

## INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE DAIRY PRODUCTS CONSUMPTION LEVELS

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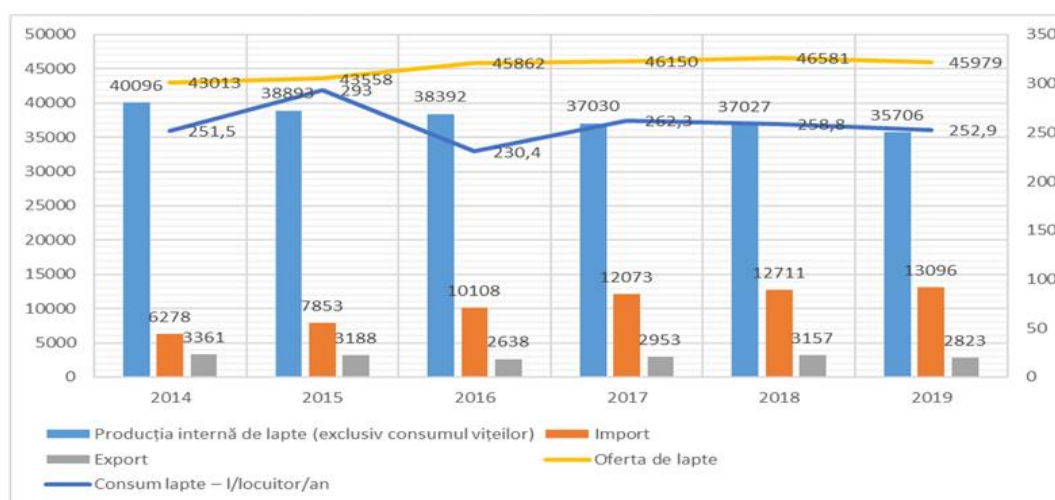
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**Abstract:** Milk is one of the animal derived products that bear a major importance in human nutrition. It is seen as a strategic product because it is a complete food that is easily assimilated and has high nutritional value and an antitoxic role. Milk production occupies the second place in terms of animal-derived products, from both an economical and nutritional point of view, being one of the cheapest sources of animal-derived protein, with increased biological value. Milk is also an irreplaceable raw material destined for the processing and transformation of more than 1000 dairy products that are indispensable for human nutrition. The offer of fresh or processed drinking milk is unequally divided both territorially and qualitatively, with the highest milk consumption signalled especially in large urban centres that are very far distance-wise from the production sites.

**Key words:** market, dairy products, offer, consumption, preferences.

## INTRODUCTION

The dairy products market has reached a value of almost 1.5 billion euros in 2020, with a 15% head start compared to the year 2019, and approximately 631 000 tons in volume, increased by 11% compared to 2019 [15,16]. The increase is based on the increase in consumption on the internal market, However, due to the fact that it includes mostly fresh, staple food, with short validity terms and also a large array of local, traditional products that can only be produced regionally, the dairy products market is not very much subject to globalization,. Thus, the indigenous production rises and exports decrease. The increased local consumption can also be added to this ascending evolution [15,16,17,18].



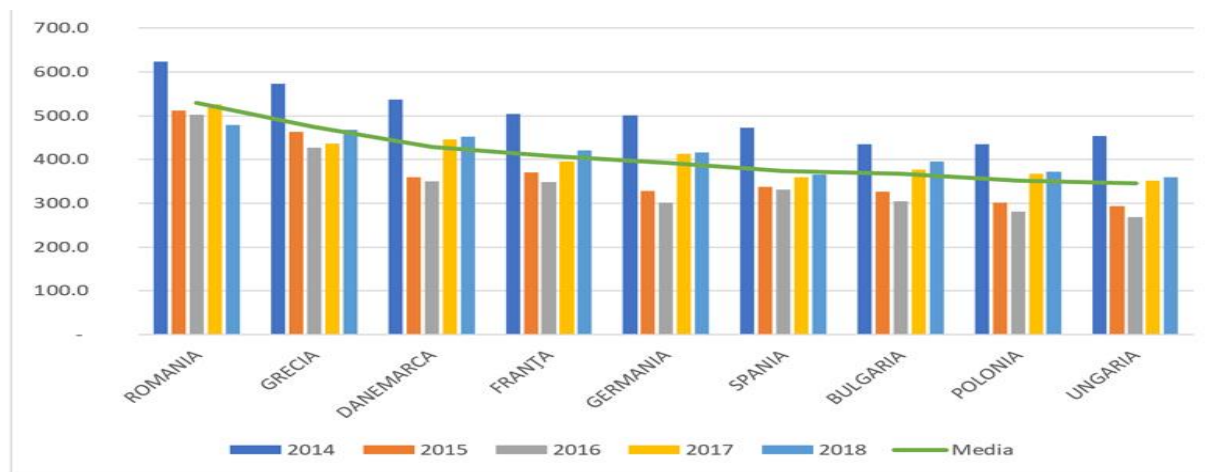
Sursa: INS; MADR, date operative; calculații ICEADR

**Figure 1. Cow milk demand and supply in thousands of hectoliters**

The enquiry for cow's milk in the time period between 2014-2019 has fluctuated and had a recessive trend starting with the year of 2017, therefore in the year of 2019 the recorded value of milk consumption was at about 252.9 l per capita, representing a close value to the level of the year of 2014. The milk supply on the market has increased by a

percentage of 6.8% in the year of 2019, compared to its value from the year of 2014, due to a double number of imports and not because of domestic milk production, which has decreased by 10.9% [1,3,4,8,15,16].

By analyzing the production price for cow's milk on the Romanian market compared to some of the main European countries, it results that in the period between the years of 2014-2018, the production price trend for cow's milk has decreased, with a slight upward trend starting with the year of 2017 [2,8,10,16].



Sursa: FAOSTAT

**Figure 2. The production price for cow's milk**

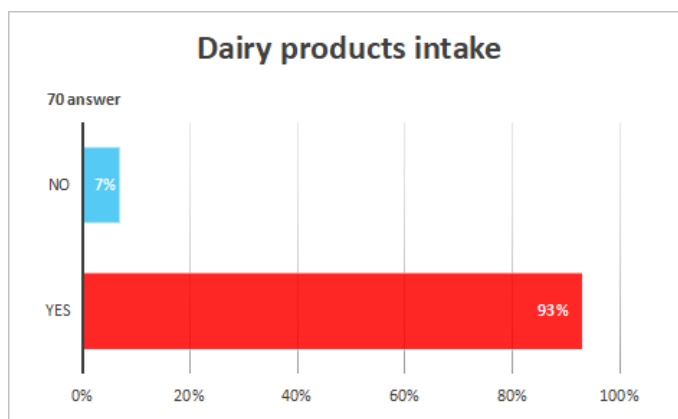
Also, throughout the analyzed period, the production price for cow's milk in Romania has had a decreasing trend, the calculated average value being 528.7 UDS/t, a value well above the averages calculated in European countries (over 11% compared to Greece and up to 53% compared to of Hungary). The highest production price for cow's milk was recorded in Romania in the year of 2014 (624 UDS/t), and the lowest was recorded in Hungary in 2016 (268.4 UDS/t). All this data demonstrates the low performance in the cattle breeding sector in Romania. Also, the high production price is reflected in the high market prices [16,17,18].

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Milk consumption has many benefits for human health, being a good source of calcium, proteins and vitamins for the organism [3,5,7,10]. The consumers have not altered their behavior regarding dairy products however, they do pay more attention to their overall health, including their diet. The study aimed to perform an analysis on the consumption of dairy products among consumers from the point of view of their loyalty towards the consumed and the preferred dairy products. The obtained results can be used as foundation for predictions regarding changes in the dairy products demand. The study was performed on a group of 70 people using a questionnaire made of 16 questions.

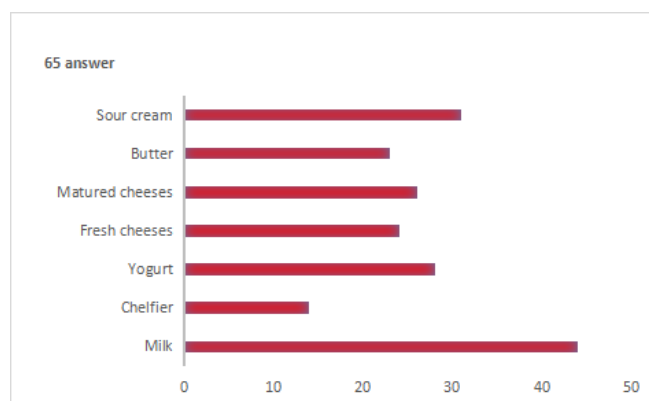
## RESEARCH RESULTS

### 1. Dairy products intake



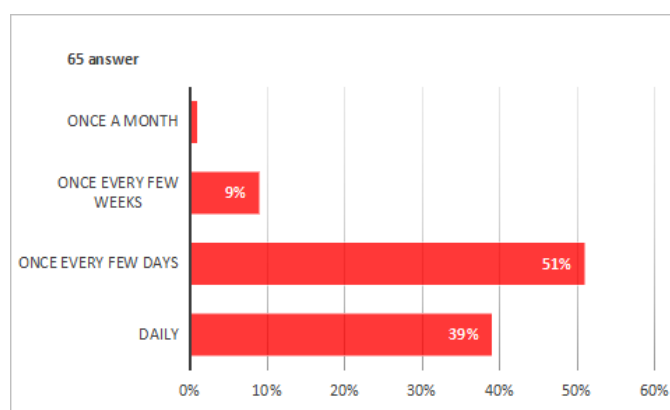
According to the obtained answers, 93 % of the participants are people who consume dairy products and 7 % of the participants mentioned that they do not consume dairy products.

### 2. Which dairy products do you consume most frequently?



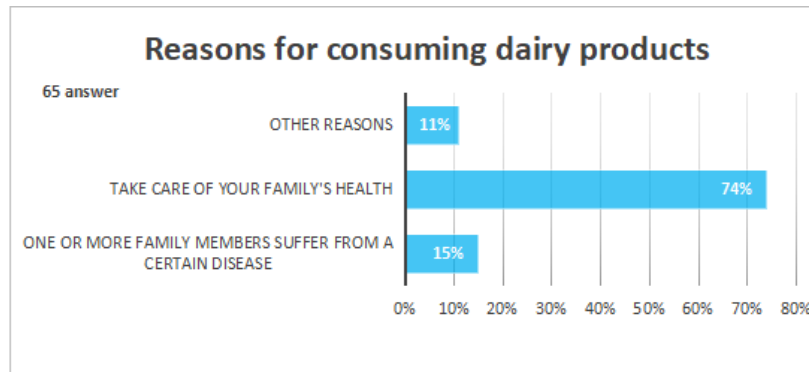
The most frequently consumed dairy products are: milk, sour cream, yoghurts, aged cheeses, butter.

### 3. How often do you consume dairy products?



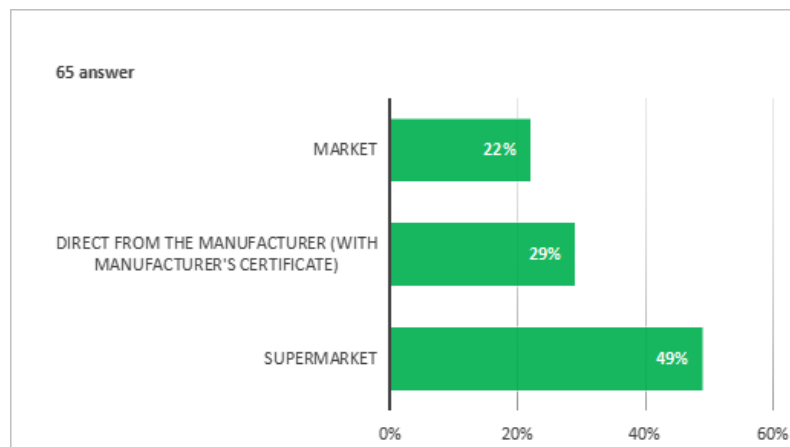
According to the answers, 90% of the participants consume dairy products on a daily or almost daily basis.

4. What are your reasons for consuming dairy products?



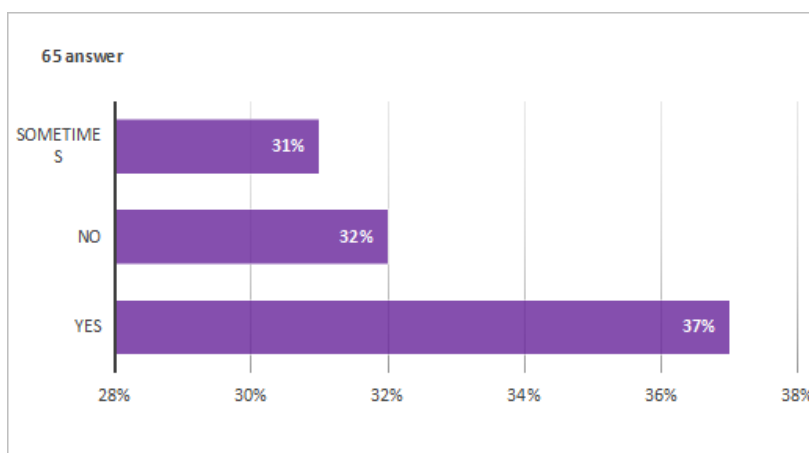
The reasons why most participants consume dairy products are based on their concern for their health (74%).

5. The most credible dairy product supplier when buying products is:



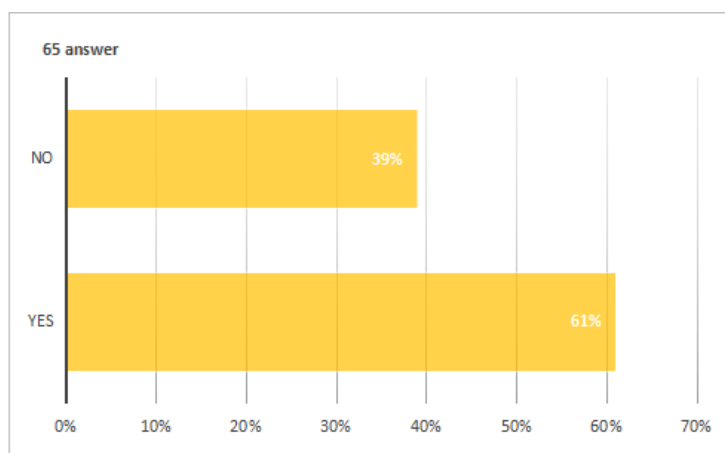
According to the answers, it can be noticed that supermarkets are the suppliers that most credible among customers, with a 49% rate.

6. Do you buy dairy products based on the ingredients mentioned on the label?



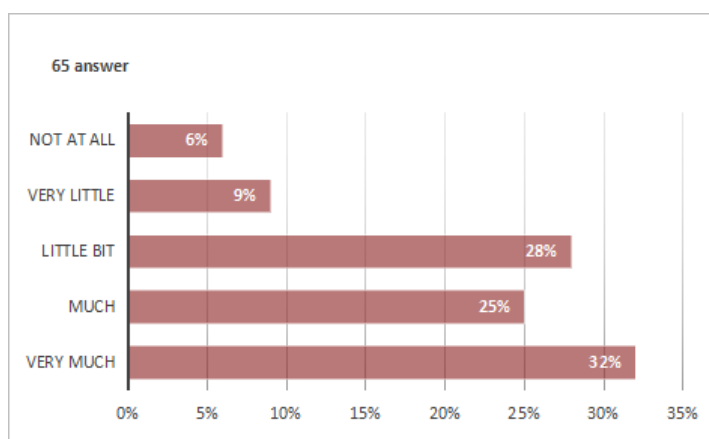
The results highlight the fact that a great number of consumers buy their dairy products according to the ingredients mentioned on the label.

7. Do you buy dairy products based on their price?



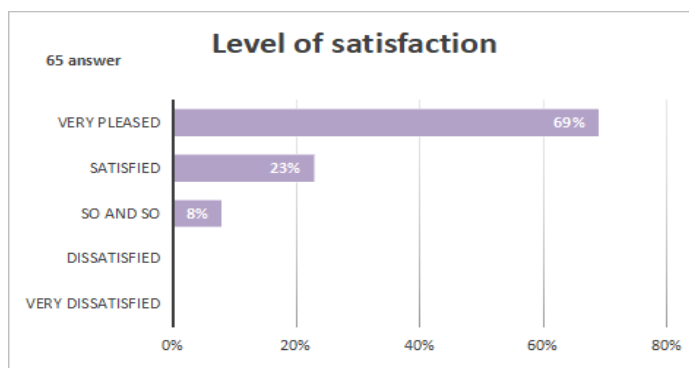
Results show that 61% of people who buy dairy products are not influenced by the price of the products.

8. To what extent are you influenced by publicity (outdoor advertisements, magazines) when choosing your dairy products?



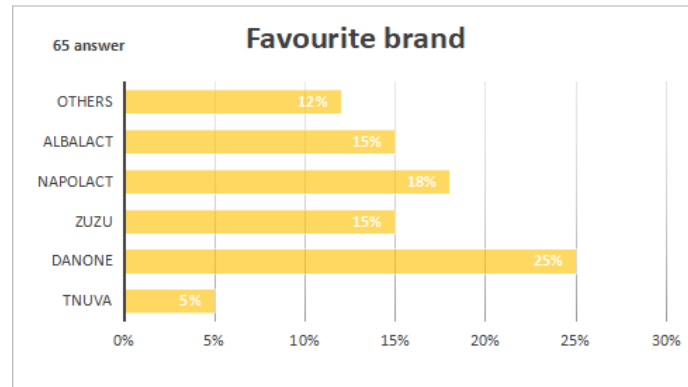
The majority of consumers (32%), are influenced by publicity when it comes to dairy products.

9. Level of satisfaction.



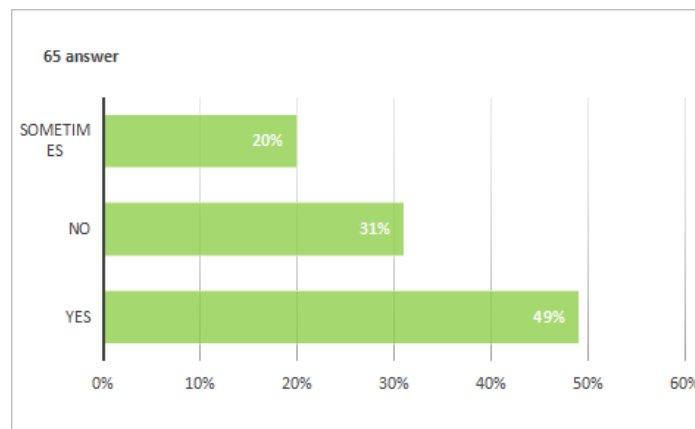
Dairy products consumers are very satisfied with the products they buy- 69%.

10. Favourite brand?



The preferred brand is Napolact 28%, followed by Danone 25% and Albalact 15%.

11. Do you maintain your preferences in terms of dairy products brands?

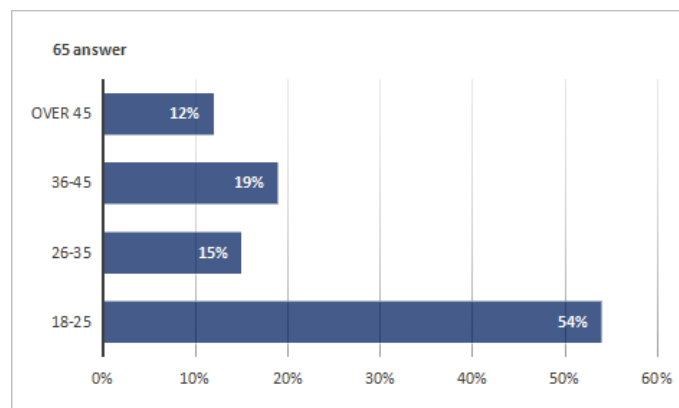


The recorded data show that 49 % of the investigated people prefer buying the same brand of dairy products.

12. Has the pandemic influenced your behaviour in terms of dairy products consumption?

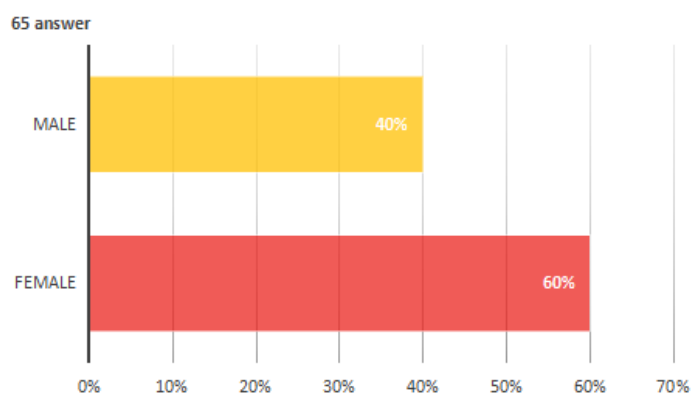
The respondents to this questions stated that they were not influenced by the pandemic when buying dairy products.

13. In which of the following age groups are you included?



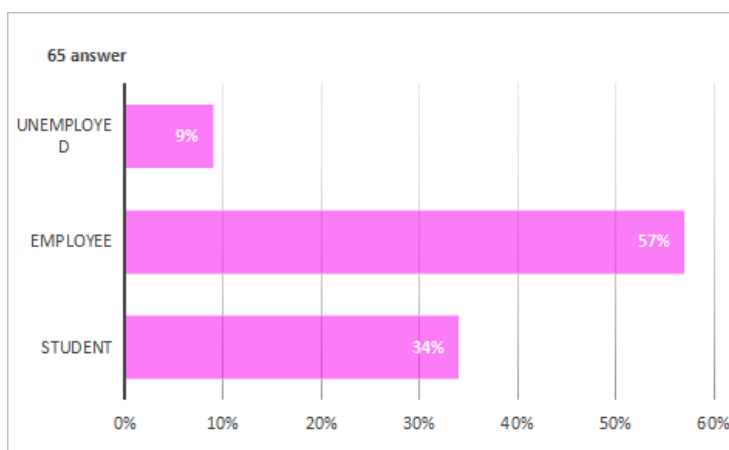
Results show that most of the respondents belong to the 18-25 years age category.

14. Your gender:



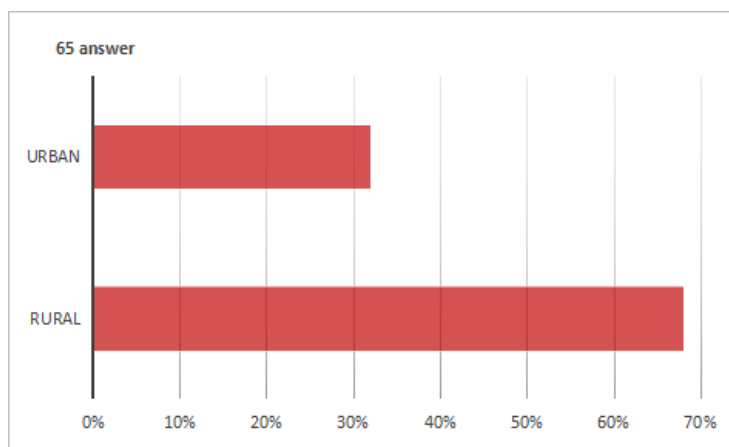
According to the results, the percentage rate is higher for females- 60%.

15. Your professional status is:



According to the statistics, the highest rate is among employees.

16. Specify your background:



Statistics highlight that most consumers come from the rural environment- 67.7%.

## CONCLUSIONS

Milk is a staple food, part of a healthy diet which, due to its nutrients, contributes to maintain and improve the health status of people, if drunk on a daily basis. This complete food is a natural part of our life, even from the youngest age and it is one of the essential foods for a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, the Romanian consumers have lost their habit of drinking milk daily and we consume two times less milk compared to western Europeans. Thus, we find ourselves among the last ranking European countries in terms of milk intake/capita.

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