

Business Display of Food Hygiene Ratings in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Area of research interest: [Behaviour and perception](#)

Study duration: 2016-01-01

Project code: FS244011A

Conducted by: GfK NOP Social Research

[Back to top](#)

Background

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) was launched formally in November 2010. It is a local authority/FSA partnership initiative which provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food premises at the time they are inspected to check compliance with legal requirements – the rating given reflects the inspection findings. The scheme enables consumers to make informed choices about where to eat out or shop for food and, through the power of these choices, encourages businesses to improve hygiene standards.

Since 2011, our organisation have been tracking the proportion of businesses displaying their ratings by means of covert audit and has investigated further the rationale for and perceived impact of display and non-display of food hygiene ratings via a business telephone survey. This report provides the findings of the latest audit and telephone survey conducted in 2016.

[Back to top](#)

Research Approach

The display audit and business survey set out to:

- ascertain how many food businesses that have been given a food hygiene rating display this at their premises, and where this was displayed
- examine reasons for, and impact of, display/non-display and find out what would encourage display
- determine awareness and use of safeguards and attitudes towards the statutory scheme.

In addition the survey sought to find out

- the proportion of businesses displaying their rating by rating (0 to 5), by type of business and by region
- whether display rates have changed over time compared with previous audits

An aim of the work is to establish what could be learned from the findings in Wales relating to the compulsory display of ratings

[Back to top](#)

Results

Display rates

Around six in ten businesses in England (59%) and Northern Ireland (64%) were displaying a sticker or certificate somewhere on their premises.

- In Wales, 86% were displaying the mandatory sticker somewhere on their premises, a significant increase of 13 percentage points (pps) since 2015.

There had been no significant increases in the rates of display visible from the outside of premises in England and Northern Ireland, but in Wales the upward trend (9 pps) continued.

Rates of display of stickers visible from **the outside of premises** were:

- 44% in England,
- 48% in Northern Ireland
- 68% in Wales.

In England and Northern Island higher rated businesses continue to be significantly more likely to display than businesses with a rating of 3 or less.

Motivations to display

Customer assurance continues to be the main motivation for display in England and Northern Ireland: around 7 in 10 displayed so that customers could see they were hygienic (73% in England, 69% in NI).

In Wales the main reason for display was also customer assurance (65%, up 7 pps from 2015)

- Second was the compulsory nature of the scheme (59%)

Impacts of display

Between a third and a half of businesses displaying their rating perceived a positive impact on their business:

- England 39%
- Wales 45% (up from 33% in 2015)
- NI (48%).

Statutory display

In England, more than a half of businesses (54%) felt that making it a legal requirement to display ratings on all entrances would be a very good thing and a further 23% felt it would be a fairly good thing (7% felt it would be a bad thing).

In Wales, the vast majority of businesses (86%) continued to express positive views about the scheme being statutory, while 18% expressed negative views.

Research report

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View Display of food hygiene ratings at food business premises in England, Northern Ireland and Wales as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (3.78 MB)