## **Nutrition policy status in Northern Ireland**

NOURISHING policy index

This country snapshot presents detailed results of the **NOURISHING policy index** [1] for Northern Ireland. It highlights strengths and weaknesses in the design of national government nutrition policies. This snapshot supplements the policy index results with an in-depth look at the quality of policy design in each country. Full policy index results are outlined in the NOURISHING policy brief, which compares Northern Ireland to 29 other European countries.

## Main messages

- 1 Northern Ireland implements national government policy actions in nine out of the ten policy areas of the NOURISHING framework. Three policy areas received a good assessment: limits or removal of specific nutrients in food products (I1), increasing awareness on food and nutrition through communication campaigns and social marketing based on foodbased dietary guidelines (I2), and giving nutrition education and skills (G).
- 2 Within policy areas, weaknesses and gap were identified, for example, in the design of fruit and vegetable initiatives in schools and lack of measures on food and drink available in the immediate vicinity of schools impacted otherwise well-designed standards on food in schools (O). Similarly, gaps were identified with regards to unhealthy food advertising for young people through product design and packaging, point of sale measures, and in/around schools (R). Finally, current policy actions at national level to ensure coherence between food systems and health (H) can be strengthened.
- **3** No action was taken at national government level in nutrition advice and counselling in health care settings (N2); therefore, this policy area should be prioritised. Greater attention should be given to setting rules and incentives to create a healthy retail and food service environment (S).

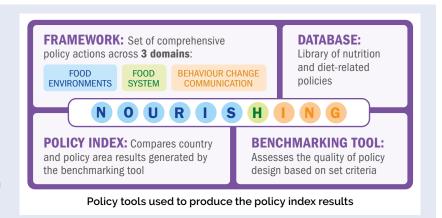
Overview of policy status	NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	POOR	FAIR	MODERATE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	
N Nutrition label standards and regulations on the use of claims and implied claims on food					MODERATE		
Offer healthy food and set standards in public institutions and other specific settings					MODERATE		
U Use economic tools to add	Use economic tools to address food affordability and purchase incentives					MODERATE	
R Restrict food advertising a	Restrict food advertising and other forms of commercial promotion					FAIR	
Improve nutritional quality	Improve nutritional quality of the whole food supply					GOOD	
S Set incentives and rules to	S Set incentives and rules to create a healthy retail and food service environment					POOR	
H Harness supply chain and	H Harness supply chain and actions across sectors to ensure coherence with health				FAIR		
Inform people about food	Inform people about food and nutrition through public awareness				GOOD		
Nutrition advice and coun	Nutrition advice and counselling in healthcare settings					NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	
G Give nutrition education and skills				GOOD			

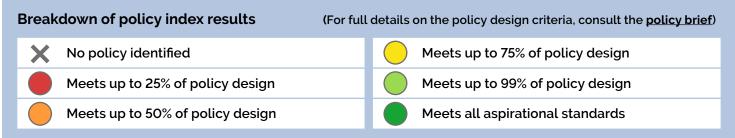
This snapshot is based on national level policies only, which include UK-wide and Northern Ireland-only policies issued by the UK government. Policies issued by provincial, regional or local governments are outside the scope of this project. Page 2 highlights which policy areas assess UK-wide or home nation policies.

## **Methods**

The NOURISHING policy index methods are fully explained in the associated **policy brief**. In short, the policy index combines values for a) policy presence, and b) policy design for 41 benchmarks.

The benchmarks are applied to policies in the **NOURISHING database** [2], collected through a comprehensive scan in 30 European countries, including Northern Ireland.





N	Nutrients on back of pack*	
	Front of pack labels*	
	Warning labels	X
	Rules on nutrient claims	
	Rules on health claims	
0	Food and drink available in schools, including restrictions on unhealthy foods	
	Measures relating to sugar-sweetened beverage provision in schools	
	Fruit and vegetables initiatives in schools	
	Food and drink available in immediate vicinity of schools	×
	Unhealthy food in out-of-education locations	
U	Health-related food taxes or tariffs	
	Income related subsidies or initiatives to increase affordability and accessibility of healthy food	×
	Targeted subsidies or initiatives to increase affordability and accessibility of healthy food	
R	Marketing to young people through advertising*	
	Direct marketing to young people	
	Marketing through sponsorship to young people	) ) X
	Marketing to young people through point of sale measures	×
	Marketing to young people through product placement and branding*	
	Marketing to young people through product design and packaging	×
	Marketing in/or around schools	×
	Limit or removal of specific nutrients in food products*	

Planning restrictions regarding food service outlets around schools  Planning restrictions on food service outlets  Initiatives to increase the availability of healthier food in stores and food service outlets  Measures to support food producers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain  Measures to support food manufacturers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain  Measures to support food retailers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain  Governance structures for multisectoral/stakeholder engagement*  Nutrition standards for public procurement  Supporting urban agriculture in health and planning policies  Community food production  Development and communication of food-based dietary guidelines  Public awareness, mass media and informational campaigns and social marketing on healthy eating*  Nutrition advice and counselling in primary care  Nutrition advice and counselling in school healthcare setting  Nutrition education in curricula  Training for educators  Training for health professionals			
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Primary care  Nutrition advice and counselling in school healthcare setting  Nutrition education in curricula  Training for educators  Training for health professionals		informational campaigns and social	
healthcare setting  Nutrition education in curricula  Training for educators  Training for health professionals	N	_	×
Training for educators  Training for health professionals		_	×
Training for health professionals	G	Nutrition education in curricula	
G		Training for educators	
Cooking skills		Training for health professionals	X
COOKING SKILLS		Cooking skills	
Training in schools in growing food		Training in schools in growing food	
Training for caterers		Training for caterers	

Note: The policy landscape in any country evolves over time. These findings reflect our knowledge as of May 2023. To see latest results and for further technical information on the policy indexes, please consult our website: wcrf.org/our-policy-work.

For feedback or suggested updates, please email policy@wcrf.org. More info in the CO-CREATE project can be found at co-create.eu

[1] Policy index: wcrf.org/nutrition-policy-index

[2] Policy database: policydatabase.wcrf.org





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This document reflects only the authors' views and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

