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Leaflet on secure handling of research data provided with a GESIS data use agreement

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The following measures and procedures, which however do not represent all measures of attaining data security, have to be considered by the data users in their data security concept:

1. Maintaining confidentiality of the database: Only the data recipient and the additional participants within the given research project who are named in the data use agreement have access to the data.

2. The database must only be stored on password protected devices that are under supervision of the data recipient and that are protected against external access. For example, up-to-date anti-virus software must be used.

3. Holding and processing of the database on devices or media (such as USB sticks) that are not in the possession of the data recipient are not permitted. Whilst handling and processing the data, created carriers have to be kept under lock and key (e.g. not leaving USB sticks unattended).

4. Either the database itself is password-protected, e.g. with a file password, or only the data recipient has access to the computer, on which the data are kept (this means e.g. not to leave the computer unattended while it is in operation).

5. Access to the database has to be secured by user identification control (such as a personal password for each of the authorized users).

6. User IDs and password have to be kept secret; individual access codes are only known to the respective user.

7. The database must be stored in a place that is secured against unauthorized access (e.g. theft). It needs to be made sure that the folders that data is stored in are not subject to automated backups (as are usually performed by the local IT at a university).

8. If there are any gaps concerning data protection or data security or defects in terms of data quality, they should be pointed out to GESIS, so that GESIS can improve data its services.

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