

Food and You 2 FHRS Wave 4: Executive Summary

Results available: Results available

Area of research interest: [Food and You 2](#)

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Overview of Food and You 2

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 4 was conducted between 8th October 2021 and 10th January 2022. A total of 5,796 adults from 4,026 households (an overall response rate of 28.5%) across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the 'push-to-web' survey (see Annex A for more information about the methodology).

This report presents findings from the F&Y2: Wave 4 'Eating out and takeaway' module relating to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). A total of 4,755 adults across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the 'Eating out and takeaway' module via the online or the 'Eating out' postal questionnaire.

Food and You 2: Wave 4 data were collected during a time and context which has seen changes in UK and global economics and politics, the context in which the public make food decisions, and the effect of Omicron restrictions. It is expected that the current context had an impact on the level of food security and food-related behaviours reported ([footnote 1](#)).

Key Findings

Awareness and recognition of the FHRS

- Most respondents (89%) reported that they had heard of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). Most respondents in England (89%), Wales (95%), and Northern Ireland (92%) had heard of the FHRS **. Respondents in Wales (74%) and Northern Ireland (65%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FHRS than those in England (57%)*2.
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, the most common place respondents had come across the FHRS was a food hygiene rating sticker displayed at a food business premises (85%), while over a third (37%) of respondents had come across the FHRS on a food business' website.
- When shown an image of the food hygiene rating sticker, 88% of respondents reported that they had seen the sticker before. Recognition of the food hygiene rating sticker was slightly lower in England (87%) than in Wales (95%) and Northern Ireland (94%)*2. Respondents

were most likely to have seen the sticker in a restaurant (81%), café (71%) or takeaway (66%) in the last 12 months.

Understanding and use of the FHRS

- Around 4 in 10 (41%) respondents had checked the food hygiene rating of a food business in the previous 12 months (either at the business premises or online). Respondents in Wales (54%) were more likely to have checked the food hygiene rating of a business than those in England (40%), and to a lesser extent those in Northern Ireland (46%)** [\(footnote 2\)](#).
- Of those who have checked the food hygiene rating of a food business, the most common types of businesses where respondents checked ratings were takeaways (70%) and restaurants (69%), and most had checked the rating by looking at the food hygiene rating sticker displayed at the food business (83%).
- One in 10 (10%) respondents reported that they always checked the food hygiene rating of a restaurant or takeaway on arrival, 20% of respondents reported that they did this most of the time and 31%

Use of the FHRS in decision making

- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, most respondents said they would still eat at a restaurant or takeaway if they saw a food hygiene rating sticker with a rating of 4 (good) (94%) or 3 (generally satisfactory) (61%). However, most respondents reported that they would not eat at a restaurant or takeaway if they saw a food hygiene rating sticker with a rating of 2 (improvement necessary) (81%), 1 (major improvement necessary) (94%) or 0 (urgent improvement necessary) (95%).
- Less than 1 in 10 (8%) respondents would only consider a rating of 5 (very good) as the lowest acceptable rating. Over 4 in 10 respondents would consider a rating of 4 (good) (41%) as the lowest acceptable rating, and 40% of respondents would consider 3 (generally satisfactory).
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, around two-thirds (65%) of respondents could not think of a situation in which they might decide to buy food from a food business with a rating which is lower than their lowest acceptable rating. For those who could think of a situation where they might decide to buy food from a food business with a lower rating (22%) the most common situation was when there wasn't much choice of places to go, or if the respondent had eaten food from there before.
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, most respondents (64%) could think of a situation in which they would only buy food from a food business with a rating which is higher than their lowest acceptable rating. This was most likely to occur when it was a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, or other celebration.
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, over half (57%) of respondents would be less likely (i.e., 'much less likely' or 'a little less likely') to eat at a food business that did not have the food hygiene rating sticker present at the entrance; and 15% said they had decided against eating somewhere in the last 12 months for this reason.

Views on mandatory display

- Of the respondents who had heard of the FHRS, 93% thought that food businesses should be required by law to display their food hygiene rating at their premises and 95% thought that businesses providing an online food ordering service should display their food hygiene rating where it can clearly be seen by customers before they order food.

1. [Consumer insights tracker report: key findings from December 2021 to March 2022 \(2022\), FSA. The UK Public's Interests, Needs and Concerns Around Food \(2022\), Bright Harbour. Food in a pandemic \(2021\). FSA. UK Household Food Waste tracking survey Winter 2021: Behaviours, attitudes, and awareness \(2022\), WRAP](#)
[The true cost of living- The action needed to stem the rising tide of destitution: March 2022, Trussell Trust. Family Resources Survey \(FRS\): financial year 2020 to 2021 \(2021\). DWP.](#)
The FRS asks respondents to report experiences of food insecurity in the last 30 days so responses cannot be compared with Food and You 2.
2. See 'Interpreting the findings' section for explanation of '***'.