

Data security principles for data files delivered to Statistics Finland

Data files delivered for statistical and research purposes are received by means of Statistics Finland's data transfer system. The data files received are disseminated centrally to the statistics and research services utilising the data. This document describes the structure and implementation of the data transfer system and the data processing environment from the viewpoint of data security.

General issues related to data security

Physical data security

Physical data security is ensured together with the Government ICT Centre Valtori. The servers are located in Valtori's controlled data centre. The servers are maintained regularly and in accordance with good maintenance principles.

Data security is ensured with the same elements also when doing remote work.

Access control management

At Statistics Finland, access control is administered with the access control management system produced by Valtori. Access control is based on work roles and the principle of the lowest access control is applied. The employee's work role is determined based on their tasks. The supervisor applies for the employee's work roles required by the task in the access control management system. Access rights to servers are granted only to persons who, because of their work role, have a need to access them.

Logging

The legislation lays down the general requirements for the processing of log data. In addition, instructions addressed to the central government sector and Statistics Finland's own log policy decision are available on the collection and processing of log data (so-called log management). Log events are produced from error situations and data security incidents, handling and reading of critical data, for example.

Data on all processing related to data files are collected into a centralised logging system. Permission to use logs is limited only to the named persons whose task requires more detailed processing of log data.

Regulations guiding data file agreements

Each person entering Statistics Finland's service signs a pledge of secrecy at the beginning of the employment relationship. It obliges the person not to disclose to a third-party information acquired during their employment relationship that is defined as confidential by virtue of the Statistics Act or the Act on the Openness of Government activities or by virtue of a separate order issued by an authority.

Statistics Finland concludes a legal data file agreement with the owner of the data, delivers a separate data request, or agrees in some other way on the delivery of the data file to Statistics Finland.

The agreement and data request describe matters related to data protection and data security. Provisions on data security and data protection include:

- EU's General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679
- Data Protection Act (1050/2018)
- Act on Information Management in Public Administration (906/2019)

- Statistics Act (280/2004), and
- Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999)

Data transfer to Statistics Finland's server

In the SFTP data transfer or in the data transfer browser service (HTTPS), the data provider submits the data files to Statistics Finland's protected server. In automatic retrieval, Statistics Finland retrieves the files from the data supplier's secure server using a highly encrypted telecommunications connection.

Interface searches and web scraping

In addition to the file transfer system described above, data can be retrieved directly from data producers' API interfaces or web pages.

Data retrieval from API interfaces is performed programmatically following the terms of use specified by the interface provider. The use of the interface is often based on an agreement between the producer of the data and Statistics Finland. Then Statistics Finland receives an authorisation and identifiers for identification to the interface with which the data can be retrieved.

Web scraping is an automated data collection method in which the data are collected in fixed format from the source code of the web pages. Statistics Finland's general operating principles for web scraping can be found on [Statistics Finland's web pages](https://www.stat.fi/en/surveys) (<https://www.stat.fi/en/surveys>).

Data reception process

Data security is determined by the persons' access control roles. Data reception has been defined as one access control work role that is applied for the persons responsible for the reception of data files whose tasks require these user licences. Correspondingly, the access control work roles are applied for with the work roles of the other stages of the statistical production process.

The data reception service is responsible for directing received data to data set-specific directories in the raw data resources or to the statistics' own work folders. The rights to the target directory of data are limited and they are granted according to Statistics Finland's access control management on the work task basis. Supervisors define the rights of their subordinates to different structures.

Storage, archiving and destroying of data

Provisions on the storage of data collected for statistical purposes are given in Section 10a of the Statistics Act. By virtue of the decision of the National Archives (KA/19843/07.01.01.03.01/2017), digital statistical data are retained permanently.

The data are ensured in accordance with the backup policy and their return from backup is practised regularly.

Research use

Based on Section 13 of the Statistics Act (280/2004), Statistics Finland may release or grant permission to use confidential data collected for statistical purposes from which the possibility of direct identification of a statistical unit has been removed.

By virtue of Section 19 of the Statistics Act (280/2004), data on age, gender, education, occupation, and socio-economic group may also be released with identification data. Statistics Finland may release data on causes of death with

identifiers based on the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999).

The use of research data is based on fixed-term user licences by means of which the named researcher or researchers will obtain rights to Statistics Finland's research services operating system (FIONA). Direct identification data are pseudonymised for research use for each project.

Transfer of data from the system to one's own computer is prevented. Once the validity of the user licence has ended, the right to use the data will be removed.

Further information about research use of data files is available in the Research services' Rules document and from tutkijapalvelut@stat.fi.

Further information

Further information about data reception or release can be obtained by sending email to the address aineistojen.vastanotto@stat.fi. More information about data protection is available from the address tietosuoja@stat.fi. In technical questions related to data transfer, please contact the address tiedonsiirto@stat.fi.