We would like to hear your views on life in the UK

Dear Sir or Madam,

We would like to invite your household to take part in UK Opinion 2018. The study explores how the views of people in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland compare with those of people living in other countries. We hope we can count on your help with this important research.

We would like to ask for your frank opinions on vital issues that affect us all, like health, politics, education, fairness and immigration. No special knowledge is needed, and you don’t need a strong opinion – we just want to hear what you think. This is a unique chance to represent the opinions and lives of people like you.

Why your views matter
You are representing the real views and opinions of people living in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The information we collect is used by universities, charities and government to understand the real opinions of the public.

What next?
One of our interviewers will call at your address in the next week or so, to explain more about the study. So you know who they are, they all carry an ID card. We would like to select one person from your address to take part.

Thank you
As a thank you for taking part, please find enclosed a £5 Post Office Voucher that can be exchanged for cash at any branch of the Post Office.

We realise you may be busy, so we will do everything we can to make taking part as easy as possible for you.

We look forward to meeting you soon,

Alun Humphrey
National Coordinator, UK Opinion 2018
Frequently asked questions

What is the interview about?

The study is designed to find out what people in the UK think. We will ask you what you think about health, politics, education, fairness, immigration and other topics. The study will be used to understand the opinions of people in the UK and how these have changed over time, and to see how opinions in the UK compare with opinions in other countries in Europe.

What will happen to the information I share?

We will treat all the information you share in the strictest confidence in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Your information will be used for research purposes only and it won’t be possible to identify you from the published results.

We guarantee that you will never receive any junk mail or sales calls as a result of taking part in this study.

Please see the enclosed leaflet for more information about how we protect your privacy.

How did you choose my address?

We have chosen your address at random from the Postcode Address File. This is a list of every address in the UK, held by the Post Office and available to the public. We choose addresses at random to get a truly representative picture – so we need to speak to people from all regions, age groups and walks of life.

Who is carrying out the study?

NatCen Social Research is the UK’s leading independent social research agency. We’re proud to have been carrying out research on behalf of government, charities and other organisations for over 40 years. NatCen is a non-profit organisation completely independent of government departments and political parties. The study is funded by the Economic Social and Research Council (ESRC). The ESRC is the UK funding agency addressing economic and social concerns.

How do I take part?

An interviewer will call at your address in the next few days. They will have a NatCen ID card. You can also call the number at the bottom of this letter to make an appointment. You do not have to take part but we hope that you will as we rely on the voluntary cooperation of those invited to take part to get a clear picture of public opinion in the UK.

Where can I find out more?

You can ask the interviewer about the study, visit our website: www.natcen.ac.uk/opinion2018, email opinion2018@natcen.ac.uk, or phone us free on 0800 652 2704.
Why are we contacting you?

The study is designed to provide an accurate picture of opinions in the UK. NatCen has sampled your address at random from the Postcode Address File, a list of all addresses in the UK. In each household, we randomly select one person aged 15 or over to interview.

If you are under 18 years of age at the time of the interview, a parent or guardian will be asked for permission for you to participate. As a parent/guardian you can request to see the questionnaire in advance.

Your participation in the ESS

During the interview, you will be asked a number of questions about your attitudes, life events, as well as more factual questions. We will ask about politics, religion, trade union membership and about your attitudes to social issues. Your answers from the interview will be recorded electronically. We also gather information about the area you live in.

Your participation in the survey is voluntary. You are free to choose which questions you want to answer, and you may stop the interview at any time without giving any explanation.

Where can I find out more?

To find out more about the study, visit www.natcen.ac.uk/opinion2018 and www.europeansocialsurvey.org

NatCen Social Research
0800 652 2704
opinion2018@natcen.ac.uk

Data Protection Officer
ESS ERIC (Data Controller):
dpo.esseric@europeansocialsurvey.org

UK Information Commission’s Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow Cheshire, SK9 5AF
01625 545700
ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/

The full data protection privacy notice can be seen at:
www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/privacy.html

UK Opinion 2018 is a survey of social attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of individuals in the UK. Similar studies are carried out in other European countries, and together these are called the European Social Survey or ESS.

Protecting your personal information is important to us. This leaflet outlines what we do with the information we collect and store.
If you decide not to participate

If you decide not to take part in the ESS, for whatever reason, we will ask and record the reason(s) why, for example if this is due to a language barrier or illness/sickness.

This information helps us to check that the people who participate in the survey are representative of the overall population in your country. For information about your privacy and rights, see below.

What happens with the information we collect?

- We will treat all the information about you with strict confidentiality and in accordance with EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and national data protection laws.
- Only NatCen and NISRA, who collect the data, will have access to your contact information (e.g. name and address).
- When data collection in Northern Ireland has been completed, NISRA will send the survey data including your contact information, to NatCen.
- When the survey is finished, NatCen will send the UK survey data, without your name or contact details to the ESS Archive (NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data, Bergen, Norway).
- Your name and contact information will be deleted when the data is published and no later than June 2020.
- The rest of the collected survey data will be securely stored for an indefinite period. They are made available for use in scientific studies by researchers, students and others interested in opinion and social attitudes in the UK and other countries.
- There is a possibility but it is unlikely that some information (such as citizenship, age, country of birth, occupation, ancestry and region) may combine in a way that would identify you. This is a possibility only for the survey responses which are not published. Access to this information will only be given to researchers after approved applications and confidentiality agreements are in place.
- The results of the survey will be published on the ESS website in May 2020.
- We will make every effort to ensure that no participant is identifiable in the results of the survey or in any publications based on the study.

Your rights

As long as we can identify you in the ESS results (the survey responses), you have the right to object to the processing of your personal data, to access, rectify and erase any information about you, and to ask us what information we hold about you. Once details such as your name and address are removed, then it will no longer be possible to delete the information you provided.

You also have the right to lodge a complaint to the UK Information Commission’s Office.

Who is responsible?

The European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC) undertakes the survey and, along with NatCen Social Research, is the joint Data Controller. Its headquarters are in London, UK.

NISRA, as a data processor, are responsible only for the collection of survey data in Northern Ireland and subsequent delivery of this data to NatCen Social Research.

What organisations are involved?

In the UK, NatCen is responsible for the recruitment and carrying out the survey. See www.natcen.ac.uk/opinion2018 for an overview of the key members of this team.

What gives us the right to collect your personal data?

The lawful bases used in ESS are that it is undertaken as a task in the public interest and necessary for research and archiving purposes, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and national laws.