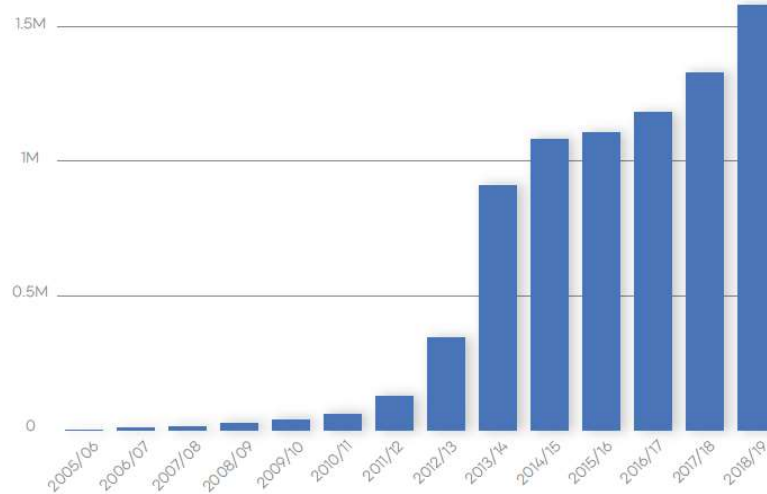


# Why measuring food insecurity matters

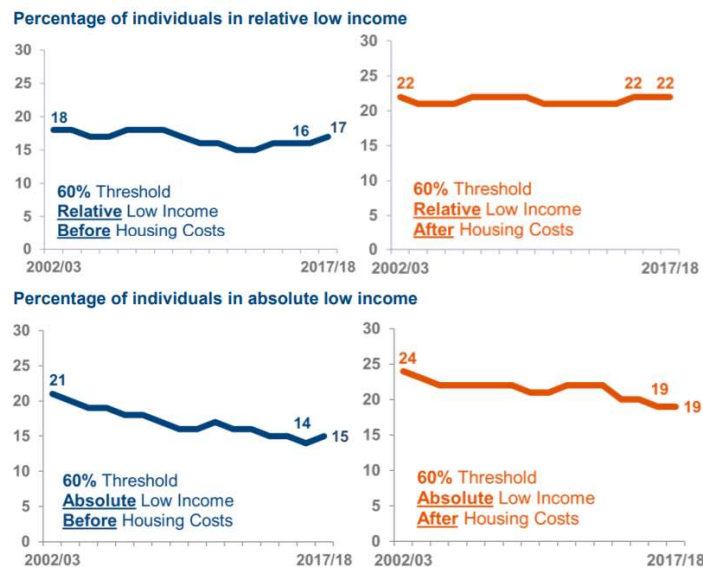
Dr Rachel Loopstra  
King's College London



Figure 3.2 Number of food parcels distributed by food banks in the Trussell Trust network

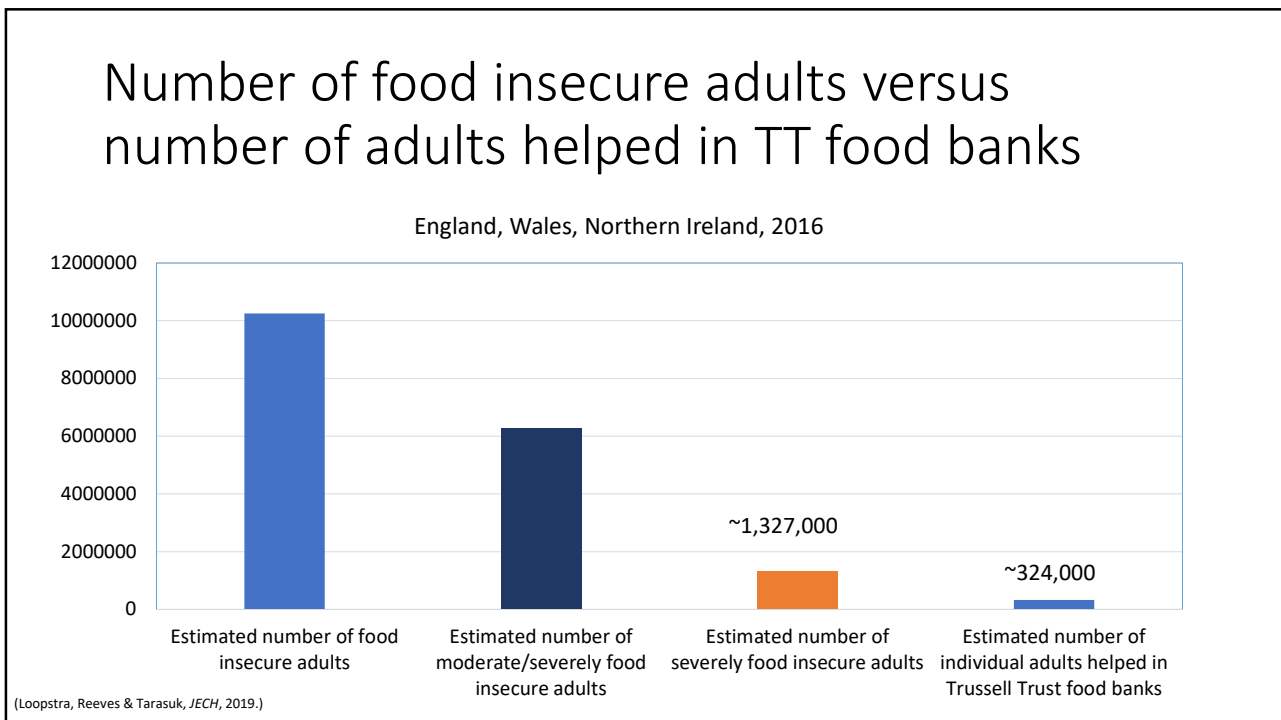
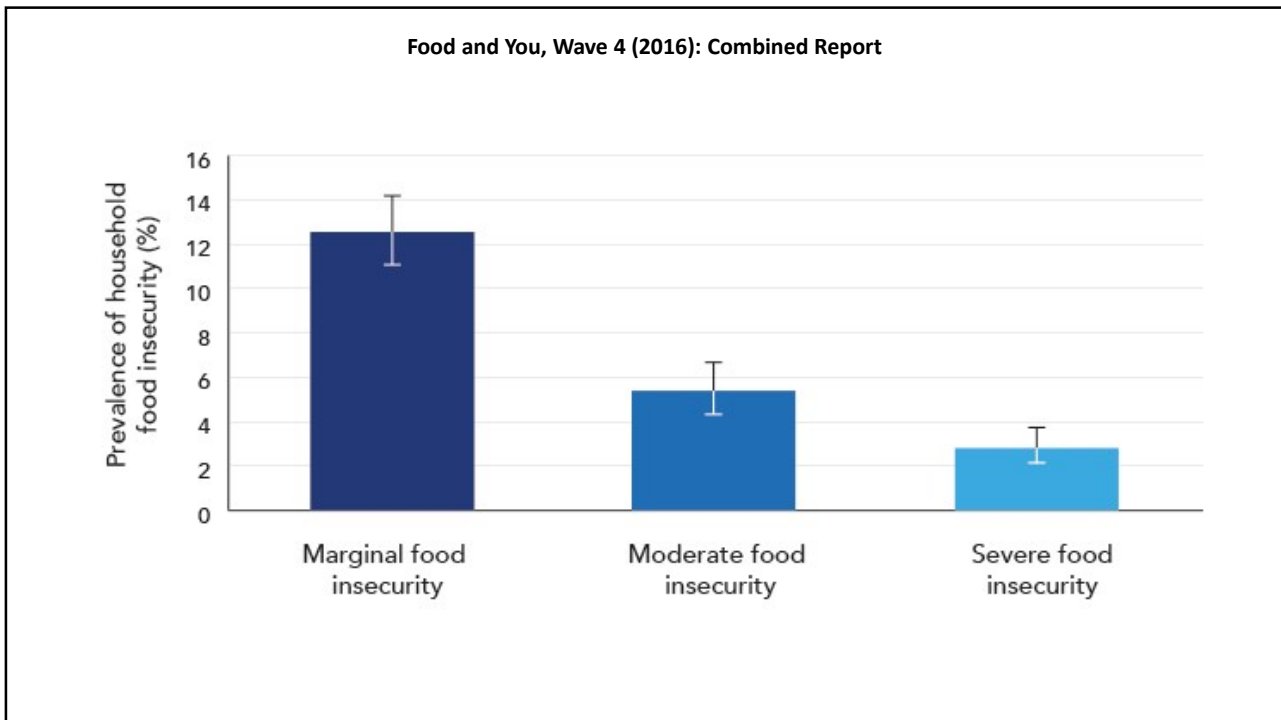


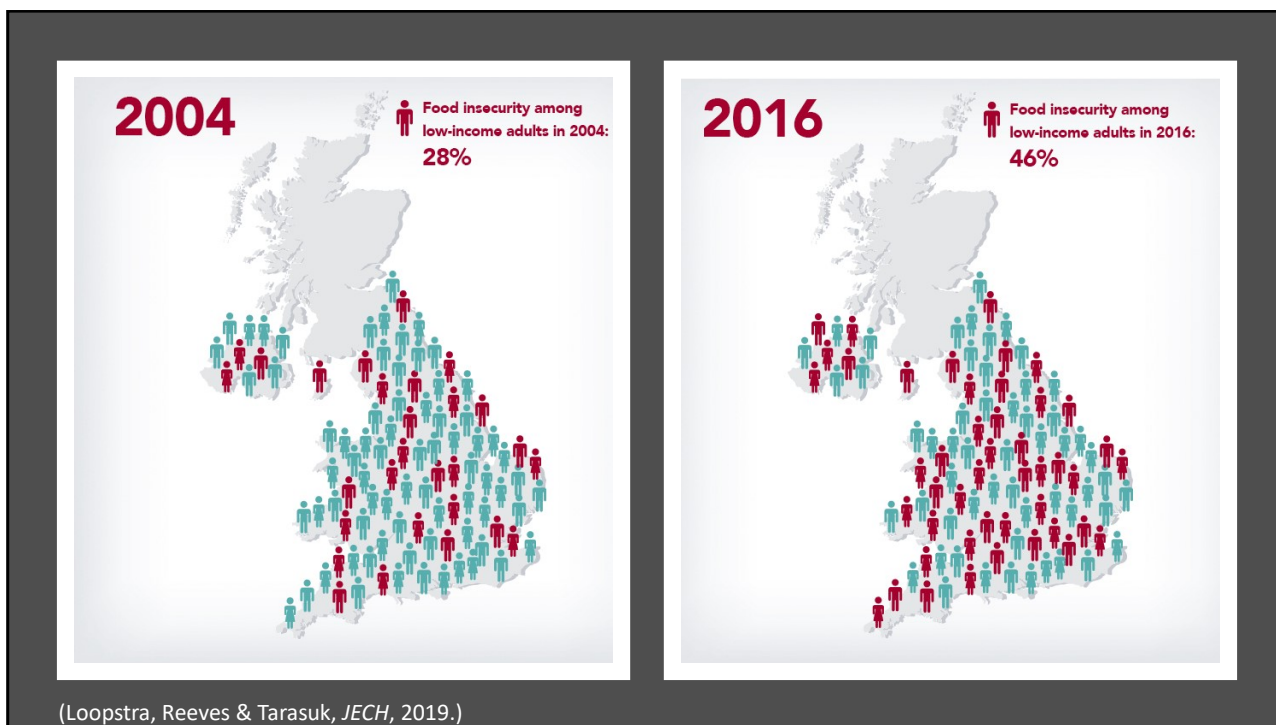
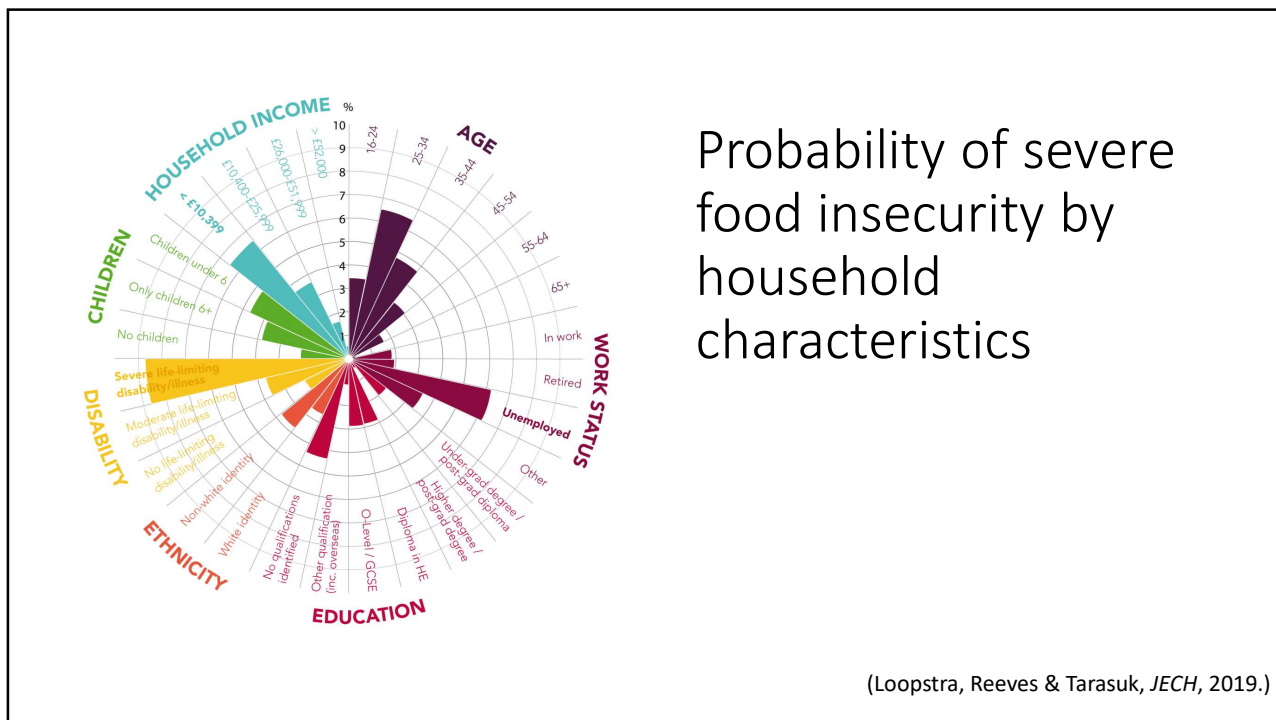
(Sosenko et al. State of Hunger. The Trussell Trust. 2019.)



(Households Below Average Income: An analysis of the UK income distribution: 1994/95-2017/18. DWP. 2019)

Measurement: piecing this puzzle together





# Going forward: evaluation of policy interventions

## Money speaks: Reductions in severe food insecurity follow the Canada Child Benefit

	Households without children		Households with children	
	Pre-CCB	Post-CCB	Pre-CCB	Post-CCB
Unadjusted model <sup>b</sup>				
Food secure	85.9 (85.2, 86.6)	86.0 (84.8, 87.1)	83.9 (82.8, 84.9)	84.3 (82.7, 85.9)
Marginally food insecure	4.1 (3.7, 4.4)	3.8 (3.1, 4.4)	5.1 (4.6, 5.7)	5.4 (4.4, 6.3)
Moderately food insecure	6.0 (5.5, 6.5)	6.1 (5.3, 6.9)	7.9 (7.1, 8.7)	8.0 (6.7, 9.3)
Severely food insecure	4.1 (3.7, 4.5)	4.1 (3.5, 4.7)	3.1 (2.6, 3.6)	2.3 (1.7, 3.0)
Adjusted model				
Food secure	85.4 (84.4, 86.4)	86.1 (85.2, 87.1)	83.5 (81.9, 85.1)	84.1 (82.6, 85.2)
Marginally food insecure	4.6 (4.0, 5.2)	4.0 (3.2, 4.6)	4.2 (3.5, 4.9)	4.7 (3.9, 5.5)
Moderately food insecure	6.0 (5.3, 6.6)	5.9 (5.2, 6.5)	8.7 (7.4, 10.3)	8.5 (7.4, 9.7)
Severely food insecure	4.0 (3.4, 4.6)	4.0 (3.4, 4.6)	3.6 (2.8, 4.4)	2.7 (2.0, 3.4)

- New child benefit introduced in July 2016
- During first year of implementation, CCB issued an average of \$6800 to eligible families, approximately \$2300 more than previous child benefits.
- Decreases in the probability of experiencing severe food insecurity were significant and more pronounced with declining economic circumstance.

(Brown & Tarasuk. *Preventive Medicine*. 2019.)

## Research enabled by regular monitoring of food insecurity in US/Canada

- Introduction of child benefit in 2005 associated with reduction in food insecurity (Canada).
- Period of investment in poverty reduction for benefit claimants associated with decline in food insecurity in NFLD province (Canada).
- Significant reduction in food insecurity when low-income individuals transition from out-of-work benefits to state pensions (Canada).
- Where out-of-work benefits more generous and administrative errors less frequent, reduction in food insecurity (US).
- When Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (food stamps) programme expanded, reduction in food insecurity (US).

Reviewed in Loopstra R. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*. 2018.

## Why evaluate food insecurity and not just income?

- Do both!
- Food insecurity concentrates in bottom of income distribution.
- Food insecurity above low-income threshold.
- How much income is enough to ensure food security?
  - Depends on exposure to, and ability to cope with, income shocks (e.g. access to savings and credit, access to informal support)
  - Varying household expenditure needs:
    - Housing costs
    - Transportation costs
    - Disability and health status
    - Regional variation in cost of food

# Measurement of food insecurity on the Family Resources Survey

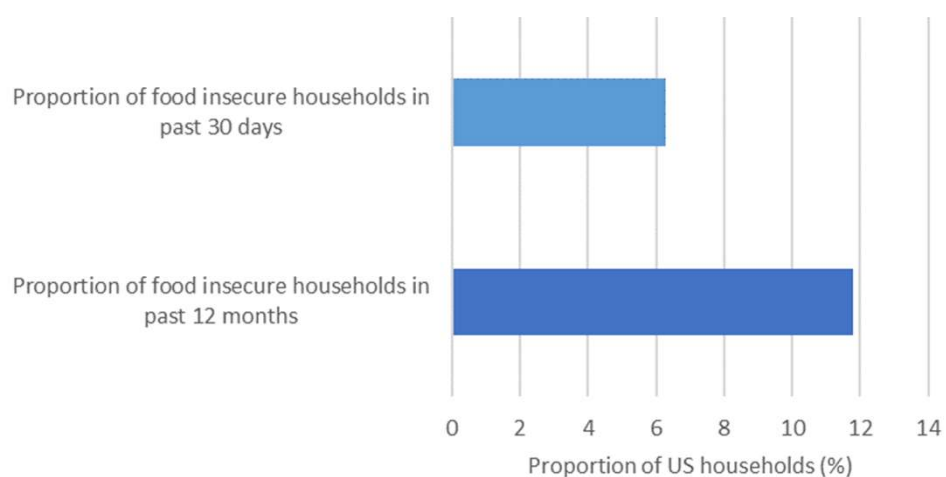
## Family Resources Survey: opportunities

- Detailed information on household income, benefit receipt, free school meal receipt, wealth.
- Comparisons with other dimensions of poverty.
  - Other material deprivation measures
  - Income-based poverty measures
- Robust comparisons between England, Scotland, Wales, NI.
- Repeat cross-sectional data:
  - Changing vulnerability over time
  - Evaluation of policy interventions

## Family Resources Survey: limitations

- 30-day measure
  - It is critical that 12-months measures still appear in other nationally-representative surveys.
    - Scottish Health Survey
    - Food and You
- No health outcomes
- No data on child experiences
  - Pros/cons
- (relatively) small sample sizes → no estimates at local authority level

Household food insecurity in the United States, 2017



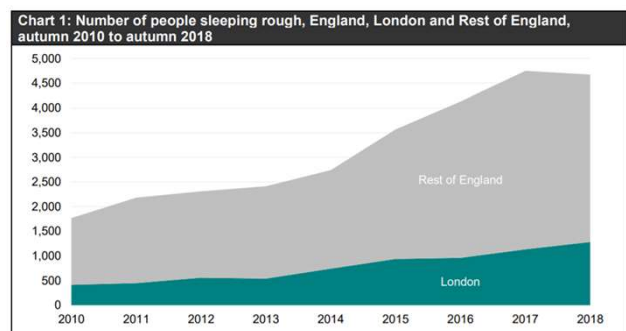


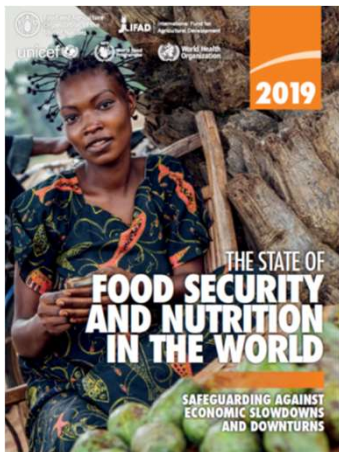
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## Barriers to the usefulness of measurement

- Inconsistent measurement/different tools
- Missed subpopulations
- Lack of data linkage
- Non-response, misclassification

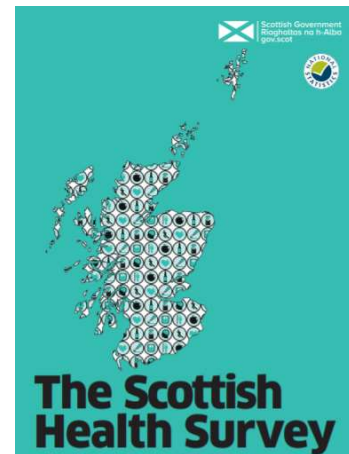




5.6% moderate/severe food insecurity based on global indicator in 2016-2018  
3,000 adults from telephone surveys



10% low/very low food security based on door-to-door/telephone survey, 3,000 adults each wave  
England/Wales/NI

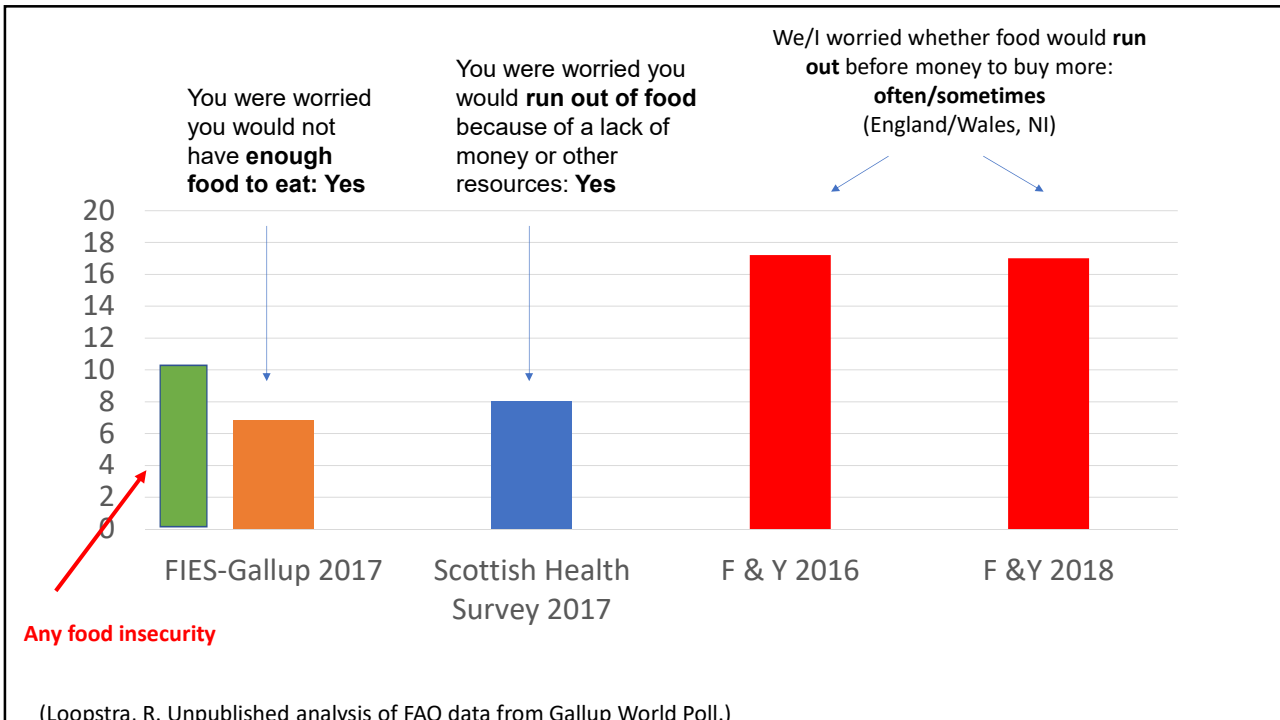


9% food insecure based on worry about running out of food  
4,980 adults

End Hunger UK's new campaign goal: that the UK Government should commit to developing a cross-departmental action plan to halve household food insecurity by 2025...



<p><b>Gallup World Poll (FAO FIES)</b>  <i>During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You were worried you would not have <b>enough food to eat</b>? (Yes/no)</li> <li>2. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food? (Yes/no)</li> <li>3. You ate only a few kinds of foods? (Yes/no)</li> <li>4. You had to skip a meal? (Yes/no)</li> <li>5. You ate less than you thought you should? (Yes/no)</li> <li>6. Your household ran out of food? (Yes/no)</li> <li>7. You were hungry but did not eat? (Yes/no)</li> <li>8. You went without eating for a whole day? (Yes/no)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Scottish Health Survey</b>  <i>During the last 12 months, was there a time when:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You were worried you would <b>run out of food</b> because of a lack of money or other resources?</li> <li>2. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?*</li> <li>3. Your household ran out of food because of lack of money of other resources?*</li> </ol> <p>* Only asked if previous questions affirmative.</p>	<p><b>FSA Food and You (Adult USDA FSM)</b>  <i>In the last 12 months...</i></p> <p>I/We worried whether my/our <b>food would run out</b> before I/we got money to buy more. (Often/sometimes/never)</p> <p>The food that I/we bought just didn't last, and I/we didn't have money to get more. (Often/sometimes/never)</p> <p>I/we couldn't afford to eat balanced meals. (Often/sometimes/never)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? (YES/NO → How often?)</p> <p>Did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food? (YES/NO)</p> <p>Were you every hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food? (YES/NO)</p> <p>Did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food? (YES/NO)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food? (YES/NO → How often?)          ---- only asked if one or more q affirmative</p>
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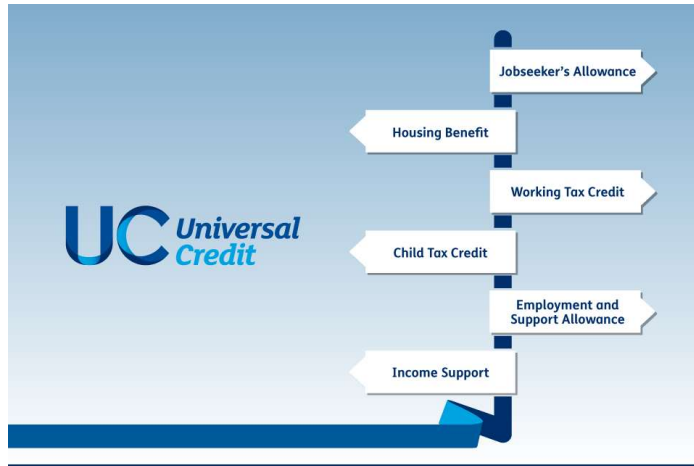


## Going forward...

- Continue to monitor food insecurity on 12-month basis in existing surveys to complement FRS data and FAO data.
- Harmonise questions used to monitor food insecurity?
- Measure food insecurity in other surveys, link data, etc.
- Monitor and report on food insecurity alongside other poverty measures.
- Make food insecurity an explicit target of policy interventions alongside other poverty measures.

The screenshot displays the Scottish Government website (gov.scot) with the following elements:

- Header:** Scottish Government logo and name in Gaelic (Riaghaltas na h-Alba) and English (gov.scot). Navigation links for 'Contacts' and 'Help' are visible.
- Navigation:** A menu bar with links for 'Home', 'About', 'Topics', 'News', 'Publications', and 'Consultations'.
- Breadcrumbs:** 'You are here: | Topics | Statistics | Browse Statistics | Social and Welfare | Poverty |'.
- Main Content Area:**
  - Left Sidebar:** A tree view showing 'Statistics' > 'Browse Statistics' > 'Poverty in Scotland'.
  - Right Content:**
    - Section:** 'Food Insecurity'.
    - Introductory Text:** 'Food poverty/insecurity has become a subject of key policy concern in Scotland and the UK in recent years. This section presents information on food insecurity in Scotland.'
    - Sub-section:** 'Monitoring food insecurity in Scotland'.
    - Text:** 'The Scottish Government committed to monitoring household food insecurity in 2016, following recommendations from an Independent Short-Life Working Group on Food Poverty. Three priority questions from the UN Food Insecurity Experience Scale were included in the 2017 and 2018 Scottish Health Surveys, and will be included in the 2019 Scottish Health Survey. The 2017 Scottish Health Survey showed that 8% of adults experienced food insecurity in the preceding 12 months, defined as worrying about running out of food due to lack of money or other resources. Food insecurity data from the 2018 Scottish Health Survey will be published in September, 2019. From March 2019 onwards, food insecurity will be measured in the UK-wide Family Resources Survey, with the first data published in March 2021.'
    - Text:** 'Monitoring of food insecurity informs the food insecurity indicator in the National Performance Framework, and is in line with Goal 2 of the UN Sustainable Development Goal. You can track progress of the Food Insecurity National Performance Indicator here: [National Performance Framework](#)'.
    - Text:** 'You can access the report from the Independent Short-Life Working Group on Food Poverty here: [Dignity: Ending Hunger Together in Scotland](#) (published June 2016)'.
    - Text:** 'Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy; Becoming a Good Food Nation' aims to ensure everyone in Scotland has access to the healthy, nutritious food they need. You can find out more about Good Food Nation here: [Good Food Nation policy](#)'.



*From JRF....*

UC is likely to reduce the number of people in poverty in working families by 300,000; but sweep 200,000 more people in out-of-work families into poverty....

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/where-next-universal-credit-and-tackling-poverty>

## Questions?

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