Northern Ireland Take Home Food and Drink Purchases 2018 to 2022

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

April 2024

The FSA purchased data from Kantar's Worldpanel on take home food and drink purchasing. This report explores the FSA's results and analysis of purchasing from 2018 to 2022 in Northern Ireland.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Frequency	The average number of times a food or drink category has been purchased in a specified period.
Money off promotions	Food and drink purchased using a promotion that has reduced the price of the product. For example, X% off marked price, marked price reduced by £X, special price or trial price.
HFSS products	Food and drink classified as high in saturated fat, sugar or salt as per nutrient profiling technical guidance 2011.
Take home food and drink	All food and drink purchased and brought back into the home as part of the grocery shop. This excludes takeaways delivered to the home and food ordered at restaurants. This data does not take into account food waste.

Glossary continued

Term	Definition
Total volume	The amount/quantity of take home food and drink purchased which is measured in kilograms, litres and servings for all households. This measure is used to calculate nutritional information and will be referred to as volume throughout the report.
Total promotions	The total combined spend or volume of food and drink via money off and volume focussed promotions.
Total spend	Money (£) spent on take home food and drink for all households.
Total sugars	Total sugars include sugars that are added to food and drink products by the manufacturer, cook and consumer (free sugars) and those naturally occurring in food.

Key Findings

The average household in Northern Ireland 2022

Average spend
£94 / week

Frequency of shopping occasions
234 times / year

Average number of packs purchased
58 Packs / week

Spend on promotion
21%

Volume purchased on promotion
17%

Methods

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Methods

Population

650 households are chosen to reflect all Northern Ireland households by region and demographics. Weighting is applied to ensure the panel is reflective of the Northern Ireland population.

Shopping (In Store or Online)

Kantar's Worldpanel aims to collect data on all food and drink purchases brought into the home (including in store and online shopping). Food and drink products purchased and consumed out of the home are not included such as supermarket meal deals, restaurant meals, food from takeaways and food on the go. Also, this data does not account for food waste.

Products scanned

Panellists are provided with a handheld scanner to scan purchases once brought into the home. Panellists scan the barcodes of purchased items alongside their shopping receipt, which collects the product prices. Using a codebook provided, panellists scan unbarcoded products such as loose breads, fruit, and vegetables.

Data sent and received

Kantar's Worldpanel provided data for take home food and drink purchasing on 38 categories from 2018 to 2022. Five additional categories were created through combining relevant categories: Total Northern Ireland Categories, Total Alcohol Categories, High-fat sugar or salt (HFSS) categories, Healthier Categories or Other Categories.

Healthier and HFSS categories

Categories within the dataset were classified as HFSS or Healthier based on the Eatwell Guidelines and the Nutrient Profiling Model. Excluded categories or those unable to be classified were not included within HFSS and Healthier category analysis.

HFSS

- Milk Based Drinks
- Regular Soft Drinks
- Morning Goods
- Breakfast Cereals
- Chocolate Confectionery
- Sweet Confectionery
- Ice Cream Lollies Sorbets
- Biscuits (sweet)
- Savoury Biscuits & Crackers
- Cakes
- Puddings
- Crisps & Savoury Snacks
- Pizza
- Meat Products & Processed Meats
- Cooking Sauces Table Sauces & Dressings
- Dips & Salads

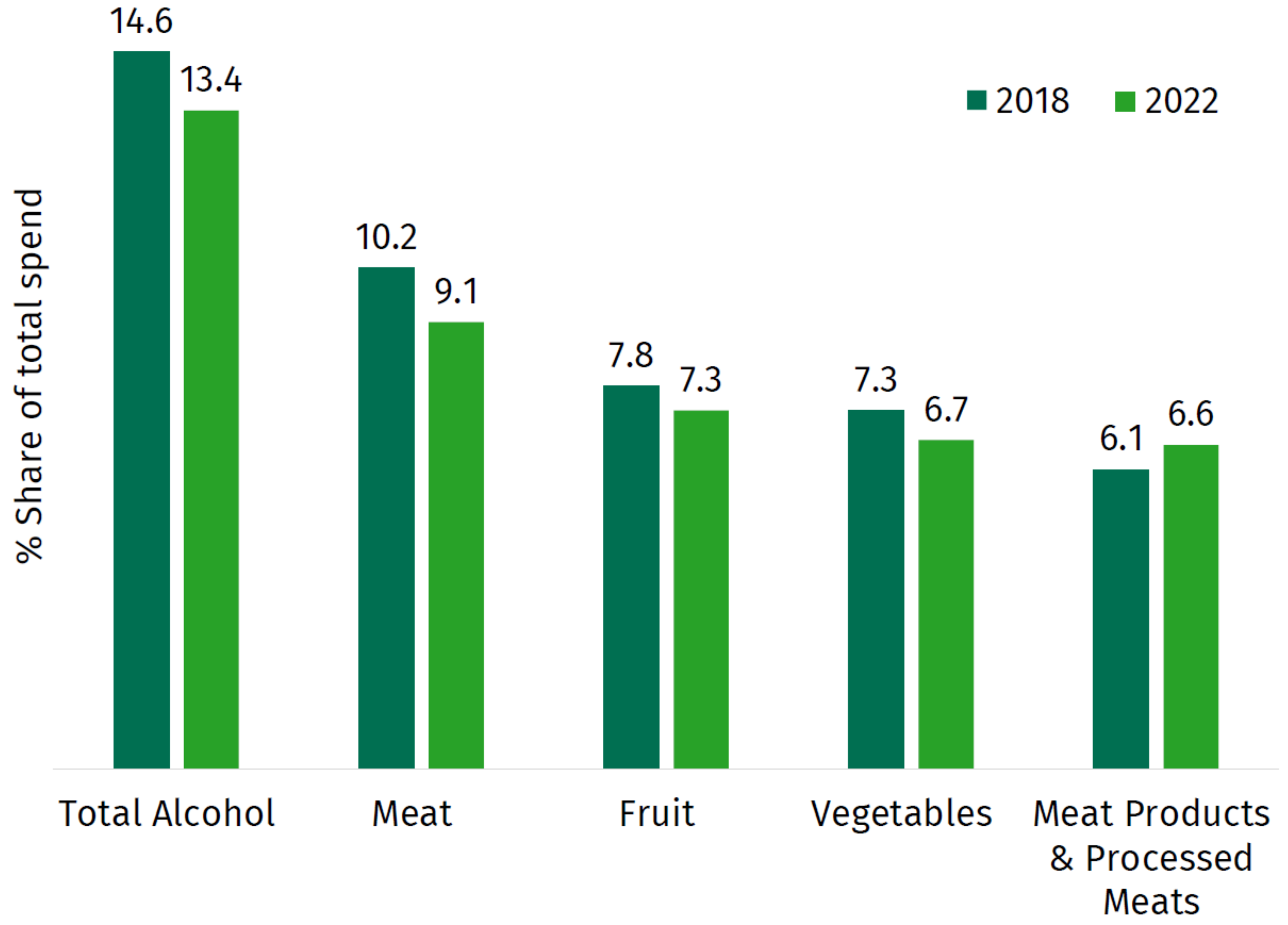
Healthier

- Pure Fruit Juice
- Plain Breads
- Bread with Additions
- Pasta Rice Noodles
- Potato Products
- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Fish (exc Oily Fish)
- Oily Fish
- Yoghurts & Fromage Frais
- Cheese
- Milk
- Soups

Results

Spend

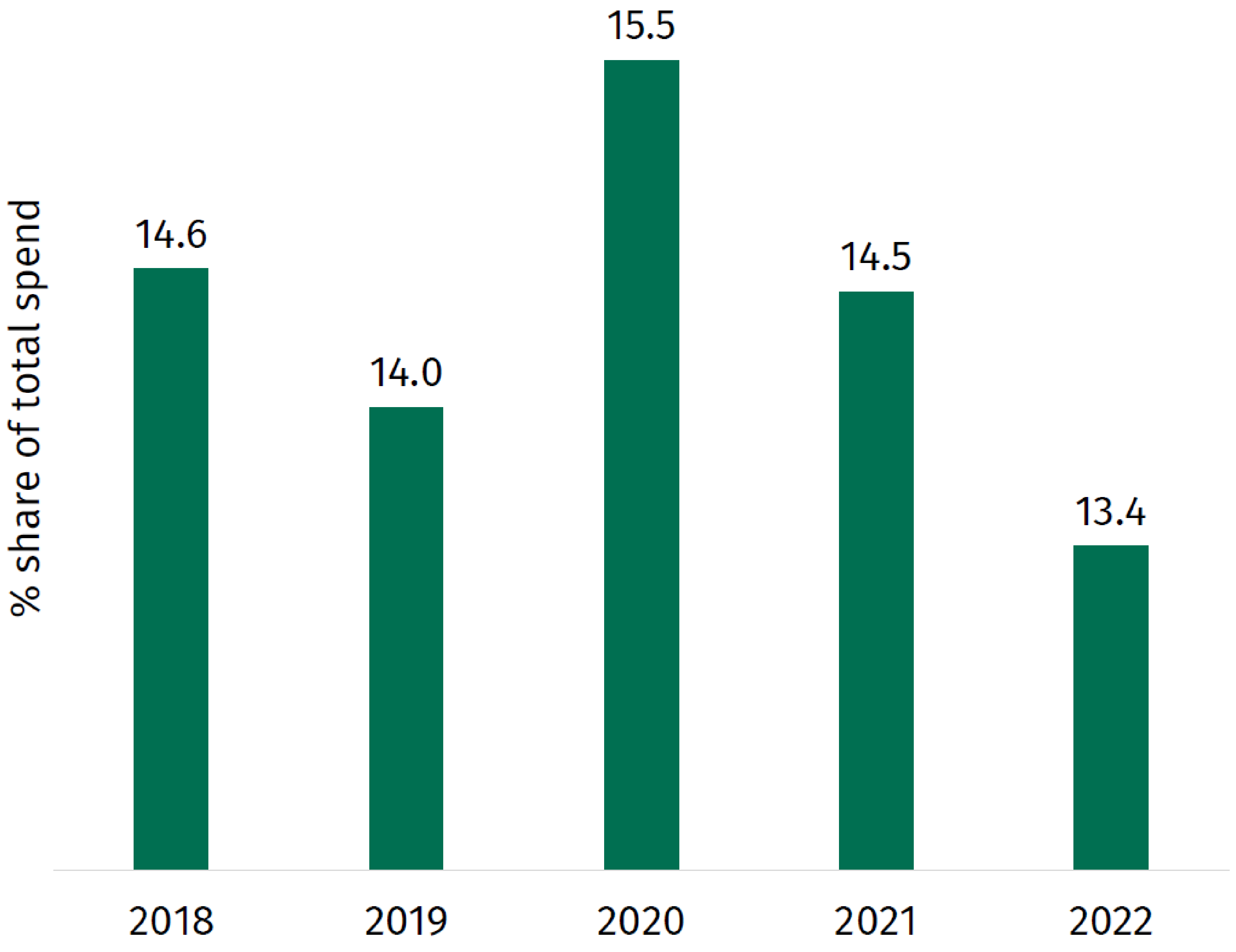
Total alcohol had the highest contribution to percentage share of spend in 2022 at 13.4%, followed by Meat (9.1%), Fruit (7.3%), Vegetables (6.7%) and Meat Products & Processed Meats (6.6%).



Top five food and drink categories with highest percentage (%) share of total spend in 2022, compared to 2018.

Alcohol purchasing

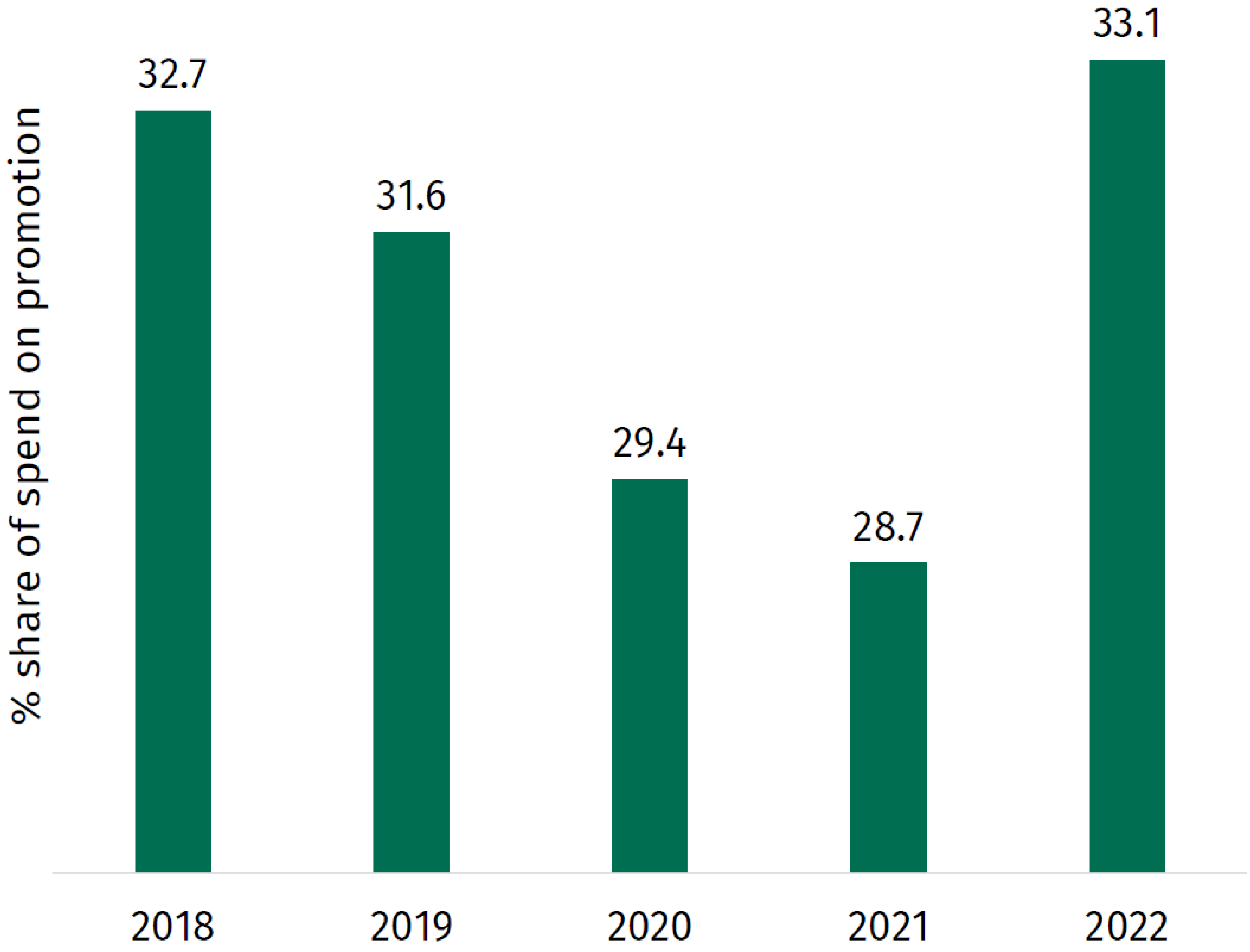
Total alcohol had the highest share of total spend in 2022 and has maintained the highest share since 2018. An increase in spend was observed in 2020 during the height of the Covid-19 restrictions when bars and restaurants were closed. Contribution to share of total spend has reduced for this category in 2022 by 2.1% since 2020. Although alcohol purchasing has reduced since 2020.



Total alcohol share of spend in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Alcohol on promotion

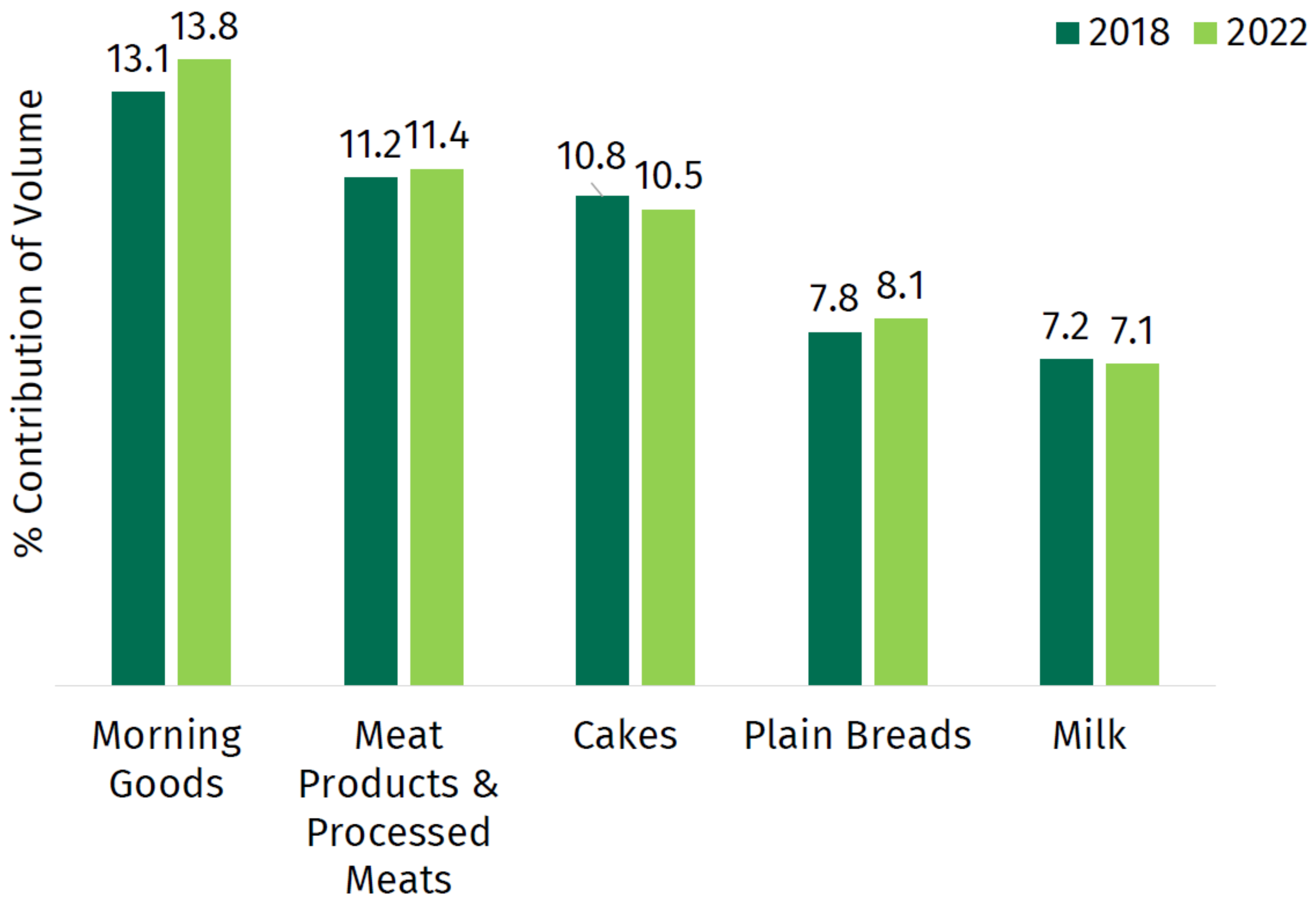
However, when examining the percentage contribution of consumer’s share of spend on alcohol on promotion, an increase of almost 4% from 2020 to 2022. This may indicate that although consumers are purchasing less alcohol, when they do purchase it, they choose to do so when it is on promotion.



Total alcohol share of spend on promotion in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

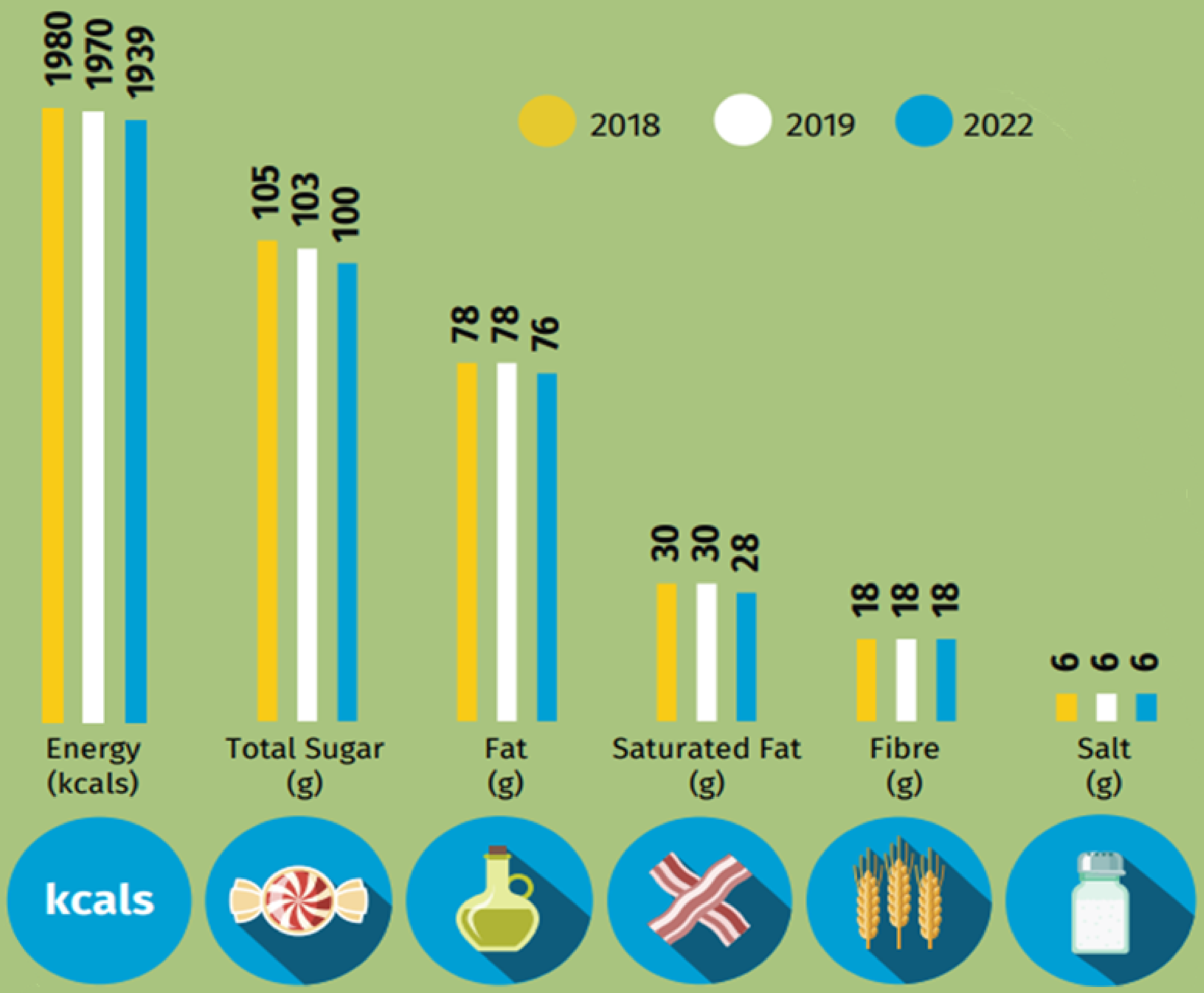
Volume

Morning Goods had the highest contribution to percentage share of volume in 2022 at 13.8%, followed by Meat Products & Processed Meats (11.4%), Cakes (10.5%), Plain Breads (8.1%) and Milk (7.1%).



Top five food and drink categories with highest percentage (%) share of total volume in 2022, compared to 2018.

Nutrient purchasing



The average nutrients purchased per person per day from take home shopping in 2018, 2019 and 2022.

Excluding years affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been no major changes in nutrient purchasing per person per day for energy (kcals), fat (g), saturated fat (g), fibre (g) and salt (g). There has been a 5g decrease in sugar purchasing per person per day from 2018 to 2022.

Top contributors to share of nutrient purchasing

Fruit was the top contributor to total sugar* purchasing in 2022 at 15.8%, followed by Chocolate Confectionery at 10.0%.

Meat Products and Processed Meats had the highest percentage contribution to salt purchasing in 2022 at 13.1%.

Fats Oils & Spreads was the top contributor to total saturated fat purchasing in 2022 at 20.3%.

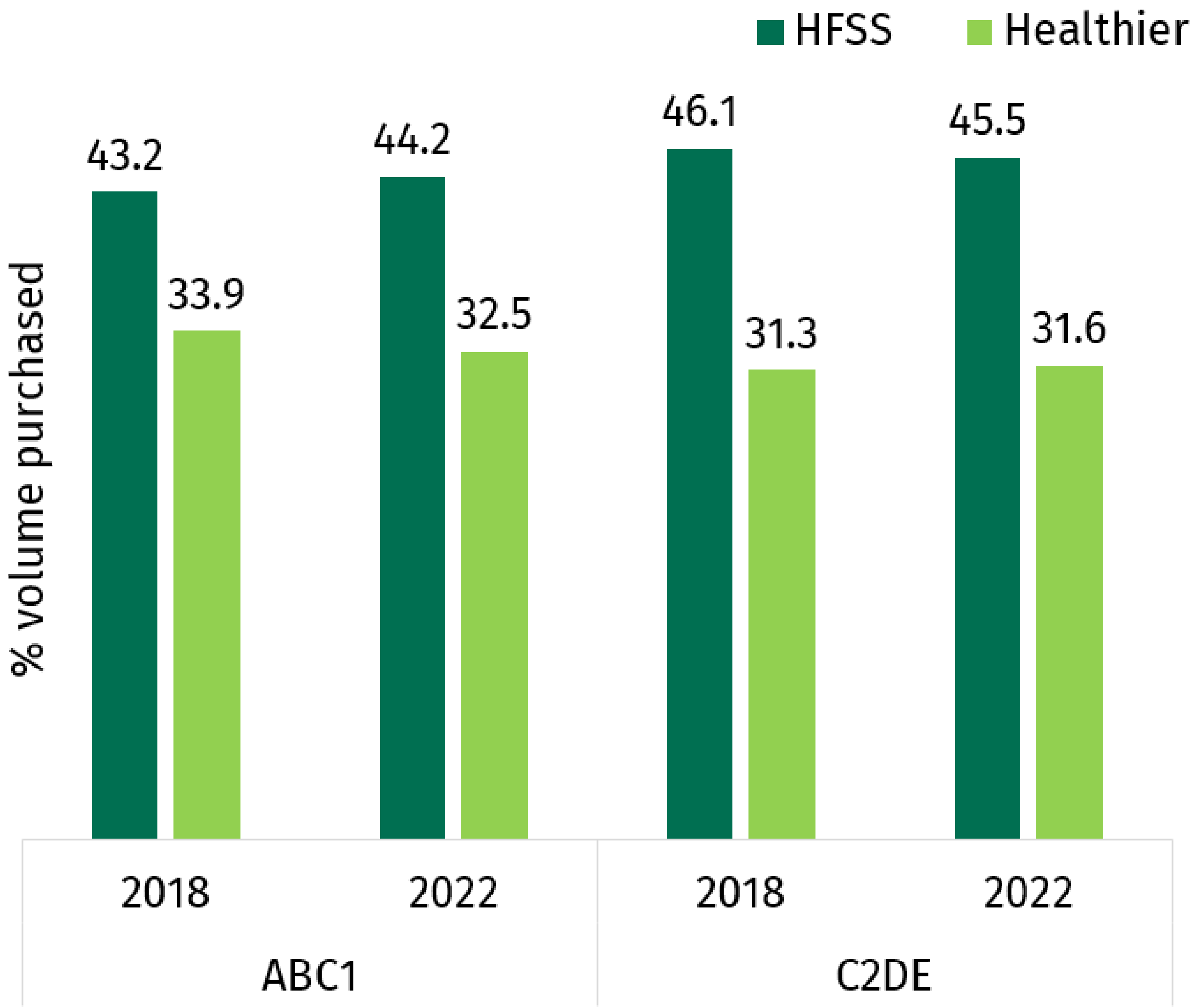
*Total sugars include sugars that are added to food and drink products by the manufacturer, cook and consumer (free sugars) and those naturally occurring in food. Kantar's Worldpanel data does not differentiate between natural and free sugars.

Social Class definitions

Grade	Social status	Description
A	Upper middle	Higher managerial, higher administrative, or higher professional
B	Middle	Intermediate administrative, intermediate professional, senior managerial
C1	Lower middle	Supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, junior administrative, junior professional
C2	Skilled working	Skilled manual workers; generally, having served in apprenticeship
D	Working	Semi and unskilled workers
E	Non-earners, state benefits only	Those receiving state benefits only

HFSS and Healthier purchasing by ABC1 and C2DE households

ABC1 households purchasing of HFSS products increased and their purchasing of Healthier products decreased from 2018 to 2022. The opposite was true for C2DE household with their HFSS purchasing decreasing and their Healthier purchasing increasing. This resulted in little difference between ABC1 and C2DE HFSS and Healthier product purchasing in 2022.



Share of volume for Healthier and HFSS categories purchased for ABC1 and C2DE households in 2018 and 2022.

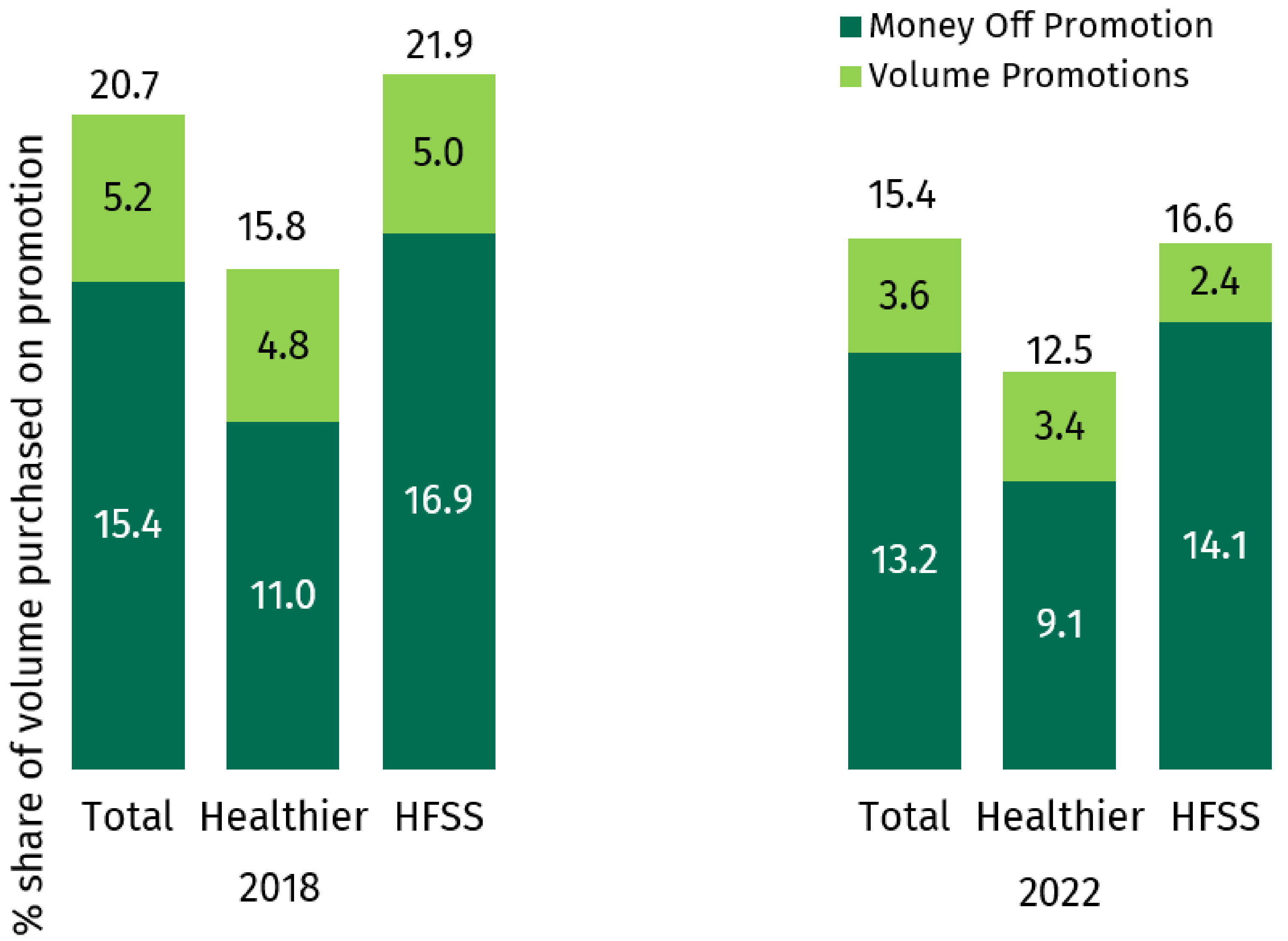
Promotions

The restrictions of HFSS promotions in the UK

The UK Government introduced legislation to restrict the promotions of high fat, sugar and salt food by volume price (e.g. multibuy offers such as 'buy one get one free' and location (e.g. checkouts), both online and in store. Location restrictions were introduced in October 2022 and volume price restrictions have been delayed until 2025. These restrictions apply to businesses operating in England. In Northern Ireland, we are gathering research and data to build our evidence base. This report therefore includes a deep dive into promotional purchasing to help inform any potential future policies. Although volume restrictions have not been implemented in England, retailers may have altered their marketing in anticipation of future changes. This may have affected HFSS promotional sales in NI in recent years.

HFSS Promotions

Share of volume of HFSS products purchased on total promotions was 5.4% higher in 2018 compared to 2022. This decrease was mainly driven by volume promotions as share of volume of HFSS products purchased on volume promotions decreased from 5.0% in 2018 to 2.4% in 2022.



Share for volume of Total Food and Drink, and Healthier and HFSS categories purchased on promotion in 2018 and 2022.

Popular promotional products

The categories with highest percentage of volume purchased on promotion were Beer & Lager (37.7%), Spirits (37.4%), Diet Soft Drinks (34.8%) and Pizza (33.5%) in 2022. Excluding alcohol categories, a number of HFSS products were top contributors to promotional purchases by volume in 2018, 2019 and 2022.

Yoghurts & fromage frais	42.5%
Diet Soft Drinks	37.8%
Crisps & savoury snacks	37.2%
Chocolate confectionery	36.7%
Ice cream, Lollies & Sorbets	36.4%

Yoghurts & fromage frais	40.3%
Diet Soft Drinks	37.7%
Ice cream, Lollies & Sorbets	37.0%
Crisps & Savoury Snacks	34.9%
Chocolate Confectionery	34.3%

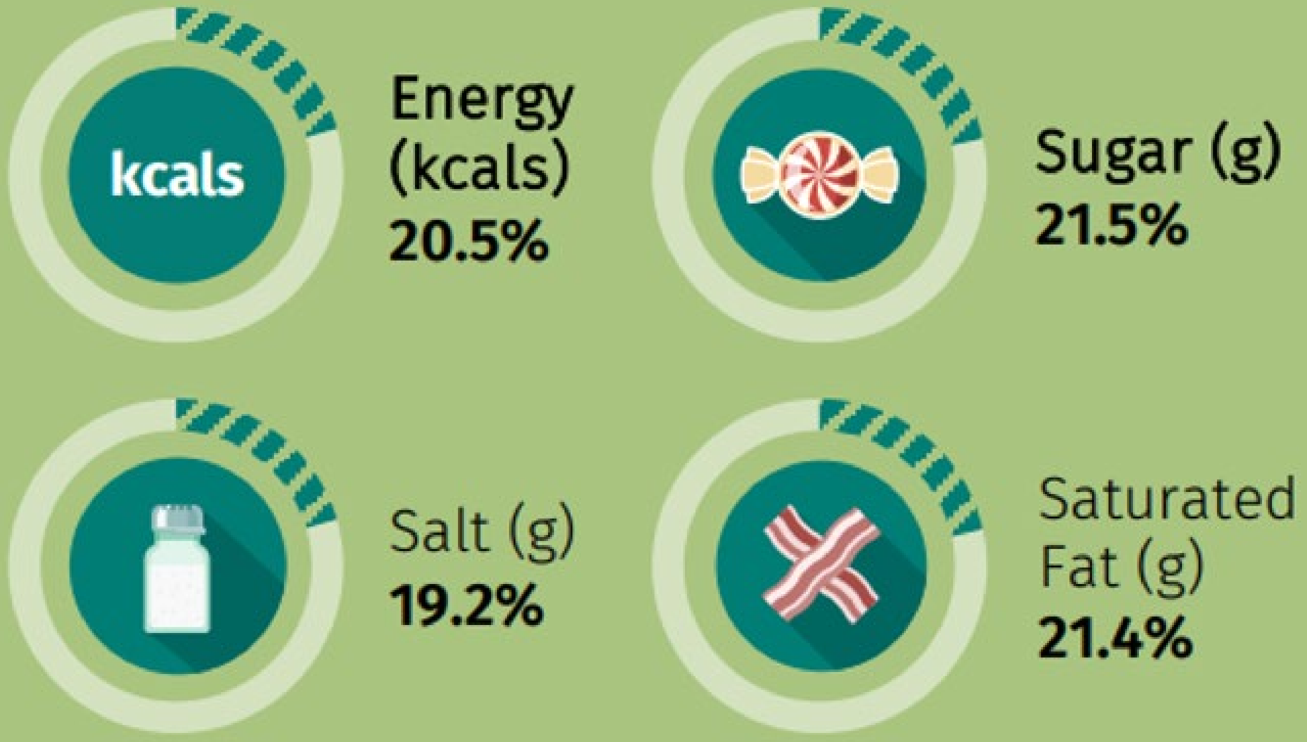
Diet Soft Drinks	34.8%
Pizza	33.5%
Yoghurts & Fromage Frais	30.7%
Ice cream, Lollies & Sorbets	30.2%
Cheese	25.0%

The top 5 categories purchased on promotion by volume in in 2018, 2019 and 2022 (excludes alcohol categories).

Online promotions

In both 2018 and 2022, a higher proportion of volume purchased on promotion was purchased in store rather than online. Nearly one fifth (17.3%) of the share of volume was purchased on promotion in store in 2022. Online promotion purchases contributed to 15.9% of share of volume in 2022.

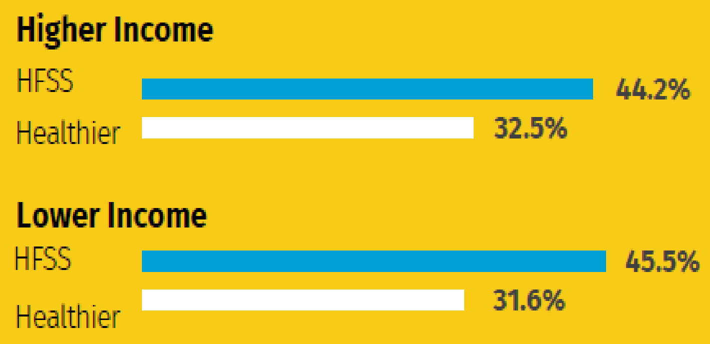
Nutrient purchasing from HFSS promotions



Approximately one-fifth of energy (20.5%), sugar (21.5%), saturated fat (21.4%) and salt (19.2%) was purchased through HFSS categories on promotion in 2022. Promotional purchases on healthier categories contributed less energy (12.9%), sugar (15.4%), saturated fat (16.8%) and salt (13.1%).

Conclusions

Excluding years affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been no major changes in nutrient purchasing per person per day for energy (kcals), fat (g), saturated fat (g), fibre (g) and salt (g). There has been a 5g decrease in sugar purchasing per person per day from 2018 to 2022.



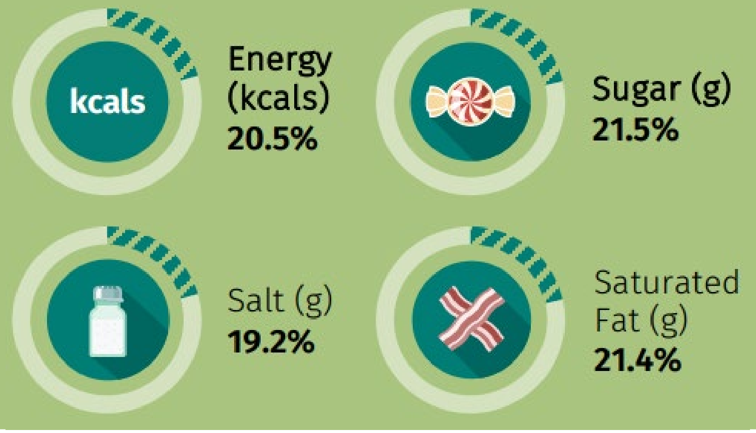
In 2022, both consumers with higher and lower incomes purchased more food and drink from HFSS categories than Healthier categories.

Alcohol purchasing has decreased in recent years. However, share of spend on alcohol on promotion has increased. This is potentially a result of the cost-of-living crisis.

Promotion Conclusions

There has been a widespread reduction in promotional purchasing. This is a potential impact of the planned policies for restriction of the promotion of HFSS products in Great Britain.

Excluding alcohol categories, a number of HFSS products were top contributors to promotional purchases by volume in 2018, 2019 and 2022.



HFSS products on promotion account for approximately one-fifth of energy, sugar, salt and saturated fat purchasing. This indicates that promotions on HFSS food have an important role in purchasing patterns.

Appendices available on FSA website

Appendix 1 Methodology

Appendix 2 Kantar’s Worldpanel Northern Ireland take home food and drink categories

Appendix 3 Calculations

Appendix 4 Supplementary Tables

Appendix 5 References