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## Informed decisions?

**Availability of nutritional information for a sample of  
out-of-home food outlets in Scotland**

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# Summary

Ipsos MORI Scotland was commissioned by Food Standards Scotland to review and collate information available online on the nutritional content of savoury and breakfast meals and meal accompaniments served in a sample of out-of-home businesses in Scotland. The main aims of this research were to **identify and report on gaps in the information available** and to collate the information that was available into a format that could **support future analysis to inform policy development** – for example, to support consideration of the potential to develop calorie caps or reduce portion sizes of main meals offered in out-of-home settings.<sup>1</sup>

Only information that was publically available **online** was collected as part of this project: information provided by businesses on their menus within premises was not included. In order to understand how many businesses did provide this information in store, the research team contacted all businesses via email. However very few (n=22) responded.

Key findings include:

- From the 86 out of home businesses included in the final sample, 60% (n= 52) made some level of nutritional information available online.
- Most of these businesses (55% of the total sample, n = 47) provided information on kilocalories, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content for most of their menu.
- Far fewer of these businesses provided information on actual portion size (17%/n = 9). Fibre content was also missing for just under half of those who made some other nutritional information available.
- 40% of businesses in the sample did not provide any nutritional information online.
- There was considerable variation in how information was presented to consumers online. For example:
  - o Displaying information for whole dishes or components, e.g. information provided for a whole burger, compared with separate information for the patty, bun and sauce
  - o Lack of clarity in what exactly was included in a meal, e.g. whether nutritional figures were inclusive or exclusive of side dishes
  - o The format the information came in, e.g. a PDF file of detailed nutrition tables vs. drop down menus for each menu item
  - o Provision of any additional information to help consumers interpret nutritional information, e.g. comparison of nutritional content with daily reference intakes.
- It was not possible within the scope of this project to verify what information was available in store, as well as online. However, among the quarter of sampled businesses who responded to email enquiries about in-store nutritional information, only a minority (n = 2) said they made some nutritional information available on their menus.
- A preliminary analysis of nutritional data collated from across sampled out-of-home businesses indicates that:

<sup>1</sup> FSS (8 March 2017) *Diet and Nutrition: proposals for setting the direction for the Scottish diet one year on*, available at: [http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/Board\\_meeting\\_-\\_2017\\_March\\_08\\_-\\_Diet\\_and\\_Nutrition\\_one\\_year\\_on\\_0.pdf](http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/Board_meeting_-_2017_March_08_-_Diet_and_Nutrition_one_year_on_0.pdf)

- Around 55% of adult meals contained over 600 kilocalories. Around a quarter contained 400 or fewer kilocalories, while a similar proportion contained in excess of 1,000 kilocalories. This compares with a daily reference intake of 2,000 kilocalories for an adult woman. However, it is important to note that in this analysis, starters, meal components and meal accompaniments were excluded. Therefore, the range of caloric values shown below do not necessarily represent the total calorie content for an entire meal
- An analysis of items described as beef burgers showed that the vast majority contained over 600 kilocalories and around half contained over 1,000 kilocalories. Around half contained more than 50g of fat, compared with a daily reference intake of 70g for an adult woman. However, as described above, it was often unclear whether the nutrition content for these burgers was inclusive of sides dishes.
- Around 1 in 5 children's meals contained more than 2g of salt while around half of children's dishes contained over 1g of salt. The recommended daily maximum salt intakes for children are 2g for children aged 1-3 years-old, 3g for 4-6 year-olds and 5g for 7-10 year-olds.

This report highlights the need for improvements in the availability, consistency, quality of nutritional information for consumers when eating outside the home. In addition, the report suggests areas for further analysis of the data.

# Introduction

Ipsos MORI Scotland was commissioned by Food Standards Scotland to review and collate information available online on the nutritional content of savoury and breakfast meals and meal accompaniments served in a sample of out-of-home businesses in Scotland. The main aims of this research were to identify and report on gaps in the information available online and to collate the information that was available into a format that could support future analysis to inform policy development – for example, to support consideration of the potential to develop calorie caps or reduce portion sizes of main meals offered in out-of-home settings.<sup>2</sup>

The research was conducted alongside a related project, involving mystery-shopping within a small sample of out-of-home businesses in Scotland to assess the way food is marketed to customers, as well as what nutritional information was available in-store. Ipsos MORI's report from this 'sister' project is available from the Food Standards Scotland website<sup>3</sup>. The research also builds on previous analysis of the out-of-home market for Food Standards Scotland by NPD Group<sup>4</sup> – this earlier project looked at the profile of the market but providing detail on available nutritional information was beyond the scope of the data collected. It also complements a similar exercise for sweet items undertaken by Public Health England to help inform the development of sugar targets.<sup>5</sup>

## Diet and nutrition in Scotland

The majority of people in Scotland weigh more than is recommended for maintaining good health – in 2015, 65% of adults were overweight, with 29% obese (with a Body Mass Index of 30 or more).<sup>6</sup> Being overweight or obese is associated with an increased risk of numerous common diseases, including type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart disease and certain cancers. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reports that the UK as a whole has the worst obesity rates in Europe,<sup>7</sup> while comparison of 2015 Scottish Health Survey data for Scotland with similar data for England, Wales and Northern Ireland indicates that obesity rates may be higher here than in the rest of the UK.<sup>8</sup> Further, obesity disproportionately affects those living in the most deprived areas.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>2</sup> FSS (8 March 2017) *Diet and Nutrition: proposals for setting the direction for the Scottish diet one year on*, available at: [http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/Board\\_meeting - 2017 March 08 - Diet and Nutrition one year on 0.pdf](http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/Board_meeting - 2017 March 08 - Diet and Nutrition one year on 0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Setterfield, L, Eunson, J and Murray, L (2017) *Instore Marketing: Marketing strategies used within premises by out-of-home businesses*, <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/marketing-strategies-used-within-premises-by-out-of-home-businesses>

<sup>4</sup> NPD (2015) *An overview of the out of home market in Scotland: NPD CREST data to year ending December 2015*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/an-assessment-of-the-out-of-home-food-and-drink-landscape-in-scotland>

<sup>5</sup> PHE (2017) *Sugar reduction: achieving the 20% - A technical report outlining progress to date, guidelines for industry, 2015 baseline levels in key foods and next steps*, available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/604336/Sugar\\_reduction\\_achieving\\_the\\_20\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604336/Sugar_reduction_achieving_the_20_.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> *The Scottish Health Survey 2015: summary edition*, Scottish Government – available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00505745.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> *Obesity and the Economics of Prevention: Fit not Fat - United Kingdom (England) Key Facts*, OECD, available at <http://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/obesityandtheconomicsofpreventionfitnotfat-unitedkingdomenglandkeyfacts.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Cancer research UK, 2016: Overweight and obesity statistics: <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/risk/overweight-and-obesity#heading-One>

<sup>9</sup> Gray, L and Leyland, A (2015) 'Inequalities in Health risks' in Campbell-Jack, D, Hinchliffe, S and Bromley, C (eds.) *Scottish Health Survey 2014: Volume 1: Main Report*, Scottish Government, available at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/09/6648/318828>

**Food Standards Scotland – Scotland's public sector body for food - has identified obesity as the 'most pressing diet-related issue in Scotland today' which can 'reasonably be viewed as a crisis'.<sup>10</sup>**

A wide range of complex factors have led to this increase in obesity. But at the most basic level, the problem is driven by **excess calorie consumption**, which is largely driven by excess consumption of fats and sugars. The Scottish diet is poor; monitoring of dietary intakes shows that intakes of fats, sugar and salt are too high while intakes of fibre, fruit, vegetables and oil rich fish are too low<sup>11</sup>.

### **The out-of-home market**

The out-of-home market – referring to food and drink purchased and consumed outside the home – contributes to excess calories, with more than a quarter of total UK spend on food and drink spent on food eaten outside of the home.<sup>12</sup> Depending on how 'out-of-home' is defined, estimates of the proportion of total calories contributed by the out-of-home sector vary from 11%<sup>13</sup> to 20-25%.<sup>14</sup> Recent research done by NPD Group for Food Standards Scotland<sup>15</sup> indicates that there was a 3% increase in the number of visits to out of home outlets in Scotland between 2014 to 2015 – a bigger increase than in every other European country followed by NPD Group. In 2015, the average person in Scotland visited an out-of-home food outlet 177 times.

The NPD Group report showed that food and drink purchased out-of-home is **skewed towards less healthy food and drink categories, including chips, cakes, biscuits, pastries and sugary drinks**. The most common reasons people in Scotland gave for purchasing food out-of-home were pragmatic or functional – because they were at work (22%), or to satisfy hunger and thirst (19%). However, people also eat out-of-home for social reasons (socialising with friends, 9%; eating as a family, 7%) or to give themselves a break (14%) or a reward (to treat myself/kids, 16%). Research for Food Standards Scotland on attitudes to diet and health in Scotland<sup>16</sup> showed that around half of adults report finding it difficult to eat healthily out of home – significantly higher than the proportion who say they find it difficult to eat healthily at home (48% compared with 20%). When asked about the main reason they found this difficult, 17% said it was because they 'want to eat what I like when I go out', 11% mentioned a lack of healthy choices, 11% that 'less healthy options are more convenient' and 10% that 'healthy food is too expensive'.

<sup>10</sup> FSS (2016) *Diet and Nutrition: proposals for setting the direction for the Scottish diet*, <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/fss-board-meeting-20-january-2016>

<sup>12</sup> DEFRA (2017) Family Food 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-food-statistics>

<sup>13</sup> DEFRA (2017) Family Food 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-food-statistics>.

<sup>14</sup> Analysis based on National Diet and Nutrition Survey reported in PHE (2017) *Sugar reduction: achieving the 20% - A technical report outlining progress to date, guidelines for industry, 2015 baseline levels in key foods and next steps*, available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/604336/Sugar\\_reduction\\_achieving\\_the\\_20\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604336/Sugar_reduction_achieving_the_20_.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> NPD (2015) *An overview of the out of home market in Scotland: NPD CREST data to year ending December 2015*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/an-assessment-of-the-out-of-home-food-and-drink-landscape-in-scotland>

<sup>16</sup> Scott Porter (2015) *Attitudes to diet and health in Scotland*, Food Standards Scotland, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/attitudes-to-diet-and-health-in-scotland-2015>

## Policy relevance

Under the Food (Scotland) Act 2015, Food Standards Scotland has a statutory duty **'to improve the extent to which members of the public have diets which are conducive to good health.'** Food Standards Scotland has set out their proposals for improving the Scottish diet in recent papers presented to the FSS Board.<sup>17 18 19</sup> These proposals include measures for the improvement of consumer information for making healthier choices, as well as the need to work with the food industry to improve the food environment. Information on the calorie and nutrient content and portion size of meals available outside the home will help inform consumer choice and discussions with industry. This report therefore provides evidence to support the development of policy in relation to the out of home environment.

## About this report

The purpose of this research, which was conducted across a sample of out of home businesses, was to:

- Ascertain the type and nature of savoury and breakfast meals and meal accompaniments offered outside the home in Scotland.
- Collate available online nutrition information.
- Identify gaps in nutrition information.

The report is divided into four main sections:

- **Methods** – Describes in detail the methods used, including known limitations and what this means for interpretation of the findings and use of the data
- **What information is available online?** – This section discusses the nutritional data that we found for the sampled outlets. It also summarises key differences in the level and nature of that information and how it was presented and identifies gaps in nutrition information.
- **How much does nutritional content vary?** – This report is not intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of variation in nutritional content across the out-of-home sector. However, variations in nutritional content from some typically available menu items are presented.
- **Discussion and conclusions** – Summarises the main conclusions and potential areas for further discussion/research based on the findings.

<sup>17</sup> FSS (20 Jan 2016) Diet and Nutrition: proposals for setting the direction for the Scottish diet: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/fss-board-meeting-20-january-2016>

<sup>18</sup> FSS (October 2016) *Diet and nutrition: update on setting the direction for the Scottish diet*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/board-meeting-19-october-2016>

<sup>19</sup> FSS (8 March 2017) *Diet and Nutrition: proposals for setting the direction for the Scottish diet one year on*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/fss-board-meeting-8-march-2016>

# Methods

This report is based on desk-based research conducted by Ipsos MORI between January and March 2017. We recorded what information was available online for an agreed sample of out-of-home outlets and, where information was available, converted this into a standard format (in Excel) to facilitate further analysis of variations in nutritional content across items/outlets.

## Sample

An initial list of 91 small and major brand outlets operating in Scotland, who were most likely to have online nutrition information was identified from NPD Group's report.<sup>20</sup> This list excluded independent businesses, workplace and university canteens and hotels, and a further five businesses who did not appear to have a current website and/or it was unclear if they were still operating in Scotland, leaving a final sample of 86 businesses (see Appendix 1 for a full list of those included).

The final sample included a mixture of different kinds of out-of-home business – for example, 'Quick Service' establishments (QS, which specialise in 'fast food' and include coffee shops, sandwich shops and bakeries) and 'Full Service Restaurants' (FSR, which offer full table service). The table in Appendix 3 shows how different outlets were categorised into the following categories, which were based on the categories used previously by NPD Group<sup>21</sup>:

- FSR - French
- FSR - Italian/Pizza/Pasta
- FSR - Japanese
- FSR - Mexican/Spanish
- FSR Other
- FSR Pub
- FSR Traditional
- Leisure/entertainment (e.g. cinema food concessions)
- Leisure/entertainment - bar/club
- Leisure/entertainment - in-store restaurant
- QS Bakery
- QS Burger
- QS chicken
- QS Coffee
- QS Other

<sup>20</sup> NPD (2015) *An overview of the out of home market in Scotland: NPD CREST data to year ending December 2015*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/an-assessment-of-the-out-of-home-food-and-drink-landscape-in-scotland>

<sup>21</sup> NPD (2015) *An overview of the out of home market in Scotland: NPD CREST data to year ending December 2015*, available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/an-assessment-of-the-out-of-home-food-and-drink-landscape-in-scotland>

- QS Pizza/pasta
- QS Sandwich
- Retail – Grocery<sup>22</sup>.

## Data processing

Data was collected, processed and checked at several stages:

- An **initial online search** established whether or not each business made any nutritional information available for savoury and breakfast meals and accompaniments on their website. This information, which was typically provided either as a table in a PDF document, or via online drop down 'nutritional information' boxes from the menu, was copied directly from the business website and comprised the main 'raw data' for this research. Where no information was identified, a second member of the Ipsos MORI team carried out a further search to verify this, which identified nutritional information for two further businesses.
- '**Summary**' **data** were recorded (in Excel) for all 86 businesses in the final sample, identifying whether any nutritional information was found online and summarising what this covered, including:
  - o Whether nutritional information was available for all/most items
  - o Whether information was available for all/most items on: portion size in grams; kilojoules; kilocalories; each of fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugars, fibre, protein and salt in grams;
  - o Whether the outlet offered a children's menu, or small/half portions
  - o Whether cost information was available online or not, and whether it was available at brand level or only for individual franchises (e.g. the Falkirk branch of a particular pub brand)
- Where an email address/contact form was available (79 of the 86 sampled businesses<sup>23</sup>), **all sampled businesses were emailed** to ask (a) whether they did have any publicly available nutritional information for their menu (where we were unable to find this on their website) and (b) what, if any, nutritional information they displayed on their menus or in store. Emails/contact forms were submitted to as many sampled businesses as possible by early February and any responses received during the research period (January to March) were included. Therefore the summary data also captured:
  - o Whether any nutritional information was made available after email requests to businesses were sent (for those who did not have information online)
  - o Whether nutritional information was shown on menus or within premises (as indicated by any email response from businesses), or whether this was unknown.

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<sup>22</sup> Note, only foods and drinks purchased and consumed outside the home are included within this definition of 'Retail-Grocery'. For example, this would exclude grocery shopping but would include eating out at cafes within retail stores in addition to any food purchased and consumed 'on the go' such as sandwiches and meal deals.

<sup>23</sup> We were unable to locate an appropriate e-mail address/contact form for 5 businesses, one had no website, and one stated on its website that it did not make any nutritional information available, so it was not considered worthwhile e-mailing them for further information.

- Where nutritional information was available from the website, this 'raw data' was transferred to Excel and **converted into a standard format** across all businesses. In recognition that Public Health England has already collected similar data on sweet items as part of their sugar reformulation and reduction programme<sup>24</sup>, nutrition information was only collected for savoury and breakfast meals and meal accompaniments.
- The collated data enables comparison of nutritional information for all items included on:
  - o **Portion size** (in grams)
  - o **Energy content** (per portion): both kilocalories and kilojoules
  - o **Fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugars, fibre, protein and salt** (per portion, in grams).

Although information on price was requested by Food Standards Scotland, this proved impractical due to the fact that information on price was often not recorded in the same place as information about nutrition, and because for many brands, prices varied between different individual franchises.

- Items were then coded based on the information available from business websites, to allow filtering of the data and enable comparison of items both within an individual business and across businesses. However, due to the variability in how products were described across businesses, further codes were developed based on our interpretation of item descriptions to help distinguish between items and facilitate further analysis and comparison.
- Codes applied based on information available from business websites identified whether items were described as a:
  - o **Breakfast, lunch or dinner:** However, in practice, items were not always labelled explicitly as 'lunch' or 'dinner', with some businesses operating all-day menus and therefore it was necessary to include an 'unspecified/unknown' option.
  - o **Main, starter, side or snack.** However, as above, items were not always described using these terms and so it was necessary to include an 'unspecified/unknown' option.
  - o **Small or 'child's portion'**
- Two further codes based on our interpretation of item descriptions were applied to indicate:
  - o **Whether the item was a meal, meal accompaniment or meal component** – all starters and main courses (including sharing platters) were coded as 'meals', while 'meal accompaniments' refer to side dishes and optional extras (like chips or side salads) and 'meal components' refers to items that form part of a meal

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<sup>24</sup> PHE (2017) *Sugar reduction: achieving the 20% - A technical report outlining progress to date, guidelines for industry, 2015 baseline levels in key foods and next steps*, available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/604336/Sugar\\_reduction\\_achieving\\_the\\_20\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604336/Sugar_reduction_achieving_the_20_.pdf)

(e.g. where the nutritional information for a burger is provided separately for the burger itself, the bun, the tomato, etc.).<sup>25</sup>

- **Broad food category** – to facilitate further analysis and comparison across businesses, Ipsos MORI coded each item into one of 17 broad categories (see Appendix 2 for a full list).

Data for each business were saved in an Excel workbook containing both the 'raw' data (as extracted from the business PDF or webpage), and the 'processed' data, which converted this raw data into a standard format, as described above. Data for each business were then **combined into a master dataset**.

## Accuracy of data processing

The 'raw' nutritional data for this project was taken directly from businesses' websites and we were not able to verify whether or not this data accurately reflected actual nutritional content of the dishes described. However, we did carry out various edits and checks to ensure accuracy of data processing (that is, the process of converting this raw data into a consistent, combined Excel file for further analysis). These checks included:

- **Spot checks** – for each business, a minimum of 3 rows were checked against the original data (downloaded from the website, or on the website itself) as a check against systematic errors in how the raw data was converted. This identified one business where the processed datasheet was incorrectly picking up sugar values in the saturated fat column, as well as a few other minor errors (e.g. duplicate dishes) which were corrected.
- **Range checks** – particularly high or low values (e.g. kilocalories > 2000 or < 20) were inspected for plausibility and checked against the raw data for discrepancies. 58 items were identified that appeared to contain over 2000 kilocalories. The majority of these were sharing platters, although they also included some larger burgers or steaks. There was one case where the entire row of nutritional data in the raw data PDF was clearly an error (each value was a very long string of numbers and letters) and was deleted from the dataset. 107 items were identified as having fewer than 20 kilocalories, most of which were sauces, jams, onions, or other meal toppings which were deemed to be plausible and therefore were retained. Two items that appeared particularly implausible as having fewer than 20 kilocalories (a pizza slice and cauliflower cheese side) were double-checked, but as the values matched the raw data they were left in the overall dataset but excluded from analysis. The overall dataset does, therefore include some implausible values.
- **Ratio checks** – any cases where either the saturated fat value appeared to be higher than the total fat (n = 7), or the sugar higher than the total carbohydrates (n = 29) were double-checked. Where the values matched the raw data from the businesses (6 cases in total), these were deleted as it was impossible to confirm which the correct values were.

## Analysis and outputs

A summary of the data for all businesses is provided within appendix 3. This report contains illustrative analyses of these data, which may be further explored by Food Standards Scotland.

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<sup>25</sup> Note that in practice the choice between 'meal accompaniment' and 'meal component' was not always clear – for example, it was not always clear if sauces or dressings were provided as part of a meal or as an optional accompaniment.

## Scope and limitations

It is important to be aware of limitations to the data when interpreting the findings within this report. In particular:

- While the sample was intended to capture information across a range of different types of out-of-home brands, it was **not intended to be statistically representative of the out-of-home market**. In particular, the sample does not include independent (as opposed to 'branded' or chain) out-of-home businesses, who account for around half the out-of-home market in Scotland.<sup>26</sup> Mapping what, if any, nutritional information is made available by independent businesses would be a much larger exercise.
- Time and resource limitations meant that we primarily focused on collating **information that was easily available online**. Although wherever possible we attempted to contact businesses by email to verify whether any additional information was available, we only received replies from a quarter of the businesses in our sample. As discussed in the introduction, an Ipsos MORI sister project aimed to explore what information is displayed in store within a subsample of out-of-home businesses. Where possible, we have cross-referenced findings from this study here. However, we must acknowledge that it is possible that some of the businesses in our sample do make additional information available by other routes or in store, although this information may not be easily available online.
- The findings are a **snapshot at a particular point in time**. Many businesses change their menus on a regular basis, so the nutritional information included in the dataset and in this report may in some cases already be dated and may not reflect current menus.
- Finally, and most importantly, **we were limited by the information available online**. Where businesses did not make any nutritional information available, or where specific values, like actual portion size in grams, were missing, there are inevitably gaps in the data. Nevertheless, understanding gaps in information within the sample was a key aim of the project and it was therefore important to identify and report these gaps.

<sup>26</sup> NPD (2015) *An overview of the out of home market in Scotland: NPD CREST data to year ending December 2015*: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/an-assessment-of-the-out-of-home-food-and-drink-landscape-in-scotland>

# Results

## How many out-of-home providers make nutritional information available to customers online?

60% (n=52) of the 86 out-of-home businesses included in the final sample provided some level of nutritional information online for all or the majority of their menu. This figure is based on those who at a minimum make kilocalorie information available for the majority of their menu. For example, this figure excludes:

- Three businesses whose websites/menus only identify dishes under a certain kilocalorie level (e.g. under 600 kilocalories), but do not show the kilocalorie or nutritional content for the rest of their menu. Although this type of information might be useful from a consumer perspective, without exact kilocalories we could not include data for these dishes in the master dataset to enable further analysis of calorie content.

55% of the total sample (n = 47) provided information online about the kilocalorie, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content of all their menu items.

- A further five businesses in the sample are classed as providing partial nutritional information online - that is, they provided information about some but not all of these components, or they provided information in a non-standard or unclear format. These five business included two which provided sodium content in milligrams but not salt content in grams, one that provided sodium instead of salt and no information on sugar, one whose information did not enable calculation of standard nutritional categories in grams (for example, it provided information on the percentage of 'free fatty acids', rather than fat or saturated fat content in grams), and one whose nutritional information appeared to be for their US menu (it was unclear whether the information also applied in the UK).

Among the 40% for whom we were unable to locate any detailed nutritional information, most did not reply to our email or contact form requests for further information. However:

- Six businesses indicated (either in response to contact from Ipsos MORI or on their website) that they were currently looking into the options for calculating and/or presenting nutritional information for customers.
- Four businesses indicated that customers could contact either head office or ask in individual branches for more detailed nutritional information, although they did not make this available to us.
- Two businesses mentioned that there is no legislative requirement for food and/or menus to be labelled with nutritional information in explaining why they did not make this information available to customers.

For the most part, there was no clear pattern to which types of out-of-home business in our sample were more or less likely to make detailed nutritional information available online, either in terms of differences between 'quick serve' or 'full service' outlets or between outlets serving different types of food – for example, some 'full service' Italian/pizza restaurants had detailed nutritional information available from their websites, others did not. However, detailed nutritional information was available from all 16 businesses in our sample classed as 'Full Service Restaurants – pub'. While our sample was not comprehensive, this may suggest that this part of the sector is further ahead in making detailed nutritional information available, at least online. Although both large and small brands were included among the 34 businesses for which we

could not locate detailed kilocalorie or nutritional information, overall fewer smaller brands made detailed nutritional information available.

## What kind of information is (and is not) available?

Although 60% of businesses in our sample made some kind of nutritional information available online, **the nature and level of detail of this information varied**. Figure 1 shows that, of those who made any nutrition information available online:

- almost all (96% or more) provide information on kilocalories, fat, saturated fat, and sugar in grams for all or most of their menu items
- just over half (56%) provide information about fibre content, and
- fewer than 1 in 5 (17%, n = 9) provide the actual portion sizes in grams for most/all of their menu. One additional business provided information about portion size (in grams or ounces) for some items but not all. A further 9 businesses provide nutritional information (kilocalories, fat, sugar etc.) per 100g, as well as information about kilocalories, fat, sugar etc. per portion, but they do not state the actual portion sizes in grams.

Only 6 out of the 86 businesses in our sample (7%) provided information on all of portion size, kilojoules, kilocalories, fat, saturates, carbohydrates, sugars, fibre, salt and protein. A further 17 businesses (20%) provided information for all of the above *except* portion size.

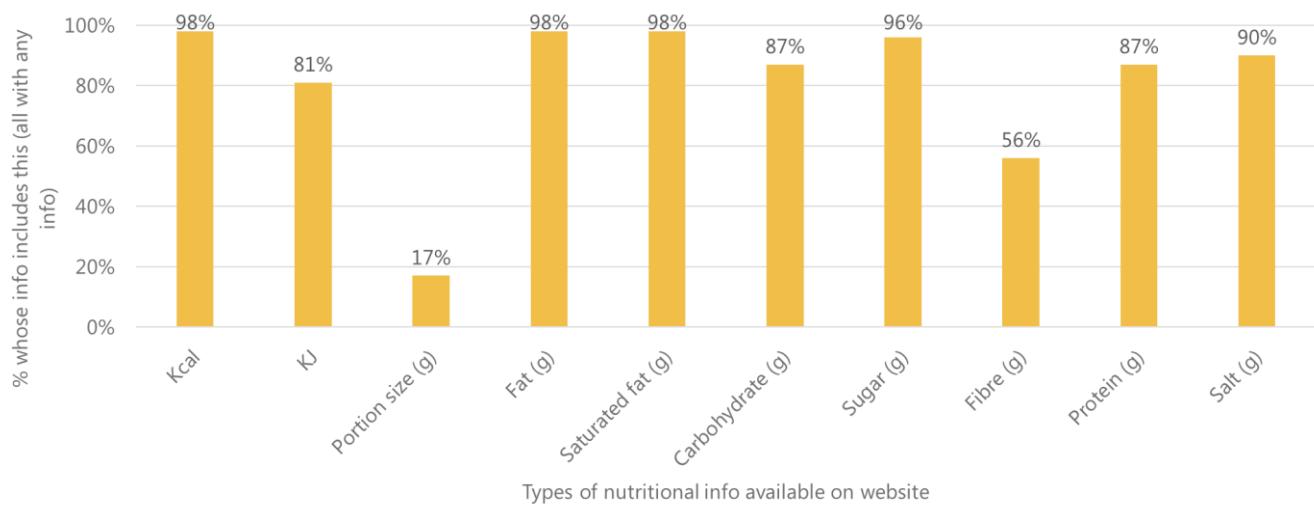
Appendix 3 provides a summary of the nutritional information provided by each business in our sample, including whether or not they provide information on kilocalories and on portion size, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt in grams (since these are particularly key to assessing nutritional content from a health perspective).

The ability of Food Standards Scotland and its partners to assess the nutritional content of food offered in the out-of-home sector to inform both policy goals and detailed discussion with industry is severely limited by the lack of portion size information, so this is a clear area for further discussion. Moreover, given the Food Standards Scotland's aim of reducing large portion sizes contributing excessive calories, the lack of information on the actual size of portions being offered in much of the out-of-home sector is problematic. The lack of consistent information on fibre content may reflect the fact that manufacturers of pre-packaged food are not currently required to provide information about fibre content on their labels. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that relatively few out-of-home businesses provided this information either. However, given that the revised Scottish Dietary Goals include higher recommendations for fibre consumption (recommending people consume 30g a day), the fact that more businesses do not provide information on fibre content may be an area for attention.<sup>27</sup>

There was no clear pattern in the types of business that did and did not provide portion size information - although it was largely bigger brands that provided this information, there were other big brands that did not. Similarly, there was no obvious pattern (e.g. in terms of whether businesses were quick serve or full service, or the type of food they served) to which businesses did and did not provide information about the fibre content of their meals.

<sup>27</sup> See Scottish Government,(2016) *Revised Dietary Goals for Scotland* at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Healthy-Living/Food-Health/DietaryGoalsScot>

**Figure 1 – What proportion make specific types of nutritional information available online? (All sampled out-of-home businesses who make any nutritional information available, n=52)**



Base = 52 (all those who make any nutritional information available online)

## How is information presented to customers?

### Online

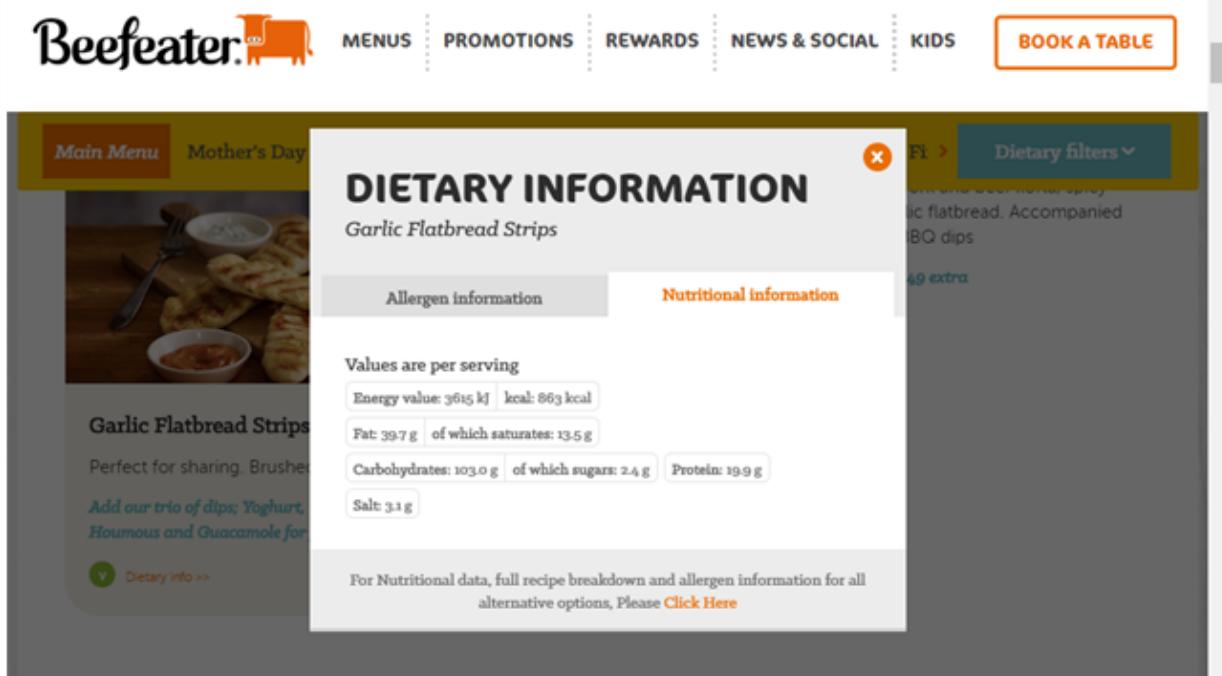
In addition to variations in *what* is presented, there was also considerable variation in *how* nutritional information is presented. The prominence, location on the website, and ease of finding this information varied widely. Examples of different practices across out-of-home businesses included:

- **Displaying information for whole dishes** (e.g. a beefburger including the bun, salad and sauces) **vs. providing separate nutritional information for each component** (i.e. kilocalories etc. in the bun, the burger, the tomato, the sauce etc.). There are also differences in how information for similar dishes is presented across businesses – for example, whether information is shown for whole pizzas or for individual slices. It was not always clear exactly what was included in the nutritional figures – for example, there were cases where it was not clear from the description of the menu item in the nutritional table whether or not it included any sides or accompaniments. As discussed in the following chapter, there were also cases where it was unclear if the values for ‘upgrades to large’ portions showed the total nutritional content of a large portion, or only the *additional* kilocalories associated with the ‘upgrading’.
- **Variations in the format the information comes in** – the most common option across our sample was to provide a detailed nutrition table available as a PDF (or, in some cases, as multiple PDFs for different menus). In some cases, these tables include data for many hundreds of menu items. Some businesses provide nutritional information in drop-down format which can be accessed by clicking on each dish on the online menu (instead of, or in addition to, a downloadable PDF for the entire menu).

## Case study: information format – Beefeater

Beefeater provides nutritional information in two formats – as a downloadable PDF with 60+ pages of tables showing nutrition and allergy information for all menu items, and as a pop up from each individual menu item (accessed through the home page for individual Beefeater restaurants).

The guidelines for daily energy and other nutrient intake, the Reference Intake (RI), for adults are given below.								
Reference Intake (RI)	Energy kJ	Energy kcal	Total Fat g	Saturates g	Carbohydrate g	Sugars g	Protein g	Salt g
8400								
2000								
The figures below give the nutrition values for each complete dish as listed on the menu. Where the dishes are for sharing the figure given is for the total dish and you must divide this by the number of people sharing the dish to get the nutrition per person. Figures are typical and may vary due to seasonal factors and chef practices								
Product/ Dish Description		Nutrition Information Per Portion						
		kJ	kcal	Fat (g)	Saturates (g)	Carbohydrate (g)	Sugars (g)	Protein (g)
DAYTIME MENU								
STARTERS								
GARLIC BREAD	884	211	12.0	3.1	21.3	1.1	3.7	0.5
LOADED POTATO DIPPERS CHEESE & SPRING ONION	2172	519	31.8	14.3	37.3	2.8	20.5	1.1
TOMATO SOUP	1540	368	15.8	12.4	29.2	10.7	8.3	1.7
CRISPY FLAT CAP MUSHROOMS	2048	489	23.1	3.7	41.1	5.4	8.3	2.1
MAINS								



The screenshot shows the Beefeater website with a navigation bar including 'Main Menu', 'Mother's Day', 'MENUS', 'PROMOTIONS', 'REWARDS', 'NEWS & SOCIAL', 'KIDS', and a prominent 'BOOK A TABLE' button. The main content is a 'DIETARY INFORMATION' page for 'Garlic Flatbread Strips'. It features a large image of the dish, a brief description, and two tabs: 'Allergen information' (selected) and 'Nutritional information'. The nutritional information table is identical to the one shown in the table above. A 'Dietary filters' button is visible in the top right corner of the main content area.

Images from beefeater.co.uk (accessed 10 March 2017)

- Differences in whether or not businesses provide additional information aimed at helping interpret the detailed nutritional information – for example, information about reference intakes<sup>28</sup> alongside actual content in grams. There are some examples where businesses have developed bespoke tools to help customers interpret/compare nutritional data, including:
  - o nutrition calculators, which allow customers to select multiple items and then see how many kilocalories this amounts to and what share of their reference intake of kilocalories, fat etc. their chosen meal would account for
  - o tools that allow you to select multiple items and compare their nutritional content side by side
  - o filters to allow you to easily identify menu items under a certain kilocalorie content or 'healthier' menu items.

Examples of these tools are shown below. However, these examples are the exception rather than the rule – the most common approach across the businesses in our sample who made nutritional information available was to provide this in a table available as a downloadable PDF. While the PDF/table format may be more useful for those interested in analysing the nutritional content of whole menus, it may be less accessible for consumers, who arguably only need to see information for the dish or dishes they are considering ordering. Similarly, where nutritional information is presented without any reference to daily reference intakes, it relies on the consumer having a working knowledge of this advice to enable them to interpret the information provided.

- Differences in whether or not information is given per portion, per 100g, or both. Although the focus of this project was on collecting information per portion, from a scientific point of view, information per 100g may also be useful in, for example, linking to volume sales or comparing to nutrient targets. However, most businesses in our sample did not provide information per 100g – of the 52 businesses who provided any nutritional information online, only 15 provided information per 100g. All 15 of these also provided information on nutritional content (e.g. kilocalories, grams of fat, etc.) per portion, and 6 out of 15 also provided actual portion size.

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<sup>28</sup> Reference intakes (RIs) show the amount of a nutrient that the average adult needs. These values are based on an average sized woman doing an average amount of physical activity.

## Case study: additional tools – McDonald's and Caffé Nero

McDonald's' website features a 'nutritional information' link on its homepage. Clicking this link takes you to a page with general information about nutrition and a balanced diet, and links to further information, including a nutrition calculator which allows you to add items to an order and see both the individual kilocalorie, kilojoule, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content, and what proportion of the daily reference intake of energy, fat, carbohydrate, protein and salt the total order would amount to.

The screenshot shows the McDonald's Nutrition Calculator interface. The top navigation bar includes a 'OUR MENU' dropdown, a 'Food Quality' section, 'PROMOTIONS', 'McCAFÉ', 'RESTAURANTS', 'PEOPLE', 'FOOTBALL', 'FAMILY', 'OUR WORLD', 'ABOUT US', 'CONTACT US', and 'NEWSLETTER SIGN UP'. The main content area is titled 'Nutrition Calculator' and shows a table for 'Fries Medium'. The table includes columns for energy (kJ and kcal), fat (total, saturated, monounsaturated, polyunsaturated), carbohydrates (total, sugars), protein, and salt. Below the table, a note states: '\*Reference intake (RI) of an average adult (8400 kJ/2000 kcal)'. To the right, there are links for 'Bacon Clubhouse Double' (with a 'View Details' button) and 'McDonald's Fries' (with a 'View Details' button). Each item has a 'View Ingredients and Allergen Information' link.

Image from [mcdonalds.co.uk](http://mcdonalds.co.uk) (accessed 10 March 2017)

Caffé Nero's website allows customers to select up to three items to compare, enabling them to view nutritional information for similar items side-by-side.

The screenshot shows the Caffé Nero Product Comparison tool. The top navigation bar includes 'HOME', 'OUR STORY', 'COFFEE', 'FOOD', 'CAREERS', 'COMMUNITY', 'SOCIAL & CAFFÉ', 'CONTACT US', 'SHOP', and a search bar. A sidebar on the left lists 'HOME AND COFFEE', 'FOOD AND DRINKS', 'BREW AND BAKE', 'TEA AND SOUP', 'CAFFÉ AND SMOOTHIES', and 'BREAD AND BAKERY'. The main content area is titled 'Product Comparison' and shows a table comparing three products: 'All Day Breakfast Panini', 'Bacon Sandwich on Bloomer Bread', and 'Bacon, Lettuce & Tomato Sandwich'. The table includes columns for 'Typical Values' (Per Product / Per 100g), 'Energy (kJ)', 'Energy (kcal)', 'Protein', 'Carbohydrate', 'Sugars', 'Fat', 'Sat fat', 'Sodium', 'Equivalent as salt', and 'Allergy and other information' (Contains Gluten, Contains Wheat). The 'All Day Breakfast Panini' row is highlighted in blue.

Image from [caffenero.co.uk](http://caffenero.co.uk) (accessed 10 March 2017)

## In store

As discussed in the methodology section, as this project was desk-based there was not scope within project resources to verify whether nutritional information available online was available in store. However, where possible we contacted (by email or customer contact form) businesses in the sample to ask about in-store nutritional information. We only received responses from around a quarter of businesses in our sample. Responses (22 in total) were divided between those who:

- **made nutritional information available online, but not on menus in store** (n = 8). In some cases, they stated that staff were trained in/had access to nutritional information should it be required. One business commented that providing nutritional information on their printed menus would be impractical due to the number of dishes on the menu and numerous possible modifications to each.
- confirmed that they **did not currently make any nutritional information available** for their menu, either online or in store (n = 10). This group was further divided between those who said they were looking into or working towards making this information available (n = 4), and those who did not mention any plans to make nutritional information available in the future (n = 6).
- said they were **unable to give any further information** or did not provide a clear response (n = 2)
- clarified that they **did provide some nutritional information on their in-store menus** (n = 2), including one business that appeared to make this available in-store but not online.

This project took place alongside a parallel study in which Ipsos MORI mystery shoppers made visits to a sample of out-of-home businesses across Scotland – including 11 who were also in the sample for this study – to observe how food is displayed and promoted. As part of this parallel study, mystery shoppers noted what nutritional information was displayed in store at selected outlets for each brand. Kilocalorie content was available on menus, posters, signage on shelving or signage behind the counter in 60% of the outlets visited. This information was more likely to be displayed in coffee outlets (75%) and least likely to be available in Retail cafes (46%). Further nutritional information (e.g. fat) was much less commonly displayed, and was available at only 35% of outlets.

In addition to differences in the nutritional information available on dishes, there are also differences in how the dishes themselves are marketed and described. For example, most of the nutritional data we reviewed applied to menus that appeared to be 'all day' menus – relatively few items in our dataset were described explicitly as 'lunch' or 'dinner' items. At the same time, menus are not always divided into clear 'starters', 'mains' and 'sides'. Instead, sections might include 'small plates', 'sharers', 'burgers and dogs', 'lighter bites', etc. This may well reflect changes in eating habits – perhaps fewer people expect to sit down to a traditional three course meal. However, it has the potential to raise some difficulties for customers in working out what a reasonable combination of dishes for a lunch or a dinner might be in terms of nutritional intake.

## How much does nutritional content vary?

As discussed in the introduction to this report, the second key aim of this research was to collate the information that is available in a format that can support future analysis to inform policy development. A comprehensive analysis of this data was beyond the scope of this report. However, in this section we provide some **examples** of variation in recorded nutritional content across dishes/outlets to illustrate both how the data might be used, and the kinds of issues that may be encountered during further analysis.

## Number of businesses included in the dataset

As discussed above, 52 out of the 86 out of home businesses included in the final sample made some level of nutritional information available. Detailed nutritional data for the menus of 49 of these was included in the analysis. Two businesses shared the same menu (and nutritional information), so data was only included for one of these. The two others excluded from the detailed data were:

- one whose nutritional information was in an incompatible format with the others (it provided information about the percentage of 'free fatty acids', for example, but no portion size, so it was not possible to work out nutritional content in grams)
- one business where the detailed nutritional information provided appeared to be for their US menu rather than their UK menu.

## Calorie content of main meals

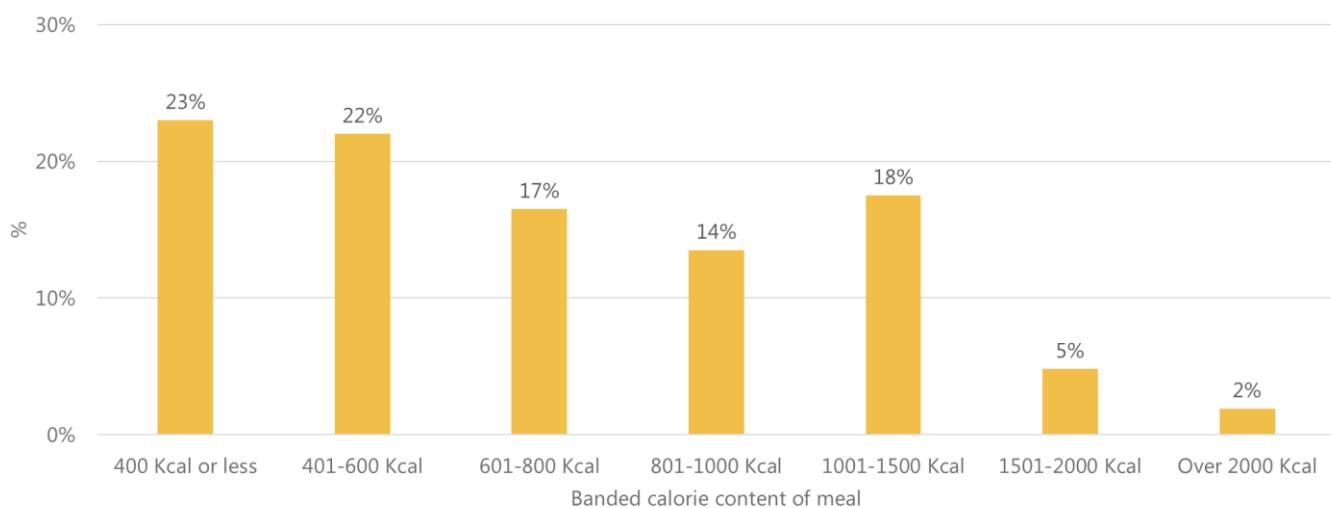
The recommended calorie intake for the average woman is 2,000 kilocalories a day, and 2,500 kilocalories a day for the average man. While the ways in which people split their kilocalorie intake between different meals, snacks and drinks may vary (both between individuals and across different days of the week), kilocalorie intakes at breakfast, lunch and dinner contribute significantly to most people's daily intakes.

Figure 2 shows the kilocalorie content of the 2,706 adult main meals in the dataset. It is important to note that in this analysis, starters, meal components and meal accompaniments were excluded. **Therefore, the range of caloric values shown below do not necessarily represent the total calorie content for an entire meal.**

Around a quarter (23%) of the main meals contained 400 or fewer kilocalories, while 45% contained 600 kilocalories or under. However, it is important to note that this analysis will still include some lower calorie items described by the business as a 'meal' for example, breakfast items such as toast or cereal. These items made up only a small proportion of the total dataset, however. Additionally, in collating this data, we also identified various examples of businesses explicitly offering dishes under a particular kilocalorie limit (typically 600) as a 'lighter' option, indicating that some out-of-home businesses have taken some steps to market lower kilocalorie options on their menus.

However, this still leaves over half (55%) of these adult meals which contain over 600 kilocalories, while around a quarter (25%) contain in excess of 1,000 kilocalories. A small proportion (2%) of meals in the dataset contained more than 2,000 kilocalories – in excess of the total daily reference intake for an average adult woman. However, it is important to note that it is not always possible to tell from the descriptions in businesses' nutritional data whether the kilocalorie values for a 'meal' include all the sides that come with that dish as standard. If the kilocalorie value stated on a business menu does not include the accompaniments served with a meal (e.g. chips with a burger) then the actual kilocalorie content of the whole meal will be higher than indicated.

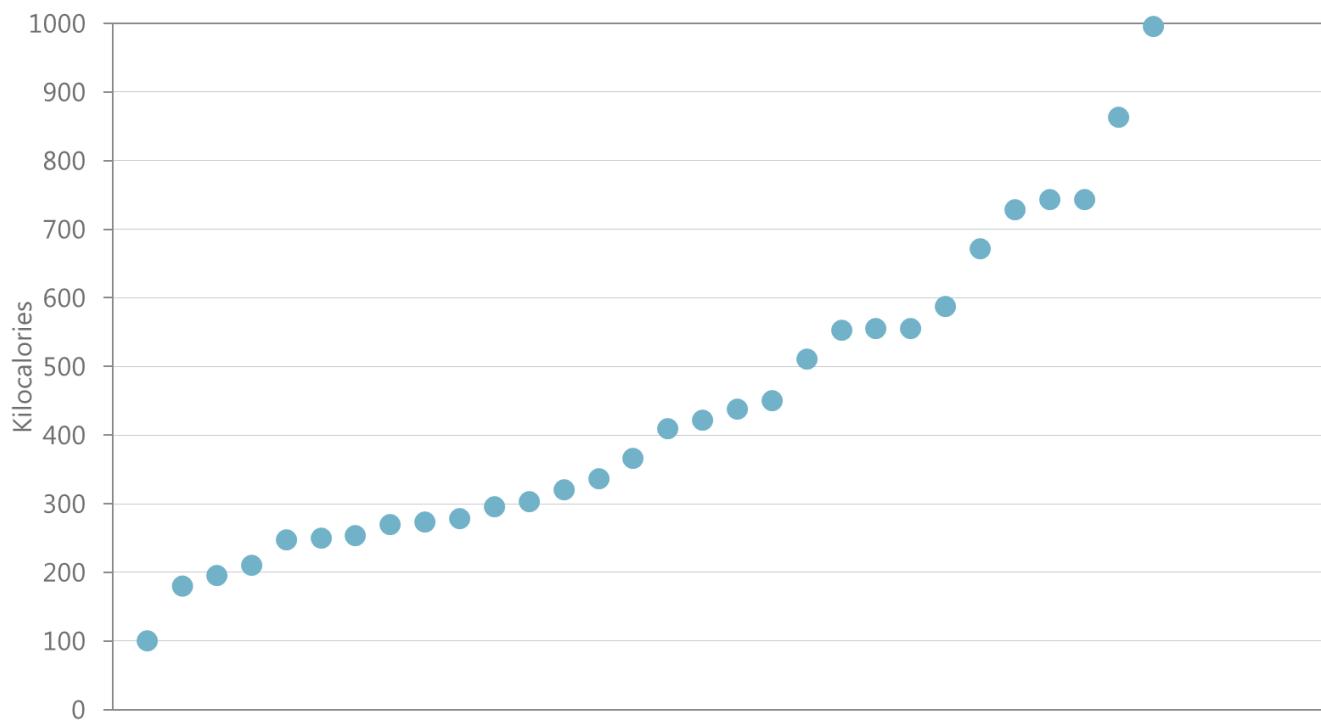
Inspection of the descriptions of the very high (2000+) kilocalorie items shows that some (though not all) are described as 'sharing platters'. However, it is not always clear how many people they are intended to be shared between. There are several examples in the data of dishes containing in excess of 2,000 kilocalories that are described as 'for two' or 'for two or more', which might still be considered excessive in the context of a reference intake of 2,000 kilocalories for an average adult woman.

**Figure 2 – Calorie content of adult meals**

Based on 2706 menu items. Excludes children's meals, starters and sides, as well as pizzas where the nutritional information is given per slice and it is unclear how many slices would constitute a 'meal'. Differences in how information is presented in the raw data means that some 'meals' will include sides/accompaniments in the kilocalorie count, while others will only include the meal 'centre' (e.g. a burger without fries etc.).

#### Variations in the calorie content of similar dishes

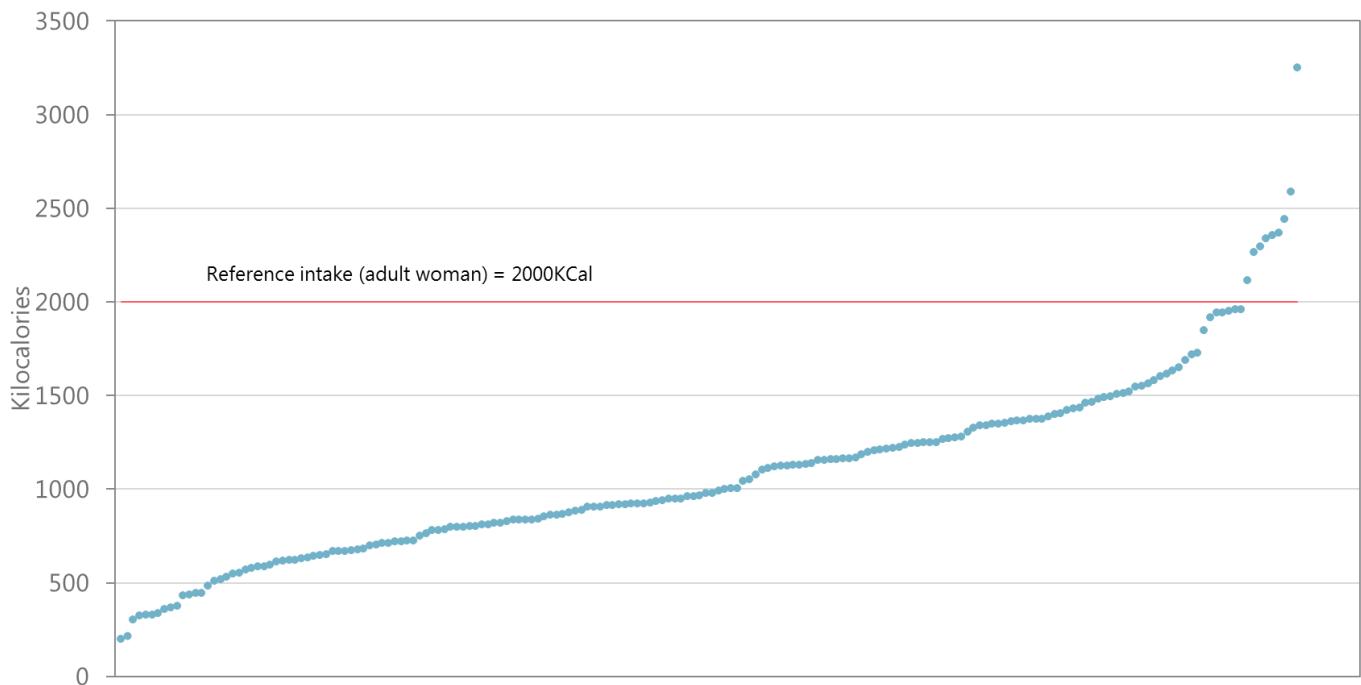
Another way in which the collated nutritional data could be used is to explore variations in the recorded nutritional content of similar dishes across outlets (and, in some cases, across different versions of the same dish within the same outlet). A simple illustration of this is shown in Figure 3, below. Kilocalorie data for all items described as 'garlic bread' are shown on a scatterplot. This shows that, for the 30 items in our dataset described as 'garlic bread', the stated kilocalorie content varied from 100 kilocalories (which seems likely to be a value per piece) to almost 1000 kilocalories. Again, the highest kilocalorie item was described as a 'Garlic bread selection', which suggests that it is intended for sharing. Around half contained under 400 kilocalories, and around half over this amount. Garlic bread is typically ordered in addition to a main meal, so even at the lower end of the kilocalorie spectrum shown here consumers are adding considerable kilocalories to their meal by the addition of garlic bread or similar sides.

**Figure 3 – Calorie content of garlic bread without cheese**

Based on 30 menu items. Excludes those advertised as children's portions and garlic bread with cheese or other added extras, but includes 'non-standard' types of garlic bread, like garlic naan, garlic ciabatta sticks etc. Also excludes items where the nutritional content is described as 'per piece' rather than for the whole dish.

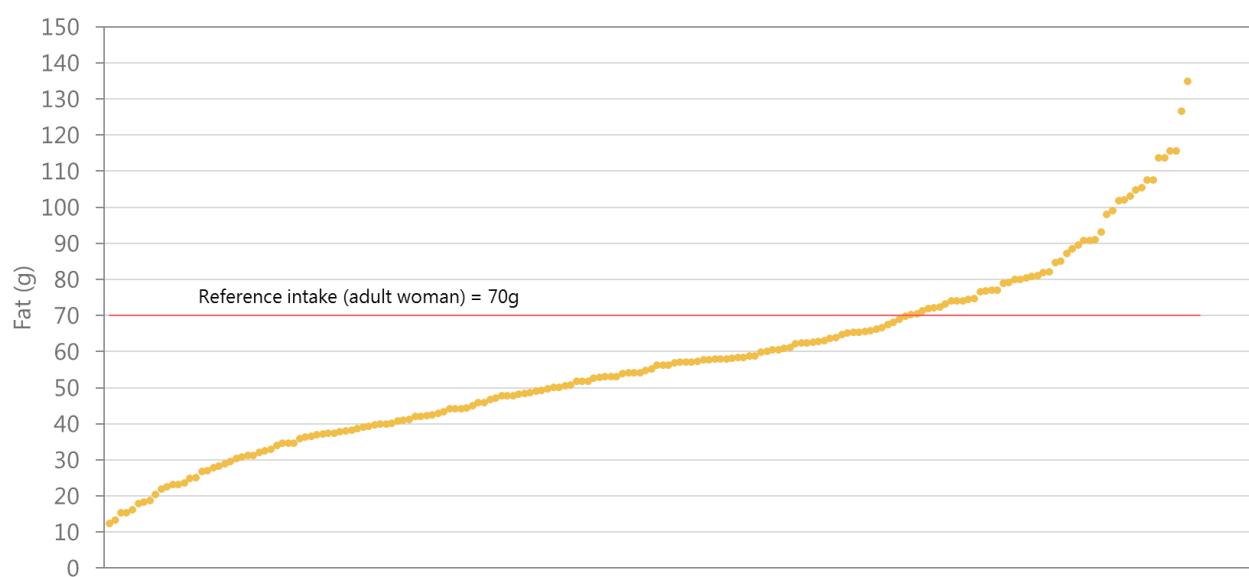
Figure 4 shows similar data but this time for a menu item for which there is more data available. There were 191 'beef burgers' in the dataset (excluding those aimed at children). Their stated kilocalorie content ranged from just under 200 to over 3,000 kilocalories. **The vast majority of burgers offered in our sample of out-of-home businesses contain over 600 kilocalories, which may be considered an excessive contribution for a single meal towards a reference intake of 2,000 a day for an average women.** Around half had stated kilocalorie contents over 1,000 kilocalories, and a small number contained in excess of 2,000 kilocalories.

The descriptions included in the collated nutritional data do not indicate that the beefburger dishes in excess of 2,000 kilocalories are intended for sharing (although it is possible that more detailed descriptions of these items on menus within stores suggest they could be shared). However, closer inspection of the item descriptions indicates that some of the lower kilocalorie items are burgers without any accompaniments, whereas at the higher end, some values are for burgers with multiple additional toppings and sides like onion rings and/or fries. At the lower end, it is also not always possible to be completely sure from the description whether or not the nutritional values include or exclude side dishes served as part of the meal. It is also unclear in some cases if the values are for a whole burger meal, or for an additional burger added into a meal (e.g. the description is for a beefburger 'per burger', but it unclear if this means a burger with bun etc., or just the burger patty).

**Figure 4 – Calorie content of beef burgers**

Based on 190 menu items. Includes all described (or known to be) beef burgers, including topped burgers, cheese burgers, steak burgers etc. Excludes chicken, veggie etc. burgers, and components of beef burgers (e.g. where kilocalories given for individual patties), as well as children's burgers. Note that it is not always clear from the available nutritional information whether or not values are for the burger alone or also include fries or other side dishes.

Figure 5 shows the fat content of these 191 beef burger meals. Over half of these burger dishes contain more than 50g of fat (against a reference intake for adult women of 70g).

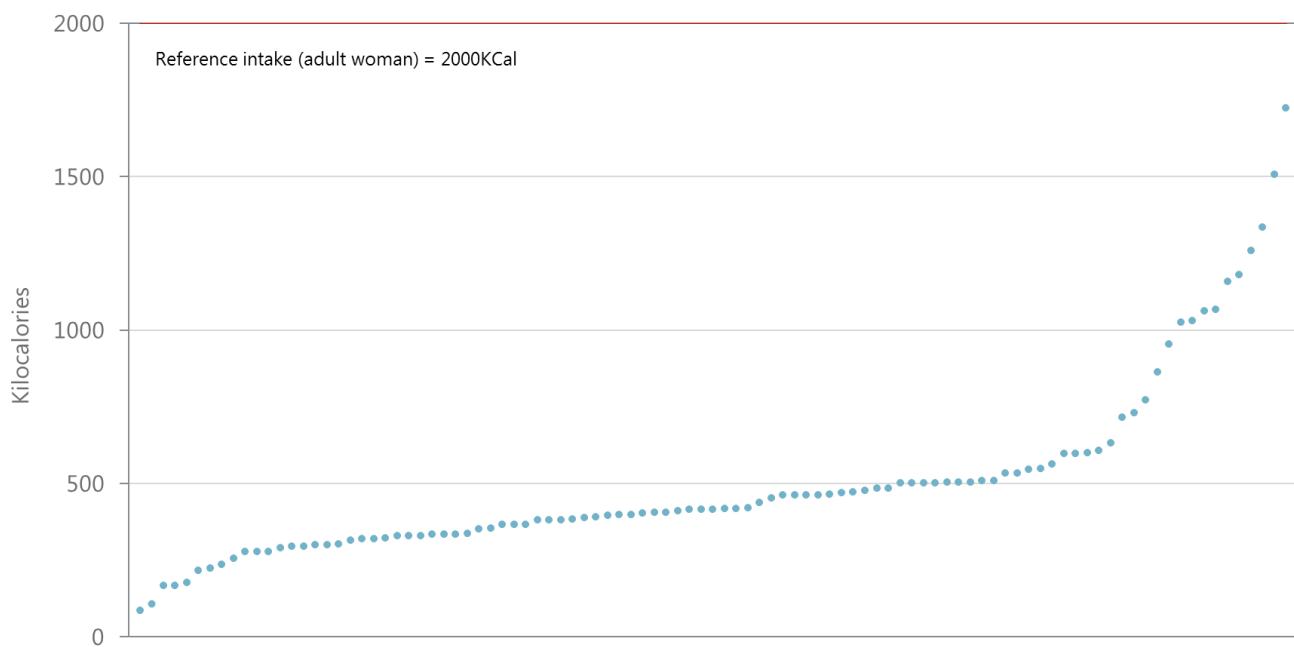
**Figure 5 – Fat content of beef burgers (grams)**

Based on 190 menu items. Includes all described (or known to be) beef burgers, including topped burgers, cheese burgers, steak burgers etc. Excludes chicken, veggie etc. burgers, and components of beef burgers (e.g. where kilocalories given for individual patties), as well as children's burgers. Note that it is not always clear from the available nutritional information whether or not values are for the burger alone or also include fries or other side dishes.

As indicated in the notes to the charts above, it was not always possible to tell whether or not the data was for the burger alone, or for a burger with sides like chips, salad, etc. Side dishes can add considerably to the kilocalorie content of dishes. Figure 6, below, shows the kilocalorie content of 99 menu items coded as 'chips/fries' or similar (excluding those described as a starter or main). This shows **kilocalorie content for chips ranging from just under 100 kilocalories to over 1,700**. Sampled dishes split into five roughly evenly sized groups: around 20% in each case contained under 300 kilocalories, 300-400 kilocalories, 400-500 kilocalories, 500 to 600 kilocalories, and 600 or more kilocalories.

At the lower end of this chart, it is worth noting that the two lowest recorded values are actually for upgrading to large fries/chips. It seems likely, therefore, that the values shown are actually the *additional* kilocalories, on top of the kilocalories included in 'standard' fries, rather than the whole kilocalorie content of a large fries. However, this is not completely clear from the nutritional information or item description. Displaying information in this way requires anyone using it (whether customers or nutritionists) to work this out and then to add together the values for the standard dish and the upgrade to work out the actual nutritional content. This raises questions about whether there ought to be guidelines about how nutritional information is displayed to maximise its usefulness (both for consumers and for nutritionists) and minimise confusion.

**Figure 6 – Calorie content of chips**



Based on 99 menu items. Includes potato fries/skins (including sweet potato fries), except where described as a starter/main course. Excludes children's portions. Excludes cheesy chips, chips with curry sauce, chips with pulled pork etc., but includes chips that are spiced or come with a dipping sauce (e.g. garlic mayo). Excludes chips advertised as part of a buffet where values are given per 100g only and actual portion size is unclear.

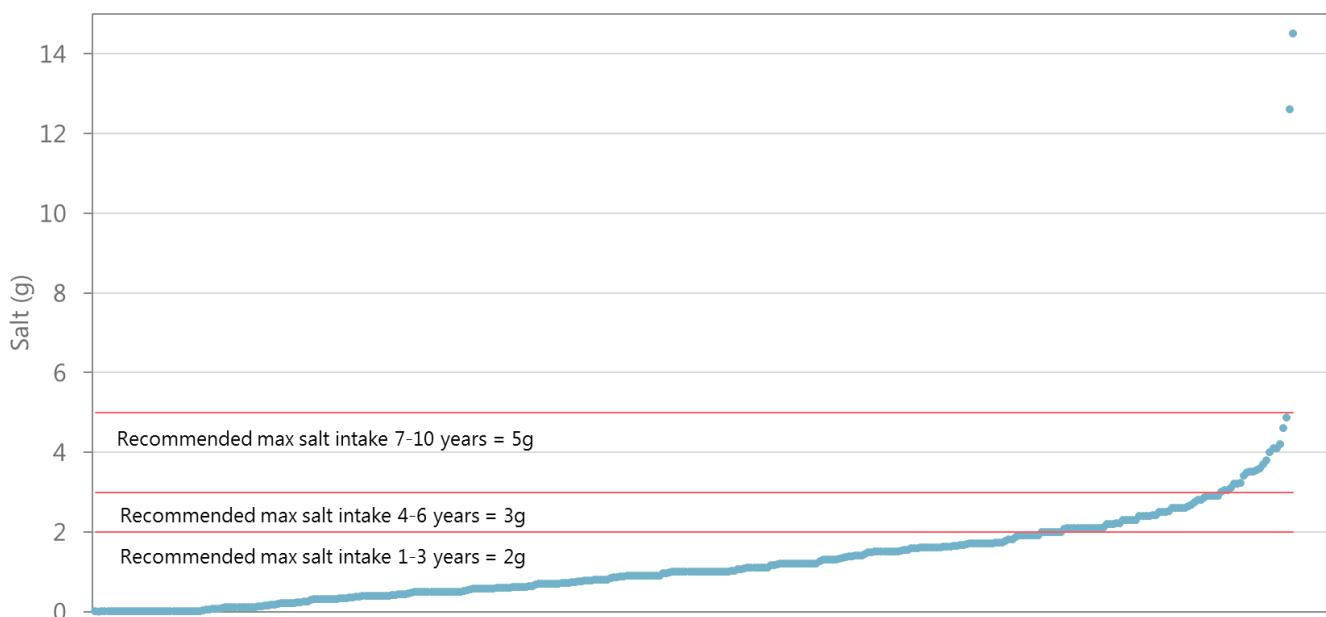
## Salt content of children's meals

It is recommended that babies and children under 11 should consume less salt than adults.<sup>29</sup> Current guidance is to aim for no more than 2 grams of salt a day for children aged 1-3, no more than 3 grams for 4-6 year-olds, and no more than 5 grams for 7-10 year-olds.

60% (n = 53) of all the out-of-home businesses in our sample offered a children's menu.<sup>30</sup> This proportion was similar (63%, n = 33) for those businesses that made nutritional information available online. Figure 7, below, shows the salt content of 377 children's dishes included in the collated dataset. **Around 1 in 5 children's dishes contains more than 2g of salt while around half of children's dishes contained over 1g of salt.**

Two dishes in the dataset have recorded salt values over 10g. Both have been double-checked against the original data taken from the business' website to ensure this was not a mistake in our data entry. However, these values may be as a result of input errors made on the business website. While the volume of dishes on the menus of some outlets means occasional errors are inevitable, this does highlight the degree to which consumers are reliant on the accuracy of businesses' nutritional data if they are to make effective use of it.

**Figure 7 – Salt content of children's dishes (grams)**



*Based on 377 children's menu items. Includes starters, sides and mains.*

<sup>29</sup> See Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (2003) *Salt and Health*, TSO, available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/338782/SACN\\_Salt\\_and\\_Health\\_report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/338782/SACN_Salt_and_Health_report.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> There were a further 7 businesses where it was unclear from the information provided online whether or not they had a children's menu.

# Conclusions

This report highlights the need to work with the out-of-home sector to improve the availability, quality, consistency and scope of nutritional information available to allow consumers to make informed choices when eating out.

## 1. Incomplete information

40% (n=34) of businesses in the sample did not make any nutritional information for their menu available online. Of the remaining businesses who did provide nutrition information online, most provided information on the kilocalorie, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content of all their menu items (55% of total sample). However, only 9 businesses in the sample provided information on the portion sizes of menu items, making it difficult to interpret the nutrition data and assess the composition of food offered when eating out.

## 2. Variation in format of nutritional information and inconsistency of menu item descriptions

This report also highlights variations in the format of businesses' nutritional information, and if they provided additional support to assist consumers in interpreting it. Where nutrition information was available, there was considerable variation in how it was presented. The most common format for this information was a detailed nutrition table available as a PDF which, in many cases, included data for many hundreds of menu items which may be difficult for consumers to interpret and use.

It was not always clear from the business descriptions of menu items what exactly was included in the calorie and nutrient values. The analysis of main menu items excluded starters, meal components and meal accompaniments. However, it was often unclear if sides or accompaniments were included within the nutritional values. Furthermore, there was variation in whether information was provided per component, or for a whole dish. This inconsistency in how menu items are described is likely to make it difficult for consumers to calculate the total calorie (or nutrient) content of their overall meals.

## 3. Salt content of children's meals

Recommendations for salt intakes are lower for children than adults. Recommended maximum intakes for children aged 1-3 is no more than 2 grams of salt a day, for 4-6 year-olds it is no more than 3 grams per day and for 7-10 year-olds it is no more than 5 grams. The report indicated that around half of the children's dishes in the sample contained over 1g of salt, while around 1 in 5 contained more than 2g of salt. Consumption of these dishes would therefore contribute considerably to intakes of salt in children, and in some cases may push children over their recommended maximum intake.

## 4. Calorie content of menu items

This report provides some insights into the range of calorie contents of menu items and highlights the proportion high in kilocalories. While some businesses have made efforts to offer and/or highlight lower kilocalorie items on their menu, the majority of main meals offered across the subsample of businesses, for which we could locate nutritional information, contained above 600 kilocalories while a quarter contained over 1000 kilocalories. Some items – like beef burgers – were almost always in excess of this level. However, as discussed above, it is not always clear whether the kilocalorie value stated on a business menu includes sides or accompaniments. As a result, the range of kilocalorie values reported will not necessarily represent the total kilocalorie content for an entire meal.

# Appendix 1 – list of businesses included in the sample

All Bar One	Coffee Republic	Little Chef	Sizzling Pub Company
AMT Coffee	Costa Coffee	Lloyds No 1	Spud-U-Like
Asda Café	Cote	Loch Fyne	Starbucks
Ask Pizza & Pasta	Dominos	Marks and Spencer's café	Stone Willy's Pizza
Azzurro	EAT	McDonald's	Subway
Barburrito	Ed's Easy Diner	Morrison's café	T.G.I. Fridays
BBs Coffee & Muffins	Five Guys	Muffin Break	Table Table
Beefeater	Flaming Grill Pubs	Nandos	Taylor Walker Pubs
Bella Italia	Frankie And Bennys	Odeon	Tesco's café
Bills	Garfunkels	O'Neill's	The Slug and Lettuce
Brewers Fayre	Giraffe	Papa Johns	Toby Carvery
Burger King	Gourmet Burger Kitchen	Pasty Shop	Two for One
Byron Burger	Greggs	Patisserie Valerie	Upper Crust
Cafe Nero	Harry Ramsdens	Perfect Pizza	Vue cinemas
Cafe Rouge	Harvester	Pizza Express	Wagamama
Café Thorntons	Hungry Horse	Pizza Hut	Wahaca
Carluccio's	Jamie's Italian	Pret A Manger	Wetherspoon
Chef and Brewer	John Barras Pubs	Prezzo	Whistle Stop
Chicken Cottage	John Lewis café	Quizno's	Wimpy
Chimichanga	KFC	Roosters Piri Piri	Yates
Chiquito	La Tasca	Sainsbury's café	Yo Sushi
Cineworld			Zizzi

## Appendix 2 – list of ‘broad food category’ codes

Pizza  
Burger / hot dog  
Steak  
Pasta dish  
Sandwich/wrap  
Main salad  
Hot breakfast item (inc. cooked bf)  
Other main  
Soup  
Bread starter/side  
Nachos  
Chips/fries (including sweet potato fries)  
Side salad  
Vegetable side  
Sauce/topping  
Other starter/side  
Other

## Appendix 3 – Summary of information available by business

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
All Bar One	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
AMT Coffee	QS Coffee	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Asda Café	Retail - Grocery	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Ask Pizza & Pasta	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Azzurro	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Barburrito	FSR Ethnic - Mexican/Spanish	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
BBs Coffee & Muffins	QS Coffee	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Beefeater	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Bella Italia	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Bills	FSR Other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Brewers Fayre	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Burger King	QS Burger	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
Byron Burger	QS Burger	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Cafe Nero	QS Coffee	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Cafe Rouge	FSR Ethnic - French	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Café Thorntons	QS Coffee	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Carluccio's	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Chef and Brewer	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Chicken Cottage	QS chicken	Yes (though non-standard format)	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Chimichanga	FSR Ethnic - Mexican/Spanish	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Chiquito	FSR Ethnic - Mexican/Spanish	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Cineworld	Leisure/entertainment	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
Coffee Republic	QS Coffee	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Costa Coffee	QS Coffee	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
Cote	FSR Ethnic - French	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Dominos	QS Pizza/pasta	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
EAT	QS Sandwich	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Ed's Easy Diner	FSR Other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Five Guys	FSR Other	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
Flaming Grill Pubs	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Frankie And Bennys	FSR Other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Garfunkels	FSR other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Giraffe	FSR Other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Gourmet Burger Kitchen	QS Burger	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Greggs	QS Bakery	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Harry Ramsdens	FSR Traditional	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Harvester	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Hungry Horse	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Jamie's Italian	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
John Barras Pubs	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
John Lewis café	Leisure/entertainment - in-store restaurant	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
KFC	QS chicken	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
La Tasca	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Little Chef	Leisure/entertainment - motorway services	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Lloyds No 1	Leisure/entertainment - bar/club	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Loch Fyne	FSR Other	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Marks and Spencer's café	Leisure/entertainment - in-store restaurant	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
McDonald's	QS Burger	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Morrison's café	Retail - Grocery	Not online, but some info on in-store menu	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	No	No	No	No
Muffin Break	QS Coffee	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Nandos	FSR Other	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Odeon	Leisure/entertainment		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for some items				
O'Neills	FSR Pub		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Papa Johns	QS Pizza/pasta		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Pasty Shop	QS Bakery		No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Patisserie Valerie	FSR Other		No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Perfect Pizza	QS Pizza/pasta		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	No			
Pizza Express	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Pizza Hut	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta		Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
Pret A Manger	QS Sandwich		Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Prezzo	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta		No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Quiznos	QS Sandwich	Yes, but unclear if for UK menu	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	No
Roosters Piri Piri	QS chicken	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Sainsbury's café	Retail - Grocery	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	Yes - for some items			
Sizzling Pub Company	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items
Spud-U-Like	QS Other	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	No
Starbucks	QS Coffee	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Stone Willy's Pizza	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Subway	QS Sandwich	Yes	Yes - full info	Yes - for all items				
T.G.I. Fridays	FSR Other	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	Yes - for all items	No	No
Table Table	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for some items				
Taylor Walker Pubs	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Tesco's café	Retail - Grocery	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
The Slug and Lettuce	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Toby Carvery	FSR Traditional	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Two for One	FSR Pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for some items				
Upper Crust	QS Sandwich	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Vue cinemas	Leisure/entertainment	Yes	Yes - partial info	Yes - for all items				
Wagamama	FSR Ethnic - japanese	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Wahaca	FSR Ethnic - Mexican/Spanish	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Wetherspoon	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Whistle Stop	QS Sandwich	No	No, no info available	No	No	No	No	No
Wimpy	QS Burger	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

Name of business	Type of business	Nutritional information available online for all/most items?	Portion size in grams?	Kcal?	Fat (g)?	Saturated fat (g)?	Sugar (g)?	Salt (g)?
Yates	FSR pub	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Yo Sushi	FSR Ethnic - japanese	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				
Zizzi	FSR Ethnic - Italian/Pizza/Pasta	Yes	No, no info available	Yes - for all items				

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### **About Ipsos MORI Scotland**

Ipsos MORI Scotland provides research focused on the distinct needs of policymakers and businesses in Scotland. We offer the full range of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and have a detailed understanding of specific sectors in Scotland, their policy challenges and their research needs. The variety of research we conduct gives us a unique insight into many aspects of life in Scotland.