Data security of data reception

The purpose of Statistics Finland's data reception system is to receive data materials supplied to Statistics Finland for statistical purposes and distribute them further to the statistics utilising the data. The structure and implementation of the data transmission system and the data processing environment from the viewpoint of data security are described here.

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 a controlled data centre. The servers are maintained according to the normal maintenance cycle.

Data security is also ensured with the same elements 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 work role is approved by the employee's supervisor in the access control management system.

Logging

The legislation lays down general requirements for the processing of log data. In addition, instructions directed 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.

With the producer of the data Statistics Finland concludes a legal data file agreement where data protection and data security are described. A request for data materials can be used mainly for one-off acquisition of data, which is guided by regulations similar to the data file agreement. The main regulations are:

- The 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 (line transfer)

In a line transfer, the data supplier delivers the data files in accordance with the data security regulations to Statistics Finland's protected server or Statistics Finland retrieves the data files from the data provider's protected server using a strongly encrypted data connection.

Interface searches and web scraping

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

Data search 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.

Data reception process

The data security of data materials is defined by the persons' access control roles and the reception of data is defined as one of the work roles. The work role is sought for the persons responsible for the reception of data whose tasks require these authorisations. Correspondingly, the access control work roles are sought 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 of 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.

The reception process of data received by Statistics Finland is being automated into metadata-controlled process management. The introduction of the system takes place in stages.

The pseudonymisation of personal data will also become an automated service in the new reception system.

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

According to Section 13 of the Statistics Act, statistical authorities may release confidential data collected for statistical purposes for scientific research and statistical surveys on social conditions so that direct identification is prevented.

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

Transfer of data from the system to researchers' own computers is prevented. Once the user licence has expired, the licence to use the data will be deleted.

Further information about the research use of data intended for users outside Statistics Finland can be found in the Research Services document Rules and instructions of Research Services or by inquiring at tutkijapalvelut@stat.fi at.

Further information

Further information about the reception of data is available by sending email to aineistojen.vastaanotto@stat.fi. In matters related to data protection, you can find more information at: tietosuoja@stat.fi.