

## **Economic resilience of broiler farms in two different countries**

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Modern consumers demand safety and quality in foods of animal origin, often associated with extensive farming systems. This perception exists for all species, including broilers, which in most cases are housed in high-density barns.

Under the *mEATquality* project (Grant Agreement No. 101000344 – *mEATquality*), innovative strategies have been investigated to meet the above-mentioned societal demands, environmental requirements, and economic needs of entrepreneurs. Within this framework, the factors of extensiveness of production are a pivotal issue and the project proposes a step-by-step analysis of them.

As a first step, the impact of these factors on the intrinsic quality of meat has been assessed. Data have been collected from conventional, free-range and organic farms and processed through standardized sustainability assessment protocols. Data collected from thirty Polish and thirty German breeders have drawn a general description of the farm, highlighted some key environmental issues – mostly related to animal welfare –, and offered economic and productivity information.

The economic protocol provided key information on economic performance and its variability according to the degree of extensiveness of broiler farms.

Moreover, a qualitative survey has been combined to the traditional technical questionnaire, in order to detect economic resilience through appropriate parameters.

This approach aims to describe the bargaining power of the farmer within the value chain and explores the ability of the farm to withstand and overcome negative events. Responders have been asked to score (from 1 “poor”, to 5 “very high”) a list of more than twenty factors and abilities affecting their entrepreneurial skills, resilience of resources, robustness of training and propensity to innovate.

The incidence of different responses has been compared both between countries and between production systems. The overall goal of this analysis is to bring to light a new perspective, now shared by more research on the approach of economic sustainability, which is not only related to costs, but looks at the entire value chain and the role of the farmer.

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