

**WP2 Latvia report**  
**BSC**  
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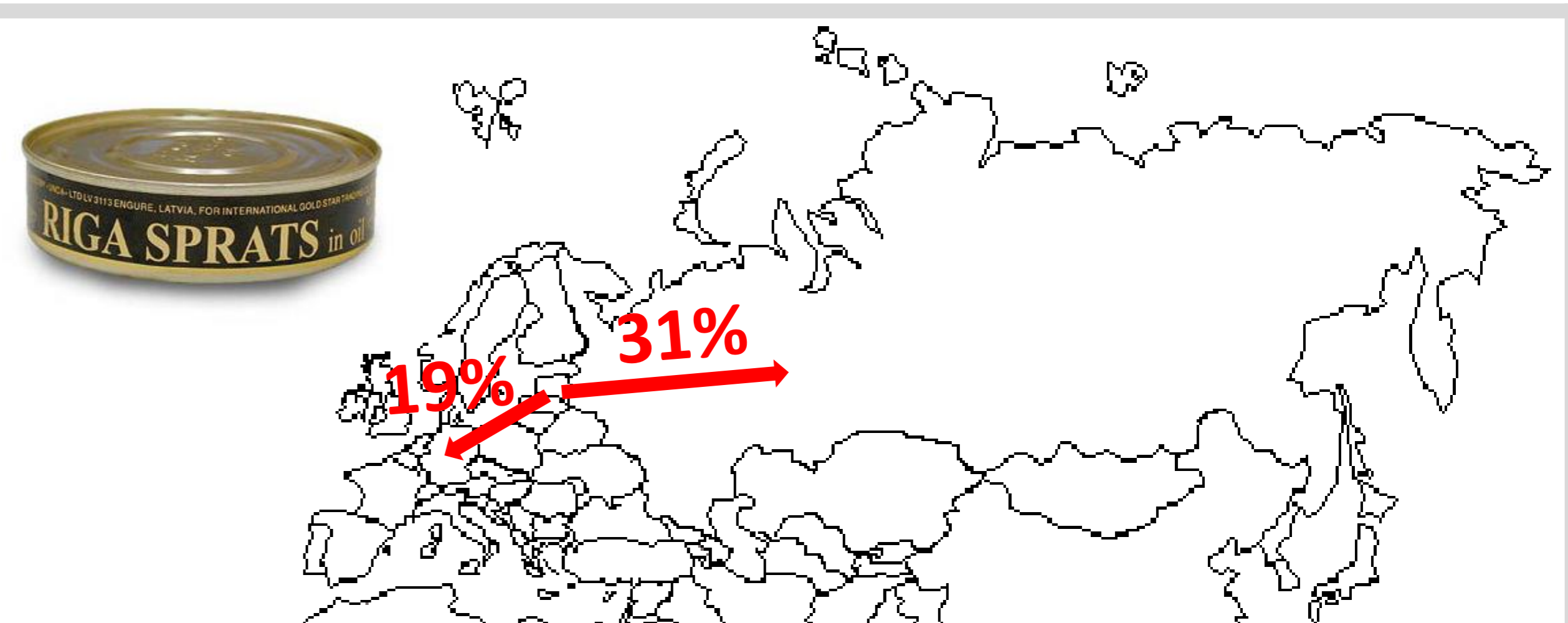
**Introduction**

- The major principle that is behind almost all food related discussions is a support to greater economic efficiency. This principle manifests in strong claims for economic development, improved competitiveness, increased export, etc. In opposition to this dominating interpretation of food system there is a mix of other ideas introduced in food discourses in the recent years, e.g. local procurement, ethnical consumption, traceability.
- Food market is structured according to neo-liberal ideas. Yet it is expected that the state will also create instruments to support national producers. And local food systems
- *Local* is a notion used to argue and secure food sovereignty at various levels: at the level of household food choices and consumption, measures to promote local products and production systems, in national agricultural policies. The *local* signifies Latvia as a territory of origin and serves as an instrument to promote national products.
- Most of ideas describing food chains concentrate on economic dimension. Social and health dimensions also receive recognition. Yet aspects related to environmental and ethical dimensions are practically absent in food discourses.
- Representation of important food chain attributes differs between various spheres.

**Multi-criteria matrix of food supply chain performance**

	Economic	Social	Environmental	Health	Ethical
Public	Affordability Efficiency Embeddedness	Embeddedness Affordability Consumer habits Labourforce	GMO Embeddedness	GMO Origins Risks	Affordability Labourforce
Scientific	Knowledge Cooperation	Affordability Cooperation Consumer habits		Diet	
Market	Support Economic development Identity Information accessibility Knowledge Origins Export Competitiveness	Identity Origins	Information accessibility	Diet	
Policy	Support Economic development Efficiency Procurement Information accessibility	Labourforce Control Procurement Information accessibility Cooperation	Control Information accessibility	Diet Control Information accessibility	Control GMO Information accessibility

**Significant News & events**



**Riga Sprats in Russia's market: political manipulation over food**

- Some of the Latvia's products are historically recognized in Russia. *Riga Sprats* is one of such products which gained popularity in the former Soviet Union.
- Currently *Riga Sprats* is one of the prominent export items to Russia (31% of overall sprat sells are on Russia's market).
- In the last years for political reasons Russia has repeatedly imposed bans on sprat import from Latvia to exercise political influence.
- The similar import bans for varied explanations have been applied to Estonian milk and fish, Lithuanian pork and dairy, Moldavian wine, mineral water from Georgia, etc.
- «Manipulation over food imports is a common practice how Russia regulates its political influence in the region.» (Andris Sprūds, Head of Latvian Institute of International Affairs)

**Attributes' ranking\***  
 (all attributes are important. However, this table illustrates relative importance when compared to others\*\*)

Economic development	↑	Information accessibility	→
Efficiency	↑	Control	→
Labourforce	↑	Risks	→
Diet	↑	Identity	↓
Export	↑	Embeddedness	↓
Competitiveness	↑	GMO	↓
Affordability	→	Knowledge	↓
Procurement	→	Origins	↓
Consumer habits	→	Cooperation	↓
Support	→		

\* Attributes are colored according to their most relevant Dimension.

\*\* Arrows illustrate current importance of attributes



**Attempts to introduce sustainable procurement policy**

- Recently several municipalities consider introducing new public procurement procedures to enhance sourcing of more healthy and local produce.
- The Ministry of Agriculture considers public procurement as an instrument to support local producers and promised to come up with clear guidelines.
- After political ping-pong the task to research the issue has been given to Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre – an institution which lacks capacity to invest in the area. The Centre has come up with low budget projects that should bring answers how to move forward.
- Meanwhile, the lack of clear state policy in public procurement of food has been used by other actors. *Green Spoon* – an often criticized national quality scheme that represents a limited number of big food enterprises has achieved that it is recognized as one of the criteria for local procurement.