



INFORMATION SHEET

Scottish Rural Communities Policy Review – Scottish Rural Network

Scotland's Rural College, in partnership with Ipsos Mori and the University of Highlands and Islands, is carrying out a review for the Scottish Government of three core elements of their island and rural community policy: Community Led Local Development, Scottish Rural Action and the Scottish Rural Network.

Before you decide if you want to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that seems unclear.

This survey is focused on Scottish Rural Network. It is one of [a number of surveys, interviews and workshops being used to inform this research](#). The survey contains 16 questions and will take ~30 minutes to complete.

- The survey will discuss your experience of Scottish Rural Network.
- You can download a copy of your responses when you submit your survey, as well as a copy of the project information sheet.
- In submitting your survey, you consent to participate in the research.
- You will remain anonymous, including for Scottish Government and the public, and your responses will not be recognisable even if a quotes from your response is used in the report.

Further details on the research process are listed below.

What is the purpose of the study?

The Scottish Government is developing a new Rural Support Plan and associated policy. This follows the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024, which replaced retained European Union law relating to agriculture and rural development. A range of policies, plans and programmes will need to be developed to deliver this legislation. This project will deliver an evidence base to inform this new rural Scotland policy support system. Insights will generate options and recommendations to inform the future rural development support.

The survey you participate in will focus on Scottish Rural Network.

What does participation in the study involve?

You will complete an online survey. The responses will be analysed for the research purposes.



Why have I been invited to take part?

We are specifically looking for those involved with Scottish Rural Network who are willing to share their experiences and thoughts. We want to hear your voice because your perspective can help us understand the support system in Scotland's rural and island communities. Based on this understanding we can provide evidence directly to Scottish Government to inform their policy decisions.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and there will be no adverse consequences should you decide not to participate. You can refuse to answer any given question without consequence. You consent to participate by submitting your survey response. Only the research team will have access to the data. You can withdraw from the research within seven days of submitting your survey (after this point we will only have an anonymised information). If you decide to withdraw your data will be deleted for any reason and without question. The data collected may be used in other outputs we produce (academic papers for example).

Are there any risks associated with participating in this study?

Only grouped results will be reported in the study. All information gathered will be kept confidential and not released to anybody outside the research team. No individuals will be identified or identifiable in any reports from the research.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The research team will share findings with all involved stakeholders through the report, academic publications, conference presentations, and policy briefs. The team will develop user-friendly summaries, infographics, and share findings so diverse audiences, including stakeholders and the public can access the information. This will help to foster dialogue and collaboration and to translate research evidence into actionable policies for Scotland's rural and island communities.

Who is involved in the study?

SRUC is lead partner, with UHI (Perth) and Ipsos. The team includes Rose Regeneration, Rurali, Grounded Insight, Impact Hub Inverness and Science Ceilidh. The team includes these different experts who will be focusing on different aspects of the project.

What else do I need to know?

Personal information relating to participants in research will be stored securely and treatment of data will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. Please follow this link for details about the protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals with respect to the processing of their personal data:



<https://www.sruc.ac.uk/connect/about-sruc/policies-compliance/compliance/privacy-notice-gdpr-cookies/#commitment>

The data, in the form the recorded transcript will be collected, analysed, and interpreted. All the data sets and storage will be aligned with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) regulations. Anonymised transcripts will be held after the project is completed – each year we will review whether these should be deleted (i.e. there is no more use for them because we have written all of our outputs).

Whom can I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact one of our research team members.

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