

DATA PROTECTION DECLARATION  
TIMSS 2027 SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

The information provided below applies to TIMSS 2027 data.

**Identity and contact details of controllers:**

Educational Research Centre (hereinafter "ERC")

DCU St Patrick's Campus

Drumcondra Road Upper

Dublin 9

D09 AN2F

Ireland

Telephone: +353 1 837 3789

Email: [timss.ireland@erc.ie](mailto:timss.ireland@erc.ie)

and

Stichting I.E.A. Secretariaat Nederland (hereinafter "IEA")

Keizersgracht 311

1016 EE Amsterdam

The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 20 625 3625

Email: [secretariat@iea.nl](mailto:secretariat@iea.nl)

The ERC and IEA have concluded a joint controller agreement, which regulates their respective roles and responsibilities in the processing of personal data.

**Data Protection Officer**

The ERC's Data Protection Officer can be reached at: [data.protection@erc.ie](mailto:data.protection@erc.ie)

IEA's Data Protection Officer can be reached at: [dataprotection@iea.nl](mailto:dataprotection@iea.nl)

**For which purpose are data collected and processed?**

The data collected during the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2027 will be used exclusively for scientific research purposes. TIMSS is an educational research project sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

The ERC is administering TIMSS in Ireland at the request of, and on behalf of, the Department of Education and Youth. This is in accordance with one of the functions ("carrying out national and international assessments of the attainment levels and academic achievement of students and reporting on such assessments to the Minister") set out in the ERC's Establishment Order as a statutory body (which can be viewed in full at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/si/392/made/en/print>). The ERC's legal basis for processing personal data as per GDPR (Article 6) is "the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller".

**Which information is requested?**

The school principal (or, if a principal is not available, another equally qualified personnel) is invited to complete the TIMSS 2027 School Questionnaire in order to provide the study with

information about the characteristics and resources of the school, instructional time, the principals' experience and education, and his or her opinion on related topics, as well about the characteristics of the students (economic background, native language).

- In order to ensure that TIMSS is based on scientifically selected samples of students and schools, selected schools are expected to cooperate with the administration of TIMSS where requested to do so (Department of Education Circulars 0025/2025).
- Principals will not be disadvantaged in any way by non-completion of the questionnaire, and respondents are permitted to skip individual questions or to discontinue answering the questions at any time.
- By filling in and returning a completed questionnaire, a study participant is agreeing to the collection and processing of their data within the questionnaire.
- Withdrawal of agreement to the processing of data without stating any reason can be made by any participant up to 4 weeks after the tests have been administered.
- Any participant who wants to remove or amend their information can contact the ERC (at +353 1 837 3789 or [timss.ireland@erc.ie](mailto:timss.ireland@erc.ie)). If an individual withdraws from the study, no additional data will be collected from that individual.
- Queries related to how personal information is protected can be directed to the ERC's Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@erc.ie](mailto:data.protection@erc.ie)).

#### **What kind of data are collected?**

Data from answers to the questions in every completed TIMSS 2027 School Questionnaire are collected and stored. This is in the form of numbers representing selections (for example, a multiple-choice question), or values (for example, a figure for number of students in the target grade).

As this survey is administered online, there is information stored regarding login time and device information (for each login), answers and answer history for each question including timestamps and whether the questionnaire has been submitted. In addition, the following log data is captured: all navigation events; each click on a checkbox/radio button; each selection in a drop-down; focus (putting the cursor into the box) and blur (putting the cursor outside the box).

This information cannot, in and of itself, be used to identify individual respondents by name. A numeric unique identifier (ID) is recorded to uniquely identify each school. The relationship between this ID and the school's name and the school principal's name is known to the school coordinator and the team at the ERC conducting the study. It is not, however, shared with the IEA or any third parties.

#### **Where, how, and for how long are data from TIMSS stored?**

TIMSS 2027 data are stored securely in a pseudonymous form, that is, processed in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific data subject without the use of additional information (any such additional information is kept separately and subject to technical and organisational measures to ensure that the personal data are not attributed to an identified or identifiable natural person). These data cannot be accessed by any external persons or systems. Moreover, any IEA or ERC employees who access the data

for processing have been suitably briefed on what constitutes an acceptable treatment of data and have signed a confidentiality agreement.

Questionnaire data (IEA) are collected and stored (including backups) on an AWS server hosted in the EU. The IEA SharePoint server where Within-School Sampling (WinW3S) data is uploaded by the ERC is hosted by Microsoft within the EU.

The collected data (responses, event, and system data) are archived for an indefinite amount of time following the technical and organisational measures described in the Joint Controller Agreement between the IEA and the ERC so that they remain available for scientific and statistical research. These data eventually result in a database that allows researchers to compare education systems worldwide (see “Public accessibility” below).

All data arriving for data processing are submitted in a pseudonymised form, i.e., without respondent names—only using a random, international ID system.

#### **With whom and how are data from TIMSS shared?**

IEA subcontracts the international implementation of TIMSS 2027 to the International Study Center (ISC) based at Boston College, USA. IEA shares the pseudonymised data with the ISC via a secure SharePoint server. The ISC analyses the collected TIMSS 2027 data and produces the International Report. Employees of the ISC who access the data for analyses have signed a confidentiality agreement.

IEA has performed the required Data Transfer Impact Assessment for transfer of personal data outside of the European Economic Area. IEA relies on EC Standard Contractual Clauses (Module II: Controller to Processor) for transferring pseudonymised personal data to the USA.

The ISC shares the pseudonymised data with RTI for the purpose of school sampling. RTI is an authorised sub-processor in the USA. IEA transfers the data using a secure SharePoint server. Employees of RTI who access the data for analyses have signed a confidentiality agreement.

IEA also shares the pseudonymised data with the National Research Centers of all other participating countries using a secure SharePoint server.

#### **Related data**

Along with the principals, teachers, students, and their parents are asked to complete a context questionnaire. Students are asked to complete achievement tests. Information from all these sources is linked to information collected from the principals, and this linked information is in the final version of the international research database.

#### **Public accessibility**

The final international research database will be accessible to the public from the following sites:

<https://www.iea.nl/data-tools/repository/timss> (Amsterdam, Netherlands)  
<https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/index.html> (Boston, USA)

All data in the database are pseudonymous and, as such, cannot be linked to individuals without the use of additional information, which is kept separately, and its security is ensured by using appropriate technical and organizational measures.

## Automated decision-making and profiling

We do not conduct any automated decision-making, including profiling, as referred to in Article 22 GDPR.

## Rights of Data Subjects

The GDPR grants the following rights to you as a data subject:

- Right to Withdraw Consent, if processing is based on consent—Article 7 GDPR
- Right to Information—Articles 13 and 14 GDPR
- Right of Access—Article 15 GDPR
- Right to Rectification—Article 16 GDPR
- Right to Erasure—Article 17 GDPR
- Right to Restriction of Processing—Article 18 GDPR
- Right to Data Portability—Article 20 GDPR
- Right to Object—Article 21 GDPR
- The right not to be subjected to decisions only based on automated decision making of profiling—Article 22 GDPR
- Right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority—Article 77 GDPR

Data Subjects are entitled to the rights set out in Articles 15-20 GDPR.

Data Subjects have the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority. The relevant authority in Ireland is:

Data Protection Commission

6 Pembroke Row

Dublin 2

D02 X963

Ireland

Website Address: [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)

The Data Protection Commission (DPC) has published a resource to assist schools with meeting their data protection obligations when processing the personal data of children. For further information, the Data Protection Toolkit for Schools can be accessed by clicking on the following link [*please note: this link will take you to the website of the Data Protection Commission*]:

- (English)  
[https://www.dataprotection.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2024-12/DataProtection-ToolkitforSchools\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://www.dataprotection.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2024-12/DataProtection-ToolkitforSchools_EN_0.pdf)
- (Gaeilge)  
[https://www.dataprotection.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2024-12/DataProtection-ToolkitforSchools\\_GA\\_0.pdf](https://www.dataprotection.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2024-12/DataProtection-ToolkitforSchools_GA_0.pdf)