

The ESS ERIC privacy notice is available at:
www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/privacy.html

Living in the UK Survey 2025

About us

Living in the UK is a survey of social attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of individuals. Similar studies are carried out in other European countries, and together these are called the European Social Survey.

The European Social Survey ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium) is responsible for the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is run in around 30 other countries in Europe every two years. It asks questions about people's attitudes, life events, the area they live in, as well as factual questions. The information collected is joined together and the ESS results are compared across all the countries that took part. The ESS ERIC has agreements with all organisations involved in the ESS that cover how your personal information is used.

Protecting your personal information is important to us and this leaflet explains what we do and your rights.

If you are under 18 years of age at the time you complete the survey, permission from a parent or guardian is required for you to participate. This person can ask to see the paper questionnaire in advance so that they know what questions are going to be asked.

1. What information about you do we use?

Anything that can identify you is considered 'personal data' and is protected by law.

This includes your name, address and other contact details. Some types of information are known as special category personal data, such as information about your health, trade union membership and political opinions. ESS collects all these types of personal data.

If you choose not to take part in the survey, information on the reason why may be collected, for example, if there is a language barrier.

If you start the survey online but do not complete it, we will use the information you provide, unless you tell us not to (see section 6. Your rights, below).

2. How did we obtain your contact details?

Your address has been randomly selected from the Postcode Address File to participate in the survey. We need to select one adult aged 15 who has the next birthday from your household to participate in the survey. This helps to ensure we achieve a representative sample, that is, one includes the views of the range of different groups in the UK.

We might collect different information depending how you complete the survey – you will be invited to complete the ESS online or on paper.

If you choose to complete the survey online, we will collect some extra information. For example, how long it took you to answer each question and the type of device you used to complete the survey. This helps us learn about people's experience of completing the survey and may inform changes we make in the future. The IP address of your device will be captured when you complete the survey but will be anonymised, that is, no information linking this device to you will be available in the collated data.

3. When will your information be used?

The ESS in the UK takes place in 2025 and 2026. We collect your information from the start of the ESS when preparing for the survey, when we invite you to participate, during the survey, when you are answering the questions and afterwards. Your contact information will be deleted once the survey is published by the ESS ERIC Data Archive, by December 2027 at the latest. Otherwise, the survey responses with all directly identifying personal information removed will be stored indefinitely at the ESS ERIC Data Archive at Sikt, Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research, in Norway.

If you agree that ESS ERIC may contact you again for later studies, your contact details will be held until the end of 2030. Note that if you agree to take part in later studies, we will combine your data from today's survey with any other surveys you complete for us in the future.

[If you give any information to receive a £10 voucher, this information will be deleted by 12/2026.]



4. What organisations get access to your information?

A number of organisations are involved in the ESS and may access your information.

- The ESS National Coordinator (NC), the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) in the UK is asked to undertake the ESS.
- NatCen are also the fieldwork organisation administering the survey. NatCen can access your contact details.
- Centerdata, an independent non-profit research institute located on the campus of Tilburg University in the Netherlands, is responsible for hosting the survey platform and can access your personal data, although this is not routinely done.
- If you agree to be contacted again, Centerdata will store contact information for this purpose until the end of 2030.
- Contact information that we use to contact you is separately stored.
- The ESS ERIC Data Archive at Sikt stores your survey responses, without your name or contact details, indefinitely. The responses are sent from NatCen via a web platform hosted by the University of Pompeu Fabra (UPF) in Spain.

If information is transferred between the organisations involved in the ESS, this is done securely. Any transfer to the UK is based on the European Commission Adequacy Decision of June 2021 covering the transfer of personal data from the EU to the UK.

The published results are made available on the website:

www.europeansocialsurvey.org.

Because of the questions we ask there is a slight possibility that your responses, when combined, may identify you. Methods to reduce the possibility of this occurring are used at all stages. The storage arrangements also cover the responses that are not published. For these, researchers in approved research institutions may apply for access to these unpublished results for use in scientific studies. Because the unpublished information may include more potentially identifiable information than the published results, there is a slightly higher possibility that these unpublished responses, when combined, may identify you. Due to this, special permission is needed for access to these results, and we take particular steps to reduce the possibility of identification before researchers may access any of the unpublished results.

5. The legal basis for our use of your personal data

The ESS is undertaken every two years for the purpose of research and its legal basis is performance of a task in the public interest and for scientific research purposes UK GDPR art. 6.1(e); 9.2 (J); 89,1.). All processing is for this purpose.access any of the unpublished results.

6. Your rights and how to exercise them

You have rights to:

- access your personal data
- request the correction of any errors in the personal data we hold
- request deletion of your personal data
- request the restriction on processing of your personal data, that is, to ask us to stop processing while the accuracy of your personal data is checked
- To object to our processing of your personal data.

As long as we can identify you, you have these rights. If you want to stop receiving information or have your data deleted, please contact NatCen. If you have questions regarding your rights, you may contact the ESS ERIC Data Protection Officer.

Please note that as soon as details, such as your name and address, are removed, then it is unlikely that you can be identified with any certainty and therefore it will no longer be possible to delete the remaining information you have provided. You have a right to lodge a complaint with the UK Information Commissioner's Office.

When you contact NatCen to exercise your rights, they might have a legal obligation to keep some of your data for other purposes for a longer period of time. For example, they may be legally obliged to keep a record of who contacted them and how their request was actioned.

Contact us if you have any questions or you want to make a complaint

- ESS National team & FWO 0800 652 2704, LivingintheUK@natcen.ac.uk
- Controller: ESS ERIC, c/o ESS ERIC HQ, City St George's, University of London, Northampton Square, London EC1V OHB, UK. ess@city.ac.uk (The Controller is responsible for protecting your personal data)
- Data Protection Officer, ESS ERIC: dpo.esseric@europeansocialsurvey.org
- ESS ERIC's GDPR Representative: CESSDA ERIC, Solheimsgaten 16, 5058 Bergen, Norway: ess-gdpr@cessda.eu

If you want to make a complaint, please contact:

UK Information Commission's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or by post Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, UK

How to find the results of the survey

You can find the results of the survey on the European Social Survey website. Go to **www.europeansocialsurvey.org** and you will be taken to the survey's homepage.