

# Eating Well Choosing Better Tracking Survey - Wave 7

Area of research interest: [Consumer Interests \(aka Wider Consumer Interests\)](#)

Study duration: 2021-08-18

Project status: Completed

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## Background

We have been monitoring progression of the EWCB programme through a consumer tracking survey since November 2017. The Eating Well Choosing Better programme supports small and medium sized food businesses to reduce the calorie, sugar, saturated fat and salt content of the food they produce, sell or serve, as well as reducing portion sizes to help consumers make healthier choices.

## Research approach

The EWCB survey is completed annually by a representative sample (approximately 600 adults) of the Northern Ireland population. The seventh wave of the survey was conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing, also known as 'face to face' interviewing. Significance testing was completed to identify any differences in the views, attitudes and behaviours by demographic variables including age, gender, social class and household income. Demographic differences have been reported where statistically significant differences occur at the 5% level.

## Results

Key findings from the Wave 7 survey:

- 87% of participants recognised the traffic light label and 79% reported understanding what traffic light labels are for.
- 64% of consumers choose foods with healthier traffic light colours always/most times.
- The majority of those surveyed would be more likely to buy food reduced in sugar (64%) and at least half would be more likely to buy food reduced in saturated fat (51%) and salt (50%) compared to the regular version.
- 56% or more participants found it difficult to choose healthier food from a range of settings including takeaways (78%), leisure facilities such as cinemas and bowling alleys (72%), fast food restaurants (71%), restaurants and pubs (64%), local/corner shops, newsagents or garage forecourts (57%) and cafés and sandwich shops (56%).
- There is consumer demand for healthier food to be offered in several food settings, such as takeaways (51%), fast food restaurants (49%), restaurants and pubs (42%), leisure facilities such as cinemas and bowling alleys (41%) and vending machines (35%).
- 21% of male and 20% of female participants are aware of the correct recommended daily calorie intake for their gender.
- Males and those in a lower socioeconomic group are significantly less likely to actively seek healthier options when food shopping and eating out; find or use nutritional information on

food packets and want to see increased availability of food lower in saturated fat, sugar and salt.

## **Northern Ireland**

[Eating Well Choosing Better tracking survey wave 7 full report \(accessible version\)](#)

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