

PIRLS Data Collection and Privacy Information

What Information Is Collected?

Students in the selected PIRLS classes complete an online test that measures reading literacy. The students are also asked to complete a questionnaire to provide information about reading during leisure time, the school environment and reading instruction, safety and sense of belonging at school, how the student feels at school (e.g., difficulties concentrating due to hunger/tiredness/worry; other feelings at school such as motivation, happiness, confidence, etc.), use of digital tools (at school and at home), school attendance, use of the library, students' attitudes toward reading and self-assessment of reading skills, reading and resources at home, how often they speak Norwegian at home, as well as gender and month/year of birth.

Teachers of the PIRLS classes at participating schools are asked to complete the teacher questionnaire to provide information about the participating class(es), teaching practices and reading instruction, homework, classroom environment, use of digital tools in teaching, library resources, being a teacher (including job satisfaction, motivation, individualized instruction, possible obstacles), assessment of the school (safety, school environment, collaboration with colleagues, respect), assessment of reading, and some questions about age, gender, personal experience and education/need for professional development or further education.

Principals (or another member of the school leadership team if the principal is unavailable) at participating schools are asked to complete the school questionnaire to provide information about the school and its resources, the student population (number, background), the school's location, instructional time for 5th-grade students, resources for 5th-grade students (such as access to school nurse, social worker, school meals, etc.), the school's emphasis on academic achievement, parental cooperation/involvement, student motivation and respect, teachers' experience and education, school discipline and safety, use of digital devices, the school's reading-related instruction, and the principal's experience and education.

Parents of students in the PIRLS class(es) are asked to complete a questionnaire to provide information about early reading activities and language use at home (limited to "Norwegian," "Swedish/Danish," or "Other"), whether the child was born in Norway (and if not, how old the child was upon arrival), age at school start, the child's early skills at school start (e.g., could the child read letters, write their own name?), parental participation in

school activities (e.g., parent meetings), assessment of the child's reading skills, involvement in reading activities with the child, parents' own reading habits (attitudes, time spent), use of and attitudes toward digital tools/internet, home resources and thoughts about the child's school and education, as well as parents' own education and occupation.

What Types of Data Are Collected?

Data from every completed PIRLS questionnaire is collected and stored. The data is stored only in the form of numbers representing response options (for example, a multiple-choice question). The questionnaires are web-based, and during completion, information is also stored about the first and last login time, the number of times the respondent logged in, the number of questions answered, and whether the questionnaire was submitted.

The information from the responses cannot, by itself, be used to identify individual respondents by name. Each respondent is assigned a unique identification number (ID). The link between the ID number and the student/principal/teacher/parent is known only to the school contact and those working on the PIRLS project, and is stored separately from the responses. This means your data is pseudonymized. The link between ID and respondents will never be disclosed to anyone else, not even to the IEA, and will be deleted in August 2025 (for the field trial) and December 2027 (for the main study).

Where, How, and for How Long Is PIRLS Data Stored?

PIRLS 2026 data is securely stored in a pseudonymized form. This means the data is processed in such a way that it cannot be linked to a specific person without the use of additional information. This additional information is stored separately and securely to prevent the data from being linked to an identified or identifiable person. The data is not accessible to external individuals or systems. Additionally, all IEA staff with access to the data have received training on proper data handling and have signed a confidentiality agreement.

Digital response data is collected and stored in two locations:

1. Student performance data (RM Education Limited) is collected and stored (including backups) on AWS servers in Europe.
2. Questionnaire data (IEA) is collected and stored (including backups) on Microsoft Azure servers in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

IEA's SharePoint server is operated by Microsoft within the EU. All response data is submitted without names – only ID numbers are shared with the IEA.

The Reading Centre deletes response data from the field trial in August 2025.

Response data from the main study is stored indefinitely for research purposes. It is stored in a database that allows researchers to compare education systems worldwide.

Who Has Access to PIRLS Data?

The PIRLS 2026 study is led by the International Study Center (ISC) at Boston College, USA, and most of the data analyses are conducted there. The IEA in Hamburg sends the pseudonymized responses to the ISC via a secure SharePoint server. ISC staff with access to the data for analysis have signed a confidentiality agreement and received extensive training in data protection and privacy.

Since the USA is a third country (outside the EU/EEA), the transfer is subject to appropriate safeguards and is regulated by a specific data processing agreement in accordance with the European Standard Contractual Clauses adopted by the European Commission. The data is also returned from the ISC, again via a secure SharePoint server, to the Norwegian PIRLS project (led by the National Reading Centre).

Public Availability

Data from the field trial in spring 2025 will not be made public.

Information collected from students, teachers, principals, and parents during the main study in spring 2026 will be compiled into an international research database. This international database will be publicly available on the following websites:

<https://www.iea.nl/index.php/data-tools/repository> (Hamburg, Germany)

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

All data in the database is de-identified and cannot be linked back to individuals without additional information.

Automated Decision-Making and Profiling

No automated decision-making, including profiling as described in Article 22 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is carried out based on the responses.

Your Rights

If you have questions about the processing of your personal data or wish to exercise your rights, you can contact:

- Data Protection Officer: personvernombud@udir.no

- National Reading Centre: pirls2026@uis.no

Exercising your rights is free of charge.

We will respond to your inquiry as soon as possible, and no later than within 30 days.

You can read more about your rights on the Norwegian Data Protection Authority's website:

<https://www.datatilsynet.no/rettigheter-og-plikter/den-registrertes-rettigheter/>

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the relevant supervisory authority, which in Norway is the Data Protection Authority (postkasse@datatilsynet.no).