

## DATA PROTECTION DECLARATION TIMSS 2023 SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

### Identity and contact details of controllers:

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

The data collected during the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 2023) will be used exclusively for scientific purposes. TIMSS is an educational research project sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

The Educational Research Centre (ERC) is administering TIMSS in Ireland at the request of, and on behalf of, the Department of Education. This is in accordance with one of the functions (“carrying out national and international assessments of the attainment levels and academic achievement of pupils 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 principals (if a principal is not available, other equally qualified personnel) of participating schools are invited to complete the TIMSS 2023 School Questionnaire to provide the study with information about the characteristics and resources of the school, instructional time, principals’ experience and education, and with principals’ opinion data.

- In order to ensure that TIMSS is based on scientifically selected samples of pupils and schools, selected schools are expected to cooperate with the administration of TIMSS where requested to do so (Department of Education **Circulars 0056/2011 and 0025/2012**).

- 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 Educational Research Centre (at 01 8373789 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 from every completed TIMSS 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).

If principals choose to complete the survey online rather than on paper, there is further logging information stored regarding the first and latest log-in time, the number of times a respondent has logged in in total, the number of the current question, and whether or not the questionnaire has been submitted.

This information cannot, in and of itself, be used to identify individual respondents by name, however a numeric unique identifier (ID) is recorded to uniquely identify each school. The relationship between this ID and the school's name or roll number, is known to the school coordinator and the Educational Research Centre. It is not, however, shared with the IEA or any third parties, including RTI International (United States) which prepares the sample of schools for the participating countries.

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

TIMSS data are stored securely on servers located in Europe and cannot be accessed by any external parties or systems. The online questionnaire data collected in TIMSS 2023 DC using the Online SurveySystem are stored on Microsoft Azure servers that are located in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Data are processed centrally at the IEA in Hamburg, Germany. Data are processed centrally at the IEA in Hamburg, Germany. All data arriving for data processing are submitted without names.

Moreover, any ERC or IEA 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.

#### ***The data are stored as follows:***

Anonymised TIMSS data will be archived for research purposes for an indefinite amount of time so that it remains available for scientific analyses. These responses eventually result in a database that allows researchers to compare education systems worldwide (see 'Public accessibility' below).

#### ***At the ERC, the data are stored as follows:***

Data linked to individuals are stored until the international database is released (expected to be February 2025 for this cycle of TIMSS). At that point (or earlier in the cycle where possible), all

data are anonymised so that there is no possibility of an individual study participant being identifiable.

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

As part of initial processing, the ERC shares some data from TIMSS with its subcontractors (e.g. for data entry). All subcontractors have signed a Data Processing Agreement and confidentiality agreement with the ERC.

Response data from paper questionnaires are sent from the Educational Research Centre to IEA, via a secure FTP server. Responses to the online questionnaires are available to the Educational Research Centre and the IEA only. Both provide the data 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 being 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).

TIMSS is directed by the International Study Center (ISC) based at Boston College, USA, and most of the data analyses occur there. Response data are required for the analysis but are sent to the ISC, via a secure FTP server, in a pseudonymous form. ISC employees who access the data for analyses have signed a confidentiality agreement. The transfer of the data to the USA, as a third country, is safeguarded by appropriate and suitable legal, technical and organisational measures such as a Data Processing Agreement and European Standard Contractual Clauses.

The data are also shared back, again over secure FTP server, with the Educational Research Centre.

### **Related data**

Along with the principals, teachers, parents (for Fourth Class only) and students are also asked to complete a questionnaire. Information coming from these sources is linked to that from principals in the final international research database (IDB).

### **Public accessibility**

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

<https://www.iea.nl/data> (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

<https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/index.html> (Boston, USA)

All data in the database are anonymous, and cannot be linked to individuals.

### **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**

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

21 Fitzwilliam Square South

Dublin 2

D02 RD28

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