

Guidelines for handling Scientific Use Files (SUF) of the Research Data Centres of the Statistical Offices of the Federation and the Federal States (RDC)

With this guideline, we provide you with important information that you must observe when handling the transmitted data

I. Provision of the SUF:

- The SUF are provided via the **download service "Secure Box"**. Further information on the download service can be found at <https://www.forschungsdatenzentrum.de/en/scientific-use-files>.
- The SUF as well as duplicates must be kept **securely locked** and may only be made available to persons who have been named as data users in the research project applied for and who are **obliged** to statistical confidentiality in accordance with Section 16 (7) of the Federal Statistics Act (BStatG). The same applies to the materials describing the data set. Additional data users can be registered during the project period.
- The SUF and duplicates may only be processed on IT equipment (hardware and software) provided by the scientific institution. **The use of private data carriers and end devices is prohibited.**

II. Storage of the SUF:

- The SUF, their duplicates, extracts and processings may only be stored and processed in the secure environment of the scientific institution.

Please note that the SUF and all duplicates must be deleted at the end of the project period (see section V)!

- The following storage options are conceivable:
 - Secured IT environment of the scientific institution
 - Mobile storage (CD, USB), which – outside of data use – is kept in a locked safe to which only the data users have access.
 - Isolated computers that are used exclusively for data analysis
- ⚠⚠⚠ Storage of the SUF, its duplicates, extracts and processings is **not** permitted in the following environments:
 - Cloud
 - Mobile devices not located in the research institution/university
 - Private end devices

III. Maintenance of statistical confidentiality:

- All data users must maintain **statistical confidentiality**. Information on this can be found at <https://www.forschungsdatenzentrum.de/en/confidentiality>. The SUF provided may only be used within the framework of the scientific project.
- The scientific institution and the data users are subject to the prohibition of **re-identification** of the individual data transmitted to them. Re-identification is punishable!
- Any action aimed at or suitable for de-anonymising the factually anonymised individual statistical data contained in SUF and duplicates must be refrained from. In particular, merging the data with other data sets for this purpose is not permitted.
- The RDC must be notified of any **merging of the data** with other data sets for analytical purposes and their consent is required.
- If anonymised individual statistical data are de-anonymised, even if this is not done by an action aimed at this, these individual statistical data must be kept secret from any other person and the supervising RDC location must be informed directly and immediately of the de-anonymisation and its circumstances.

IV. Publications:

- Results based on work with the SUF are to be sent to the RDC free of charge and free of fees at the latest one month after publication, in simple electronic form (preferably as a PDF file).
- The **data source** shall be indicated as follows:

“Source: RDC of the Federal Statistical Office and Statistical Offices of the Federal States, DOI: [DOI of used statistic(s)], own calculations.”

or

“Quelle: FDZ der Statistischen Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, DOI: [DOI der verwendete(n) Statistik(en)], eigene Berechnungen.”

V. End of the contract period/end of the project:

- After the end of the project or the contract period, the SUF and their duplicates must be deleted. The RDC must be notified in writing of the **deletion of the data**.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the RDC of the Statistical Offices of the Federation and the Federal States. We will be happy to help you.

You can find our contact details on the website

<https://www.forschungsdatenzentrum.de/en/contact>