

**Global food
security index 2015**
**An annual measure of the
state of global food security**

The Economist Intelligence Unit and DuPont, 2015

Introduction:

The Global Food Security Index 2015: An annual measure of the state of global food security is the fourth edition of an Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) study, commissioned by DuPont. This report discusses the key findings from the research and the benchmarking index. It also includes a special report on innovation—an important topic for food security.

Key points:

Global food security has made a rapid improvement over the past year. Global food security has made a rapid improvement over the past year. 805 million people were estimated to be chronically undernourished in 2012-14, down by 4.4% from 842 million in 2011-13. Of these 805 million, around 791 million live in developing countries, despite marked food security improvements in emerging markets and low-income countries over the past decades. The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) states that since the early 1990s the number of people in developing countries suffering from undernourishment has fallen by more than 200 million; nevertheless, about one in eight people in these regions remains chronically undernourished.

Improvement is evident in almost all regions across the globe, but particularly in emerging markets (which have more food-insecure environments), as macroeconomic improvements enable more countries to establish the structures necessary to enable food systems to operate effectively. The 2015 Global Food Security Index (GFSI) displays these developments, revealing improvements in every region except Europe. Low-income and lower-middle-income countries around the world have led the way, recording the greatest overall increases in their scores and narrowing the gap between the most food-secure and least food-secure countries.

Food security challenges for developed and developing countries differ considerably. Investment in infrastructure and food systems in low-income and lower-middle income countries is the key to narrowing the gap. Developing countries often lack basic infrastructure, including storage, road and port facilities, while smaller incomes inhibit access to and affordability of nutritious food. Political risk and corruption frequently compound structural difficulties in these countries.

Advanced, rich-world countries generally outperform developing countries, but they too experience food security challenges. Lower economic growth rates in rich-world countries than in emerging markets have eroded affordability and have created challenges in adapting to urbanisation. At the same time, a subsection of the developed world, notably Europe, has recently faced increased political stability risk. Additionally, although advanced economies have more diverse diets and higher consumption of high-quality protein and micronutrients, they also have higher obesity levels. Obesity is a form of malnutrition, which is defined as the excessive consumption of macronutrients and/or micronutrients, and a food security concern.

Global food security improves as the gap between the most and least food-secure countries narrows

Food security improved in most countries in the 2015 index. Although developed Western countries continued to have the highest levels of food security and Sub-Saharan African countries remained at the bottom of the rankings, the gap between the best and worst performers narrowed. In regional terms, Sub-Saharan Africa's score improved by 1.5 points, while North America's score improved by just 0.1 points and Europe's score deteriorated by 0.5 points. The Middle East & North Africa (MENA)

Highlight

experienced the largest regional increase in food security, with its score rising by 2.4 points, putting it further ahead of Central & South America (+1.5 points) and Asia & Pacific (+1.8 points).

How can the index be used?

The GFSI is an interactive, benchmarking model with a range of analytical tools intended to facilitate cross-country and cross-regional comparisons. Available in both Excel and web-based versions, it also provides detailed information about each country's score. This year's model offers a streamlined interface and a variety of advanced analytical functionalities.

Any two countries may be compared directly, and individual indicators can be examined in detail. The index also allows overall and category scores to be correlated with external factors that may influence food security. The model contains a number of background variables, including the prevalence of undernourishment, stunted children and underweight children, plus measures of the intensity of food deprivation and a variable on obesity.

At a basic level, the index and the tool are a repository of more than 11,000 data points relating to food security. The GFSI moves beyond standard practice and provides access to the underlying data, sources and weightings, allowing a full understanding of the index's scores and rankings.

Finally, in addition to the annual refresh of the baseline model, every quarter the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) applies a food price adjustment factor to the index. By reducing major food security themes to their core elements, the index provides a useful approach to understanding the risks to food security. By centralising existing data and filling data gaps, it aims to further research on food security.

Most important, the index is meant to spur dialogue about the drivers of food insecurity and to suggest areas in which policymakers and other stakeholders should focus their efforts in order to have the greatest impact.

Read the full report at the official website:

<http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/Home/DownloadResource?fileName=EIU%20Global%20Food%20Security%20Index%20-%202015%20Findings%20%26%20Methodology.pdf>

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