



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# European Social Fund (ESF) Participant Survey: privacy notice

Explains how we use personal data collected by the European Social Fund (ESF) Participants Survey.

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# Introduction

The Welsh Government has commissioned IFF Research to undertake the European Social Fund (ESF) Participants Survey.

The ESF Participants Survey is a survey of people who have undertaken training or received support funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). Participants will be invited to participate via a telephone or online survey.

The purpose of the ESF Participants Survey is to find out whether ESF training / support is helpful to people in areas such as seeking employment and improving skills.

The Welsh Government is the data controller for the research, and it receives the information collected. The information is used for research and statistical purposes only, to produce statistical bulletins and research reports.

Anonymised analysis of the information collected will be included in a report published on the Welsh Government website and IFF Research.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. However, your views and experiences are important in order to help inform Welsh Government policies.

The contact for this research at IFF Research is Max Henley or Guido Miani.

E-mail address: [esfparticipants@iffresearch.com](mailto:esfparticipants@iffresearch.com)

Freephone number: 0800 652 0436

## What personal data do we hold and where do we

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## get this information?

Personal data is defined under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) as 'any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified by reference to an identifier'.

All ESF funded operations are required to provide the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) with the details of their participants. Those contacted to take part in this survey have been selected from this database of participants, and their contact details (name, email and postal address and telephone number) and the following personal data are provided to IFF Research:

- Participant identifier number;
- Unique learner number;
- Gender;
- Ethnicity;
- Date of birth;
- Migrant status;
- Work limiting health conditions;
- Disability.

Contact information is used to get in touch with you to take part in the survey and the other information is used to include in the survey rather than asking you for this information again, if it is available from the database of participants. Date of birth is used to calculate your age rather than asking you. The unique learning number is used to check for duplicates i.e. where you have participated in more than one ESF operation to ensure you only have a single survey.

As part of this research, participants will be invited by IFF Research to complete a survey, either via telephone or online, providing feedback on the course attended and information on what they have done since then. Prior to the survey, participants will be contacted by letter or email to take part in the

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telephone survey or if preferred, to complete the survey online. If you take part in an online survey then the survey link you will receive from IFF Research will be a personalised link.

The survey will have the information above added to the data by IFF Research and in addition will collect the following personal information: ethnicity (if missing from the database of participants) and additional information on health and disabilities.

Your participation is voluntary and if you do not wish to take part or be sent reminders then please let us know using the email or freephone number in the survey invitation letter and your details will be removed. IFF Research will only use your details for the purposes of this evaluation.

Where the survey is administered via a telephone interview, IFF Research will record the calls for quality control purposes. If this is the case, we will make this clear to you before the interview begins, and you will have the opportunity to tell us if you are not happy for the discussion to be recorded. Recordings will be deleted as soon as soon as the research fieldwork is completed.

As part of their quality control procedures, IFF Research may wish to re-contact participants completing the telephone survey interview to verify some of the information provided. IFF Research will ask participants at the conclusion of the telephone survey if they are willing to be re-contacted for this purpose.

Your answers to the survey will be linked anonymously to other data sources as part of both the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) databank and Welsh Government's own Secure Research Environment for non-commercial research purposes only unless you ask for this linkage to not take place (see the explanatory note).

If you raise a query or complaint and provide personal data requesting a response, the researcher will forward the request only to the Welsh Government

officer and subsequently delete it from the research data.

## What is the lawful basis for using your data?

The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government. Some of the data we are collecting are called 'special category data' (in this case ethnicity, health and disability) and the lawful basis for processing this information is that it is for statistical or research purposes.

Participation is completely voluntary. Research studies such as this are important for the Welsh Government to collect information and actionable evidence about its ability to deliver government priorities. The information collected in this research, for example, might be used to:

- Explore perceptions of the support received.
- Investigate whether the operations funded by the ESF programmes are having an impact and to what extent.
- Develop recommendations for future funding programmes.

## How secure is your personal data?

Personal information provided to IFF Research is always stored on a secure server. The data can only be accessed by a limited number of researchers working on this project. The project's paperwork will be kept under lock in IFF Research's offices. IFF Research will only use this data for research purposes. IFF Research has cyber essentials certification.

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IFF Research has procedures to deal with any suspected data security breaches. If a suspected breach occurs, IFF Research will report this to the Welsh Government who will notify you and any applicable regulator where we are legally required to do so.

Personal data provided to Welsh Government by IFF Research as part of this project is held on secure servers, and for this project a folder has been created that has access restricted only to the immediate research team. The personal data you provide will be stored in this restricted folder. The information will only be used for research purposes.

IFF Research will use the information gathered to produce a report that will be published on the Welsh Government website. This report will not include any information that could be used to identify individual participants.

Anonymised survey data is made available via the UK Data Service. Accredited researchers, such as academics and NHS researchers, and other public sector bodies in Wales may also request access to data not available through the UK Data Service. These requests are scrutinised by the Welsh Government's Chief Social Research Officer and - if approved - are governed by Data Access Agreements issued by the Welsh Government. These formal agreements set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

## How long do we keep your personal data?

IFF Research will hold personal data during the contract period, and any personal data will be deleted by IFF Research three months after the end of the contract. This includes your contact details. IFF Research will provide the information given to Welsh Government. The Welsh Government will delete this data by 31 December 2026.

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The NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS) also have access to a part of the personal data for a period of three months, until the data linking with Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) is complete.

## Individual rights

Under UK GDPR, you have the following rights in relation to the personal information you provide as part of this [project], you have the right:

- To access a copy of your own data;
- For us to rectify inaccuracies in that data;
- To object to or restrict processing (in certain circumstances);
- For your data to be 'erased' (in certain circumstances); and
- To lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF.

Phone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113.

Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)



## Further Information

If you have any further questions about how the data provided as part of this study will be used by the Welsh Government or wish to exercise your rights using the UK General Data Protection Regulation, please contact:

Name: Charlotte Guinee

E-mail address: [Charlotte.Guinee@gov.wales](mailto:Charlotte.Guinee@gov.wales)

Telephone number: 0300 250734

The Welsh Government's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Email: [DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)

## Explanatory note

The Welsh Government would like to link and match your anonymised data to other anonymised information about you which is available to the Welsh Government, the NHS and other public organisations. This data linking is done within secure facilities and checks are carried out to make sure that identities are not revealed by the results of the analysis. The data will be made available using a Secure Research Environment for statistical and research purposes only to approved researchers from the Welsh Government, universities or other accredited organisations, for projects that have been approved by the Welsh

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Government. Only projects with a clear public benefit will be approved.

The SAIL Databank is a databank of anonymised data about the population of Wales, which is internationally recognised for the robust secure storage and use of anonymised person-based data for research to improve health, well-being and services. Respondents are able to opt out of having their answers linked. For more information on how to do that or on data linking, please see: [Linking and matching data: privacy notice](#).

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