



Global TGI Barometer

Issue 22: Calorie Counting Consumers; Dieting Around the Globe

With obesity rising in many parts of the world and media coverage of celebrities creating pressure to attain the 'perfect' body, it's perhaps little wonder that many people today take an interest in diets and weight loss. But which consumers are most preoccupied with slimming and how does this affect the products they choose? We take a look at how attitudes vary across the globe.

Of the countries analysed, Iran has the highest agreement rate with the statement 'most of the time I'm trying to lose weight' (48%), with India (40%) and Canada (34%) following close behind. More than half of Saudi Arabians admit they 'often skip meals to keep their weight down' and in the UAE just under half (46%) of respondents say the same. However, in other parts of the world respondents are much less interested in dieting, with only 11% of Hungarians and 12% of Germans trying to lose weight 'most of the time'.

Gaining Years, Losing Weight?

In some countries, age appears to affect attitudes towards dieting, although this really varies from market to market. In China and Russia for example, no one age group seems much more likely to agree that 'Most of the time I am trying to lose weight'. In the US, however, there is a different story; 36% of 55-64 year olds agree, compared to only 23% of those aged 18-24. In New Zealand an age bias is also apparent, but here younger people show the greatest concern with their body weight - 35% of 18-24 year old New Zealanders agree (compared to 26% of over 65s).

Women and Weight Loss

Globally, there is clearer link between interest in dieting and gender. British women are nearly twice as likely as men to agree that 'most of the time they are trying to lose weight' (38% compared to 21%). Similarly, in New Zealand 40% of female respondents agree compared to only 23% of males. A look at the newspaper and magazine articles people read also suggests that weight loss is on the minds of female consumers; in Spain 37% of female magazine readers were 'very' or 'fairly' interested in articles on slimming and diets, with more than a quarter of French and British female readers agreeing similarly. Whilst every individual has their own motivation for dieting, findings from the Czech republic indicate an interesting difference in expectations between the sexes which must surely play a part ; whilst 65% of male respondents agree that 'a man should always look good', female respondents are nearly 20% more likely to think the same about women (83%).



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Calorie Counting

So how does a preoccupation with weight loss affect our priorities as consumers? Well, 50% of Indians 'always think of the calories in what they eat' and 42% of those in both Greece and the UAE agree similarly. However, elsewhere enthusiasm for calorie counting was much lower; in Germany only 21% of respondents agree and in Ukraine just 18%. Similarly, while half of Chinese respondents 'always check the nutritional content of food', only 18% of those in the Czech Republic claim to do the same.

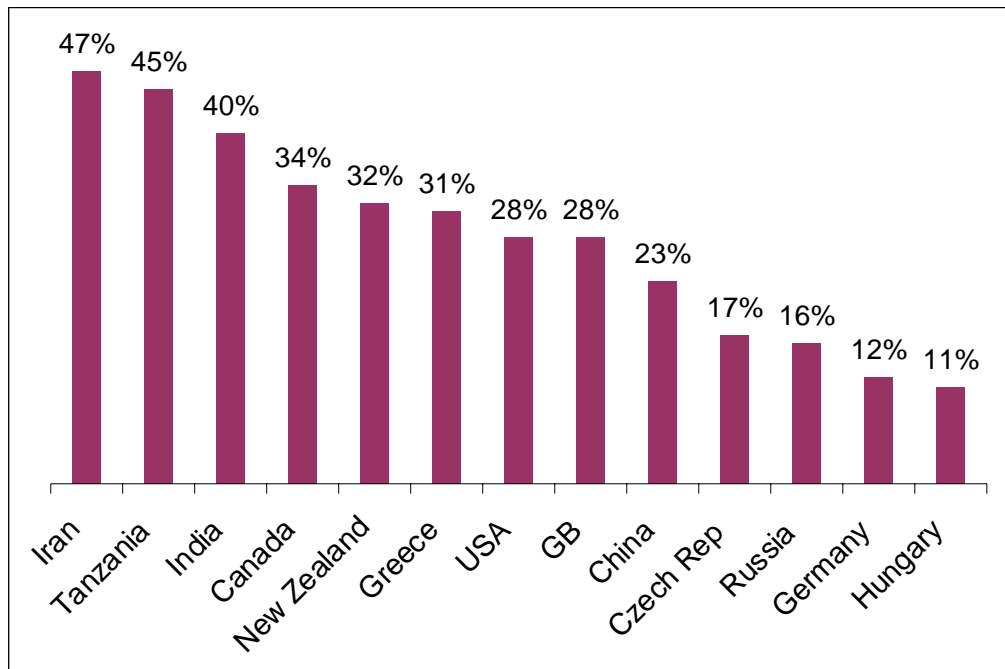
'Diet' and 'Health' Food – are we buying it?

Whilst in some countries many respondents believe that 'health foods are only bought by fanatics' (for example, 44% of Saudi Arabians and 41% of Greeks), those products marketed as 'diet' enjoy greater popularity. In India, 58% of respondents 'always look for light or diet versions of food and drink' followed by 42% of Chinese respondents. However, at the other end of the scale in Europe, respondents are far less likely to seek out 'diet' products, with only 14% of Germans, 21% of Russians and 23% of Slovenians claiming to do so. Despite this, however, shoppers in Western Europe are still likely to choose diet products on a regular basis; around a quarter of cola drinkers in Britain and France 'most often' choose a diet or low calorie version. Likewise in Canada, 26% 'most often' choose the lighter alternative, but there is clearly less appeal in markets such as Argentina where just one in ten consumers go for diet or light colas.



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'Most of the time I'm trying to lose weight' - % agree



Base: Individuals aged 18+

Source: Global TGI

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Editors' Notes

The Global TGI network operates single-source consumer and media studies in over 50 countries worldwide. Used by brand owners, media owners and agencies, it measures consumers' product and brand usage, media consumption and attitudes, based on large samples - over 700,000 respondents annually worldwide. A typical survey will cover around 4,000 brands and 500 product categories.



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TGI was originally developed in the UK by BMRB, one of the UK's leading marketing research companies. The first survey was conducted in 1969 and for the past 36 years BMRB has continued to market the service in Great Britain. BMRB is part of the KMR Group, which markets TGI globally.

KMR Group is a division of the Millward Brown Group, part of Kantar, WPP's insight, information and consultancy division.

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