The food environment of post-primary school children.

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HBSC study

- World Health Organisation (WHO) cross-national research project
- Improve understanding of young people’s health and wellbeing
- 4 year cycle
- Children's health behaviours and context
Context

- Increasing trend in overweight and obesity in children in Ireland – 20-25% primary school children 19% of teenagers
  
  IUNA, 2005, 2008

- Social, physical and individual factors

  Finegood et al., 2010, Butland et al., 2007

- Eating out of home

  Mikkelsen et al, 2011

- School food environment
  
  Children - time in this setting
Background

2010 2011 2012 ... 2015
Aims

- To map food premises within 1km of post-primary schools that took part in the 2010 HBSC survey in Ireland
- To characterise these food premises based on food sold
Methods

- Identifier file – school name, address, gender, DEIS status
- Geocode schools (n=63)
- Export food selling premises from GeoDirectory and categorise them based on food sold
- Create a spatially enabled dataset containing school food information and external food premises within a 1km buffer within ArcGIS
Categorisation process

- Food premises categorisation
  - Internal and external
  - Where children are likely to eat?

- Coffee shops and Sandwich bars, Full service restaurants, Asian and other ethnic restaurants, Fast food outlets, Supermarkets, Local shops and Fruit and vegetable retailers

- Businesses own website, online directories, Street View
Food premises
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food outlet</th>
<th>Mean number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coffee shops &amp; sandwich bars</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian &amp; ‘Ethnic’ restaurants</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast food outlets</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local shops</td>
<td>6.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit/Veg shops</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

• Variety of food retail outlets surrounding schools

• Supportive environments for young people?

• Legislation the way forward?

• Enabling healthy choices is challenging
Next steps

- Link the school level data to student dietary habits

- Qualitative work
  - How students perceive and use their food environment
    - Maps
    - Focus groups
Thank you...

- Schools and students that took part in data collection
- HBSC network of researchers
- Department of Health
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Professor Candace Currie, International Coordinator, St. Andrews University
- Professor Oddrun Samdal, Data Bank Manager, University of Bergen
- And to you for listening....