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Shaping an effective food system



Food Research
Collaboration

Who is making food policy in... **Data collection protocol and submission guidelines**

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December 2020

Introduction

Every country around the world handles food policy differently within government, as various departments and government entities are engaged on policy issues. At present, there are no publications which demonstrate how different national government departments take responsibility for food policy.

Documenting global food policy data can serve to strengthen the ability of policy-makers and organisations around the world to create better policies. Using the simple, yet highly effective method of mapping individual countries' food policies, we are building a collection of documents which can support future food policy-making.

If you wish to map food policy-making in your country or region, your contribution to the project will help people at all levels of governance understand how (and by whom) decisions are made that shape food policy. This will facilitate analysis and comparisons across territories and contribute to policy coherence, a cornerstone of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The guidelines set out in this document will lead you through the collection and submission of data which contributes to the growth of this project.

There are two sections:

- Protocol for conducting policy mapping
- Requirements for compiling the document

For the purposes of this exercise, our definition of food policy in government is 'All the policies which influence the food system and what people eat.'¹

If you have any further questions, please contact foodpolicy@city.ac.uk.

Part 1: Protocol for conducting policy mapping

Look at the model

This protocol is based on the methods used to compile the 2020 FRC publication *Who makes food policy in England: A map of government actors and activities*², and the subsequent Centre for Food Policy Briefs *Who is making food policy in...*

Set boundaries

Be clear about which jurisdiction and/or level of governance is to be the focus of the mapping, and about the time period covered by the research. For example, the FRC publication *Who Makes Food Policy in England?* focused on public policy-making at national level in England, as it existed in 2019. It did not look at policy-making devolved to Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish governments or to Local Authorities; nor at policy-making by private-sector organisations such as businesses or by NGOs.

Stay within scope

- key governance 'actors' – the bodies which play a role in making and delivering food-related policy;
- key governance 'activities' and the policies produced.

Stick to published policies

For the purpose of the mapping, it is advisable to stick to strategies, plans, instruments, laws and regulations with published, publicly accessible sources.

Use documents - plus interviews, if necessary.

The core methods used for compiling *Who makes food policy in England?* were desk-based documentary research and semi-structured, elite interviewing. The researcher began with a set of departments known to be active on food policy (e.g. in England the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Food Standards Agency, the Department for Health and Social Care) and used a snowballing technique in which the investigation led to other relevant actors and activities. Interviews were used to fill in information not available from websites or documents. However, this level of detail may not be necessary: a simpler map can be compiled using only documentary sources, such as government websites.

1. Hawkes C, Parsons K. Brief 1. *Tackling Food Systems Challenges: The Role of Food Policy*. In: *Rethinking Food Policy: A Fresh Approach to Policy and Practice*. London: Centre for Food Policy; 2019.

2. These methods are described more fully in: Parsons K, Barling D. (2018) 'UK Policymaking Institutions and their Implications for Integrated Food Policy' in *Advances in Food Security and Sustainability*, eds D.& J. Fanzo, vol 3, pp 211-251

Use a template to guide documentary or website research

This ensures information is collected consistently for each department. The template should cover:

- Name of department
- Source of data and date of collection
- Official areas of policy responsibility and goals
- Key food-related laws/policies/strategies/projects
- Organisational structure and governance.

Use official sources as far as possible

For England, documentary sources included government departments' websites, annual reports and strategic plans; government press releases; Parliamentary Select Committee reports and evidence submissions; National Audit Office reports; and consultation responses. These were supplemented by reports from external organisations.

Interview data can be used to fill gaps

For England, semi-structured interviews were conducted with stakeholders from within and outside government (including civil service, elected office, academia, industry and civil society). Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. All were conducted on the condition of anonymity.

Limitations

The maps produced may not be definitive. Policies are dynamic, and may change during and after the research period. Where interviews are used, sampling may be patchy and interviewees' knowledge may be incomplete. Finally, judgements will have to be made about which activities have significance for food, and these may vary between jurisdictions and researchers.

Part 2: Guidelines for compiling document

Once you have collected your data, it needs to be compiled into three areas:

Callouts for the Diagram

Please supply a list of the ministries, departments and other government entities responsible for making food policy, plus a very short and concise list of key responsibilities (~20-50 words each). Please also indicate if more than one entity sits within a ministry/department (see figure 1).

For a published example, see page 2 of *Who is Making Food Policy in England*.

Body Text

Please provide a 750 word overview which describes the responsibilities and importance of the ministries and departments, alongside their structure in government and

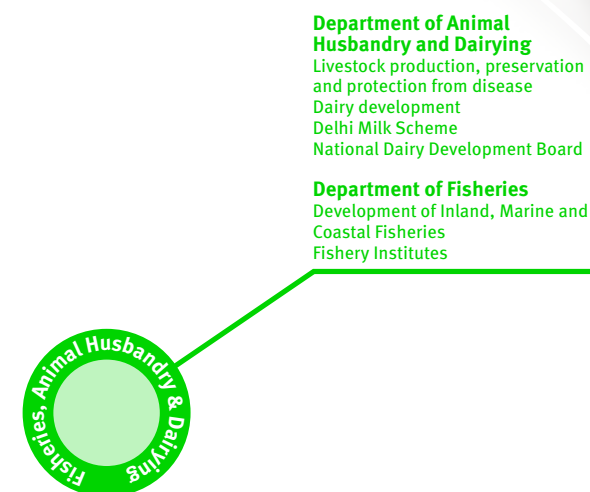


Figure 1: Ministries with multiple departments

some brief relevant history. Please refer to *Who is Making Food Policy in South Africa* for an example of how to construct this text.

Back Matter

On the last page of the document, there is space for further reading related to the data, notes about your institution or organisations involved in collecting data, and information about funders. Please provide details of any information which you wish to be included here.

Once all of these areas have been completed, submit your data and content in Word or Google Docs format to foodpolicy@city.ac.uk.

With thanks to our funders



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About us

The Centre for Food Policy at City, University of London, is an interdisciplinary unit working to shape food systems that improve the health of people, society, the environment and the economy.

We engage with people across the food system to uncover how it really works in practice. We use these insights to educate, influence, and to inform effective, joined-up food policy.



Food Research Collaboration

This protocol is based on the Food Research Collaboration publication *Who makes food policy in England? A map of government actors and activities*, by Kelly Parsons. London: Food Research Collaboration, 2019.

Please cite this Protocol as:

Wren, G. and Sharpe, R. (2020) *Who is making food policy in... Data collection protocol and submission guidelines*. London: Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London.