# Data management

For the data management, we will follow the archiving and data protection procedures as they have been established in the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences[[1]](#footnote-1). Since the network itself (name of the project, location, and goals) remains identifiable due to its unique character, we will make sure that the information collected could not be traced back to the individual participants. We will use a combination of anonymization and restricted access to the data.

#### Anonymization

After the verbatim transcript is completed, the researcher removes direct and some indirect personal identifiers. We will use replacements instead of blacking out the data (e.g., Aliona Ignatieva to be replaced with [the full name of the researcher], and not XXX). All the replacements will be listed in a log of replacements, while the log itself will be stored separately from the anonymized data files. The list of direct identifiers to be replaced:

* First name, last name of the respondent or his/her colleagues or other people who can be used to identify the respondent (e.g., a name of the director of the institution where the respondent works);
* Age;
* Name of the institution the respondent represents;
* Name of the city where the respondent or his/her institution is located;
* Country in interviews with the members of Service Team: there will be only one respondent from Germany, and selective replacement would make this person identifiable;
* Respondent’s position and/or duties in the network.

The list of **indirect identifier**s to be replaced:

* Gender (if identifiable via the transcripts);
* Dates related to the individual or the organization (e.g., when joined the network);
* Respondent’s position and/or duties in the organization s/he represents;
* Respondent’s membership in other unions, networks, etc.
* The resources that organization contributes to the network: their name or precise quantity;

The list is not exhaustive: if the respondent will mention any indirect identifiers not listed here (e.g., education, income, marital status, mother tongue, ethnicity, religion, medical identifier), they will also be replaced. It is done due to the dependencies between the participants since even indirect identifiers could be used to re-identify not only the respondent but also other people in the network.

#### Restricting access to the data

The access will be restricted (via passwords) so that **only the researcher (Aliona Ignatieva) and the daily supervisor (Dr. Liesbet Heyse)** can access the following data:

* Log of replacements of both direct and indirect identifiers;
* Research diary;
* Audio files of interviews.

The access will be restricted so that **only the researcher, daily supervisor and promoter** can access the following data:

* Interview cover sheets (only a digital copy);
* Informed consents (both scanned and physical copy);
* Requests for the withdrawal from the study;
* Documents obtained from the participants (only a scan copy is kept);
* Contact information of participants[[2]](#footnote-2);
* Audio files of observations;
* Log with the names of destroyed documents, reason for destroying, when and how they were destroyed.

The co-promotor, Dr. Jelly Zuidersma will have no access to the above-mentioned data due to the ethical reasons (due to her dual role as a co-promotor and a gatekeeper).

The verbatim transcripts with no identifiers can be shared with publishers and project partners (including Netwerk ZON and Dr. Jelly Zuidersma).

The log of replacement, audio files and the research diary will be stored separately at password-protected USB flash drive so that we can guarantee the privacy to participants. After the end of the PhD study, the researcher will handle this data to the daily supervisor. We believe that the nature of the data (re-identification of one participant can lead to re-identification of others) requires additional protective measures, and will inform the coordinator of publication and research packages about these reasons to exclude some data from the package. At the same time, interview cover sheets and informed consents will be still available for the purposes of verification, but cannot be used to check what information was provided by whom.

#### Data storage

* For the short-term storage and transmission, encrypted USB flash drive will be used.
* If the participant wants to check the transcript of the interview herself/himself, the anonymized version can be sent to the participant directly via email in a password-protected .pdf file.
* For long-term storage, the RUG servers will be used for all the data but the log of replacements, research diary, and audio files. The encrypted USB flash drive will be used for these three types of the data in order to store them separately to prevent re-identification.
* If the participant withdraws from the study, and explicitly asks to destroy the information that s/he had provided before, the following information will be destroyed: audio files (if any); verbatim transcripts, interview cover sheet, information related to this participant in the log of replacements, documents obtained from the participant, the informed consent. Contact information of the participant, email correspondence with the participant are destroyed regardless the decision to keep the data mentioned above.
* All the data is kept at the university for a maximum of 10 years as per the “Publication Packages and Research Packages” guideline of the University of Groningen[[3]](#footnote-3). The storage period is reflected in the informed consent. It is necessary to retain this information for the possibility of audits to monitor data manipulation. The retention of such data does not contradict the GDPR because the personal data is stored solely for research purposes.

1. https://www.rug.nl/gmw/sociology/research/rdm-sociology-jan-2016-huisstijl.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As a member of SFSD network, Jelly Zuidersma had personal data of the participants before the research started. The point “contact information of the participants” means that no information will be shared with Dr. Zuidersma beyond the information that had been already available to her before the project started. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.rug.nl/gmw/sociology/research/rdm-sociology-jan-2016-huisstijl.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)