

German Data Forum (RatSWD) (Ed.)

**Research Report**

## The German Data Forum (RatSWD) and Research Data Infrastructure: Status Quo and Quality Management

RatSWD Output, No. 1 (6)

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

German Data Forum (RatSWD)

*Suggested Citation:* German Data Forum (RatSWD) (Ed.) (2018) : The German Data Forum (RatSWD) and Research Data Infrastructure: Status Quo and Quality Management, RatSWD Output, No. 1 (6), Rat für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsdaten (RatSWD), Berlin, <https://doi.org/10.17620/02671.30>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/224191>

**Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:**

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

**Terms of use:**

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*

The RDCs provide researchers with user-oriented, cost-efficient access to a wide range of data. Since 2009, the RDCs have been organised in the FDI Committee to coordinate the research data infrastructure. This bottom-up coordination fosters efficient governance as well as securing the quality of the research data infrastructure through monitoring procedures.

(Most RDCs keep their German acronym FDZ)

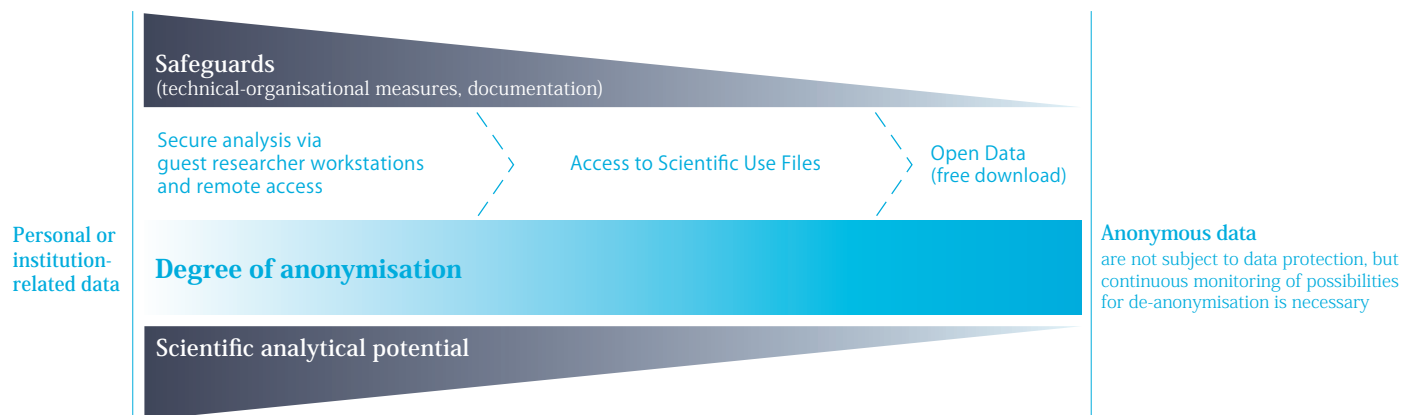


Source: RatSWD Tätigkeitsbericht 2017  
© RatSWD 2018

## Anonymisation and the analytical potential of data

In research, data protection and the preservation of the data's analytical potential need to be put in balance. As a rule, the more anonymised data is, the lower is its analysis potential for research. The RDCs therefore pursue a variety of approaches regarding the degree of data anonymisation and data access.

Depending on the sensitivity of the data, the RDCs provide a wide range of access paths to their datasets (see figure below). For weakly anonymised data, many RDCs provide guest researcher workstations for on-site data access. Several RDCs also offer (controlled) remote access. For less sensitive but not completely anonymous data, a large majority of RDCs facilitate off-site use through scientific use files. Only completely anonymised data are available for free download.



Source: RatSWD Tätigkeitsbericht 2017  
© RatSWD 2018

## Bottom-up governance to secure the quality of the research data infrastructure

The German Data Forum (RatSWD) is an advisory board made up of elected representatives from the data-using scientific community in the social sciences and appointed representatives of major German data producers. The **FDI Committee** consists of representatives from all accredited research data centres (RDCs). It complements the German Data Forum's strategic focus with a focus on day-to-day challenges and quality assurance.

### Accreditation

The German Data Forum (RatSWD) has developed standards and criteria for the accreditation of RDCs. Fully operational RDCs need to meet three mandatory criteria (in addition to further information criteria):

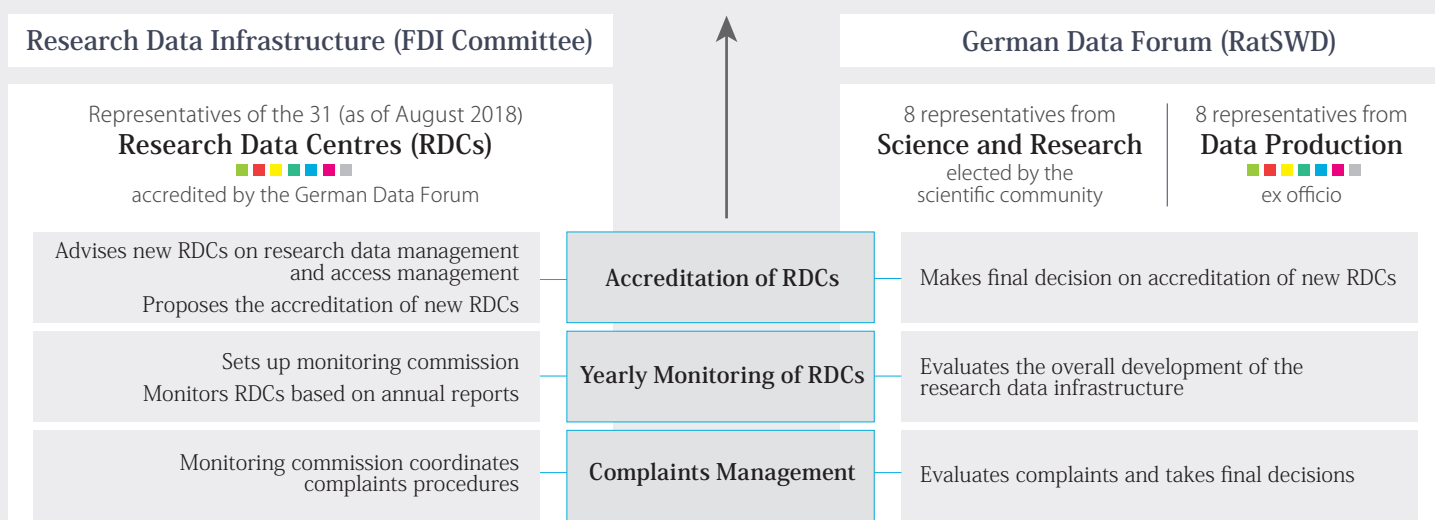
- provide at least one data access path
- provide sufficient data documentation
- ensure the long-term availability of the data

### Monitoring and Complaints Management

The FDI Committee elects a monitoring commission which manages:

- the annual monitoring of all accredited RDCs
- complaints from the research community about data access policies in RDCs

## The cooperation between the FDI Committee and the RatSWD: Developing and optimising the research data infrastructure



© RatSWD 2018

German Data Forum (RatSWD)  
Chausseestraße 111  
D-10115 Berlin  
office@ratswd.de

[www.ratswd.de/en](http://www.ratswd.de/en)

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research