

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme – Consumer Attitudes Tracker (Wave 3)

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

Study duration: 2015-11-01

Project code: FS244011

Conducted by: TnS BMRB

Background

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is a partnership scheme between local authorities and the FSA which aims to provide consumers with information on the hygiene standards of places they choose to eat out at or purchase food from.

The FSA previously commissioned a biannual public attitudes tracker survey to monitor key areas of concern for consumers in relation to food. In 2010, a number of questions were added regarding awareness and use of the FHRS. In 2014, the FSA decided to explore the FHRS and consumers in more detail, and commissioned a bespoke consumer attitudes tracker survey to specifically monitor consumer awareness, attitudes towards and use of the scheme.

This is the third wave of the tracker.

Research Approach

This piece of work consisted of face to face interviews with a representative sample of 2,102 respondents (aged 16 and over). Respondents were selected using a random location sampling method across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The questions primarily focus on the following key areas;

- Awareness of the scheme - the proportion of respondents who report being aware of the FHRS.
- Recognition of the scheme - the proportion of respondents who recognize the FHRS sticker, or who had seen a food business displaying one in the past year.
- Use of the scheme - the proportion of respondents who report using the scheme to base their decision on where to eat out or purchase food.
- Views on the scheme - for example, the proportion of respondents who believe food businesses should be legally required to display their rating.

Results

Awareness

- Nearly half of respondents in England were aware of the FHRS (45%)
- This figure was slightly higher in Wales (62%) and Northern Ireland (65%).
- The most common source of information (84%) was still a sticker/certificate displayed at food business premises, which was also the most common source in all previous waves.

Recognition

- Consumer recognition of FHRs stickers continues to be slightly higher in Northern Ireland (86%) and Wales (78%) than in England (69%).
- Levels of recognition in Wales from the previous wave (78% down from 87%).
- Most respondents report having seen a sticker on display in the last 12 months - 83% of respondents in England, 91% in Wales and 92% in Northern Ireland, though the figure was slightly lower in England.

Use

- A total of 38% of respondents in England, 35% in Wales said that they would definitely base their decision to eat out somewhere on the FHRs rating the business received.
- The figure was slightly higher in Northern Ireland at 53%.
- The figure in Wales has fallen slightly from the previous wave (down from 49%).
- In terms of actually checking the rating, 43% of respondents in England, 56% in Wales and 39% in Northern Ireland report either often or sometimes doing so.
- As in previous waves, a rating of 3 was identified most frequently as the lowest acceptable that consumers would consider - 40% in England, and 49% in Wales.
- As in wave 2, rating of 3 and 4 were equally identified as the lowest acceptable (both 35%).

Views on mandatory display

The proportion of respondents who report that business should have to display their ratings continues to be high in England (86%), Wales (90%) and is even slightly higher in Northern Ireland (97%).

Research report

PDF

[View FHRs Biannual Public Attitudes Tracker Wave 3 report as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#)

(3.03 MB)