

SEAFOOD LABELLING IN DIFFERENT EU COUNTRIES AND THEIR COMPLIANCE TO EU REGULATIONS



Simona Paolacci, Rogério Mendes, Regina Klapper, Amaya Velasco, Graciela Ramilo-Fernandez, Marta Muñoz-Colmenero, Tavis Potts, Sandra Martins, Solene Avignon, Julie Maguire, Enrique De Paz, Martin Johnson, Francoise Denis, Miguel A. Pardo, Dee McElligott, Carmen Gonzalez Sotelo



Contact information: spaolacci@bmr.sie

Aim of the study

To verify the compliance to EU seafood labelling legislation

Seafood labelling and traceability help consumers to make informed choices; The EU seafood labelling regulations are important tools that improve the sustainability of seafood.

What should we find on seafood labels?

Regulations currently in place

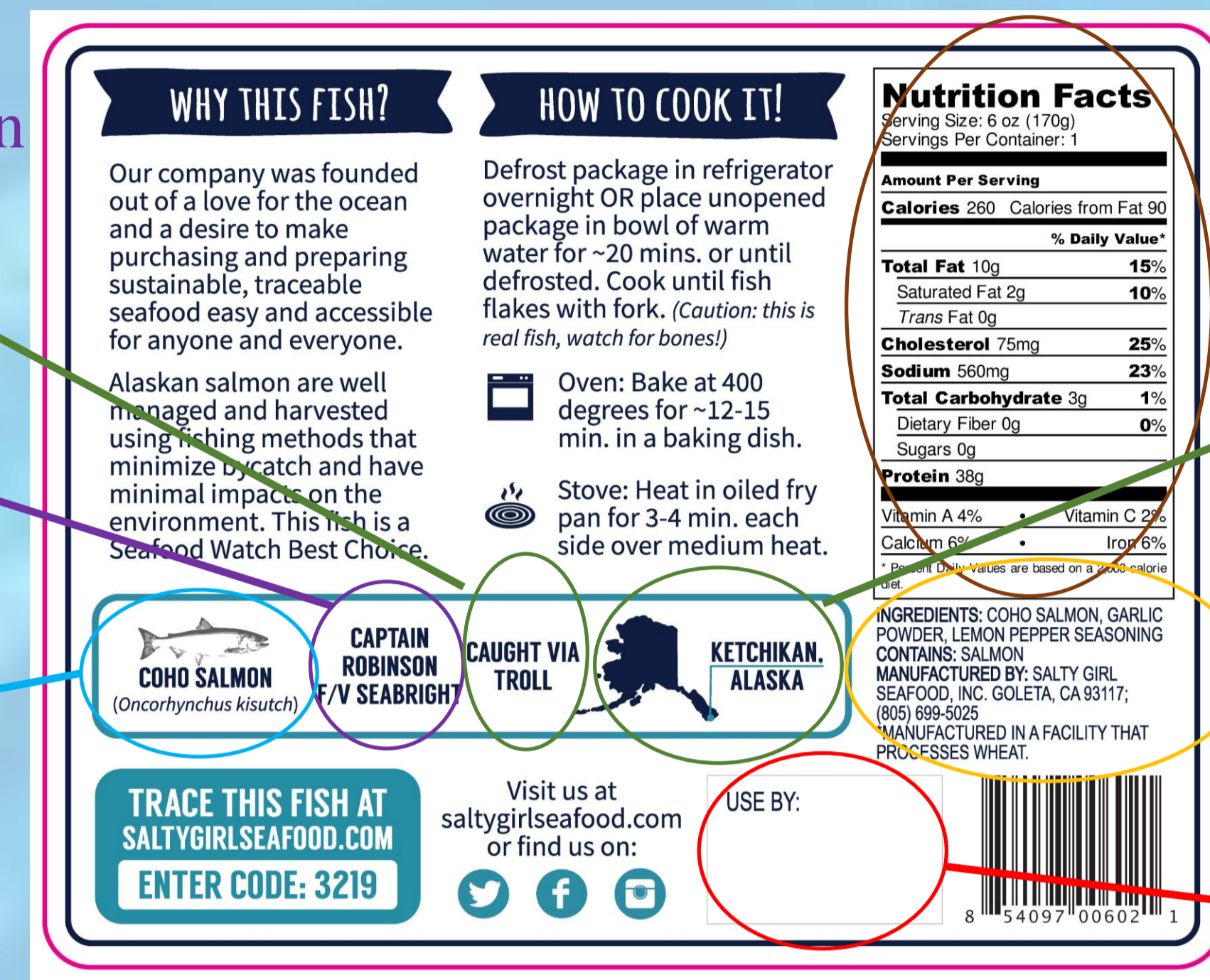
Regulation	Applies to	Description
Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 (European Union, 2011)	All foods	General principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.
Regulation (EU) 1379/2013 (European Union, 2013)	Fishery and aquaculture	Describes mandatory particulars for fishery and aquaculture products. Applies to all unprocessed and some processed products both prepacked and non-prepacked.

Fishing Gear/Production method

Operator's Name/address

Common Name and Scientific Name

Defrosted, if a product was previously frozen



Nutrition Declaration

Catch Area (FAO area, sub-area or division for marine fisheries, body of water for freshwater fisheries and country of production for farmed species)

List of Ingredients and Allergens

Best Before date or "Use by" date

Methodology

Study Area



Labels on seafood products sold in supermarkets and from fishmongers were examined to verify the compliance to EU Regulations.

Three categories of products examined:

Unprocessed Non-Pre-Packed (UNP)



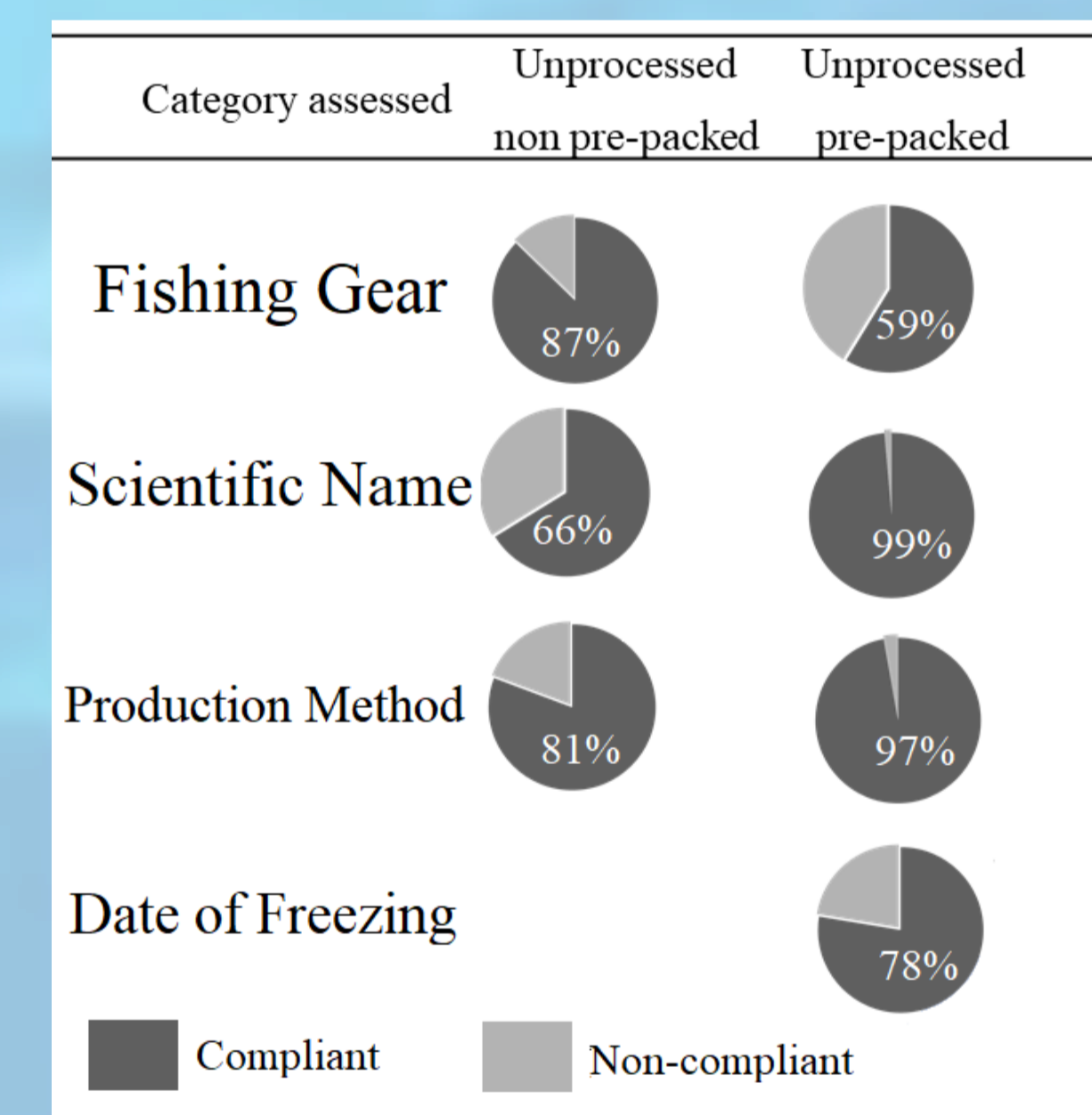
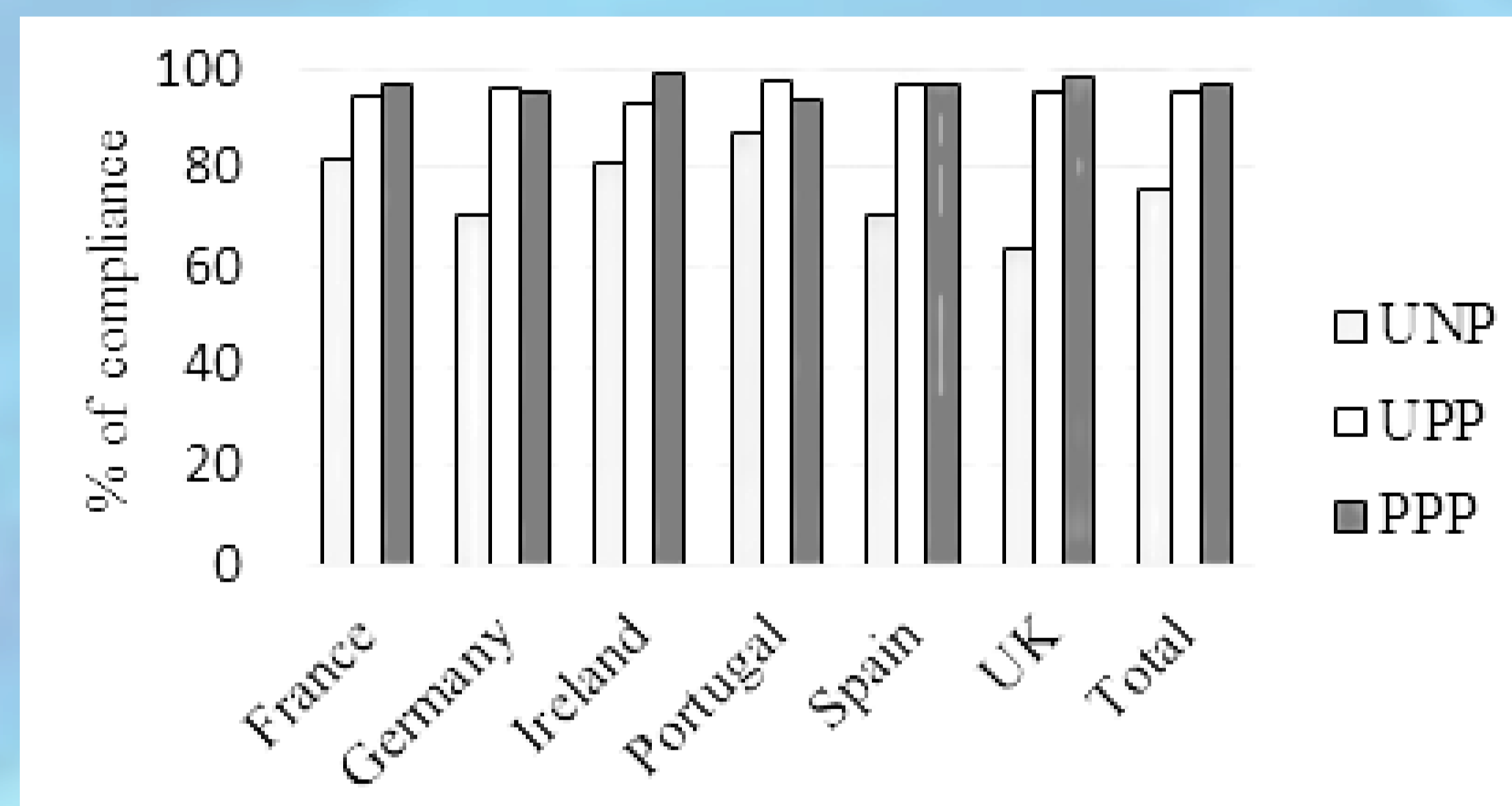
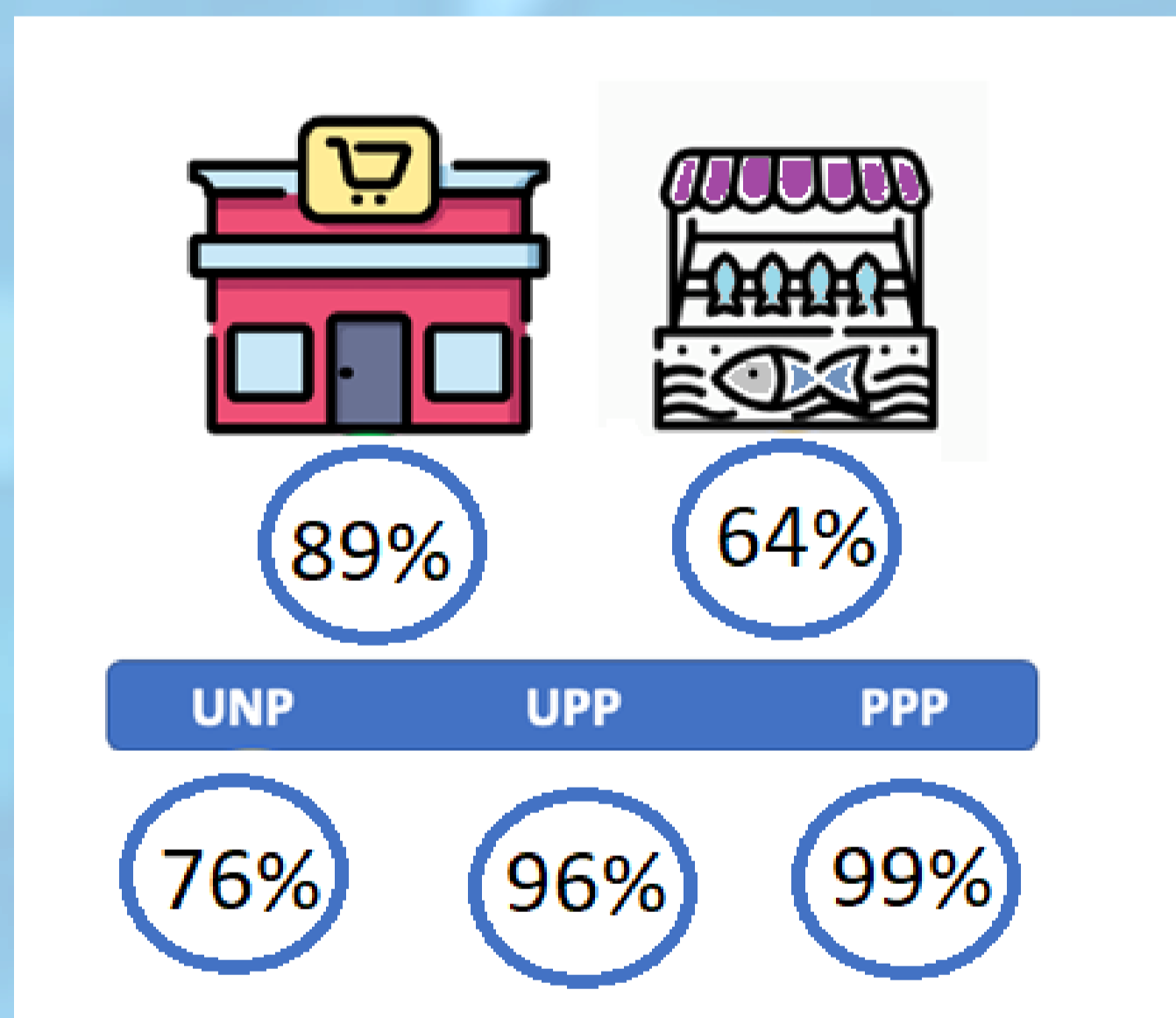
Unprocessed Pre-Packed (UPP)



Processed Pre-Packed (PPP)



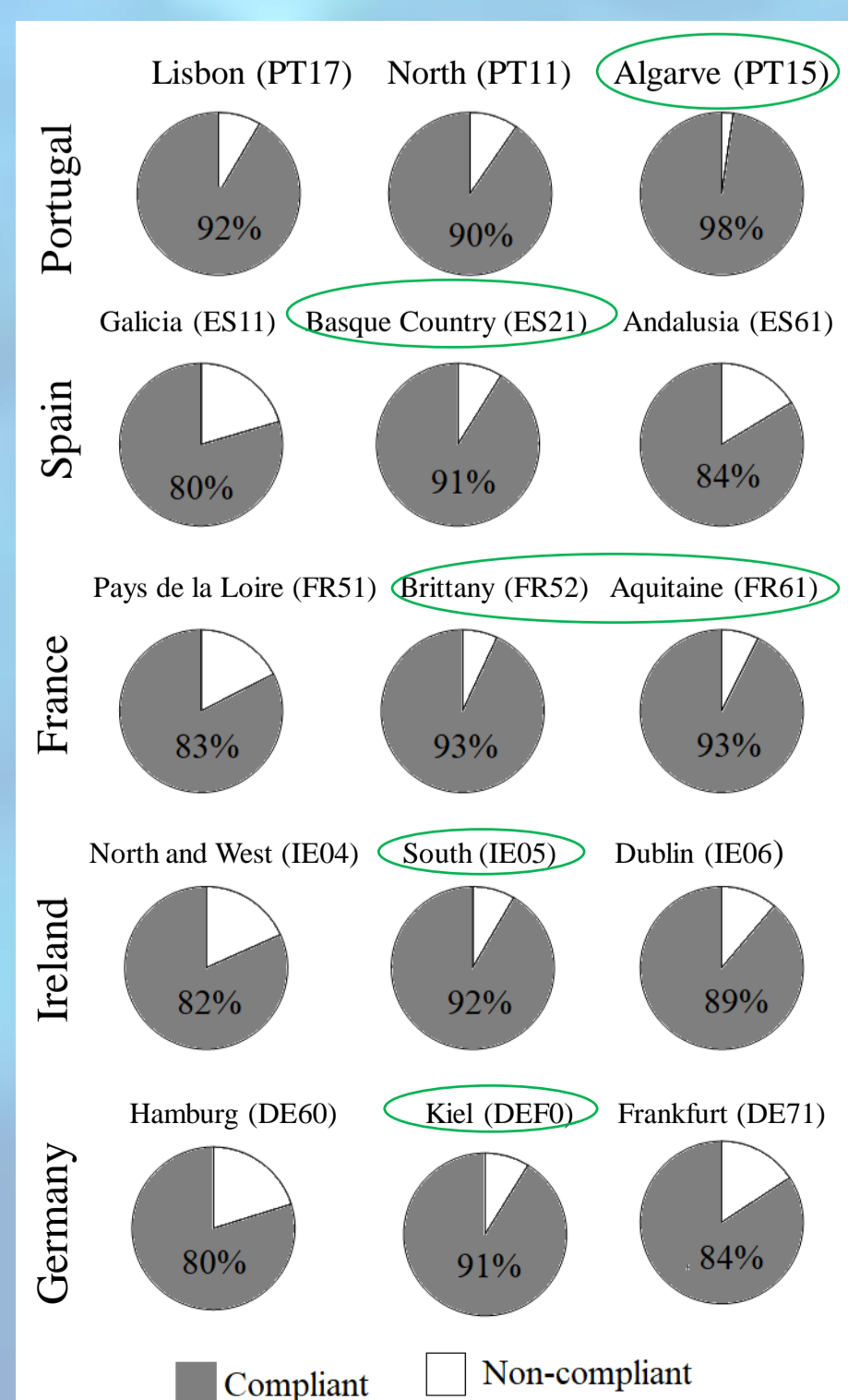
Results



Fishmongers were significantly ($p < 0.01$) less compliant than supermarkets and UNP were significantly ($p < 0.01$) less compliant than the other two categories.

Pearson's chi-squared test showed association between Country and compliance ($p < 0.01$). Spain and the UK showed disproportionately low levels of compliance and Portugal disproportionately high compliance.

Fishing Gear, Scientific name, Production method and the Date of Freezing were the types of information most frequently missing on the labels examined



Compliance to the EU labelling legislation varied between different geographical areas within national borders. The areas circled in green were significantly more compliant than the other areas in the same country.

CONCLUSIONS

Lack of homogeneity in law enforcement and cultural differences lead to different levels of compliance in different countries and within countries. The types of mandatory information more often left out of the labels were strongly linked to the sustainability of the fishery.

Please note that these results do not show that fishmongers cannot be trusted, but only that they have a higher tendency to not provide all the information required on labels and/or billboards, possibly because they provide the information requested by the consumers verbally.