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DESCRIPTION

Food Policy is a multidisciplinary journal publishing original research and novel evidence on issues in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of **policies** for the **food sector** in developing, transition, and advanced economies.

Our main focus is on the economic and social aspect of food policy, and we prioritize empirical studies informing international food policy debates. Provided that articles make a clear and explicit contribution to food policy debates of international interest, we consider papers from any of the social sciences. Papers from other disciplines (e.g., law) will be considered only if they provide a key policy contribution, and are written in a style which is accessible to a social science readership.

Policy issues that are relevant to the journal include:

- Food production, trade, marketing, and consumption
- Nutrition and health aspects of food systems
- Food needs, entitlements, security, and aid
- Food safety and quality assurance
- Technological and institutional innovation affecting food systems and access
- Food systems and environmental sustainability

Conceptual and methodological articles should be written so that they are accessible to the journal's diverse international readership. We normally do not publish review papers, although we might make rare exceptions for rigorous and critical reviews on topical issues.

AUDIENCE

Academics and practitioners involved in work related to food policy, in particular agricultural and development economists, nutritionists, political scientists, sociologists, agricultural and food scientists, and public policy analysts.

IMPACT FACTOR

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To find out more, please visit the Preparation section below.

INTRODUCTION

Food Policy is a multidisciplinary journal publishing original research and novel evidence on issues in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies for the food sector in developing, transition, and advanced economies. Authors who submit to *Food Policy* implicitly agree to the conditions laid out in this Guide for Authors. Lack of compliance with these conditions will result in the Editors rejecting an article for publication, or in rescinding their decision to accept a manuscript.

Our focus is on the economic and social aspect of food policy, and we prioritize empirical studies informing international food policy debates. Provided that articles make a clear and explicit contribution to food policy debates of international interest, we consider papers from any of the social sciences. Papers from other disciplines (e.g., law, food science) will be considered only if they provide a key policy contribution, and are written in a style which is accessible to a social science readership. Articles that are primarily of a technical nature, and wherein the food policy content is merely incidental, will be desk rejected. We do not publish book reviews.

Policy issues that are relevant to the journal include food production, trade, marketing, and consumption; nutrition and health aspects of food systems; food needs, entitlements, security, and aid; food safety and quality assurance; technological and institutional innovations affecting food systems and access; food systems and environmental sustainability; food systems and climate change; empirical evidence on the impact of policies affecting the food sector.

Conceptual and methodological articles should be written so that they are accessible to the journal's diverse international readership. We normally do not publish review papers, although we might make rare exceptions for rigorous and critical reviews on topical issues. Unsolicited review articles are likely to get desk rejected.

Requirement

Food Policy receives upward of 800 submissions per year. Therefore, all new submissions will be assessed against the following checklist before being sent out for review:

Originality All papers should be *fully* original. This means that there should be no overlap in text already published in other outlets, even if from the same authors. In most situations, this also excludes situations where papers have been published on the same topic and data, even if a different subset of information is used in the submission. Given that our aim is to look at the policy implications, the whole set of information relevant to the policy should be considered. Authors should note that we run "similarity" checks for each incoming manuscript, and manuscripts deemed to contain plagiarism will be desk rejected, with the editors of *Food Policy* reserving the right to notify the supervisors of authors whose work is plagiarized. **Contribution to the international food policy debate** All submitted papers should have a clear focus on one or more food policy, and provide a relevant contribution to the food policy debate at the international level. The introduction should contain adequate information on the food policy background, and the current knowledge about the policy, and both the introduction and the paper should have a specific section dealing with the **Policy implications** of the research findings. Again, exceptions may be made for highly innovative methodological papers, which could guide future policy-relevant applications. **Geographical scope** Papers with a limited geographical scope (e.g. local, regional or only one country whose contribution to the application is negligible) are acceptable if their findings (or methods) are very innovative, if the results are generalizable to other situations, and if they are discussed with a broader perspective than the case study itself. These generalizations should be explicitly discussed in the **policy implications** section. **Formatting** Papers should be double-spaced. Papers that are not double-spaced will be desk rejected.

Types of Contribution

A typical *Food Policy* article is around 6,000-10,000 words in length, although longer articles may be accepted on an occasional basis if the topic demands this length of treatment. These word lengths are for the complete submission, including abstract, end notes, tables, references and appendices.

Review and Viewpoint articles: Review and Viewpoint articles are published by invitation only. Unsolicited reviews and viewpoints will be desk rejected.

In order to be considered, review articles are expected to address critically important areas, demonstrate rigour in the search and review process, and add substantial value to the literature. Reviews should lead to clear policy implications which need to be addressed in a specific section of the paper. Review article submissions that are not judged to meet all these criteria are likely to be desk-rejected.

For some example guidance on rigorous reviews, please see [here](#).

Food Policy does occasionally publish conceptual articles, thought-pieces and commentaries by leading researchers under the "Viewpoint" article category.

Experimental, simulation and theoretical studies:

A large proportion of submissions we receive is based on experimental data (e.g. choice experiments), on simulations (e.g., CGE models), or are purely theoretical. In order not to get desk rejected, papers that fall in these categories must be highly innovative in the questions they tackle. In order to be considered for publication these studies must rely on realistic or tested assumptions, and produce robust, valid and generalizable findings, which are relevant to the food policy debate. Papers that rely on computable general equilibrium models will typically only be considered for publication in exceptional cases.

Quantitative/modelling papers:

We privilege empirical (quantitative) contributions, which should be based on good quality measurements and representative data (free from obvious biases) and show the validity and robustness of the findings. Econometric methods should be presented in a transparent way, together with a justification of the methodological choice. Empirical analyses should be replicable, and discuss robustness to the model/method assumptions. We do not publish systems dynamics articles.

Null results

Papers can be considered even with null results, provided that the study is innovative, the analysis is well-designed, all data collection and modelling steps are taken in a rigorous scientific manner, the results and findings are discussed with a critical perspective in relation to other studies, and the authors have conducted all relevant robustness checks.

Qualitative research

We consider findings based on qualitative research, to the extent that the method allows one to shed original light on policy issues and relevant aspects of the food system, hence providing novel and useful information to the food policy debate. Qualitative research methods should follow rigorous scientific protocols just as much as quantitative papers.

Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

Ensure that the following items are present:

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:

- E-mail address
- Full postal address

All necessary files have been uploaded:

Manuscript:

- Include keywords
- All figures (include relevant captions)
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
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Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files (where applicable)

Supplemental files (where applicable)

Further considerations

- Food Policy publishes manuscript in English only. Manuscripts where the English leaves some to be desired will not be sent out for review. We ask authors to spell-check their manuscripts before they submit, and we ask authors to have their manuscripts proofread and copy-edited before they submit.
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Ethics in publishing

Please see our information pages on [Ethics in publishing](#) and [Ethical guidelines for journal publication](#).

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All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential competing interests include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Authors must disclose any interests in two places: 1. A summary declaration of interest statement in the title page file (if double-blind) or the manuscript file (if single-blind). If there are no interests to declare then please state this: 'Declarations of interest: none'. This summary statement will be ultimately published if the article is accepted. 2. Detailed disclosures as part of a separate Declaration of Interest form, which forms part of the journal's official records. It is important for potential interests to be declared in both places and that the information matches. [More information](#).

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Data provided as supplementary material

Authors may upload small data-sets as supplementary files accompanying the manuscript. (see the Supplementary Material paragraph below). Data should be provided in a format which makes reusability easy (e.g. spreadsheets, ASCII data, Stata or SPSS files, etc.).

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Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 6 keywords, using either British or American spelling, but be consistent, and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, "and", "of"). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

Submission

Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. The system converts your article files to a single PDF file used in the peer-review process. Editable files (e.g., Word, LaTeX) are required to typeset your article for final publication. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

Accordingly, users need to keep their contact coordinates on the registration page up-to-date, using the "UPDATE MY INFORMATION" option.

For a direct link to the online submission, [click here](#)

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The editors of *Food Policy* welcome proposals for special issues on topics that fall within the scope of the journal. Please [click here](#) to see the aims and scope of *Food Policy*.

Each special issue is the responsibility of guest editor(s). Those wishing to guest edit a special issue should prepare a proposal as outlined below, then send this to foodpolicy@unibo.it.

As *Food Policy* is only able to publish one to two special issues per year, the editors will seek to identify the proposals of the highest quality for publication by the following competitive process. There are two deadlines each year for submission of special issue proposals: April 15th and October 15th. As soon as possible after each of these dates, the editors of *Food Policy* will consider all special issue proposals that conform to the journal's guidelines and which have been received in the previous six-month period, up to close of business on the deadline date. All potential guest editors who have submitted proposals will be informed by e-mail of the success or otherwise of their proposal. We strongly encourage special issue submissions not to have the same authors on more than one article. Special issue submissions where the same authors appear on multiple articles are likely to get rejected.

For prospective Guest editors please see the guidelines for the process by which the editors will select special issues:

[Guidelines for Guest Editors of Food Policy Special Issues.](#)

PREPARATION

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If your article includes any Videos and/or other Supplementary material, this should be included in your initial submission for peer review purposes.

Divide the article into clearly defined sections.

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This journal operates a single blind review process. All contributions will be initially assessed by the editor for suitability for the journal. Papers deemed suitable are then typically sent to a minimum of two independent expert reviewers to assess the scientific quality of the paper. The Editor is responsible for the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of articles. The Editor's decision is final. [More information on types of peer review.](#)

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Regardless of the file format of the original submission, at revision you must provide us with an editable file of the entire article. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

Article structure

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Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1.1 (then 1.1.1, 1.1.2, ...), 1.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Use this numbering also for internal cross-referencing: do not just refer to 'the text'. Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.

Introduction

State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results. This section should explicitly refer to the policy relevance of the paper, and describe the state-of-the-art evidence basis.

Theory

A Theory section, if relevant to the paper, should extend, not repeat, the background to the article already dealt with in the Introduction and lay the foundation for further work. This section covers the theoretical background, the assumption and the definitions behind the empirical strategy.

Methodology

Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized, and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described. This section should explain with sufficient details the specification of the empirical model, the estimation strategy and any additional empirical test aimed at assessing the validity and robustness of the estimates. Authors may choose to have sub-sections referring to specification, estimation and validation.

Empirical application

This section describes in full details the empirical application. It should be consistent with the theoretical specification and estimation methodology and provide sufficient details on the empirical setting of the study, and on the data. More specifically, all papers should include a detailed description of the data sources and allow a thorough assessment of the quality of the data. This implies discussing

measurement issues, validation of measurement instruments (e.g. questionnaire items) if data are collected ad hoc for the study, and an in-depth discussion of sampling and non-sampling measurement errors. Essential descriptive statistics on the data should be provided in this section. Authors may consider the opportunity of having sub-sections (e.g. Data, Sampling strategy, Questionnaire, etc.).

Results

Results should be clear and concise. Tables and Graphs should be self-explanatory, with appropriate (concise) titles, and all the necessary/detailed information as notes below the table/graph. The size and number of tables should ensure readability and authors should make an effort to separate essential information from additional estimation outputs. The latter can be included as on-line Supplementary Material as pdf or Excel files.

Policy Implications

The discussion of the results does not necessarily require a separate Discussion section, and could be combined within the Results section. However, Food Policy requires an explicit section named Policy Implications, or - as an alternative - a Discussion section with a Policy Implications sub-section. Here authors should discuss the policy implications of the empirical results as they logically follow from the elements of policy relevance covered in the introduction. This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. If the same policy issues have been covered in previous research published in Food Policy, the discussion should explicitly refer to these studies and highlight consistencies and conflicts.

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section.

Appendices

Appendices should include relevant additional results or cover theoretical or methodological issues that were not included in the main text to improve the readability of the paper. Additional/relevant output which is not central to the objectives of the study should be rather provided as on-line Supplementary Material (see the specific paragraph below). If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

Essential title page information

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible. In general, the country or geographical scope of the study should not be the main element of the title, as the target of *Food Policy* is to present empirical evidence that informs the international food policy debate.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
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Highlights

Highlights are mandatory for this journal as they help increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: [example Highlights](#).

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

Abstract

A concise and factual abstract is required. The abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research, the principal results and major conclusions. An abstract is often presented separately from the article, so it must be able to stand alone. For this reason, references should be avoided, but if essential, then cite the author(s) and year(s). Also, non-standard or uncommon abbreviations should be avoided, but if essential they must be defined at their first mention in the abstract itself. *Food Policy* does not publish structured abstracts, and papers with structured abstracts may be sent back to authors before being considered.

Graphical abstract

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Keywords

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