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19. April 2013

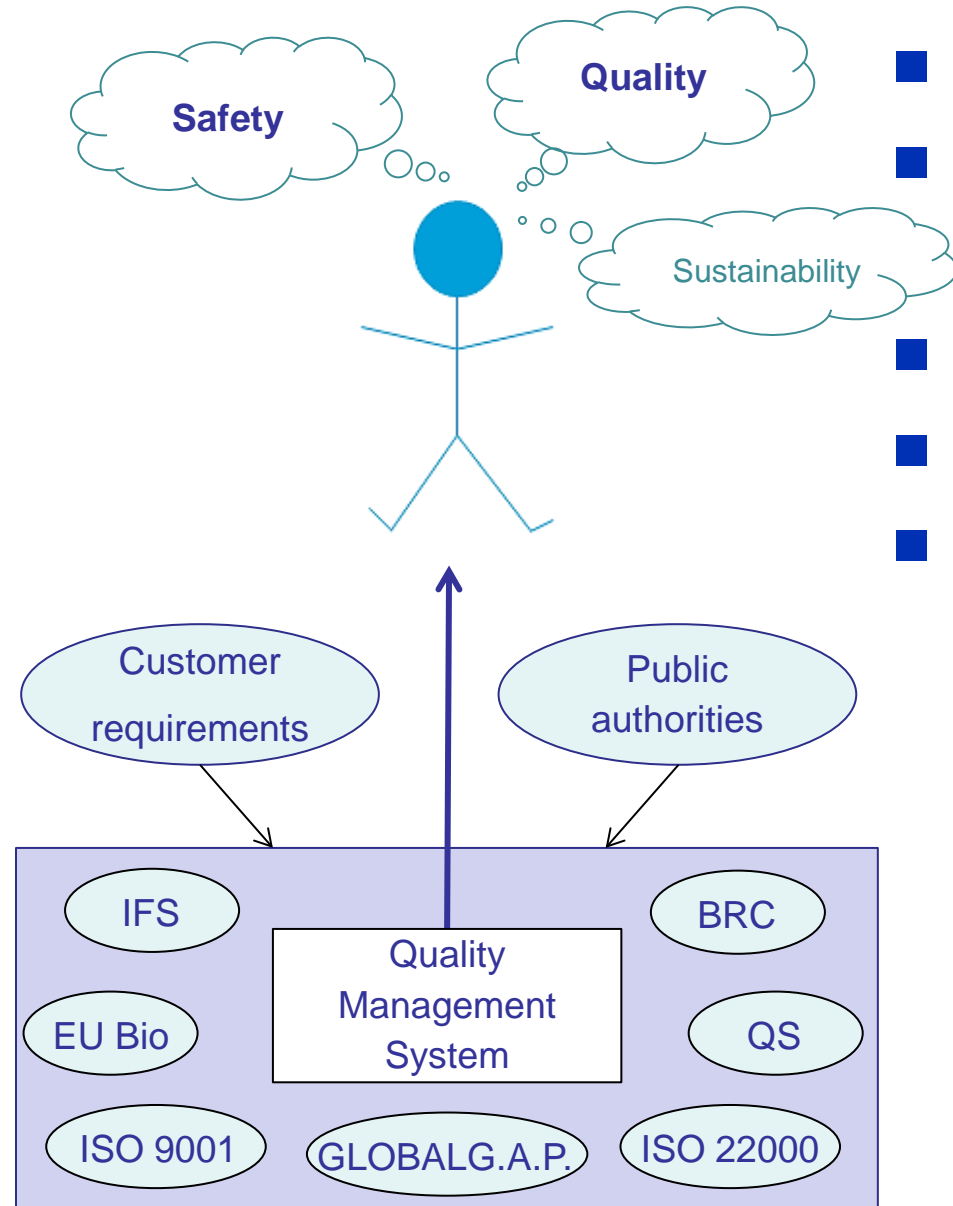
# Unannounced Audits in the Food Industry as a New Instrument of Hygiene and Quality Control based on the Example of IFS Food Checks

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- Introduction
- Methodology – Data and Sample Description
- Results
- Conclusion and further research

- Fundamental expectations of the consumer: Quality and sensory aspects
- Achievement of expectations by implementation of comprehensive quality management systems
- Food Crisis in recent years in Germany:
  - BSE (2000)
  - Dioxin (2003, 2010)
  - EHEC (2011)
  - Horse meat (2013)
- Perennial scandals demonstrate the need of superior surveillance by independent authorities or independent certification bodies



## The Power of Retailers

**‘Technically voluntary standards’ become a voluntary obligation when they are ‘mandatory (...) to do business with the major retailers’.<sup>1</sup>**

- Many customers demand supplementary supplier audits to ensure compliance of common certification schemes plus their customer’s own specifications and requirements
- These are either performed announced and/ or unannounced

### **Unannounced audit**

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**An audit undertaken on a date unknown in advance to the company.<sup>2</sup>**

## The IFS Food Standard

- ‘With more than 11,000 certificates, standards translated into 20 languages and 800+ auditors IFS Food is one of the largest food safety and quality standards worldwide.’<sup>3</sup>
- Voluntary IFS Food Checks are offered since the beginning of 2014  
 Status quo 15.10.2015<sup>4</sup>:
  - $\Sigma$ 2014/ 2015: 1513 Food Checks were performed (94.7 % passed, 5.3 % failed)
  - 2015: 791 performed Food Checks (40 failed)

	Austria	Belgium	<b>Germany</b>	Italy	Netherlands
<b>Total</b>	57	55	<b>1027</b>	76	134
Failed	2	2	<b>50</b>	9	5

- New insights in the complexity of inspection systems
- Highlighting the benefit of unannounced audit practices
- Identification of critical findings during unannounced audits in reference to findings of previous certification audit

and

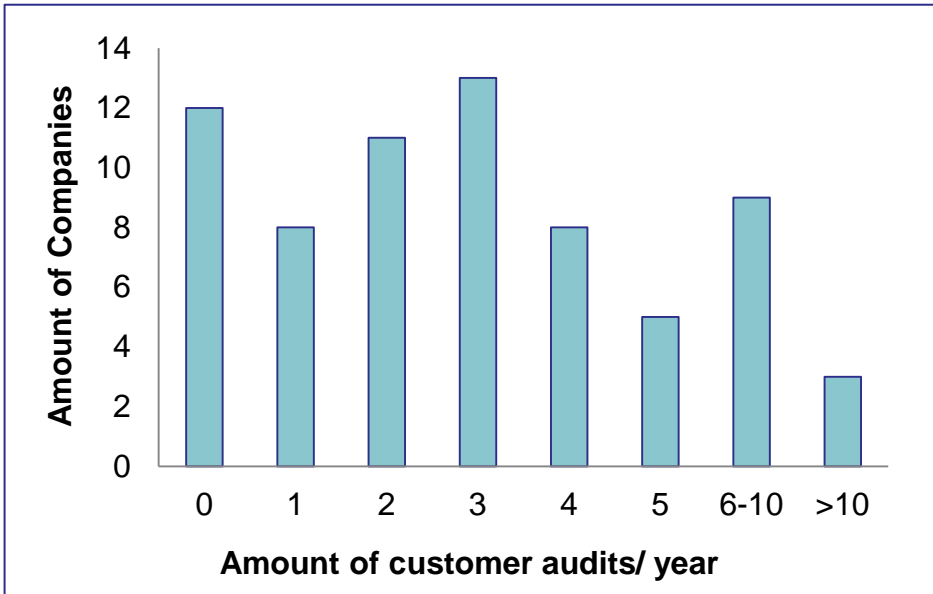
- Highlighting the pressure the food companies are burdened with
- Reflection of the current acceptance of unannounced audits in the food industry
- Difficulties in audit performance

- Audit reports of IFS Food Standard certification vs. IFS Food Check reports (n = 56)
  - Germany: 42
  - Italy: 6
  - Netherlands: 3
  - Greece, Hungary, Spain, Turkey, UK: 1
- Analysed regarding the cause of failing & with reference to the result of the previous announced audit

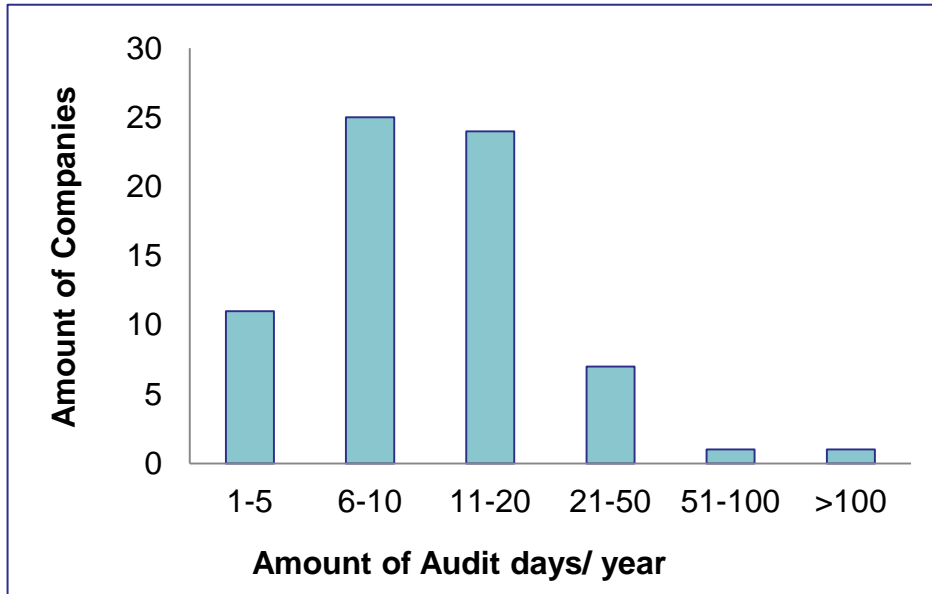


- Auditor online survey (n = 31)
  - Company online survey (n = 69)
    - IFS Food Check relating questions (n = 32)
    - Retailer audit relating questions (n = 37)
- 
- Timeframe: less than 10 minutes
  - Closed questions
  - General questions to identify the respondents characteristics
  - General questions regarding unannounced audit practices
  - General questions regarding the IFS Food Check program and/ or unannounced customer audits

- Auditors
  - Certification schemes:  
**IFS Food (74 %)**, ISO 22000 (52 %), QS (32 %)
  - Scopes:  
Ø 4.5; mostly IFS Scopes 1 and 6, furthermore IFS Scopes 5, 7, 10
- Companies
  - Certification schemes:  
Ø 3.4; **IFS Food (77 %)**, EU-Bio (64 %), QS (43 %)
  - Scopes:  
mostly IFS Scopes 1, 5 and 6



**Quantity of customer audits the surveyed companies in general have per year (n = 69)**



**Quantity of audit days the surveyed companies in general plan per year (n = 69)**

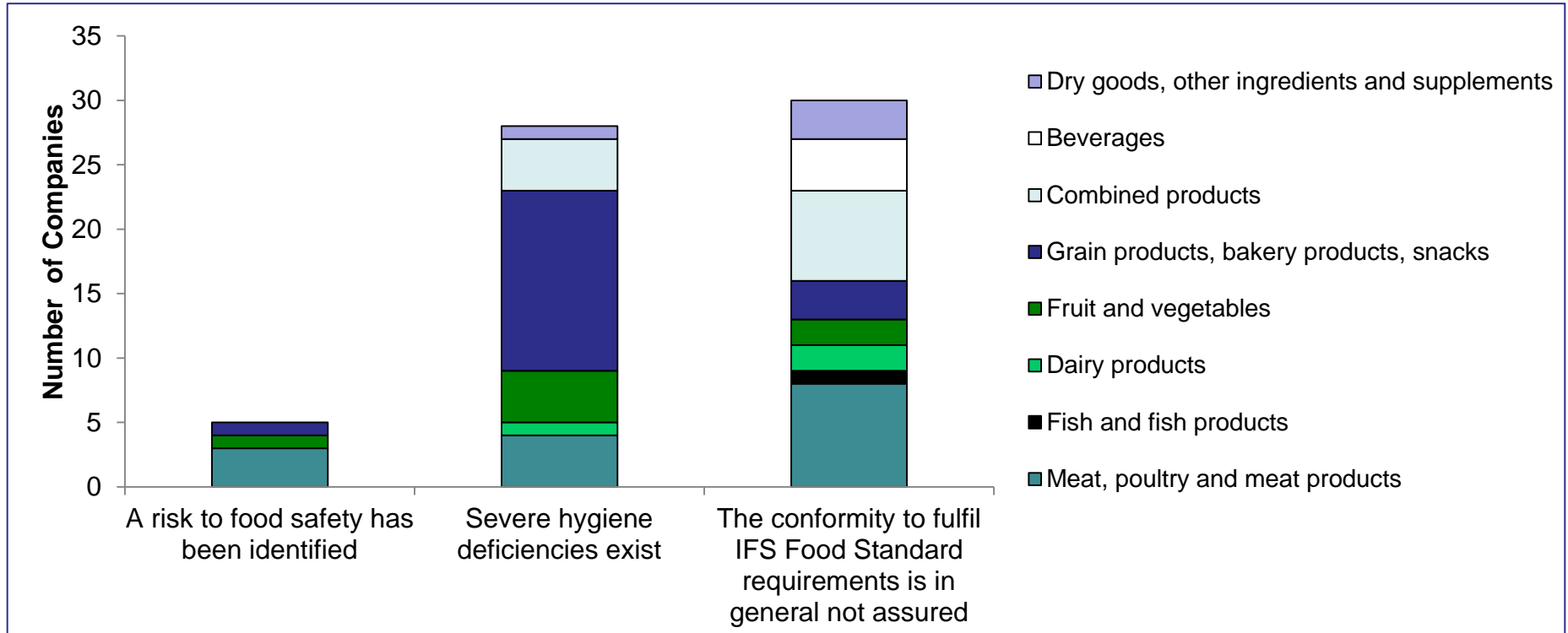


Most companies which failed during the IFS Food Check achieved higher level in the IFS certification audit.

Higher Level:  $\geq 95$  % of the requirements fulfilled

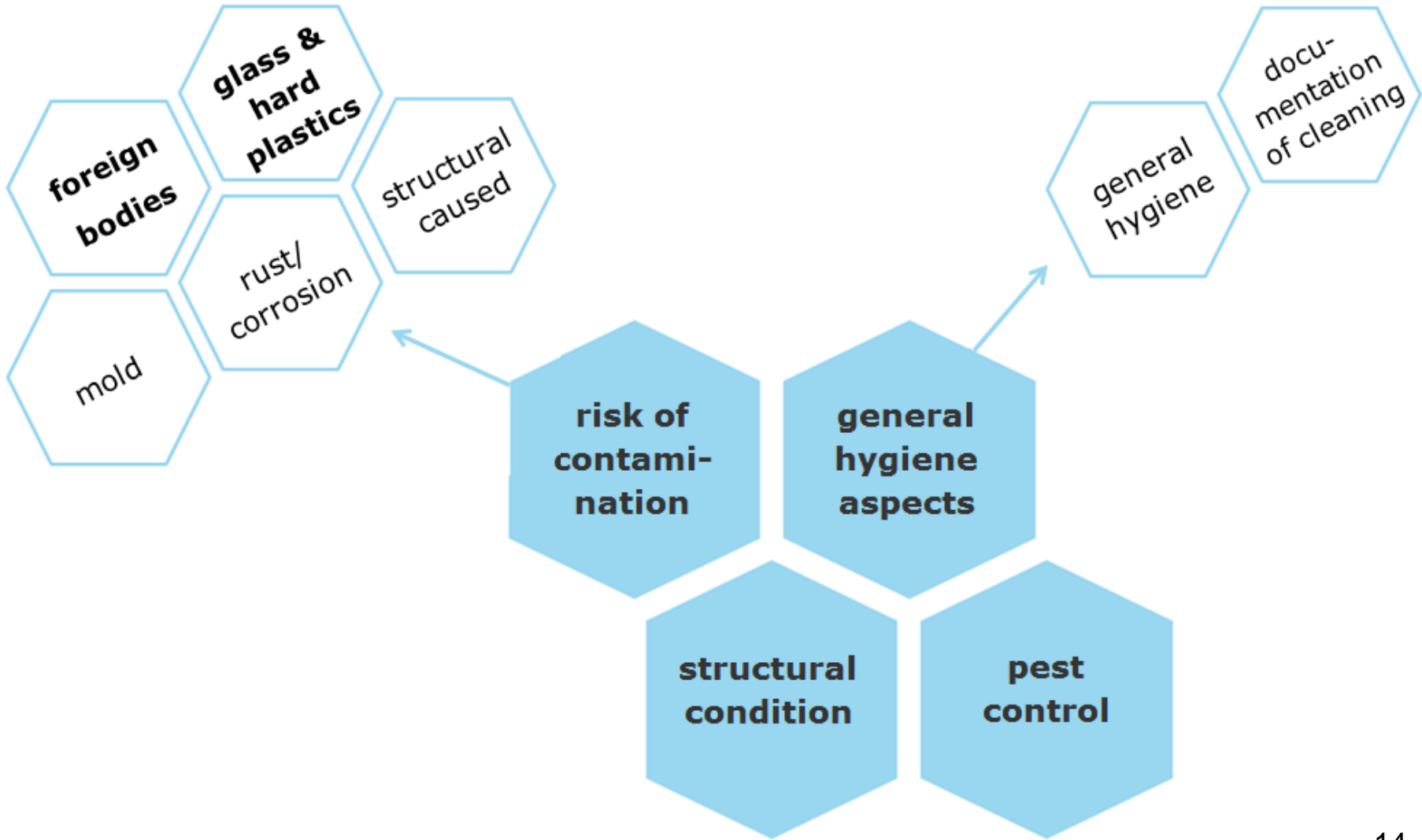
# Results – IFS Food Check

- 56 analysed audit reports:
  - 18 companies with product scope 6
  - 11 companies with product scope 1
  - 11 companies with product scope 7

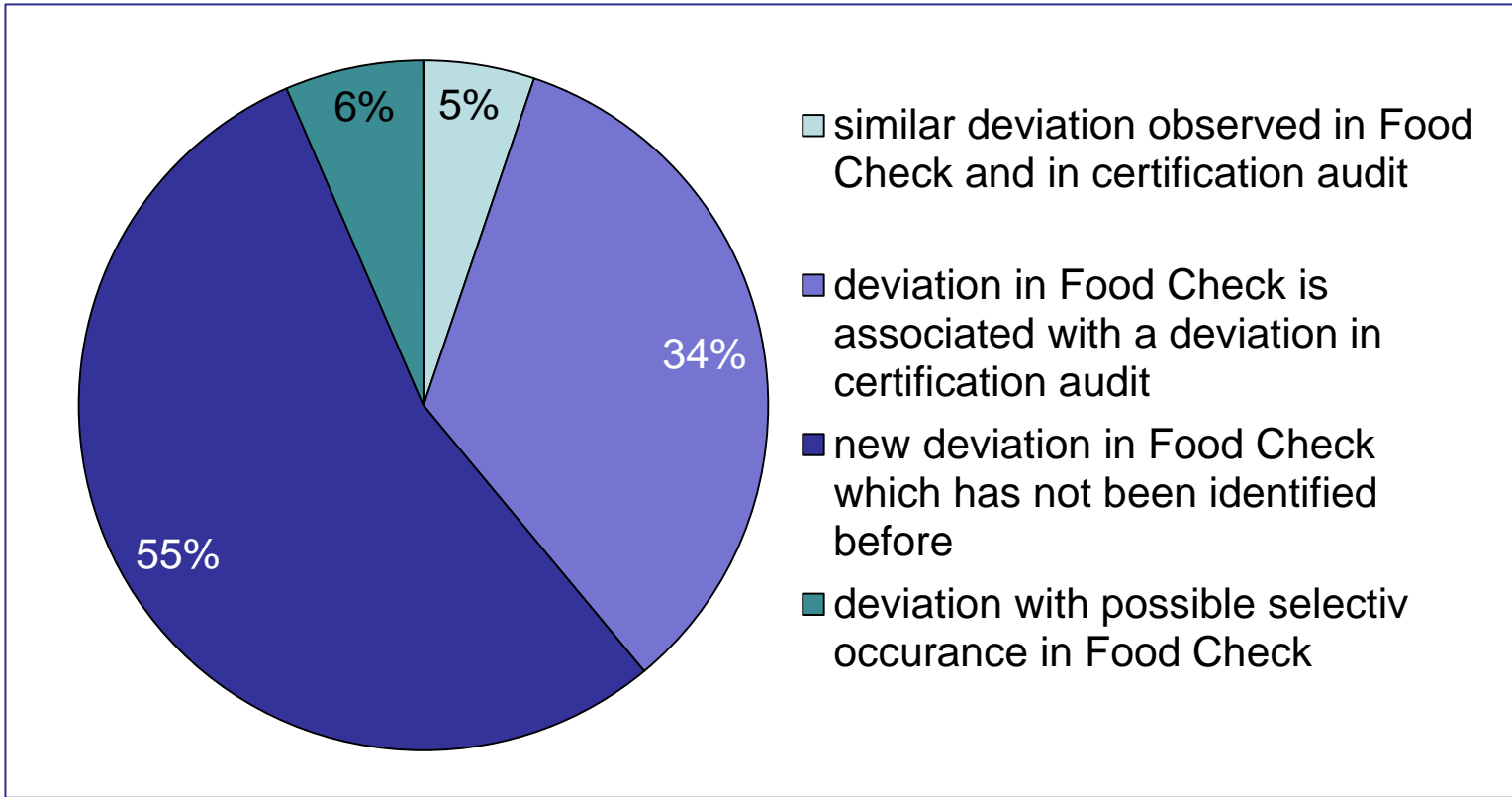


Amount of failed companies distinguished in scope and failing categories (n = 56)

# Results – IFS Food Check

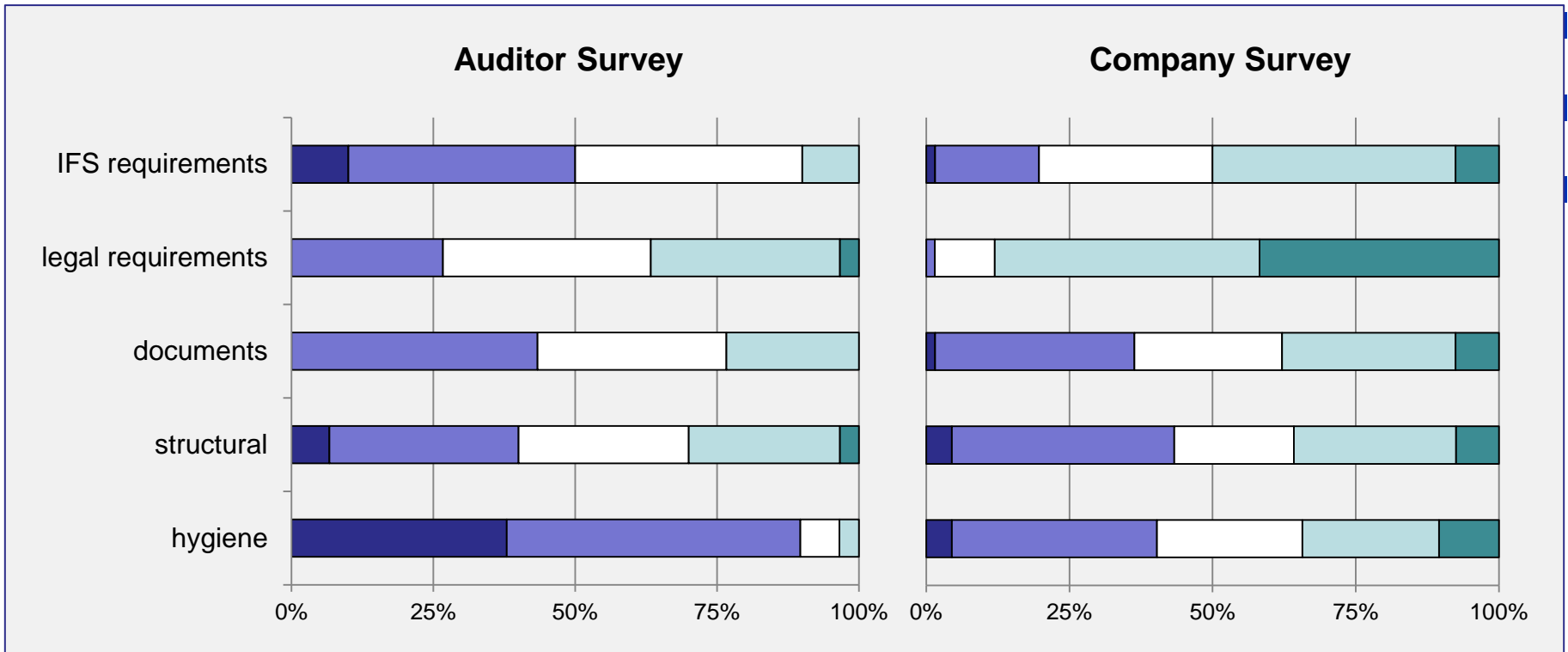


# Results – IFS Food Check



**Comparison between the F-deviations in IFS Food Checks and related deviations in IFS Certification Audits (n = 53)**

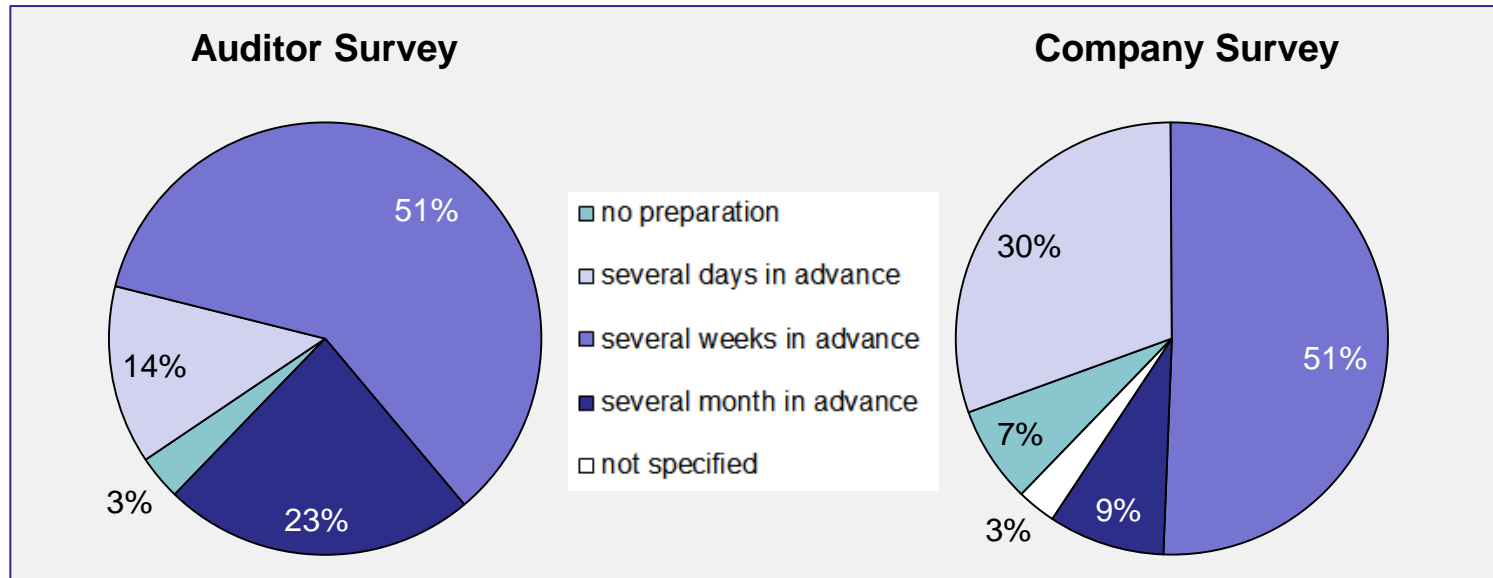
Assessment of auditors (n = 31) and companies (n = 69) regarding the more likely occurrence of a deviation in un-announced audits by categories



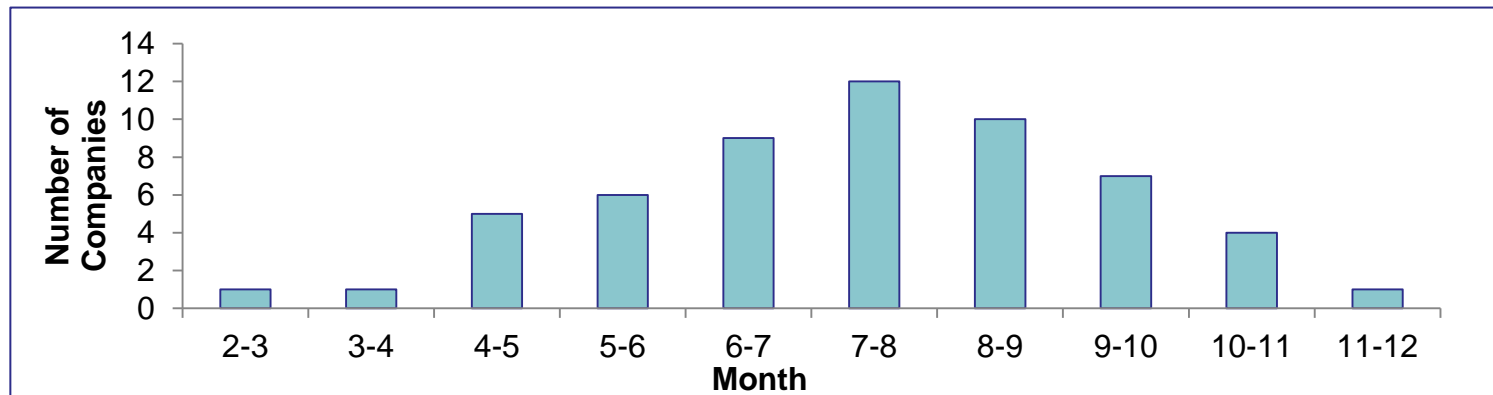
■ is completely true   
 □ neutral   
 ■ is not true  
■ is true   
 ■ is absolutely not true



# Results – Survey & IFS Food Check

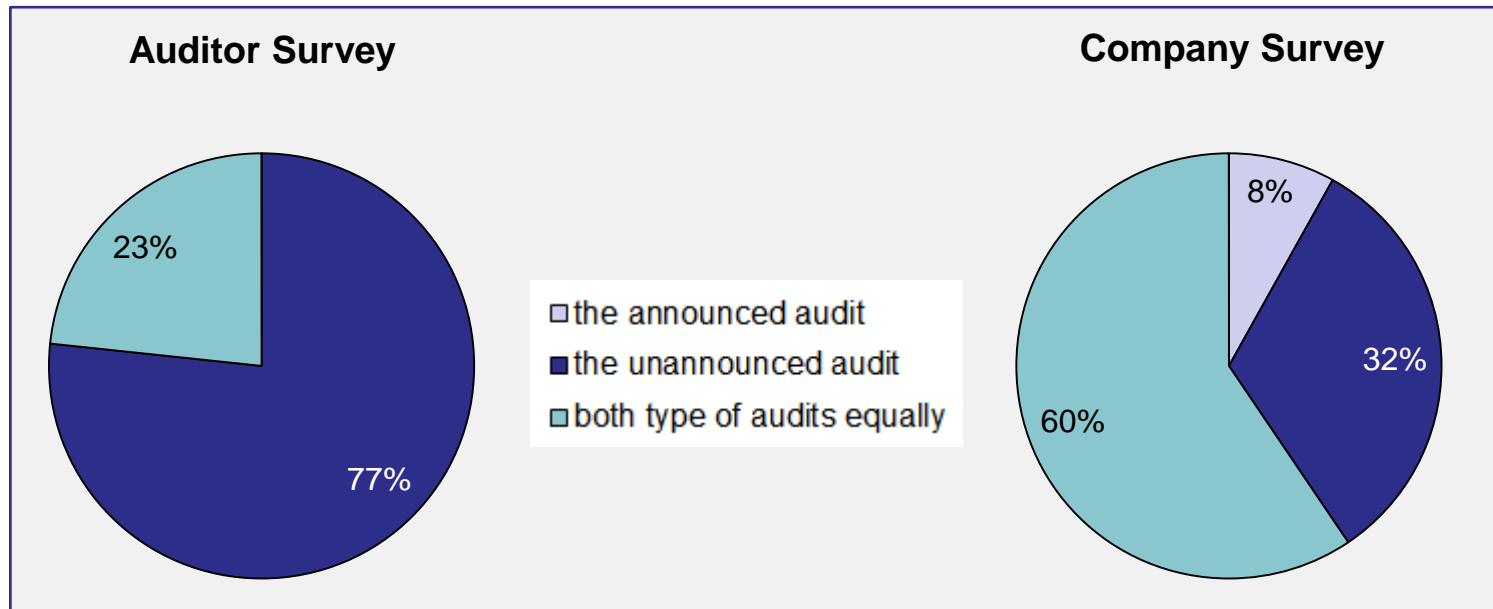


Assessment of auditors (n = 31) regarding the amount of time a company needs in general to prepare for an announced audit in comparison with the actual value companies (n = 69) indicated

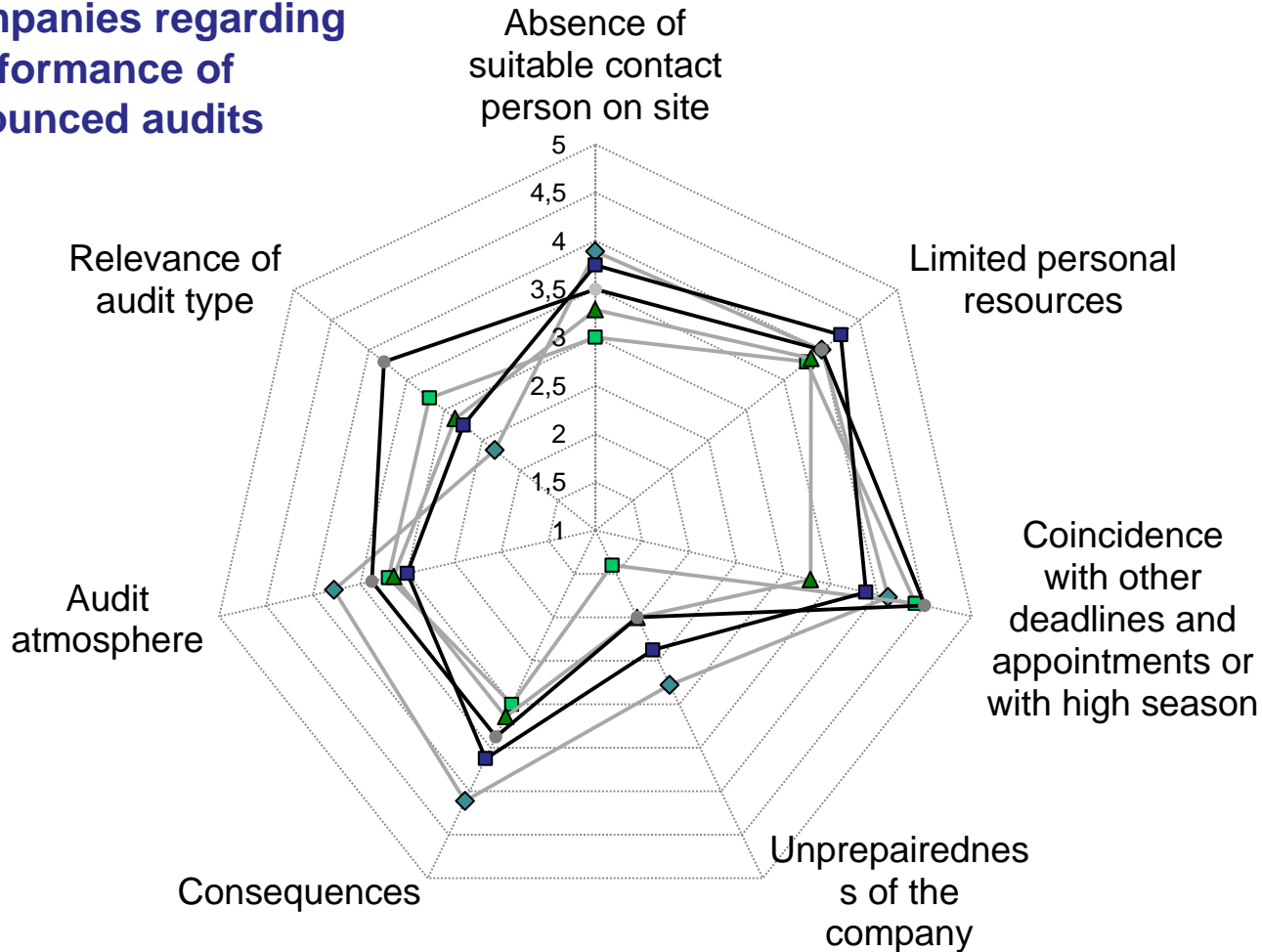


Time period in between the certification audit and the Food Check in relation to the number of companies which failed in the Food Check (n = 56)

## Which audit type better reflects the de facto daily routine?



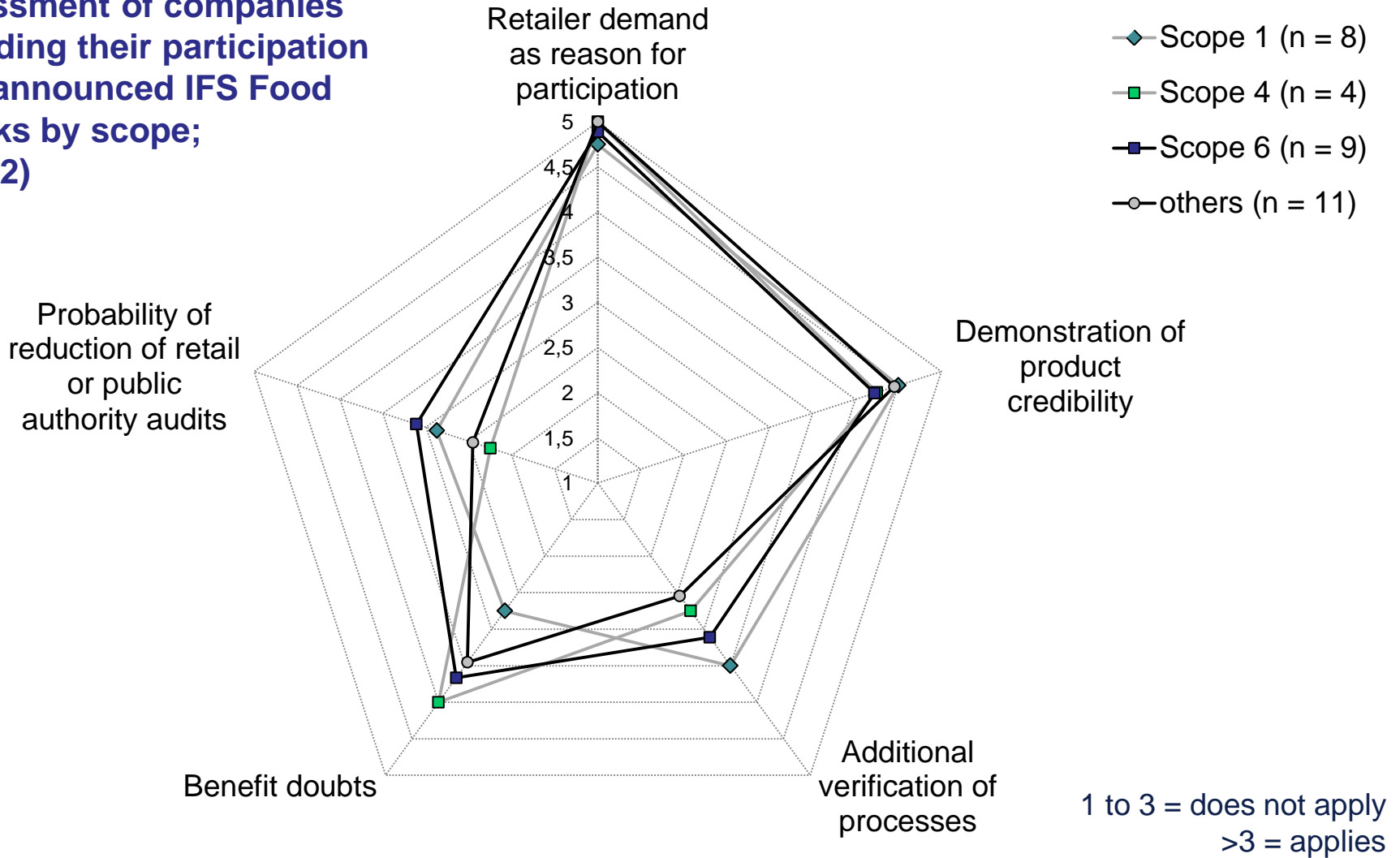
## Relevance of stress factors for companies regarding the performance of unannounced audits (n= 37)



- ◆ Scope 1 (n = 9)
- Scope 4 (n = 5)
- ▲ Scope 5 (n = 7)
- Scope 6 (n = 8)
- others (n = 8)

1 to 3 = not relevant  
>3 = relevant

**Assessment of companies regarding their participation in unannounced IFS Food Checks by scope; (n = 32)**



1 to 3 = does not apply  
>3 = applies

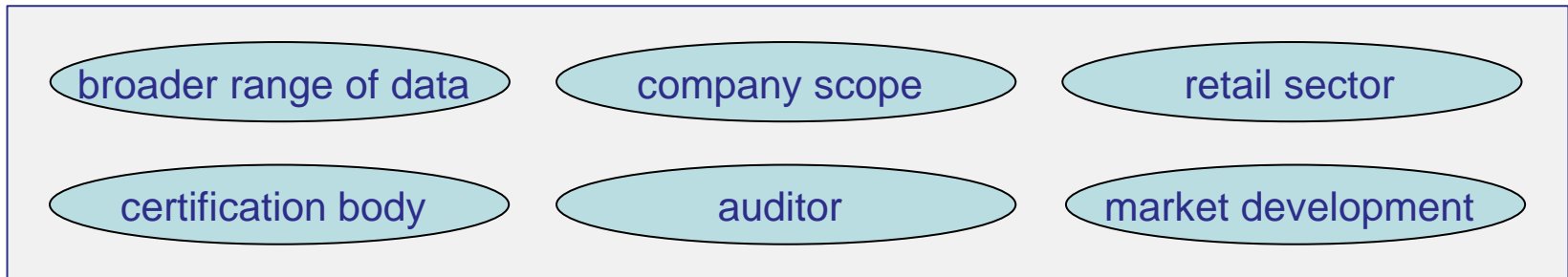
- Mostly IFS 'higher level' classified companies failed in Food Checks
- Deficiencies regarding hygiene aspects, contamination risks, pest control and structural conditions are the most common deficiencies which lead to a failing of IFS Food Checks
- In 55 % of the examined reports, F-deviations were not directly linked to a deviation of previous audit
- Companies with hygiene related findings during the Food Check often already had problems in relating domains during the certification audit
- Companies general prepare several week or even month in advance of an announced audit. This is reflected with the increasing number of failed Food Checks with an growing amount of time after the announced certification audit

- Tendency that companies with certain scopes fail more likely during an IFS Food Check and more often have deficiencies in some domains
- The high pressure due to the amount of audit days and the amount of requirements, set by certification standards and customers, lead partially to a pessimistic mood in food processing companies
- Stress factors play an important role for both companies and auditors

1. A more reliable view on the de facto daily operation is guaranteed by the implementation of unannounced auditing practices.
2. The detection of non-conformities in several domains is more likely during an unannounced audit.
3. The way stress factors are experienced by companies differ only in one or two criteria.
4. Auditors and companies assess the general benefit of unannounced auditing practices differently.



The combination of announced and unannounced audits in an appropriate frequency might be an effective solution to reduce the pressure on companies and at the same time to monitor their compliance with common standards and/ or customer requirements.





# Unique characteristics

- Common internationally accepted audit standard



- Globally operating certification body



- Proximity to scientific know-how

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**Thank you for your attention!**

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