



Information on adding economic records



Understanding
Society

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Data linking

Government departments and agencies collect a range of information about all of us for administrative purposes, so they can plan and provide services. Added to the responses you have provided in this study the information can inform further analyses and help us get a better picture of those who are using services provided by the government.

What am I being asked to give permission for?

We are asking for your permission to link the information Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) hold about your employment and self-employment history, your National Insurance contributions, income and tax credits. The information goes back to the 1970s, and to the beginning of self-assessment in the 1990s. The Understanding Society study at the University of Essex would like to add these records to the responses you have given to this study. If you give your permission, it will inform further analysis to help us get a better picture of the economic circumstances of private households and how they can best be helped.

What will happen if I give permission?

- 1) The Understanding Society study will give HMRC your name, address, sex and date of birth.
- 2) HMRC will use these details to identify the correct records it holds about you, and delete any of the personal information passed on to them.
- 3) HMRC will send your HMRC records to the Institute for Social and Economic Research at University of Essex using a secure data transfer method.
- 4) The Understanding Society study will add the HMRC records to your study responses.

What will the research be used for and who will use it?

Like your study responses, the additional information will be held as a resource for use by professional academic and social policy researchers for non-commercial research and statistics over the coming years. Any sensitive information would only be made available to them under restricted access arrangements which make sure that the information is used responsibly and safely. Names and addresses are never included in the results and no individual can be identified from the research.

The data will not be used to work out whether any individual is claiming benefits they should not be and will not affect any current or future dealings with HMRC. Your permission would allow researchers to provide answers to a great deal of highly policy-relevant questions, for example:

- how well prepared individuals and families are for retirement and how this differs across time and generations; and
- in much greater detail, how family circumstances interact with tax credits, earnings and interruptions in earnings.

What if I change my mind?

We will remind you periodically of the permissions you have given, and you can withdraw your permission at any time. While it is not possible to remove historical data, no new data will be added from that point onwards.

Who do I contact?

If you would like any further information or want to withdraw your permission, please contact us at:
FREEPOST RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS, Understanding Society, University of Essex,
Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ.
Freephone: 0800 252853
Email: contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk



Thank-you!

If you have any questions or concerns, just:
call our Freephone number: 0800 252 853,
or write to: Freepost RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS,
Understanding Society, University of Essex,
Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ

