

# GENERIC BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN GREECE: PRIVATE FOOD FIRMS VERSUS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

by

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify differences in generic strategies and performance among organizations within the food sector in Greece. Data from a survey of 61 organizations in Northern Greece are analyzed with the help of factor analysis, one-way ANOVA, and multiple linear regression. Factor analysis reveals the existence of four generic strategies consistent with Porter's (1980) framework. The findings suggest that in Greece private food firms (investor-owned firms, or IOFs) and agricultural cooperatives follow different generic strategies. Private firms emphasize differentiation-based strategies, whereas agricultural cooperatives show greater proclivity for the low-cost focus strategy. Two of the four generic strategies (the low-cost strategy and the differentiation focus strategy) improve organizational performance within the food sector for both organizational types. This is the first Greek survey on strategy contrasting private food-sector firms (IOFs) with agricultural cooperatives. A central message is that cooperatives, unlike private firms, sustain a more conservative attitude revealing traditional preference for low cost. The findings of this study will help practitioners and policy-makers to advance their knowledge of how organizations establish competitive advantage within the food sector of a European country.

**Keywords:** generic strategies, Porter strategy framework, performance, agricultural cooperatives, food firms, investor-owned firms (IOFs)