Environmental Protection Agency

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

FOOD WASTE: Attitudes and behaviours in Ireland 2021

Key Findings Report

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The EPA is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

Regulation: *Implementing regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.*

Knowledge: *Providing high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making.*

Advocacy: *Working with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental practices.*

Our responsibilities include:

Licensing

- Large-scale industrial, waste and petrol storage activities;
- Urban waste water discharges;
- The contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms;
- Sources of ionising radiation;
- Greenhouse gas emissions from industry and aviation through the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

National Environmental Enforcement

- Audit and inspection of EPA licensed facilities;
- Drive the implementation of best practice in regulated activities and facilities;
- Oversee local authority responsibilities for environmental protection;
- Regulate the quality of public drinking water and enforce urban waste water discharge authorisations;
- Assess and report on public and private drinking water quality;
- Coordinate a network of public service organisations to support action against environmental crime;
- Prosecute those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

Waste Management and Chemicals in the Environment

- Implement and enforce waste regulations including national enforcement issues;
- Prepare and publish national waste statistics and the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan;
- Develop and implement the National Waste Prevention Programme;
- Implement and report on legislation on the control of chemicals in the environment.

Water Management

- Engage with national and regional governance and operational structures to implement the Water Framework Directive;
- Monitor, assess and report on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters, bathing waters and groundwaters, and measurement of water levels and river flows.

Climate Science & Climate Change

- Publish Ireland's greenhouse gas emission inventories and projections;
- Provide the Secretariat to the Climate Change Advisory Council and support to the National Dialogue on Climate Action;
- Support National, EU and UN Climate Science and Policy development activities.

Environmental Monitoring & Assessment

- Design and implement national environmental monitoring systems: technology, data management, analysis and forecasting;
- Produce the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports;
- Monitor air quality and implement the EU Clean Air for Europe Directive, the Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution, and the National Emissions Ceiling Directive;
- Oversee the implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive;
- Assess the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment.
- Environmental Research and Development
- Coordinate and fund national environmental research activity to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions;
- Collaborate with national and EU environmental research activity.

Radiological Protection

- Monitoring radiation levels and assess public exposure to ionising radiation and electromagnetic fields;
- Assist in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents;
- Monitor developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety;
- Provide, or oversee the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

Guidance, Awareness Raising, and Accessible Information

- Provide independent evidence-based reporting, advice and guidance to Government, industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics;
- Promote the link between health and wellbeing, the economy and a clean environment;
- Promote environmental awareness including supporting behaviours for resource efficiency and climate transition;
- Promote radon testing in homes and workplaces and encourage remediation where necessary.

Partnership and networking

- Work with international and national agencies, regional and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, representative bodies and government departments to deliver environmental and radiological protection, research coordination and science-based decision making.

Management and structure of the EPA

The EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Evidence and Assessment
- Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by advisory committees who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.

FOOD WASTE: Attitudes and behaviours in Ireland

2021

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil
PO Box 3000, Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford, Ireland
Telephone: +353 53 9160600 Fax: +353 53 9160699
Email: info@epa.ie Website: www.epa.ie
Lo Call 1890 33 55 99

Published by Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

Disclaimer

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this publication, complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Neither the Environmental Protection Agency nor the author(s) accepts any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned, or claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full as a consequence of any person acting or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this publication. All or part of this publication may be reproduced without further permission, provided the source is acknowledged.

© Environmental Protection Agency 2022

This report is an output of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-led national Circular Economy Programme.

The Circular Economy Programme is a Government of Ireland initiative, funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

ISBN 978-1-80009-076-7

11/2022

Contents

Foreword		1
Key findings		2
Methodology		4
	Sampling	5
1.	Attention, concern and responsibility for food waste	6
	1.1 Attention and food waste behaviour	6
	1.2 Concern about food waste	7
	1.3 Attitudes to food waste	9
	1.4 Food waste and climate change	11
	1.5 Food waste knowledge	12
2.	Managing food at home	14
	2.1 Food management in the home	14
	2.2 Food waste in the home	16
	2.3 Reasons for food waste	17
	2.4 Food waste and shopping behaviours	18
3.	Food waste communications	21
	3.1 Promotion of food waste reduction	21
4.	Reflections	22
ANNEX 1 Survey Questions 2021		24

Foreword

Growing, processing and transporting food all use significant amounts of resources and when food is wasted, these resources are wasted too. From a climate perspective, food loss and waste is a major issue, contributing 8-10% of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

EU and national policy reflect the urgency and challenge of addressing food waste and the Government are preparing a National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap that will set out an overarching strategy and priority actions for the delivery of Ireland's target of halving food waste by 2030.

National waste statistics published by the EPA show that over 240,000 tonnes of food waste was generated by Irish households in 2020. Food waste prevention is a complex issue and insights on Irish citizens' attitudes towards food waste and food management behaviours provide evidence to design interventions to motivate behaviour change and inform awareness raising activities to prevent household food waste.

The EPA commissioned Behaviour & Attitudes Limited ('B&A') to conduct online nationally representative surveys of Irish citizens' attitudes towards food waste and food management behaviours. The first survey was conducted in 2020. This report presents the findings from the second nationally representative survey conducted at the end of 2021.

Through the Circular Economy Programme, the EPA-led food waste prevention programme drives awareness and action on food waste prevention, and develops supports leading to measured reduction in food waste in households and businesses. Stop Food Waste is the national public-facing programme for household food waste prevention. The programme is delivered through the application of behavioural insights to interventions and awareness campaigns, to achieve widespread public awareness of environmental and social issues around wasted food; leading to a significant increase in the number of people taking action on the issue. Insights from these nationally representative surveys are being used to inform the evidence-based approach for programme activities, in particular to identify target audiences and key messages for Stop Food Waste awareness communications. For example, a key finding of the baseline survey conducted in 2020 was that while the large majority of the population are aware of the challenges of food waste and agree that is it an important national issue, for most it is not top of mind during their day-to-day, and the large majority of the population also feel that they are not the ones contributing most towards the problem. Based on these findings, ongoing communications and awareness raising aim to make people aware of how much food they are wasting, and how they can take actions in their day-to-day life to reduce the food they waste.

The findings from this second nationally representative survey conducted at the end of 2021 continue to inform the evidence-led approach to raise awareness and motivate behaviour change to reduce food waste through the national Stop Food Waste campaign. A key finding of this 2021 survey is that one of the key factors contributing to food waste generation is a lack of planning. While people report they are taking some actions like checking what food they have in the fridge, there is a need to focus communications on encouraging a range of simple good behaviours around food and meal planning. This has been the focus of communications and awareness raising messaging in 2022.

Repeating this research at regular intervals will also provide trends to monitor changes in engagement and factors that influence food waste, and track Irish citizens' behaviour changes towards food. In the longer term, this data will allow measurement of the effectiveness of the programme in terms of waste prevented, behaviour changes and public awareness of the food waste issue. These surveys will be supported through regular waste characterisation studies and national waste statistics to track changes in household food waste.

epa
STOPFoodWaste.ie

Key findings

Attitudes	82% agree that food waste is an important national issue and 16% of the population see food waste as the most concerning food issue for them. This is up from 12% compared to findings from a similar EPA study in 2020. 88% agree that everyone has a responsibility to minimise the food they throw away. However, 59% believe that they only waste a small amount of food, with only 4% stating that they waste a large amount of food. Despite the strong recognition of food waste as an important issue, just 62% agree 'minimising food waste' is a top priority for them. 53% of the population see clear links between *'throwing away food that could have been eaten'* and *'recycling food waste'* with climate change. This is more likely in older age cohorts with 65% of those aged 65+ see a clear link compared to 37% of the 16-24 age cohort. 60% of people include the price of food in their top 5 food issues, with 25% of the population seeing the price of food as the most concerning food issue for them. 77% of the population say they are extremely/moderately concerned about 'the waste money from throwing out uneaten food'. The younger age cohort are least concerned, while those over 65 are most concerned.
Behaviours	When asked to consider 'how good' or 'not' they are at specific food management behaviours in the home, the majority rate themselves poorly at managing food in their home, with few differences emerging between age and gender. ● Only 12% rate themselves as good at keeping track of food in the fridge (e.g. knowing what food there is to use and when). ● 37% rate themselves good at *'checking serving/portion size guidance on food packs'*, and 34% rating themselves good at *'checking information on food packs to find out how long items can be frozen for'*. ● 74% of people also feel that they are poor at *'organising my food in the cupboard'* and 79% rate themselves poorly at *'organising my food in the fridge'*. 74% of the population are checking their fridge, 70% check their cupboards and 65% are making a list before doing a shop. Those who actively think about food waste are more likely to check their fridge and are more likely to make a shopping list – highlighting that planning ahead is a behaviour that could contribute to a reduction in food waste in the home. Those who claim to waste no food are far more likely to write a shopping list (41%) – highlighting how this behaviour can improve food waste reduction. However, planning does not appear to be an inherent behaviour for many, with just 47% stating that they *'planned ahead meals for the week'* and only 35% say that they *'checked which days I/we needed to cook meals for'*.
	This research shows a lack of planning and management around the use of food; only 14% always plan dinners for week ahead, only 12% always judge/weigh portions and 15% always organise the fridge. 83% of the population either always or regularly prepare dinners at home. 77% either always or regularly prepare lunches at home. However, only 36% always or regularly plan for lunches and 48% plan dinners for the week ahead. This represents a gap, in which a large proportion of the population are not adequately planning for the meals that they are preparing at home.

Knowledge	There appears to be a lack of knowledge of how to reduce food waste amongst the 16-34 age cohorts (2 in 5 of these age cohorts stating they would like to reduce food waste but that they 'don't know how'). This group also tend to be the most significant food wasters in the population and rate themselves poorly on food management behaviours. The large majority of the population correctly understand what 'best before' (84%) and 'use-by' (72%) date labels on food products mean. However there is some confusion around best practice behaviours around date labels with 58% incorrectly believe that food must be frozen on the day of purchase, and just 55% correctly stating that food can be frozen up until the 'use-by' date. 28% of people either misunderstand what the 'use-by' date on food means or stating that they 'don't know' highlighting a potential need for communications and education in these areas
Food waste indicators	Bread, fruit, vegetables, leftovers from the fridge and salad are the types of food thrown out most frequently. 71% of people said passing the 'Use By' date is the most common reason for throwing away food. About half of the population say that not using leftovers, passing the 'best before' dates and plans changing are key reasons for their food waste. 38% of the 16-24 year old cohort say that they waste a large or moderate amount of food. 40% of the young family age cohorts (35-44 year olds) also state that they waste a large or moderate amount of food.
Communications	Television is the primary medium in which people have seen or heard about food waste in the past year. However, for younger cohorts social media also has a prominent role for food waste information. Therefore, a multi-channel media strategy is required in order to reach all cohorts in society.

Methodology

Fieldwork for this second national representative survey was conducted in November 2021. The 22-question online survey[1] was conducted through the B&A online research panel (nationally representative sample of 1,013 adults aged 16+ and quota controlled in terms of gender, age, socio-economic status, region and area).

The survey covered the following areas:

- Attitudes towards food waste
- Food waste behaviours
- Managing food waste at home
- Shopping behaviour
- Communications about food waste

In 2020, the first national representative survey (online; 1,000 adults aged 16+) was completed between 4 and 14 September to provide baseline data on Irish citizens' attitudes to food waste and the level of consciousness of any positive actions being taken to reduce it. As part of this work, a food waste segmentation analysis of the Irish population in October 2020 was conducted to understand the underlying motivations of various groups in the population, and to identify who to target with household food waste awareness and prevention activities.

This second survey in 2021 provides an understanding of the current situation in terms of Irish citizens' attitudes, awareness and behaviours relating to food waste, and allows for trend analysis with the 2020 survey, to track Irish citizens' behaviour changes towards managing food. The research has provided evidence and insights to direct national communications and interventions on household food waste prevention.

Images in this report highlight the results of this 2021 survey, and the 2020 data are referenced in the narrative as appropriate.

Answers are expressed as statistically significant when the difference between cohorts cannot be explained by a standard 2-3% margin of error. When comparing data from one year to the next, for example comparing answers to a question asked in 2020 with answers from the same question repeated in 2021, a change greater than the margin of error of the sample is considered statistically significant.

1 See Annex 1 for 2021 survey questions

Sampling

The sample was drawn using a similar approach to face-to-face interviewing. Quota controls were used in line with the population as defined by the Central Statistics Office as set out below.

Gender	
Male	51%
Female	49%
Age	
16-24	10%
25-34	17%
35-44	21%
45-54	21%
55-64	15%
65+	16%
Region	
Dublin	29%
Rest of Leinster	26%
Munster	27%
Connaught/Ulster	18%

Sample selection is controlled by the panel management team. When extracting samples, individuals are randomly selected within the survey target groupings. All samples are randomised prior to deployment. Samples can be deployed in terms of demographic batches or regionally.

Surveying was also spread over weekdays and weekends to ensure that qualitatively a very broad selection of adults from all walks of life are included. Information is collected on work and family status so that each respondent could be allocated to a life stage. Standard demographics are also captured so that differences could be identified in terms of gender, age, social class, region and area.

Data processing was conducted by B&A including the coding of open-ended questions. The data was weighted to population (CSO) so that population estimates could be reported.

1. Attention, concern and responsibility for food waste

1.1 Attention and food waste behaviour

Over half of the population (56%) say that they actively think about food waste, with the highest attention to food waste amongst the 55+ age cohort. In fact, 61% of this age cohort say that they always or regularly think about food waste. In contrast, younger age groups are the least likely age group to think about food waste, with only 41% of 16-24 year olds outlining that they think about it always or regularly.

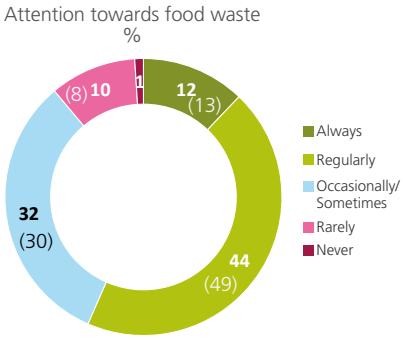
Similar to the findings in 2020, a large proportion of the population still believe that they only waste a small amount of food (59%). As such, getting people to adopt good food reduction behaviours may be challenging as many do not acknowledge that they are key contributors to the problem.

However, there is a proportion of the population who do believe that they waste more. In fact, over a quarter (27%) believe that they waste a moderate amount of food, with a further 4% saying they waste a large amount of food.

Figure 1: To what extent had you thought about food waste before today? Realistically, how much food do you waste?

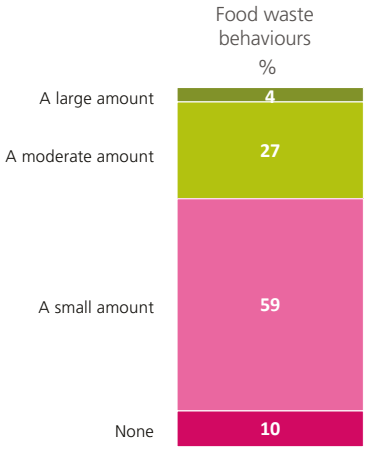
Attention towards food waste

Base: All respondents: 1,013
2020 data = ()



ANY ALWAYS/ REGULARLY 56% (62%)

Q.2b To what extent had you thought about food waste before today?



ANY LARGE/MODERATE 31% (32%)

40% (32) 35-44 year olds
37% (32) kids in HH

Q.2c Realistically, how much food do you think you waste?

Table 1: **Realistically, how much food do you think you waste? (By age group).**

	Total	Age					
		16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
UNWTD	**1013**	**106**	**169**	**211**	**215**	**151**	**161**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A large amount	4	7	4	4	3	5	2
A moderate amount	27	31	28	36	27	21	20
A small amount	59	59	61	52	62	62	61
None	10	3	7	8	9	13	17
Large/moderate amount 2021	**31**	**38**	**32**	**40**	**29**	**25**	**22**
(Large/moderate amount 2020)	(30)	(34)	(37)	(32)	(31)	(27)	(19)

When it comes to amounts of food wasted by different age groups (Table 1), the 16-24 year old cohort appear to be significant food wasters with 38% saying that they waste a large or moderate amount of food. There also appears to be a high level of food waste amongst the young family age cohorts (35-44 year olds) with 40% of them stating that they waste a large or moderate amount of food. The increase in claimed food waste among the 35-44 age cohort (young families) since the 2020 research (any large/moderate 32%) could be down to more time spent in the home due to the Covid-19 lockdowns throughout 2021. Some age groups show no significant change which may be down to maintaining better food management behaviours adopted during Covid-19 lockdowns. And 10% of the population say that they waste no food at all, with this highest amongst the 65+ age cohort (17%).

1.2 Concern about food waste

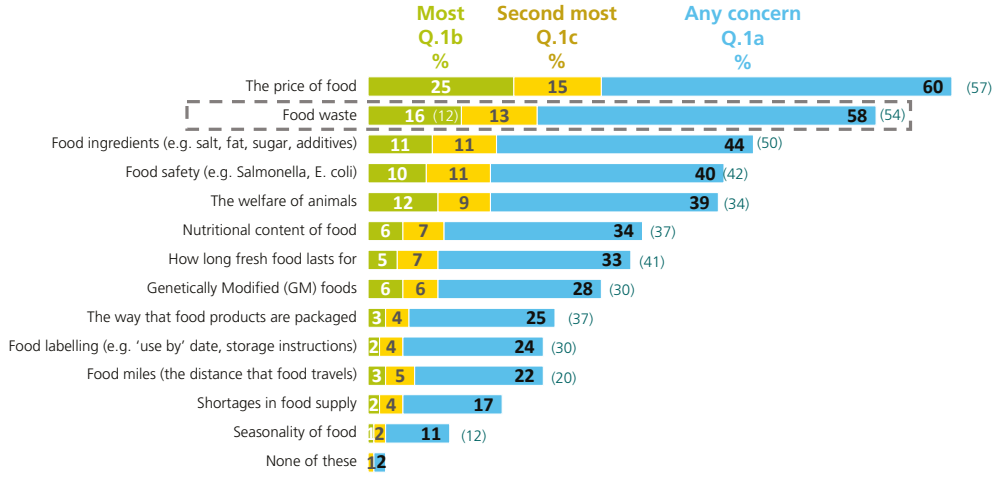
Food waste remains the second most concerning food issue amongst the Irish population, with 58% of people including it in their top five food issues. Since the last study in 2020, there has been a modest increase in the 'any concern for food waste' score (+4% points), highlighting that food waste is still firmly on the agenda as an issue for the Irish population.

In terms of demographics, concern for food waste is high across all age groups, however, concern does peak amongst those over the age of 65 - with 63% saying that it is a concern for them. Consistent with their lower levels of attention towards food waste, the 16-24 age cohort are the least concerned - with only 47% of this age cohort selecting it as a concern for them. As found in the 2020 study, the price of food is the most concerning issue to the Irish population - with 3 in 5 (60%) of people including the price of food in their top 5 food issues. In fact, 25% of the population see the price of food as the most concerning food issue for them. Over 65s appear the least concerned about price, however rising costs in 2021 may be contributing to the 11% point jump in concern of food prices versus the 2020 study (50% in 2021 vs 39% in 2020).

Figure 2: **a: Which if any of the following food issues most concern you?**
b: And which one is of MOST concern to you?
c: And which is second most concerning to you?
CHOOSE UP TO 5 OPTIONS

Concerns about food issues

Base: All respondents: 1,013
2020 data = ()



Q.1a Which if any of the following food issues most concern you? CHOOSE UP TO 5 OPTIONS.
Q.1b And which one is of MOST concern to you?
Q.1c And which is second most concerning to you?

In addition to food waste and price, there has also been some developments in the attitudes of the population towards the welfare of animals, with 39% stating it as a concern in 2021 compared to 34% in 2020. This is an interesting development that may be trending upwards reflecting the increased levels of interest in vegetarian and vegan options amongst the Irish population.

There has also been a decrease in concern for 'how long food lasts for' and 'the way that food products are packaged'. This is somewhat expected, due to shoppers having greater flexibility in their ability to visit shops in 2021 compared to stricter lockdowns in 2020, where people tended to take fewer trips to the supermarket and tended to also buy more often in bulk (meaning longevity of produce and durability was more important at that point in time).

In the analysis, the population can be divided into two broad groups. Firstly those who have 'higher attention to food waste' and secondly those who have 'lower attention to food waste'. Amongst those who have higher attention to food waste (those who always or regularly think about food waste) they tend to over-index* in their concern for the following food issues (meaning these food issues tend to be more important to them relative to the general population);

- Food waste (66% any concern, compared to 58% in the total population)
- The way products are packaged (31% any concern, compared to 25% in the total population)
- The welfare of animals (43% any concern, compared to a 39% average)
- And the amount of food miles (27% any concern, compared to a 22% average)

**When a cohort of the population 'over-index', it means that there is a statistically significant difference in terms of the attitudes or behaviours compared to the average of the population.*

Amongst those who have 'lower attention to food waste' they tend to over index in their concern for;

- The price of food (65% any concern, compared to a 60% average)
- How long fresh food lasts for (37% any concern, compared to a 33% average)

These results suggest that those who think about food waste more often tend to be more 'environmentally focused' (e.g. greater concern for packaging, animal welfare, food miles). With those who have lower attention to food waste more concerned about functional elements such as price and longevity of food produce. This has implications for how to communicate with these audiences. For example, those who have higher attention to food waste are likely to be more open to communications around more emotional areas such as animal welfare, impact on sustainability, etc., whereas those who have lower attention are likely going to be most motivated by functional communications that outlines potential cost savings or how to prolong food longevity.

When asked to focus their attention on food waste in particular, there is high concern for financial loss from wasting food, with 77% saying they were extremely/moderately concerned about *'the waste money from throwing out uneaten food'*. The younger age cohort are least concerned, while those over 65 are most concerned.

1.3 Attitudes to food waste

The large majority of the population see food waste as an important issue that needs to be tackled:

- 82% agree that *food waste is an important national issue*
- 88% agree that *everyone has a responsibility to minimise the food they throw away*
- 77% agree that *food waste* is an *important environmental issue like climate change*
- 77% agree that *food waste should be one of Ireland's top priorities.*

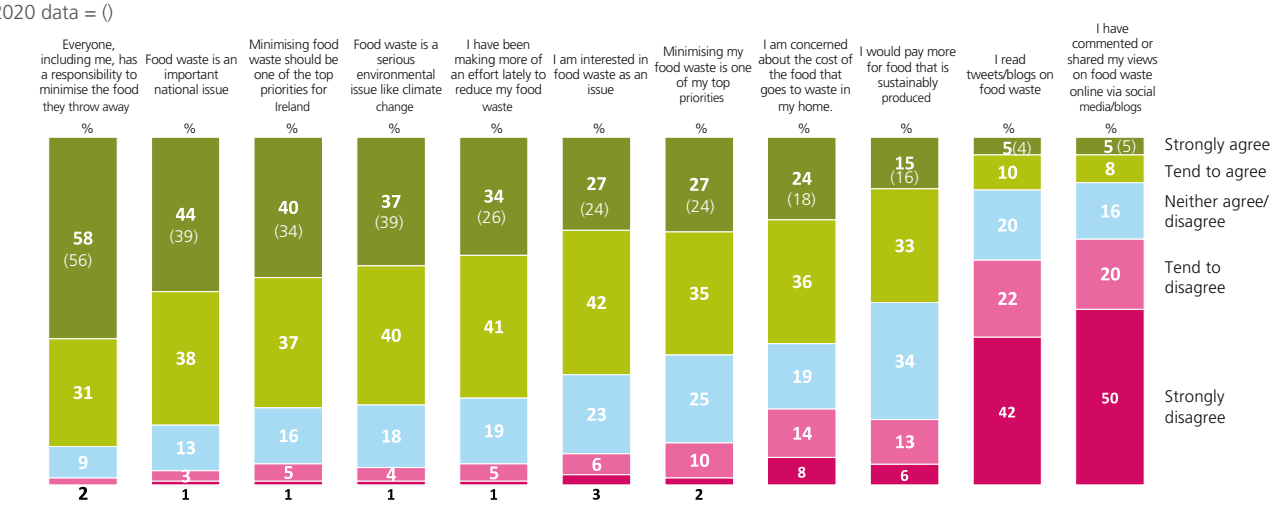
Despite the strong recognition of food waste as an important issue, less than 2 in 3 people (62%) agree *'minimising food waste'* is a top priority for them.

There is a proportion of the population who are making a sustained effort. Over a third (34%) strongly agree that they have been *'making more of an effort lately to reduce food waste'* (compared to a quarter (26%) in last year's report). In addition, over a quarter (27%) strongly agree that minimizing food waste is one of their top priorities. In the past year, there has also been an increase in the 'strongly agree' scores for the statement *'minimising food waste should be one of the top priorities for Ireland' (40% in 2021 vs 34% in 2020)* – indicating increased concern amongst the population.

Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Attitudes towards food waste

Base: All respondents: 1,013
2020 data = ()



NET (Agree)	88	82	77	77	74	68	62	60	47	15	14
NET (Disagree)	2	5	7	5	7	9	13	21	18	64	70

Q.13To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

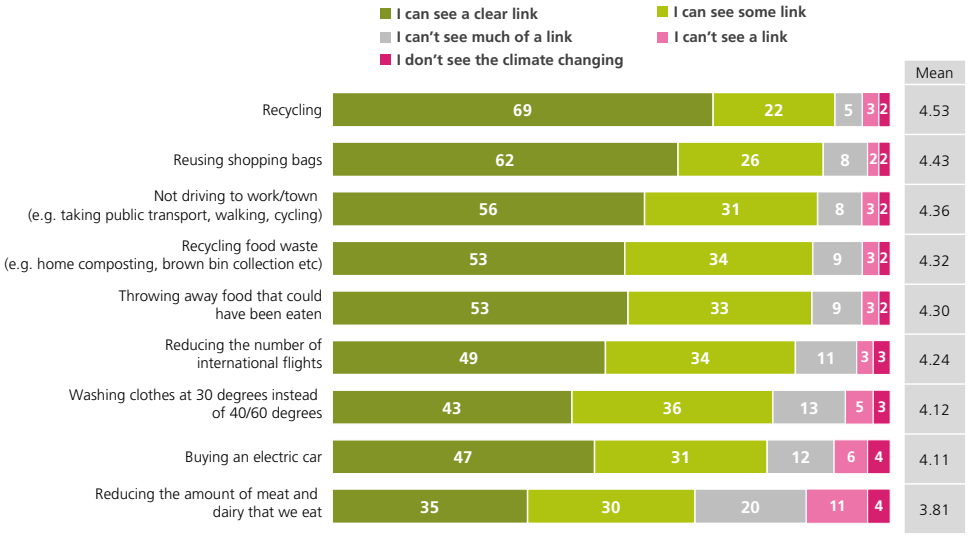
However, many people in the population are less action orientated on food waste. This research found that one of the potential ways that action on food waste could be improved is around consumer education. Nearly a third (29%) of the population agree that they *'would like to reduce their food waste but don't know how'*. This problem appears heightened amongst the younger population, with 41% 25-34 age cohort agreeing and 45% of 16-24 year olds agreeing that they *'would like to reduce their food waste but don't know how'*, compared to only 18% of 55-64 year olds and 17% of over 65s. This data aligns with similar findings in 2020 and reinforces the idea that there is a potential educational gap in terms of knowing how to reduce food waste for the 16-34 year old cohort in particular.

1.4 Food waste and climate change

Figure 4: To what extent do you see the link between the following statements and climate change?

Link between food waste and climate change?

Base: All respondents: 1,013



Q.14 To what extent do you see the link between the following statements and climate change?

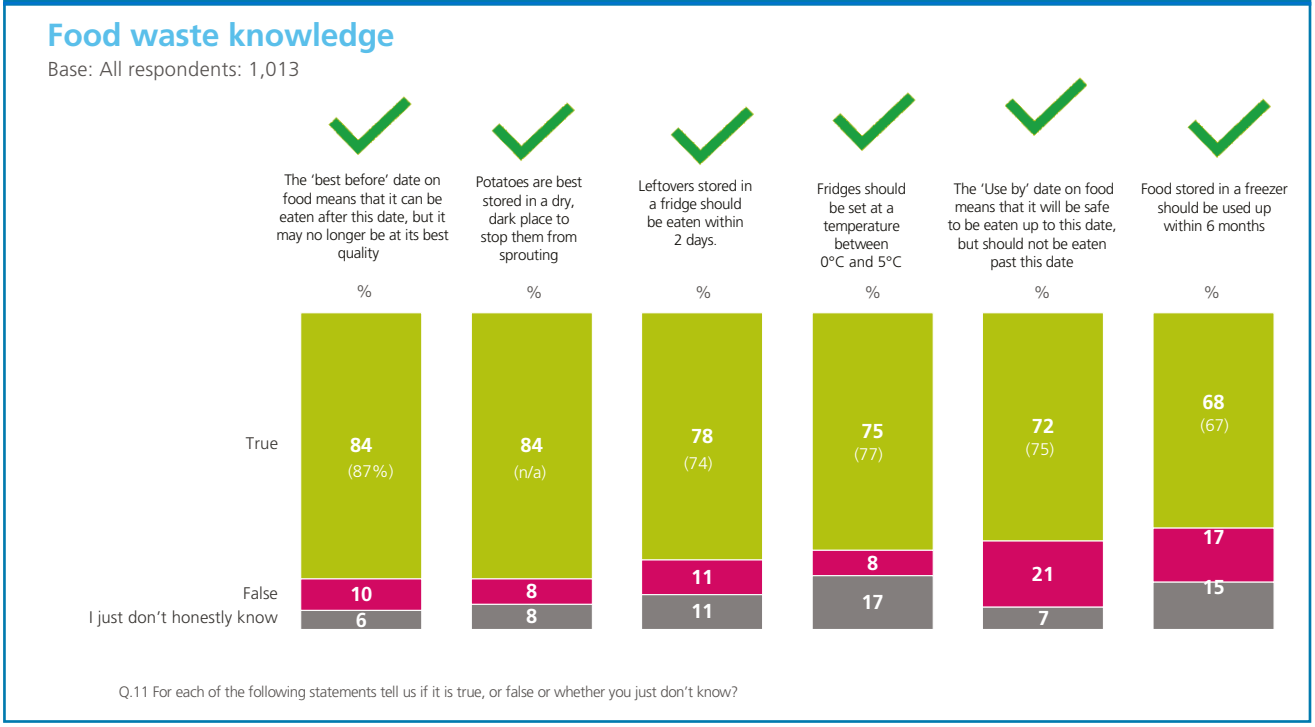
There appears to be some understanding of the link between food waste and climate change with over half (53%) of the population able to see 'clear links' between *'throwing away food that could have been eaten'* and *'recycling food waste'* with climate change. Older age cohorts are more likely to see a 'clear link' between *'throwing away food that could have been eaten'* and climate change, with nearly 2 in 3 (65%) of those aged 65+ seeing a 'clear link' compared to only just over a third (37%) of the 16-24 age cohort.

Over a third (35%) can clearly see the link between *'reducing the amount of meat and dairy that we eat'* with climate change. The associations between *'recycling' and 'reusing shopping bags'* tend to have the strongest overall mental association with climate change.

1.5 Food waste knowledge

The large majority correctly understand what 'best before' (84%) and 'use-by' (72%) communications on food products means. However, confusion exists for some in understanding what 'use-by' dates on food products means, with nearly 3 in 10 (28%) of people either misunderstanding what the 'use-by' date on food means or stating that they *'don't know'*.

Figure 5: For each of the following statements tell us if it is true, or false or whether you just don't know? *(The tick indicates the correct answer)*

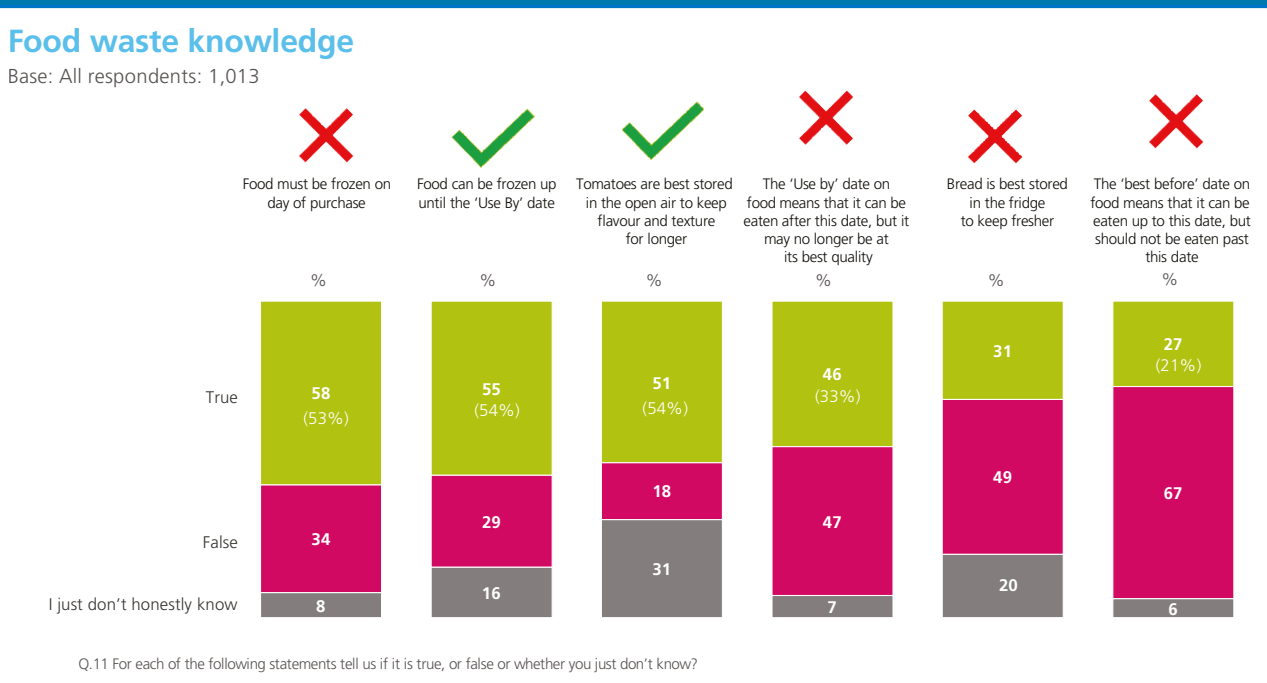


Q.11 For each of the following statements tell us if it is true, or false or whether you just don't know?

The 55+ age cohort appear to be the most likely age cohort to be unsure of what the 'use-by' date on food means - with over a third (35%) of them either incorrectly stating what the 'use-by' date on food means, or stating that they *'don't know'.*

In addition, across the entire population, 1 in 10 incorrectly state what the 'best before' date on food means, with a further 6% stating that they *'don't know'.*

Figure 6: For each of the following statements tell us if it is true, or false or whether you just don't know?



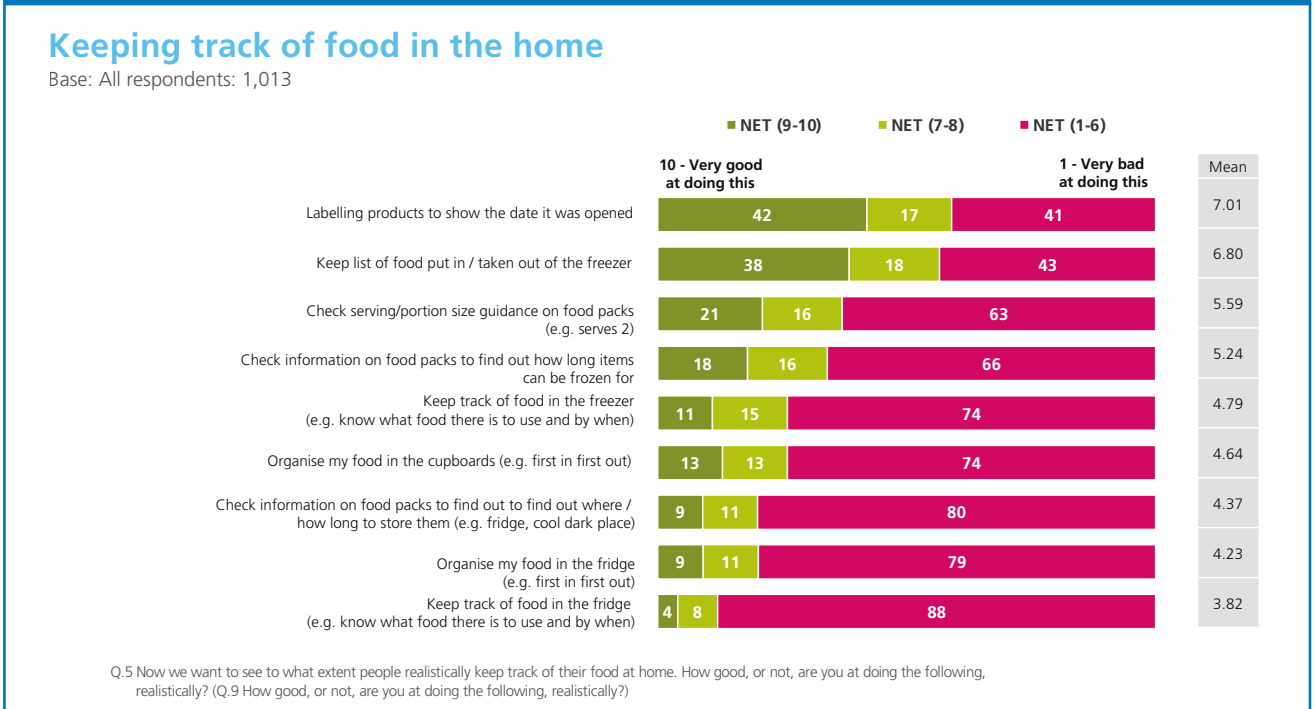
There are also other areas where knowledge on best practice amongst the population is lower as well. Over half of the population (58%) incorrectly believe that food must be frozen on the day of purchase, with only over a half (55%) correctly stating that food can be frozen up until the 'use-by' date. The low knowledge amongst the population highlights a potential need for communications and education in these areas.

2. Managing food at home

2.1 Food management in the home

When asked to consider 'how good' or 'not' they are at specific food management behaviours in the home, the majority rate themselves poorly at managing food in their home, with few differences emerging between age and gender.

Figure 7: Now we want to see to what extent people realistically keep track of their food at home. How good, or not, are you at doing the following, realistically?



Q.5 Now we want to see to what extent people realistically keep track of their food at home. How good, or not, are you at doing the following, realistically? (Q.9 How good, or not, are you at doing the following, realistically?)

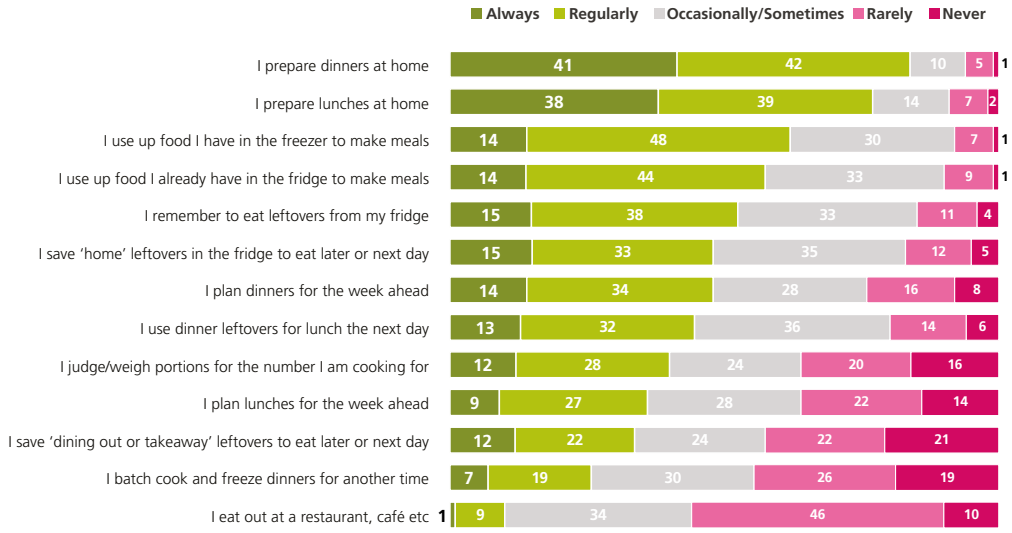
Only a little over a third (37%) rate themselves good at *'checking serving/portion size guidance on food packs'*, with a further third (34%) rating themselves good at *'checking information on food packs to find out how long items can be frozen for'*. Only 1 in 8 (12%) rate themselves as good at keeping track of food in the fridge (e.g. knowing what food there is to use and when). People also feel that they are poor at *'organising my food in the cupboard' and 'organising my food in the fridge' .*

These low scores indicate that many 'good' food waste reduction behaviours are not consistently practiced behaviours for the majority of the population and many struggle in their ability to plan for and manage the food that they have in their homes.

Figure 8: Thinking over the past 12 months, for each statement please choose one of the following.

Household food behaviour

Base: All respondents: 1,013



Q.10 Thinking over the past 12 months, for each statement please choose one of the following.

In terms of actual household food behaviour, preparing dinner and lunches at home is commonplace with over 8 in 10 (83%) either always or regularly prepare dinners at home with over three quarters (77%) of the population either always or regularly preparing lunches at home.

However, there is a far lower percentage of the population who are always or regularly planning for lunches (36%) or dinners (48%) for the week ahead.

This represents a gap, in which a large proportion of the population are not adequately planning for the meals that they are preparing at home.

Some research on the determinants of food waste indicate that planning routines can help reduce food waste because they can limit risk of over purchasing, impulse purchasing or purchase of novel ingredients that are used in small portions with remainder going to waste. In particular planning and shopping routines can be important predictors of food waste. [2]

This lack of planning evidenced in Irish citizens' household food behaviours therefore likely increases food waste in the home and communications that highlight the importance of planning meals should be considered.

2 Stefan, V., van Herpen, E., Tudoran, A. A., & Lähteenmäki, L. (2013). Avoiding food waste by Romanian consumers: The importance of planning and shopping routines. Food Quality and Preferences, 28(1), 375-381.

2.2 Food waste in the home

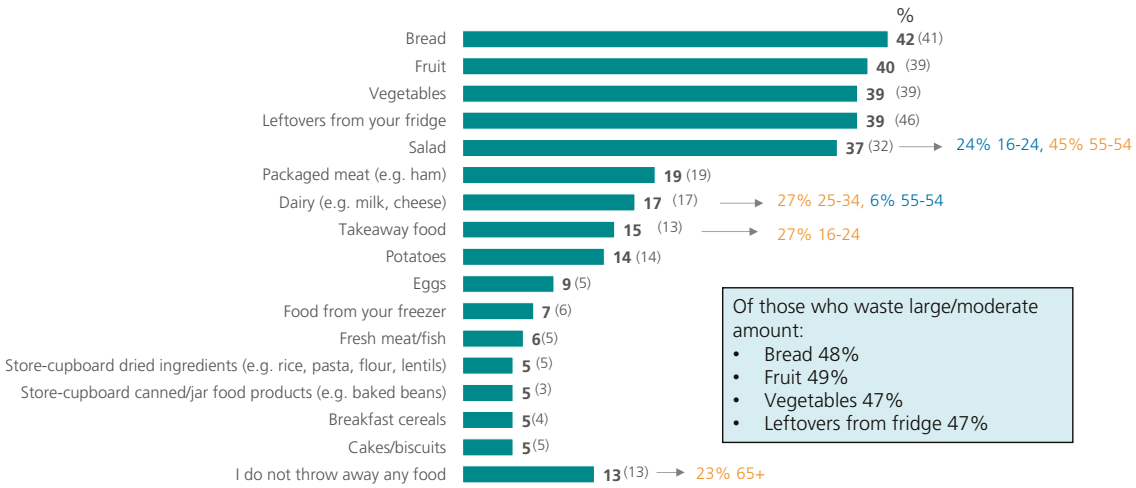
Leftovers from the fridge (39%), bread (42%), vegetables (39%) and fruit (40%) remain the most common types of food that are thrown out in the home. Of those who waste large/moderate amounts of food, they tend to throw out more bread (48%), vegetables (47%), fruit (49%) and leftovers from the fridge (47%).

This insight highlights some key problem areas in terms of which foods are thrown away more frequently amongst heavier food wasters. In the past year, there appears to have been a slight decrease in some foods that are wasted (e.g. salads down -5% points). However, by and large the type of food that is wasted in the home remains unchanged from 2020.

Figure 9: What types of food do you throw out in your household most often?

Types of food wasted in the home

Base: All respondents: 1,013
2020 data = ()



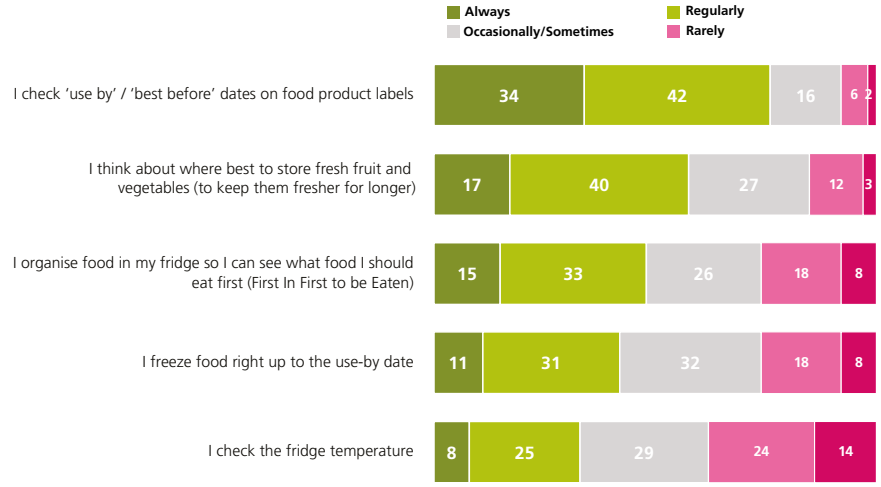
Q.6 What types of food do you throw out in your household most often?
(Q.10 What types of food do you throw out in your household most often?)

Targeting these higher frequency and volume food categories and encouraging people to be more aware of their waste in these categories could have a high impact on the volume of food waste that is generated each year.

Figure 10: Thinking over the past year, for each statement please choose one of the following.

Keeping track of food in the home

Base: All respondents: 1,013



Q.12 Thinking over the past year, for each statement please choose one of the following.

When keeping track of food in the home, there appears to be a high level of adherence to checking 'use by / best before' dates on food product labels at home, with over three quarters (76%) stating that they do this always or regularly. In addition, well over half the population (58%) *'think about where best to store fresh fruit and vegetables' and nearly half (48%) claim to 'organise food in my fridge so I can see what food I should eat first'*.

These figures are encouraging and show that a sizable proportion of the population are carrying out good food management behaviours in the home. However, there is still a large proportion of the population who only 'occasionally/sometimes' or 'rarely/never' doing many of these food management behaviours.

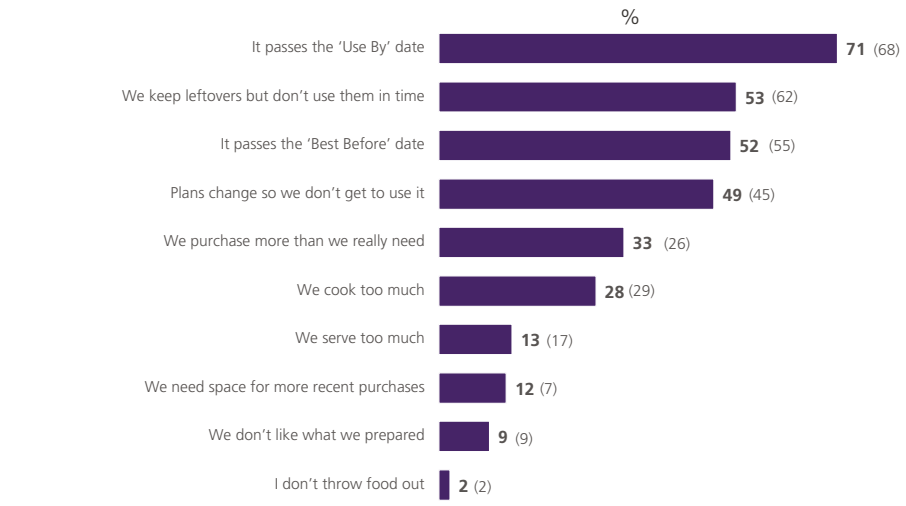
This highlights a need for further engagement in these area as these behaviours are important to reducing food waste in the home.

2.3 Reasons for food waste

Passing the 'Use By' date is the most common reason for throwing away food, with nearly three quarters of people (71%) naming this as one of their top reasons. In addition, about half of the population outline that not using leftovers, passing the 'best before' dates and plans changing are key reasons for their food waste.

These reasons for food waste all suggest that encouraging better planning and management of food appears to be an important area of focus. Cooking too much and purchasing too much is given as a reason by about a third of people – and again this is an area that could be potentially improved with better food planning, portion sizes and management behaviours.

Figure 11: From the list below, what are the main reasons you throw out food in your household? Please list your top 4.



Q.7 For the list below, what are the main reasons you throw out food in your household Please list your top 4?
Q.11 From the list below, what are the main reasons you throw out food in your household?

There has been some changes in reasons for food waste within the past year. There appears to have been a decrease in the amount of people throwing out food because *'we keep leftovers but don't use them in time'* (53% in 2021 vs 62% in 2020), but an increase in the amount of people who claim to waste food because they *'purchased more that they really needed'* to (33% in 2021 vs 26% in 2020). This potentially is influencing the increase in the number of people who threw out food because they '*needed more space for more recent purchases'* (12% in 2021 vs 7% in 2020).

2.4 Food waste and shopping behaviours

Much of the population are carrying out some positive food waste reduction behaviours when it comes to shopping.

Although slightly down on last year, three quarters of the population (74% in 2021 vs 81% in 2020) say they check what is in the fridge before shopping to see what they needed to buy, and 70% of people check their cupboards before doing a food shop (vs 74% in 2020).

However, planning does not appear to be an inherent behaviour for many, with less than half (47%) stating that they *'planned ahead meals for the week'* and only a third (35%) say that they '*checked which days I/we needed to cook meals for'.*

Those who actively think about food waste are more likely to check their fridge and are considerably more likely to make a list. This highlights some of the 'good behaviours' that are followed by those who are more conscious of food waste on a day-to-day basis.

- *'Checked what was already in the fridge to see what I needed to buy':*
  - 80% for those who actively think about food waste.
  - 66% for those who have limited/no attention to food waste.

- *'Checked what food was already in the cupboards to see what I needed to buy':*
  - 75% for those who actively think about food waste.
  - 63% for those who have limited/no attention to food waste.
- *'Checked what food was already in the freezer to see what I needed to buy':*
  - 68% for those who actively think about food waste.
  - 56% for those who have limited/no attention to food waste.

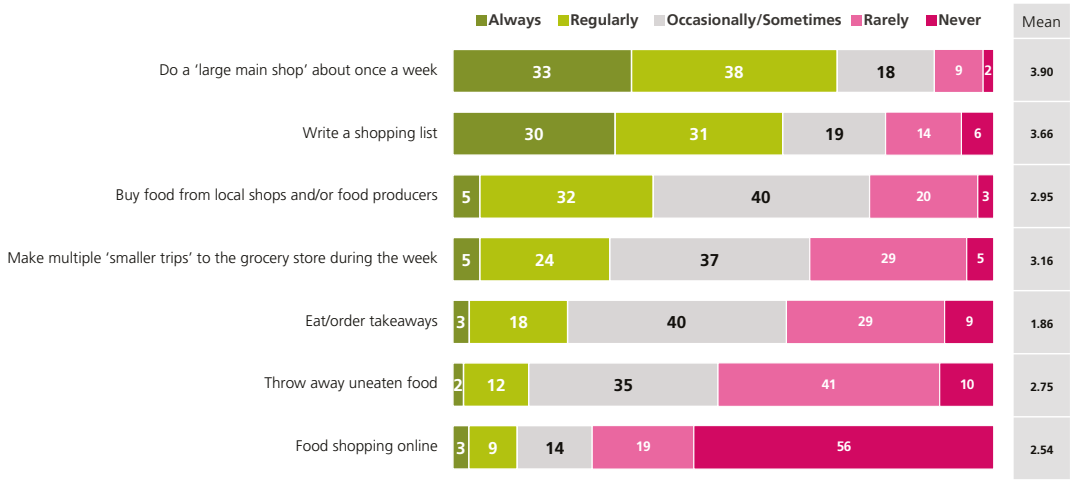
Figure 12: Please think about the last time that you did a food shop. Did you do any of the following?

When shopping, a third (33%) state that they do a 'large main shop' about once a week and just under a third (30%) state that they 'write a shopping list'. Those who claim to waste no food are far more likely to write a shopping list (41%) – highlighting how this behaviour can improve food waste reduction. Younger age cohorts are far more likely to eat/order takeaways with 33% of those under 35 doing so – likely due to a more on the go lifestyle.

Figure 13: Thinking over the past 12 months, how frequently did you do the following?

Shopping behaviour

Base: All respondents: 1,013



Q9. Thinking over the past 12 months, how frequently did you do the following? RANDOMISE OPTIONS

3. Food waste communications

3.1 Promotion of food waste reduction

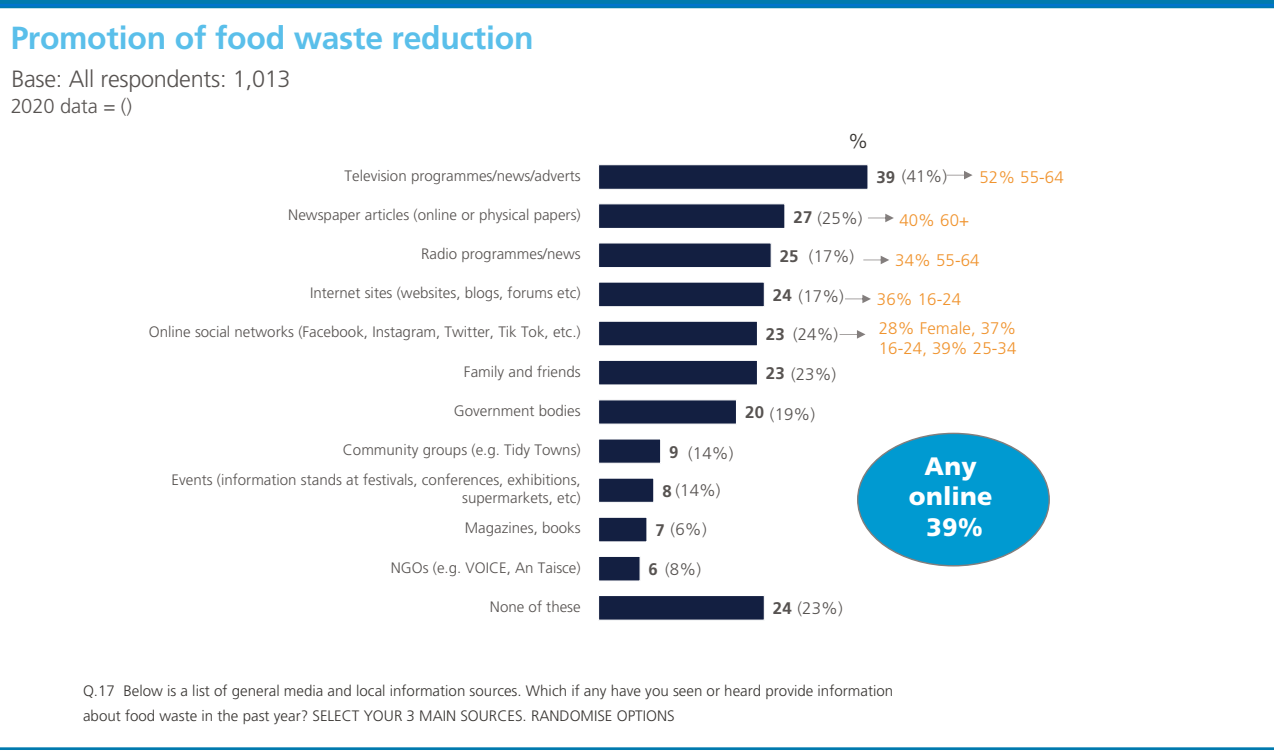
Similar to the 2020 research results, television is the primary medium by which people have seen or heard about food waste, with nearly 2 in 5 (39%) saying that this is where they heard about food waste in the past year. Just under 1 in 4 (24%) have not seen or heard anything about food waste reduction through any of the mediums – with this again consistent with last year's data.

There are considerable differences in what communications medium reaches different cohorts of the population. About half of the 55+ age cohort have predominately heard of waste reduction through TV. In contrast less than a third of the 25-34 age cohort have heard about food waste through TV in the past year.

For the 16-24 year old age group, over a third (37%) say they have heard about food waste in the past year on social media and or on internet sites. Internet sites as a source have experienced a modest increase for this age group in the past year (from 30% to 36%). Social media is also a prominent communications medium for the 25-34 age cohort, with nearly 2 in 5 (39%) claiming to have heard about food waste through this medium.

Interestingly, radio is cited more often as a source of hearing about food waste compared to last year, with a quarter (25%) stating that this is the source that they have seen or heard information about food waste from. Those over 55 tend to be more likely to hear about food waste through this medium – with 1 in 3 (34%) of those ages 55-64 hearing about food waste through radio. Newspaper articles is a source for over a quarter (27%) of the population, with this heighted amongst the 65+ age cohort (40%).

Figure 14: Below is a list of general media and local information sources. Which if any have you seen or heard provide information about food waste in the past year?



Q.17 Below is a list of general media and local information sources. Which if any have you seen or heard provide information about food waste in the past year? SELECT YOUR 3 MAIN SOURCES. RANDOMISE OPTIONS

4. Reflections

Willingness to engage

Over the past twelve months, the concern that the population has for food waste appears to have grown, with an increase in the number of those who are 'making more of an effort to reduce food waste lately'. This is positive and suggests an increasing willingness for the population to engage with the topic.

However, while there is a strong recognition of food waste as an important issue, just 62% agree 'minimising food waste' is a top priority for them. And despite EPA figures showing that 241,000 tonnes of food waste was generated by Irish households in 2020, 59% of the population believe that they only waste a small amount of food.

Therefore getting people to adopt good food reduction behaviours may be challenging as many do not acknowledge that they are key contributors to the problem.

The impact of Covid

The relaxing of Covid restrictions over the past year has had an impact on how people buy and use food within the home. The relaxing of restrictions has likely led to the decreased incidence of checking the fridge, planning ahead meals and making a list before shopping. All these behaviours were more prominent during periods of lockdown as people tended to do larger and less frequent trips to the shop.

Target messaging for behaviour change

Analysis of the research suggest that those who think about food waste more often tend to be more 'environmentally focused' (e.g. greater concern for packaging, animal welfare, food miles). With those who have lower attention to food waste more concerned about functional elements such as price and longevity of food produce. This has implications for how to communicate with these audiences. For example, those who have higher attention to food waste are likely to be more open to communications around the impact on sustainability, whereas those who have lower attention are likely going to be most motivated by functional communications that outline potential cost savings or how to prolong food longevity.

While over half the population see the link between wasting food and climate change, there is a need to increase awareness of this link, especially communications around reducing food waste as a climate action to the younger cohort where only 37% of 16-24 year olds see the link.

The high concern for financial loss from wasting food is likely to continue to be a motivator to reduce food waste.

Target top food waste types

Bread, fruit, vegetables, leftovers from the fridge and salad remain the types of food people say are thrown out most frequently. Targeting these higher frequency and volume food waste categories and encouraging people to be more aware of their waste in these categories could have a high impact on the volume of food waste that is generated each year. Household food waste composition studies are planned to take place in Autumn 2022 and will provide quantitative data on actual types and amounts of food waste in household bins in Ireland, and will verify the self-reported data on food waste types from these national surveys.

Encourage better planning behaviours

Encouragingly, much of the population are carrying out some positive food waste reduction behaviours when it comes to shopping.

Although slightly down on last year, three quarters of the population (74% in 2021 vs 81% in 2020) say they check what is in the fridge before shopping to see what they needed to buy, and 70% of people check their cupboards before doing a food shop (vs 74% in 2020).

However, both the 2020 and the 2021 research show some deep-rooted poor food management behaviours – namely a lack of planning and management around the use of food.

- *Only 14% always plan dinners for week ahead*
- *Only 12% always judge/weigh portions*
- *Only 15% always organise the fridge*

In addition, many 'good' food waste reduction behaviours are not consistently practiced behaviours for the majority of the population and many struggle in their ability to plan for and manage the food that they have in their homes. Only a little over a third (37%) rate themselves good at '*checking serving/ portion size guidance on food packs'*, with a further third (34%) rating themselves good at '*checking information on food packs to find out how long items can be frozen for'*. Only 1 in 8 (12%) rate themselves as good at keeping track of food in the fridge (e.g. knowing what food there is to use and when). People also feel that they are poor at '*organizing my food in the cupboard'* and *'organising my food in the fridge .*

To reduce food waste in Irish households, it is important to tackle these deep rooted behavioural patterns as this research suggests that a significant factor in generation of food waste is a lack of planning and poor organisation of our food at home.

While the behaviours and social practices related to food are multifaceted and food waste is an outcome of multiple interrelated activities that are habitual, cultural and emotional, studies on the determinants of food waste in households have highlighted the key role of daily food provision practices in affecting household food waste. Some of these studies indicate that planning routines can help reduce food waste because they can limit risk of over purchasing, impulse purchasing or purchase of novel ingredients that are used in small portions with remainder going to waste.

Therefore, communications focusing on encouraging simple planning behaviours, e.g. using a shopping list, inventory checking, knowing what you need, planning meals ahead for the week, etc. may have the largest potential knock-on effect, such as reducing the incidence of food being wasted as past its 'use-by' date – and reduce food waste as a result.

ANNEX 1 Survey Questions 2021

SECTION 1: ATTITUDES TO FOOD WASTE

Q.1a Which if any of the following food issues most concern you? (CHOOSE UP TO 5 OPTIONS)

Q.1b And which one is of MOST concern to you?

Q.1c And which is second most concerning to you?

RANDOMISE[3]	Q.1a Concern	Q.1b Of Most concern	Q.1c Second most concerning
The price of food	1	1	1
Food waste	2	2	2
How long fresh food lasts for	3	3	3
The way that food products are packaged	4	4	4
Seasonality of food	5	5	5
Food labelling (e.g. 'use by' date, storage instructions)	6	6	6
Food miles (the distance that food travels)	7	7	7
Food ingredients (e.g. salt, fat, sugar, additives)	8	8	8
Food safety (e.g. Salmonella, E. coli)	9	9	9
Genetically Modified (GM) foods	10	10	10
Nutritional content of food	11	11	11
The welfare of animals	12	12	12
Shortages in food supply	13	13	13
None of these	14	14	14

3 RANDOMISE refers to the question selection order being randomised for accuracy

Q.2a And now focusing your attention to FOOD WASTE in particular, how concerned are you about the following?

RANDOMISE	Extremely concerned	Moderately concerned	Somewhat concerned	Slightly concerned	Not at all concerned
The resources (water, energy, labour, land) that went into creating the uneaten food are wasted	1	2	3	4	5
People in the world go hungry every day	1	2	3	4	5
The wasted money from throwing out uneaten food	1	2	3	4	5
The impact on biodiversity and land by using fertilisers and pesticides for uneaten food	1	2	3	4	5
The contribution to Climate Change due to the growing, processing and disposal of the uneaten food.	1	2	3	4	5
The unnecessary packaging waste from the uneaten food	1	2	3	4	5
The waste of healthy/nutritious ingredients	1	2	3	4	5
The waste of time and effort by farmers/ food producers	1	2	3	4	5

Q.2b To what extent had you thought about food waste before today?

Never	1
Rarely	2
Occasionally/Sometimes	3
Regularly	4
Always	5

Q.2c Realistically, how much food do you think you waste/ throw away uneaten?

None	1
A small amount	2
A moderate amount	3
A large amount	4

SECTION 2: MANAGING FOOD AT HOME (FOOD MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOURS)

Q.3 Please think about the last time that you did a food shop. Did you do any of the following before going shopping? SELECT AS MANY OR AS FEW AS YOU FEEL IS APPROPRIATE. (RANDOMISE)

Checked what food was already in the fridge to see what I needed to buy	1
Checked what food was already in the cupboards to see what I needed to buy	2
Checked what food was already in the freezer to see what I needed to buy	3
Made a shopping list of the food I needed to buy e.g. on paper, phone or other device	4
I take a pic of the inside of my fridge as a reminder of what food I already have	5
Checked which days I/we needed to prepare meals for	6
Planned ahead meals for the week	7

Q.4 When you do your food shopping, how frequently does the following apply to you?

RANDOMISE	This often applies to me	This sometimes applies to me	This rarely applies to me	This never applies to me
Stick to a shopping list (not buy extra)	1	2	3	4
Buy an item that has a reduced price because its near its expiry date	1	2	3	4
Buy a bigger pack or extra because it is better value/on special offer	1	2	3	4
Check food product labels for use by / best before dates	1	2	3	4
Buy something I hadn't planned because a family member (child, partner) wanted it	1	2	3	4
Buy a bigger pack than I needed because a small one isn't available	1	2	3	4

Q.5 Now we want to see to what extent people realistically keep track of their food at home. How good, or not, are you at doing the following, realistically? (USE SLIDER OPTION)

RANDOMISE	Very good at doing this									Very bad at doing this
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Organise my food in the fridge (e.g. first in first out)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Organise my food in the cupboards (e.g. first in first out)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Keep list of food put in / taken out of the freezer	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Keep track of food in the fridge (e.g. know what food there is to use and by when)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Keep track of food in the freezer (e.g. know what food there is to use and by when)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Check information on food packs to find out where / how long to store them (e.g. fridge, cool dark place)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Check serving/portion size guidance on food packs (e.g. serves 2)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Check information on food packs to find out how long items can be frozen for	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Labelling products to show the date it was opened	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION 3: LEVELS OF FOOD WASTE

Q.6 What types of food do you throw out in your household most often? – Please select your top 4. (RANDOMISE)

Bread	1
Vegetables	2
Fruit	3
Fresh meat/fish	4
Packaged meat (e.g. ham)	5
Dairy (e.g. milk, cheese)	6
Salad	7
Eggs	8
Store-cupboard dried ingredients (e.g. rice, pasta, flour, lentils)	9
Store-cupboard canned/jar food products (e.g. baked beans)	10
Food from your freezer	11
Leftovers from your fridge	12
Takeaway food	13
Potatoes	14
Breakfast cereals	15
Cakes/biscuits	16
I do not throw away any food	17

Q.7 For the list below, what are the main reasons you throw out food in your household? Please list your top 4.

We purchase more than we really need	1
Plans change so we don't get to use it	2
It passes the 'Use By' date	3
We need space for more recent purchases	4
It passes the 'Best Before' date	5
We cook too much	6
We serve too much	7
We keep leftovers but don't use them in time	8
We don't like what we prepared	9
I don't throw food out	10

Q.8 Thinking about the last time you bought the following food, approximately what percentage ended up being uneaten and thrown away? (Whether in a brown bin, home compost or general refuse)? USE SLIDER OPTION (RANDOMISE)

	0%	1-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-99%	100%
Bread (including crusts)												
Salad (e.g. lettuce)												
Fruit												
Vegetables (cooked and uncooked)												
Dairy (e.g. milk, cheese)												
Fresh meat/fish (cooked and uncooked)												
Packaged Meat (e.g. ham)												
Food from your freezer												
Food from your fridge												
Leftovers from your fridge												
Takeaway food												
Potatoes (cooked and uncooked)												
Store-cupboard canned/jar food products (e.g. baked beans)												
Store-cupboard dried ingredients (e.g. rice, pasta, flour, lentils)												
Eggs												
Breakfast cereals												
Cakes/biscuits												

SECTION 4: FOOD WASTE IN FOCUS

Q.9 Thinking over the past 12 months, how frequently did you do the following? (RANDOMISE)

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally/ Sometimes	Regularly	Always
Throw away uneaten food	1	2	3	4	5
Food shopping online	1	2	3	4	5
Do a 'large main shop' about once a week	1	2	3	4	5
Make multiple 'smaller trips' to the grocery store during the week	1	2	3	4	5
Eat/order takeaways	1	2	3	4	5
Buy food from local shops and/ or food producers	1	2	3	4	5
Write a shopping list	1	2	3	4	5

Q.10 Thinking over the past 12 months, for each statement please choose one of the following: (RANDOMISE)

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally/ Sometimes	Regularly	Mostly	Always
I plan lunches for the week ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6
I plan dinners for the week ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6
I prepare dinners at home	1	2	3	4	5	6
I prepare lunches at home	1	2	3	4	5	6
I batch cook and freeze dinners for another time	1	2	3	4	5	6
I eat takeaway meals	1	2	3	4	5	6
I eat out at a restaurant, café etc	1	2	3	4	5	6
I use up food I already have in the fridge to make meals	1	2	3	4	5	6
I use up food I have in the freezer to make meals	1	2	3	4	5	6
I save 'dining out or takeaway' leftovers to eat later or next day	1	2	3	4	5	6
I save 'home' leftovers in the fridge to eat later or next day	1	2	3	4	5	6
I use dinner leftovers for lunch the next day	1	2	3	4	5	6
I remember to eat leftovers from my fridge	1	2	3	4	5	6
I judge/weigh portions for the number I am cooking for	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q.11 For each of the following statements tell us if it is true, or false or whether you just don't know (be honest as it is a finding in itself)?

RANDOMISE	True	False	I just don't honestly know
The 'best before' date on food means that it can be eaten after this date, but it may no longer be at its best quality	1	2	3
The 'best before' date on food means that it can be eaten up to this date, but should not be eaten past this date	1	2	3
The 'Use by' date on food means that it can be eaten after this date, but it may no longer be at its best quality	1	2	3
The 'Use by' date on food means that it will be safe to be eaten up to this date, but should not be eaten past this date	1	2	3
Food must be frozen on day of purchase	1	2	3
Food can be frozen up until the 'Use By' date	1	2	3
Fridges should be set at a temperature between 0°C and 5°C	1	2	3
Food stored in a freezer should be used up within 6 months	1	2	3
Leftovers stored in a fridge should be eaten within 2 days.	1	2	3
Potatoes are best stored in dry, dark place to stop them from sprouting	1	2	3
Tomatoes are best stored in the open air to keep flavour and texture for longer	1	2	3
Bread is best stored in the fridge to keep fresher	1	2	3

Q.12 Thinking over the past year, for each statement please choose one of the following:

RANDOMISE	Never	Rarely	Occasionally/ Sometimes	Regularly	Mostly	Always
I organise food in my fridge so I can see what food I should eat first (First In First to be Eaten)	1	2	3	4	5	6
I freeze food right up to the use-by date	1	2	3	4	5	6
I think about where best to store fresh fruit and vegetables (to keep them fresher for longer)	1	2	3	4	5	6
I check 'use by' / 'best before' dates on food product labels	1	2	3	4	5	6
I check the fridge temperature	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q.13 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

RANDOMISE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/ disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Food waste is an important national issue	1	2	3	4	5
Everyone, including me, has a responsibility to minimise the food they throw away	1	2	3	4	5
Food waste is a serious environmental issue like climate change	1	2	3	4	5
I read tweets/blogs on food waste	1	2	3	4	5
Minimising my food waste is one of my top priorities	1	2	3	4	5
I have commented or shared my views on food waste online via social media/blogs	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in food waste as an issue	1	2	3	4	5
I would pay more for food that is sustainably produced	1	2	3	4	5
I am concerned about the cost of the food that goes to waste in my home.	1	2	3	4	5
Minimising food waste should be one of the top priorities for Ireland	1	2	3	4	5
I have been making more of an effort lately to reduce my food waste	1	2	3	4	5
I believe it will make a real difference if I reduce the amount of food that I waste	1	2	3	4	5
It is not possible for me to reduce the amount of food that I waste	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to reduce my food waste but I don't know how	1	2	3	4	5
I talk to friends/colleagues/family about food waste	1	2	3	4	5
When I think about it I probably waste more food than I should	1	2	3	4	5
I'm too busy to worry about food waste	1	2	3	4	5
I feel my actions will not have any real impact on food waste	1	2	3	4	5

RANDOMISE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/ disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
I believe that reducing the amount of food I waste is an action I can take to reduce greenhouse gases and climate change	1	2	3	4	5
I feel changing how I manage my food will have a real impact on the amount of food I waste at home	1	2	3	4	5
I want to save money by reducing the amount of food I waste	1	2	3	4	5
Throwing away uneaten food is the same as throwing money in the bin	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 5: FOOD WASTE LINK TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Q.14 To what extent do you see the link between the following statements and climate change?

RANDOMISE	I can see a clear link	I can see some link	I can't see much of a link	I can't see a link	I don't see the climate changing
Reducing the number of international flights	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling	1	2	3	4	5
Not driving to work/town (e.g. taking public transport, walking, cycling)	1	2	3	4	5
Reusing shopping bags	1	2	3	4	5
Throwing away food that could have been eaten	1	2	3	4	5
Washing clothes at 30 degrees instead of 40/60 degrees	1	2	3	4	5
Buying an electric car	1	2	3	4	5
Reducing the amount of meat and dairy we eat	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling food waste (e.g. home composting, brown bin collection etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

Q.15 Please see below a series of factual statements on Food Waste. Please rank these statements in order of how important and/ or how big an impression they make on you. Please rank from 1 to 4; where 1 = most important/ impactful

RANDOMISE	
Greenhouse gases produced through food waste (growing, processing and disposal of uneaten food) contributes to climate change	
€700 worth of food is wasted each year by the average Irish household	
More than one quarter of all food produced in the world is wasted	
Food waste produces up to 10 % of all global greenhouse gas emissions	

SECTION 6: COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT FOOD WASTE

Q.16 In the past 12 months have you seen or heard anything about the following?

RANDOMISE	Yes	No
The amount of food that is thrown away/wasted	1	2
How to plan, buy, store or prepare food to reduce the amount of food that is thrown away	1	2
The cost of food that is thrown away by households	1	2
How reducing the amount of food wasted can help climate change	1	2
None of these	1	2

Q.17 Below is a list of general media and local information sources. Which if any have you seen or heard provide information about food waste in the past year? SELECT YOUR 3 MAIN SOURCES.

RANDOMISE	Noticed at all
Events (information stands at festivals, conferences, exhibitions, supermarkets, etc.)	1
Television programmes/news/adverts	2
Government bodies	3
Newspaper articles (online or physical papers)	4
Radio programmes/news	5
Online social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TicTok etc)	6
Community groups (e.g. Tidy Towns)	7
NGOs (e.g. VOICE, An Taisce)	8
Internet sites (websites, blogs, forums, etc.)	9
Magazines, books	10
Family and friends	11
None of these	12

Q.18a Below is a list of public bodies, community groups and online/social media platforms. Which if any, have you seen or heard provide information on food waste in the past year? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Q.18b And which one is most NOTICEABLE in doing this?

Q.18c And which is second most noticeable?

RANDOMISE	Q.18a Noticed at all	Q.18b Most noticeable	Q.18c Second most noticeable
Environmental Protection Agency (epa.ie)	1	1	1
stopfoodwaste.ie	2	2	2
County Councils, Environmental Awareness Officers	3	3	3
mywaste.ie	4	4	4
Voice NGO	5	5	5
Citizens Information (citizeninformation.ie)	6	6	6
Waste collectors	7	7	7
Tidy Towns	8	8	8
An Taisce Green Schools	9	9	9
Social Blogger/Online Influencer	10	10	10
GIY (Grow It Yourself)	11	11	11
myKidstime.com	12	12	12
None of these	13	13	13

Q.19 Have you seen the following logo in the past 12 months?

	Yes	No
epa STOPFoodWaste.ie	1	2

Q.20 Have you seen the following information campaign?
REPEAT FOR EACH CAMPAIGN BELOW. RANDOMISE
SHOW PHOTO PROMPT FOR EACH CAMPAIGN AS PER J.213158 Food Waste National Survey 2021 Photo Prompt

RANDOMISE	Yes	No
'Get Food Smart' campaign	1	2
Freezer Food Treasure' campaign	1	2
'How Fit is your Fridge' campaign	1	2
'Stretch Out & Save' campaign	1	2

FOR EACH CAMPAIGN AWARE OF AT Q.20. RANDOMISE
SHOW PHOTO PROMPT FOR EACH CAMPAIGN AS PER J.213158 Food Waste National Survey 2021 Photo Prompt

Q.21 You said you have seen the following information campaign. On a scale of 1-5 to what extent has or will the campaign lead you to do something differently (where 1 = I didn't/ won't do anything differently as a result and 5 = I did/ will do a lot differently as a result?

	1 I didn't/ won't do anything differently	2	3	4	5 I did/ will do a lot differently
'Get Food Smart' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
Freezer Food Treasure' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
'How Fit is your Fridge' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
'Stretch Out & Save' campaign	1	2	3	4	5

ASK ALL

Q.22 To what extent is the message of this campaign interesting to you?
REPEAT FOR EACH CAMPAIGN BELOW. RANDOMISE
SHOW PHOTO PROMPT FOR EACH CAMPAIGN AS PER J.213158 Food Waste National Survey 2021 Photo Prompt

	Very interesting	Fairly interesting	Neither/ nor	Not very interesting	Not interesting at all
'Get Food Smart' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
Freezer Food Treasure' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
'How Fit is your Fridge' campaign	1	2	3	4	5
'Stretch Out & Save' campaign	1	2	3	4	5

AN GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIL

Tá an GCC freagrach as an gcomhshaol a chosaint agus a fheabhsú, mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaol a chosaint ar thionchar díobhálach na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

Rialáil: *Rialáil agus córais chomhlíonta comhshaoil éifeachtacha a chur i bhfeidhm, chun dea-thorthaí comhshaoil a bhaint amach agus díriú orthu siúd nach mbíonn ag cloí leo.*

Eolas: *Sonraí, eolas agus measúnú ardchaighdeáin, spriocdhírithe agus tráthúil a chur ar fáil i leith an chomhshaoil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht.*

Abhcóideacht: *Ag obair le daoine eile ar son timpeallachta glaine, táirgiúla agus dea-chosanta agus ar son cleachtas inbhuanaithe i dtaobh an chomhshaoil.*

I measc ár gcuid freagrachtaí tá:

Ceadúnú

- Gníomhaíochtaí tionscail, dramhaíola agus stórála peitril ar scála mór;
- Sceitheadh fuíolluisce uirbigh;
- Úsáid shrianta agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaithe;
- Foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin;
- Astaíochtaí gás ceaptha teasa ó thionscal agus ón eitlíocht trí Scéim an AE um Thrádáil Astaíochtaí.

Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Iniúchadh agus cigireacht ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas acu ón GCC;
- Cur i bhfeidhm an dea-chleachtais a stiúradh i ngníomhaíochtaí agus i saoráidí rialáilte;
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí an údaráis áitiúil as cosaint an chomhshaoil;
- Caighdeán an uisce óil phoiblí a rialáil agus údaruithe um sceitheadh fuíolluisce uirbigh a fhorfheidhmiú
- Caighdeán an uisce óil phoiblí agus phríobháidigh a mheasúnú agus tuairisciú air;
- Comhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra d'eagraíochtaí seirbhíse poiblí chun tacú le gníomhú i gcoinne coireachta comhshaoil;
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaol.

Bainistíocht Dramhaíola agus Ceimiceáin sa Chomhshaol

- Rialacháin dramhaíola a chur i bhfeidhm agus a fhorfheidhmiú lena n-áirítear saincheisteanna forfheidhmithe náisiúnta;
- Staitisticí dramhaíola náisiúnta a ullmhú agus a fhoilsiú chomh maith leis an bPlean Náisiúnta um Bainistíocht Dramhaíola Guaisí;
- An Clár Náisiúnta um Chosc Dramhaíola a fhorbairt agus a chur i bhfeidhm;
- Reachtaíocht ar rialú ceimiceán sa timpeallacht a chur i bhfeidhm agus tuairisciú ar an reachtaíocht sin.

Bainistíocht Uisce

- Plé le struchtúir náisiúnta agus réigiúnacha rialachais agus oibriúcháin chun an Chreat-treoir Uisce a chur i bhfeidhm;
- Monatóireacht, measúnú agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar chaighdeán aibhneacha, lochanna, uiscí idirchreasa agus cósta, uiscí snámha agus screamhuisce chomh maith le tomhas ar leibhéil uisce agus sreabhadh abhann.

Eolaíocht Aeráide & Athrú Aeráide

- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin a fhoilsiú um astaíochtaí gás ceaptha teasa na hÉireann;
- Rúnaíocht a chur ar fáil don Chomhairle Chomhairleach ar Athrú Aeráide agus tacaíocht a thabhairt don Idirphlé Náisiúnta ar Ghníomhú ar son na hAeráide;
- Tacú le gníomhaíochtaí forbartha Náisiúnta, AE agus NA um Eolaíocht agus Beartas Aeráide.

Monatóireacht & Measúnú ar an gComhshaol

- Córais náisiúnta um monatóireacht an chomhshaoil a cheapadh agus a chur i bhfeidhm: teicneolaíocht, bainistíocht sonraí, anailís agus réamhaisnéisiú;
- Tuairiscí ar Staid Thimpeallacht na hÉireann agus ar Tháscairí a chur ar fáil;
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar chaighdeán an aeir agus Treoir an AE i leith Aeir Ghlain don Eoraip a chur i bhfeidhm chomh maith leis an gCoinbhinsiún ar Aerthruailliú Fadraoin Trasteorann, agus an Treoir i leith na Teorann Náisiúnta Astaíochtaí;
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm na Treorach i leith Torainn Timpeallachta;
- Measúnú a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar chomhshaol na hÉireann.
- Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil
- Comhordú a dhéanamh ar ghníomhaíochtaí taighde comhshaoil agus iad a mhaoiniú chun brú a aithint, bonn eolais a chur faoin mbeartas agus réitigh a chur ar fáil;
- Comhoibriú le gníomhaíocht náisiúnta agus AE um thaighde comhshaoil.

Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéil radaíochta agus nochtadh an phobail do radaíocht ianúcháin agus do réimsí leictreamaighnéadacha a mheas;
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as taismí núicléacha;
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta;
- Sainseirbhísí um chosaint ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

Treoir, Ardú Feasachta agus Faisnéis Inrochtana

- Tuairiscú, comhairle agus treoir neamhspleách, fianaise-bhunaithe a chur ar fáil don Rialtas, don tionscal agus don phobal ar ábhair maidir le cosaint comhshaoil agus raideolaíoch;
- An nasc idir sláinte agus folláine, an geilleagar agus timpeallacht ghlan a chur chun cinn;
- Feasacht comhshaoil a chur chun cinn lena n-áirítear tacú le hiompraíocht um éifeachtúlacht acmhainní agus aistriú aeráide;
- Tástáil radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre agus feabhsúchán a mholadh áit is gá.

Comhpháirtíocht agus líonrú

- Oibriú le gníomhaireachtaí idirnáisiúnta agus náisiúnta, údaráis réigiúnacha agus áitiúla, eagraíochtaí neamhrialtais, comhlachtaí ionadaíocha agus ranna rialtais chun cosaint chomhshaoil agus raideolaíoch a chur ar fáil, chomh maith le taighde, comhordú agus cinnteoireacht bunaithe ar an eolaíocht.

Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an GCC á bhainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóir. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inbhuanaitheacht i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmithe i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fhianaise agus Measúnú
- An Oifig um Chosaint ar Radaíocht agus Monatóireacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tugann coistí comhairleacha cabhair don Ghníomhaireacht agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair imní agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord.

TO FIND OUT MORE:

Email us: cep@epa.ie

Check our website: www.epacirculareconomy.ie

Follow the Stop Food Waste campaign on Instagram and Facebook: @StopFoodWaste.ie and visit the website: www.stopfoodwaste.ie

epa Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland