7% admit that they do not pay attention to this aspect, and only 29.8% declares that certificates play a significant role in their purchase decisions.

Going further, the study examines to what extent labelling is known. For comparative purposes, to a survey form, apart from the EU symbols, six foodstuff logotypes which belong to the national solutions have been included. The results of the respondent answers have been summarised in Table 3.

Recognition of the EU symbols should be evaluated as low. The EURO-LEAF is associated at the highest

level, nevertheless, it has been noticed only by 1/5 of the respondents (19.3%). Much lower results have been noted by the quality symbols (each below 10% of indications). Simultaneously, it is worth emphasising that amongst national marks, three are known by more than 30% of respondents. A privately owned brand of Alma Market S.A. – KRAKOWSKI KREDENS (CRACOVIAN CUPBOARD) (47% of positive answers) is associated with the best manner. Then it follows a label of the Polish Chamber of Regional and Local Product JAKOŚĆ TRADYCJA (QUALITY TRADITION) (44.1%). The third is a logo of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development programme – POZNAJ DOBRĄ ŻYWNOSĆ (GET TO KNOW GOOD FOODSTUFF) (32%).

Table 3. Awareness of food labels among respondents

Tabela 3. Znajomość oznaczeń dla żywności wśród respondentów










| Logo Logotyp | Seen on a product Widział na produkcie | | Able to name a product Podał nazwę produktu | | Knows from the media Zna z mediów | | Able to tell what the symbol stands for Podał o czym informuje znak | |
|---|---|------|--|------|--------------------------------------|------|---|------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|  | 87 | 19.3 | 14 | 3.1 | 48 | 10.6 | 16 | 3.5 |
|  | 40 | 8.9 | 10 | 2.2 | 38 | 8.4 | 11 | 2.4 |
|  | 44 | 9.8 | 11 | 2.4 | 36 | 8.0 | 12 | 2.7 |
|  | 43 | 9.5 | 8 | 1.8 | 27 | 6.0 | 12 | 2.7 |
|  | 199 | 44.1 | 76 | 16.9 | 133 | 29.5 | 51 | 11.3 |
|  | 167 | 32.0 | 45 | 10.2 | 97 | 21.5 | 28 | 6.2 |

Table 3 cont. – Tabela 3 cd.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|-----|------|----|------|-----|------|----|-----|
|  | | 29 | 6.4 | 12 | 2.7 | 14 | 3.1 | 8 | 1.8 |
|  | | 37 | 8.2 | 15 | 3.3 | 18 | 4.0 | 5 | 1.1 |
|  | | 44 | 9.8 | 0 | 0.0 | 43 | 9.5 | 12 | 2.7 |
|  | | 212 | 47.0 | 29 | 22.0 | 119 | 26.4 | 36 | 8.0 |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

A few respondents have been able to indicate a product name on which a label has been placed. In this case, the largest part of answers have been noted for the following symbols: KRAKOWSKI KREDENS (CRACOVIAN CUPBOARD) (22.0%), JAKOŚĆ TRADYCJA (QUALITY TRADITION) (16.9%) and POZNAJ DOBRĄ ŻYWNOŚĆ (GET TO KNOW GOOD FOODSTUFF) (10.2%). They are also associated in the best manner from media, but the strongest connection has appeared for a JAKOŚĆ TRADYCJA (QUALITY TRADITION) logo (29.5% of indications).

Against the background of the three strongest national labels, an awareness of a media presence of the European labels is small (respectively 10.6% of indications for the EURO-LEAF, 8.4% for the PDO, 8.0% for the PGI and only 6.0% for the TSG).

The greatest difficulty for respondents (while omitting a correctness of the given answers) has consisted in a determination of a message which is conveyed by a concerned label. In this context, the European labels have achieved much lower results than leading national brands, namely within limits of 2–3% of answers. Only a JAKOŚĆ TRADYCJA (QUALITY TRADITION) logo has received more than 10% indications, whereas according to the respondents it means only foodstuff

which is: Polish, healthy, tastes good, of good quality, safe, and without chemical additives.

At the next stage of the analysis, the answers of the respondents have been contrasted with the selected social and economic features. The goal consisted in following up dependencies of the respondent opinions with regards to gender and disposal income per month. In the analysis of the research results, a Pearson's chi-squared test was used for independence. A hypothesis on a feature independency has been rejected when a calculated value of the test statistics exceeds a critical value with an assumed level of statistical significance ($\alpha = 0,05$). The values obtained from the chi-squared test for independence have been summarised in Table 4 (in the brackets there are specified limit levels of statistical significance).

A belief that certified foodstuff is safer and healthier than a non-certified one is dependent on a monthly amount of money at one's disposal. Gender of respondents has an impact on their belief if certified foodstuff is a significant part of their purchases. None of the features differentiate surveyed persons in relation to paying attention to a product label while purchasing it.

The residual sample sizes for the statistically significant values of the chi-squared test have been presented in Tables 5–7.

Table 4. Results of chi-square test of independence

Tabela 4. Wyniki testu niezależności chi-kwadrat Pearsona

| Statement – Stwierdzenie | Sex Płeć | Disposable monthly income Miesięczna kwota do dyspozycji |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Certified food products are safer than non-certified Żywność certyfikowana jest bezpieczniejsza od niecertyfikowanej | 7.741 [0.102] | 48.650 [0.000] |
| Certified food products are healthier than non-certified Żywność certyfikowana jest zdrowsza od niecertyfikowanej | 6.609 [0.158] | 59.820 [0.000] |
| Considering purchase of food, I take labels into account Rozpatrując zakup żywności, biorę pod uwagę, czy i jakie oznaczenia posiada | 7.087 [0.131] | 13.450 [0.857] |
| Certified food products are significant part of my shopping Produkty certyfikowane stanowią istotną część moich zakupów żywnościowych | 12.293 [0.015] | 22.608 [0.308] |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Table 5. Opinions about certified food safety in respect to monthly income – residual counts

Tabela 5. Opinie odnośnie do bezpieczeństwa żywności certyfikowanej w zależności od dochodu – liczebności resztowe

| Disposable monthly income Miesięczny dochód dyspozycyjny | Yes Tak | Rather yes Raczej tak | No opinion Ani tak, ani nie | Rather not Raczej nie | No Nie |
|---|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Up to 600 PLN – Do 600 PLN/ | 0.6 | 3.7 | 0.3 | –2.8 | –1.8 |
| 601–800 PLN | –3.2 | 4.5 | –1.2 | 1.0 | –1.0 |
| 801–1200 PLN | 9.6 | –3.9 | –0.7 | –2.4 | –2.7 |
| 1201–1600 PLN | 1.8 | 0.9 | –0.2 | –1.5 | –0.9 |
| 1601–2000 PLN | –2.1 | –3.6 | 2.9 | 1.0 | 1.8 |
| Above 2000 PLN – Powyżej 2000 PLN | –6.7 | –1.5 | –1.2 | 4.7 | 4.6 |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Table 6. Opinions about certified food a safer food in respect to monthly income – residual counts

Tabela 6. Opinie odnośnie do żywności certyfikowanej jako zdrowszej – w zależności od dochodu – liczebności resztowe

| Disposable monthly income Miesięczny dochód dyspozycyjny | Yes Tak | Rather yes Raczej tak | No opinion Ani tak, ani nie | Rather no Raczej nie | No Nie |
|---|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Up to 600 PLN – Do 600 PLN | –0.5 | –4.6 | 12.4 | –4.2 | –3.1 |
| 601–800 PLN | –3.7 | 9.9 | –8.4 | 2.8 | –0.6 |
| 801–1200 PLN | 5.0 | 2.5 | –3.7 | –1.6 | –2.3 |
| 1201–1600 PLN | 1.8 | 1.0 | –0.4 | –1.6 | –0.8 |
| 1601–2000 PLN | 1.5 | –6.4 | 2.0 | 0.9 | 2.0 |
| Above 2000 PLN – Powyżej 2000 PLN | –4.2 | –2.3 | –1.9 | 3.6 | 4.8 |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Table 7. Opinions about certified food products as essential part of shopping in respect to respondents' sex – residual counts

Tabela 7. Opinie odnośnie do żywności certyfikowanej jako istotnej części zakupów – w zależności od płci respondentów – liczebności resztowe

| Sex – Płeć | Yes Tak | Rather yes Raczej tak | No opinion Ani tak, ani nie | Rather no Raczej nie | No Nie |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Female – Kobiety | 1.3 | –7.1 | 14.2 | –0.3 | –8.1 |
| Male – Mężczyźni | –1.3 | 7.1 | –14.2 | 0.3 | 8.1 |

Source: own elaboration.

Źródło: opracowanie własne.

The wealthiest persons do not agree with the belief that certified foodstuff is safer than non-certified (residual count sizes of 1.8 and 4.6). Such a belief is characteristic for less wealthy persons (residual count of 9.6 for a 801–1200 PLN category and 4.5 for 601–800 PLN category).

The wealthiest persons do not agree with the belief that certified foodstuff is healthier than a non-certified one (residual count of 4.8 and 2.0). Such a belief is characteristic for less wealthy persons (residual count of 5.0 for a 801–1200 PLN category). The persons who represent the lowest income category have the most unspecified opinions (residual count of 12.4).

Women to the greatest extent have no opinion whether or not certified foodstuff is a significant part of purchases (residual count 14.2). Men with a high degree of certainty have shown that certified foodstuff does not have a significant influence in their purchases.

DISCUSSION

The results of the authors' own studies demonstrate that the certified food products are perceived by the young persons as safer and healthier than those without labelling. This observation is confluent with results of the research conducted in 2014 by the Marine Stewardship Council in which almost half of the respondents trusts the certified brands more than those unlabelled (Rośnie..., 2015). The similar conclusions from their own studies were drawn by M. Janssen and U. Hamm who proved that the products with an ecological logo may boast about a higher level of trust in the eyes of the surveyed customers (Janssen and Hamm, 2012).

Only 29.8% of the young respondents declare that certificates play a significant role in their purchase decisions. It is a lower percentage than determined in the

Polish nationwide research conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research TNS OBOP insofar as much as 52% of respondents have found that quality labels for the agricultural and food products are of huge importance during the purchase process (39% assumed them as unimportant in the purchase process and 9% had no opinion on this issue) (Rozpoznawalność..., 2011).

The awareness of the EU foodstuff labelling among the Polish students should be assumed critically. Both a recognition of the symbols and knowledge about messages conveyed by them is low. Similar conclusions have been drawn by S. Żakowska-Biemans. In her research dedicated to a demand for organic foodstuff, the author has diagnosed generally low level of food labelling knowledge. The labels which have been presented to the respondents, among others, POZNAJ DOBRĄ ŻYWNOSĆ (GET TO KNOW GOOD FOODSTUFF) or symbols of own brands, have been identified with organic food labelling (Żakowska-Biemans, 2011b). In other research, the author has also determined a lack of abilities to differentiate organic foodstuff from conventional products due to an unfamiliarity with labelling of the first ones (Żakowska-Biemans, 2011a). A discrepancy between the values noted with regard to the subjective and objective awareness was also emphasised by the other authors. J.W. Alba and J.W. Hutchinson note that real awareness and a level of awareness subjectively assumed by the respondents differ among themselves since the consumers may indicate both excessively optimistic and pessimistic evaluations with regard to their real awareness (Alba and Hutchinson, 2000). In this research, a lower level of objective awareness with regard to all labelling was demonstrated (in the case of the EURO-LEAF 87 persons declared awareness of this logo and 16 persons could determine its meaning; in the case of PDO respectively 40 and 11 persons; PGI

– respectively 44 and 12 persons, and TSG – 43 and 12 persons, respectively). Similar conclusions were drawn by C.T. Hoogland et al. during the researches of the Dutch consumers who proved that the respondents are characterized by a high level of the visual awareness of the labelling of the eco products, but a degree of content awareness which they symbolise is much lower (Hoogland et al., 2007).

Low awareness of quality logos of agricultural and food products is especially bothering when considering that the research has been conducted only two years after an inaugural campaign aimed at promoting the EU labelling entitled “Trzy Znaki Smaku” (“Three Labels of Taste”) by the Agricultural Market Agency. Recognition of these symbols at the level of 8.9%–9.8% has remained constant for years. In 2009, in the Agricultural Product Quality Policy report, knowledge of quality labelling among the Poles has been evaluated for circa 8% (Agricultural..., 2009). A special edition of the Eurobarometer report No. 410 of 2013 determined it on the level of 7% for PDO, 8% for PGI, and 9% for TSG (with an average knowledge in the EU = 28 relatively: 13%, 14%, and 12%, and with a recognition in Italy which is a leader in the summary: 30%, 31%, and 20%) (Special..., 2014). If one assumes 2009 as a time censorship, it is particularly bothering that despite an increase of manufacturer’s interest in goods certification (in 2009 quality labelling was used by 15 Polish manufacturers, after 2009 a certificate was obtained by the further 21 goods (<http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.htm>)) and a lasting promotional campaign co-financed from a national and the EU budget, the similar effects cannot be noticed when it comes to a demand.

A recognition of the EURO-LEAF at the level of 19.3% is admittedly comparable with the EU mean (25% for EU = 28) (Special..., 2014). Nevertheless, it is hard to assume it as high, especially in the context of the results that have been achieved by the three national labels: KRAKOWSKI KREDENS (CRACOVIAN CUPBOARD), JAKOŚĆ TRADYCJA (QUALITY TRADITION) and POZNAJ DOBRĄ ŻYWNOŚĆ (GET TO KNOW GOOD FOODSTUFF). A higher percentage of the indications of this mark was obtained in the opinion poll among the young people by Chudzian and Chatys (a spontaneous awareness of labelling was demonstrated by approximately 1/3 of the respondents, and nearly a half of them showed aided awareness) (Chudzian and Chatys, 2014). The authors

who analysed the problem of generally low awareness of the EURO-LEAF among the Europeans as the result of an ambiguous logotype with no tagline (Zander, 2014; Sandberg, 2013; Hoogland et al., 2007). As well as Festila et al. (2014) suggest that it would be appropriate to complete a graphic symbol of the leaf by a “ECO”, “BIO”, or “ORGANIC” word which would explain to consumers a sense of the logo and would allow for easier memorization (Zander, 2014; Sandberg, 2013; Hoogland et al., 2007; Festila et al., 2014).

It is also worth emphasising that a barrier in the increase of awareness of the EU labelling is noticeable both in smaller research and stressed by other authors. A higher awareness of national and private labelling is noticed for example in Denmark or France (e.g. in Denmark a recognition of the red Ø-logo is even of 98%, whereas an awareness of the EU EURO-LEAF is at the level of 58%; in France Agriculture Biologique – 93%, EURO-LEAF – 38%; in Germany Biosiegel – 75%, EURO-LEAF 15%) (Zander, 2014; Sandberg, 2013). As it is noticed by K. Zander, good knowledge of the local certification systems causes purchasers to not feel the need to acquire knowledge on further solutions within this scope. They do not independently seek information about new symbols and therefore a need to promote them is particularly significant (Zander, 2014).

Whereas from the British research results that a lack of awareness about the labelling arises scepticism and a lack of trust towards the products marked by them (Sirieix et al., 2013). So, if the EU labelling is supposed to become the actual and effective market tools in the fight for a customer, the European Commission and the national authorities of the EU member states, including the Polish ones, must realise in a purposeful and planned manner the declared as necessary activities with regards to information and education. In the long run, this point of view would translate into building trust and loyalty of the consumers in relation to certified goods. Carpenter and Larceneux, 2008 conclusively agree.

As Bryła proves, expectations of the manufacturers with regards to potential benefits from an efficiently functioning system are high. 70% of respondents who took part in his research when questioned about elements on the packaging which may have an impact on the competitive advantage for “important” considered a quality guarantee in the form of a label or a certificate (Bryła, 2013). In the context of those expectations, K. Zander’s conclusions sound particularly

pessimistic as she claims pointedly that the EU means diagnosed by her in relation to a recognition of the EURO-LEAF (27.4%) and knowledge of contents symbolised by it (16.2%) suggest that a knowledge level about this label is so low that one should doubt a possibility of realisation of the goals which accompany its functioning. Results of the research indicate an awareness of the remaining three EU logos among young people is even lower. So, it is necessary to develop a well thought out strategy and plan for implementation of their promotion. A potential efficiency of activities within this scope is proved, among others, by an example of the Italian campaign dedicated to dissemination of knowledge about an identification number of the certification body on the food labelling (Zander, 2014) and the Danish campaigns that build an awareness of the Scandinavian labels: The red Ø-logo, The Keyhole Symbol, The Whole Grain logo, which now has the highest results with regard to recognition (relatively 98%, 86% and 77%), content knowledge (99%, 90%, and 99%) and trust among foods labelling in this country (6.3; 5.2 and 5.4 in the seven-tier Likert scale) (Sandberg, 2013). Meanwhile, a low effectivity of the Polish promotional activities is proved not only by the mentioned data related to recognition of the relevant symbols, but also consumer research which shows that only 9% of purchasers derive their knowledge about labelling from the promotional actions and advertising campaigns (with the highest indication for a “from product packings” option – 47%) (Rozpoznawalność..., 2011).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Facing a low degree of awareness of the foodstuff labelling among the students, it is recommended to conduct the campaigns which not only inform about the advantages of the certified food products, but also realise educational activities for the young people and a promotional campaign, using the on-line communication channels.

2. With regard to the EURO-LEAF, this symbol should be complemented by a slogan which should increase a clearness of the logo.

The research and conclusions limitations result from a lack of the representativeness of sample and a narrow range of the respondents which is restricted to the students.

A suggestion for further research: the research on the awareness of foodstuff labelling should be extended to a larger randomly selected sample. It would be valuable to compare a level of consumer awareness in the “old” and “new” member states of the EU, as well as to conduct similar research within the context of granted certificates and a level of their awareness in the respective member states of the European Community.

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ZNAJOMOŚĆ WSPÓLNOTOWYCH OZNACZEŃ ŻYWNOSTCI WŚRÓD STUDENTÓW

Streszczenie. Wysoki poziom konkurencji rynkowej, przy istotnym stopniu zagrożeń bezpieczeństwa żywności sprawia, że zarówno producenci, jak i konsumenci poszukują narzędzi zmniejszających ryzyko transakcji. Jednym z instrumentów tego rodzaju są oznaczenia żywności. W artykule przedstawiono wyniki badań, których celem była ocena poziomu rozpoznawalności unijnych oznaczeń żywności wśród młodych ludzi. W badaniach zastosowano metodę sondażu diagnostycznego; narzędziem była anonimowa ankieta wypełniona przez 451 studentów. Znajomość symboli europejskich należy ocenić jako niską. Najlepiej kojarzony jest EURO-LISTEK. Znacznie niższe wyniki notują symbole jakościowe. Niewielu badanych potrafiło przywołać nazwę produktu, na którym umieszczone było logo. Największą trudność sprawiło im podanie treści, jaką niesie znak. Niski poziom świadomości oznaczeń jest niepokojący, zwłaszcza biorąc pod uwagę, że badania przeprowadzono dokładnie dwa lata po inauguracji przez Agencję Rynku Rolnego kampanii promującej symbole UE pod tytułem „Trzy Znaki Smaku”. Zaleca się przeprowadzenie kampanii informujących o zaletach certyfikowanych produktów żywnościowych.

Słowa kluczowe: certyfikacja, logo, logotyp, oznaczenia, polityka jakości, żywność

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