



# GDPRism Data protection survey

SURVEY ON THE VALUE OF DATA PROTECTION IN THE  
EDUCATION SECTOR AS PART OF THE "GDPRISM" PROJECT  
MEDIENKOMPETENZ.TEAM

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# Introduction

## About the project

At the latest since the introduction of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2018, the topic of data protection has repeatedly been part of the public discourse. The right of every individual to the protection of their personal data is already enshrined in Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The GDPR only concretises this protection.

The General Data Protection Regulation contains rules on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. It aims to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons - in particular their right to the protection of their own personal data.

In other words, the GDPR describes our personal rights to informational self-determination. We ourselves should be able to determine the disclosure and use of our personal data. And these rights result in obligations and provisions that companies and organisations must comply with.

But especially in the professional environment, data protection is seen by many people as a hindrance. Data protection is often associated only with restrictions and prohibitions. And that is a real pity, because it serves to protect the personal data of all of us.

The GDPRism project aims to support organisations and staff in adult education in planning and implementing projects in a data protection compliant manner. The target group of the project is therefore basically employees who are responsible for the planning and implementation of projects and educational offers. In addition to administrative staff, this also includes trainers and teachers from vocational and adult education. In developing the content, the project also specifically addresses organisations that run projects in the ERASMUS+ environment. Nevertheless, the project results have a general validity and can also be used by other organisations and institutions.

By building expertise and competences within the organisation, the project supports the target group in the digital transformation.

In order to understand the importance of data protection in the respective organisations, an anonymous online survey was conducted between December 2022 and the end of March 2023. The survey was aimed at employees and staff in adult and vocational education, children's and youth work as well as in education and training in general.

The results of the survey are the content of this document.

### **hardfacts**

Website of the project: <https://gdprism.eu/>

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## The project partners

### Media Competence Team e.V.

#### - GERMANY -

The Medienkompetenz Team e.V. is a non-profit association based in Karlsruhe, Germany. The aim is to increase media literacy among the public - especially with regard to important core topics such as data protection, privacy and the promotion of all necessary skills of digitalisation. Today, the MKT offers training, lectures and workshops for children and young people, students, teachers, parents, and all interested parties. Here, the association covers all topics related to digitalisation and digital transformation. The MKT works closely with the municipal child and youth welfare office in Karlsruhe.

Web: [www.medienkompetenz.team](http://www.medienkompetenz.team)

### Educommart

#### - GREECE -

EDUCOMMART (EDU) is a meeting point for partner institutions that address social, societal and economic bottlenecks with their projects and develop and implement educational programmes together with EDU. The EDU wants to create space for new structures and impulses for a holistic approach to education. In doing so, it chooses paths of education, communication, music & art, which together form the EDU's mission statement. It concentrates on socio-political, cultural-critical & media-pedagogical topics, with the aim of sensitising trainers in youth and adult education to new fields of action.

Web: <https://www.educommart.org/>

## Licensing information

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# Result of the survey

## Scope and database

### Frame

As part of the "GDPRism / DSGVOjemine" project, a public, web-based and anonymous survey was conducted on the topic of data protection. The survey was aimed at employees in the education sector and was intended to provide an insight into the importance of data protection in the professional but also in the private environment of employees in the education sector.

The survey was published in German, Greek and English and conducted between December 2022 and the end of March 2023. Participants were approached through different channels (own contacts and publications such as on socialmedia or on EPAL). Despite several efforts, unfortunately only 85 responses were received. The survey is therefore not representative, but the results nevertheless give a good first impression of the importance of data protection in the education sector.

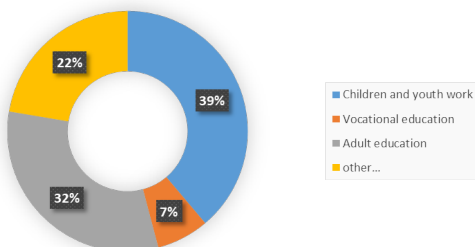
### database

The majority of the participants come from Germany (n=50) and Greece (n=23). This is also because the two partner organisations of the project come from these countries. The remaining 12 participants are spread over 11 European countries. In detail: Estonia, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, the Czech Republic and one response each from the Benelux countries and Scandinavia.

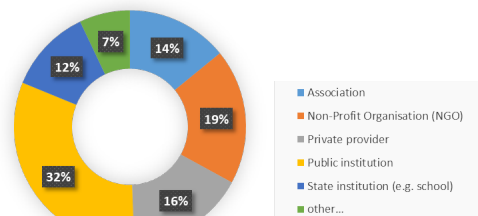
The distribution of participating individuals and organisations is very balanced.

Most of the feedback came from people in organisations working with children and young people as well as in adult education. These were private providers, NGOs as well as public and state providers. People from management, administration as well as instructors and trainers responded. Only IT is a little underrepresented, but this is of no consequence, as it can be assumed that IT managers in particular have already dealt with data protection.

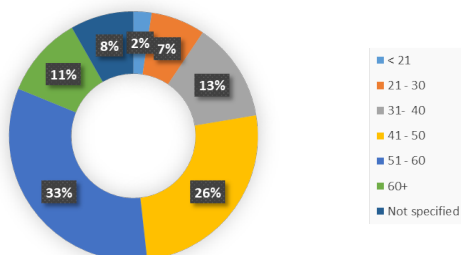
**In which field are they active?**



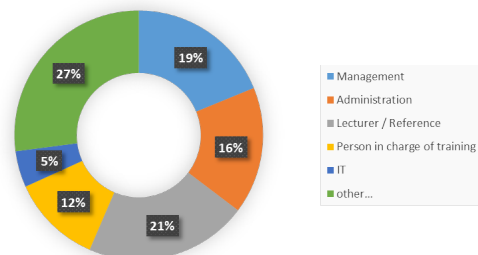
**Which statement is most applicable to your organisation?**



**Age group of the participants**



**Your area of responsibility in the company**



## Personal assessment on data protection

In the first part of the survey, we first wanted to find out how the individual participants personally feel about data protection. To do this, we first wanted a personal assessment of individual topics related to data protection. Then we wanted to know specifically how worthy of protection individual types of data are seen to be, and finally to find out whether the participants use online services for certain activities in their private lives and whether they have thought about data protection in this context.

To start with, we wanted to know what terms come to mind when the participants hear the word data protection. This feedback was implemented via a free text field. The participants submitted over 200 keywords. The feedback shows the differentiated view of data protection.

Terms like "security" and "privacy" are the buzzwords most associated with data protection. However, they are also followed by negative associations such as "complicated". Basically, the associations are quite mixed: In addition to many positive terms, people also associate negative terms with data protection. In the feedback, terms such as "bureaucracy", "obstacle", "strenuous", "encroaching", "costly" or "obstruction" also appear.



88% of respondents feel that data protection is an important issue, and it also plays an important role in their everyday lives for 69% of respondents. Also, 88% of respondents feel that the protection of their own data is important and almost as many (86%) also support the fact that there are concrete regulations on data protection for companies.

However, only 56% are concerned about the protection of their own data. 22% neither agreed nor disagreed with this thesis and 15% are not concerned about the protection of their own data.

The question about the impact of the GDPR also paints a more differentiated picture. When asked whether the GDPR has a sustainable effect, 40% are undecided. Only 32% believe that the GDPR will have a lasting effect, while 20% disagree with this statement.

A similar picture emerges in response to the thesis that the GDPR is "out of touch with practice". 30% agree with this thesis and 21% disagree. 41% neither agree nor disagree with this thesis.

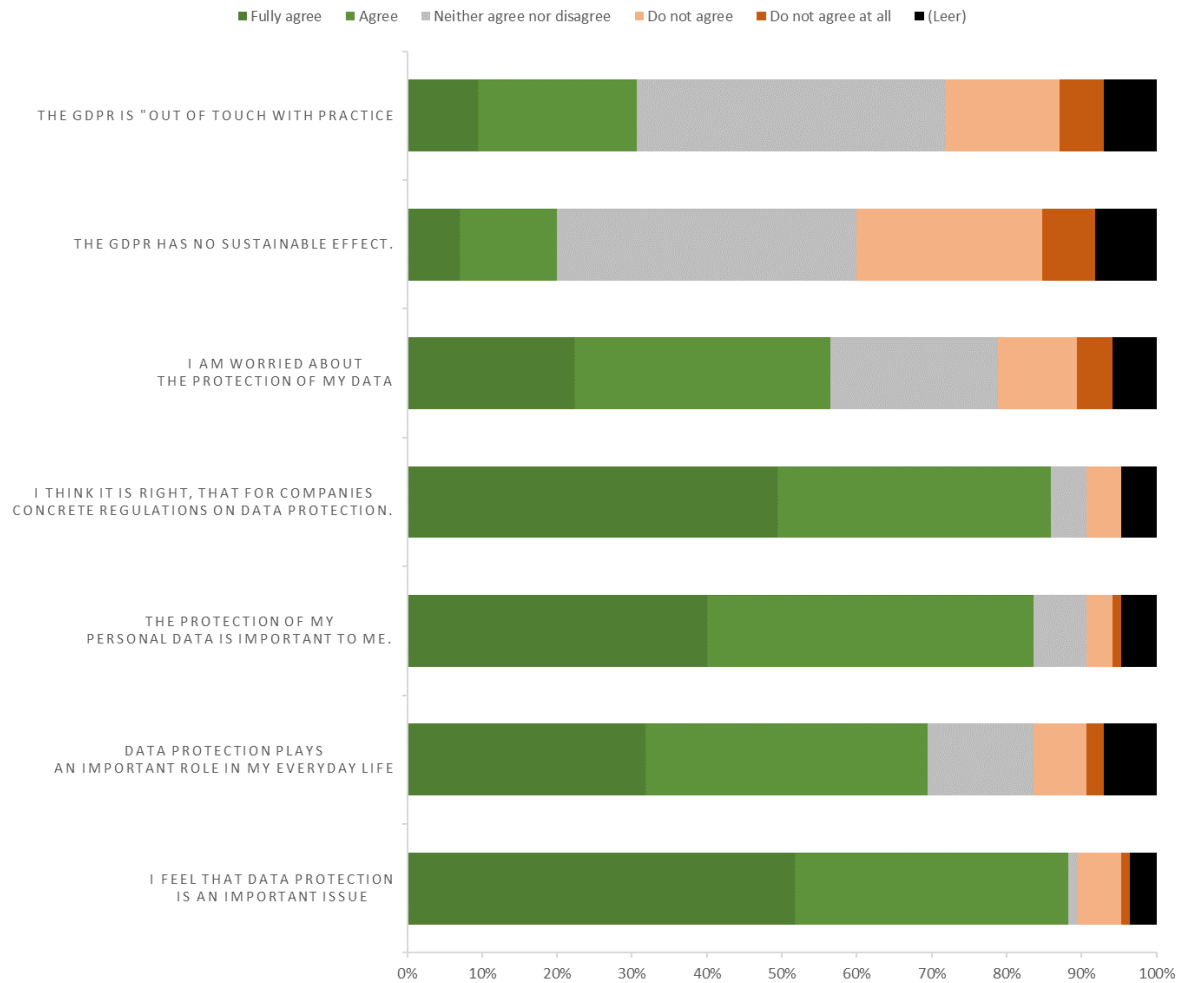
## **CONCLUSION**

The results show that employees in the education sector also see data protection as an important topic in their private lives and consider the protection of their own data to be important. However, only half are concerned about the protection of their own data.

With regard to the GDPR, a majority is in favour of having regulations on data protection for companies. However, there are mixed views on the GDPR itself. The sustainable effect of the GDPR is certainly doubted and one third of the respondents consider the GDPR to be out of touch with practice. However, this should not hide the fact that a good 40% of respondents are also undecided on these questions.

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## Result of the survey // Personal assessment on data protection





## How protective do you consider your personal data to be?

We wanted to know from the participants how worthy of protection they classify certain types of data. Basically, all types of personal data are classified by the majority of participants as at least worthy of protection. The differences here are marginal, but nevertheless a more detailed analysis is worthwhile.

It was asked how worthy of protection certain types of data are rated. If the responses "worthy of protection" and "absolutely worthy of protection" are combined, financial data is rated as particularly worthy of protection with 93%, followed by photos and videos of the family, communication data and health data with 91% each. This is followed by contact data (89%), personal data (85%), one's own political interests (81%) and online usage behaviour (79%). A maximum of 8% (personal data) classify all these data as not worthy of protection.

If we look at the types of data that are perceived as particularly worthy of protection, the differences between the data types become greater. In this case, financial data (78%) is again in first place, followed by health data (73%). This is followed by private photos and videos (66%), communication data (64%), contact data (53%) and one's own political interests (51%). Bringing up the rear are personal data (45%) and usage data (39%).

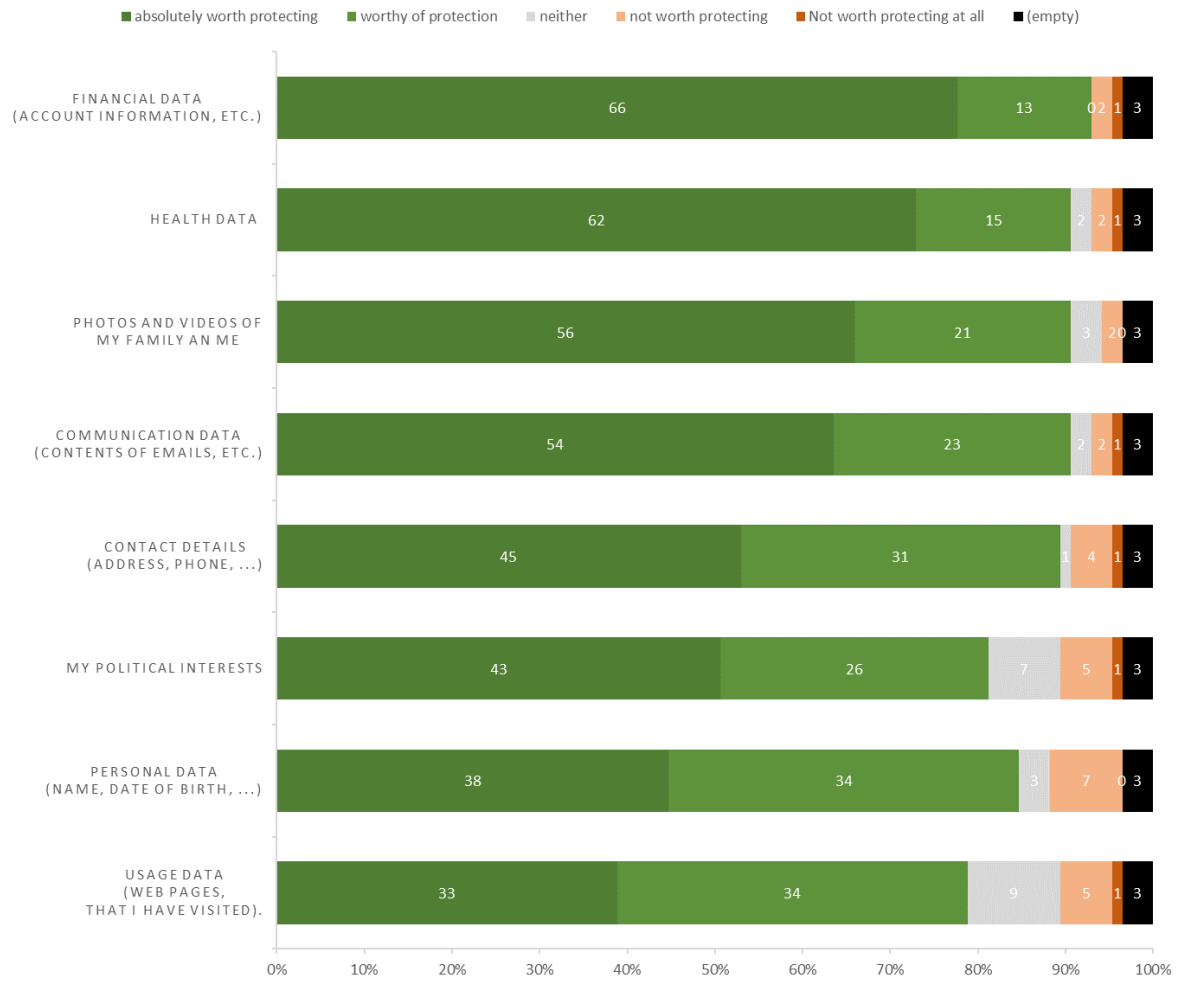
The highest value for the answer "neither" is 11% for usage data.

### **CONCLUSION**

In principle, personal and private data are definitely perceived as worthy of protection. The need for protection lies primarily in financial and health data as well as personal data such as photos, videos and contact and communication data. The perceived need for protection of personal data and usage data is also present, but is lower in comparison. This is probably also due to the fact that we are used to sharing these data

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Result of the survey // How protective do you consider your personal data to be?



## Private use of online services

71% of respondents also use online services for private purposes to store their own private data. However, only 20% feel that their data is stored securely with the respective providers. 35% are undecided on this topic and 13% even assume that their data is not securely stored with the providers.

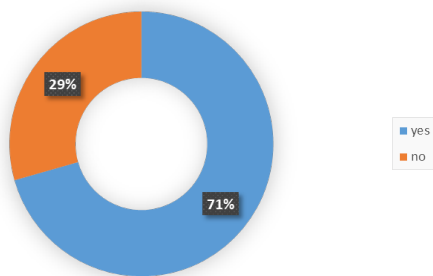
When choosing a provider, one third of the respondents (32%) pay attention to the country in which the provider is based. For 18%, this does not matter.

Despite the use of online services, 42% nevertheless continue to make local backup copies. This group includes not only all those who do not believe that their data is kept safe with providers, but also half of those who assume that their data is safe with providers.

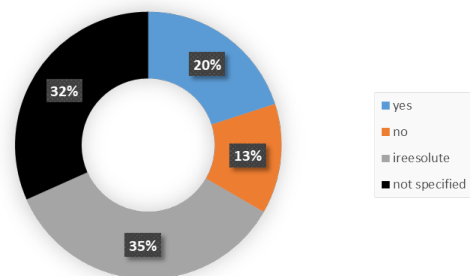
### **CONCLUSION**

A large majority of respondents use online services to store their own data. Nevertheless, only 20% are convinced that their data is stored securely with the providers, even though the vast majority of respondents consider their data to be worth protecting. The country in which the provider is based is also irrelevant for the majority of respondents.

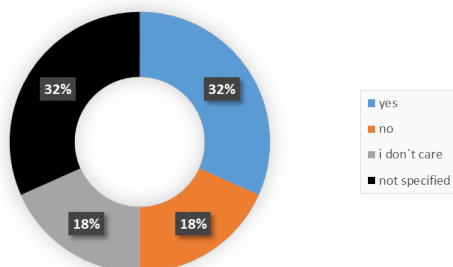
**Do you use online services (internet services) to store your data on the internet?**



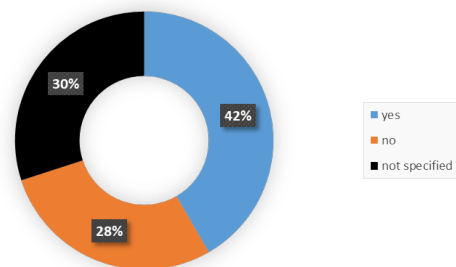
**Do you feel that your data is kept safe with the provider?**



**Do you pay attention to the country in which the provider is based?**



**Nevertheless, regardless of this, do you regularly make local backups?**



## Data protection in the organisations

In the second part of the survey, we wanted to know from the respondents to what extent data protection is already anchored in the organisation and whether there are points of contact with data protection in the daily work. We also wanted a subjective assessment of data protection from a professional perspective.

85% of the respondents stated that they have **points of contact with data protection** in their everyday work.

According to the participants, a data protection concept exists in a large part of the organisations (73%). However, the number may well be higher, as 14% of the respondents answered this question with "I don't know / I don't know". Only 7 persons (8%) stated that there is no data protection concept in their organisation.

The majority (75%) also have work instructions and guidelines for handling personal data as well as data protection awareness measures. However, only just under half of the participants (48%) had received training on data protection.

Technically, the majority of organisations (66%) regulate access to data via a roles and rights concept. And data protection is also taken into account when dealing with software solutions or service providers by 58% - only 12% said they do not do this. 26% of respondents simply could not make a statement on this.

When asked about the processing directory, as a central element of the GDPR, only 19% could confirm that such documentation exists in their company. 48% said they did not know and 28% answered in the negative. However, it can be assumed that many more companies probably have a corresponding directory, but that their employees are not aware of it.

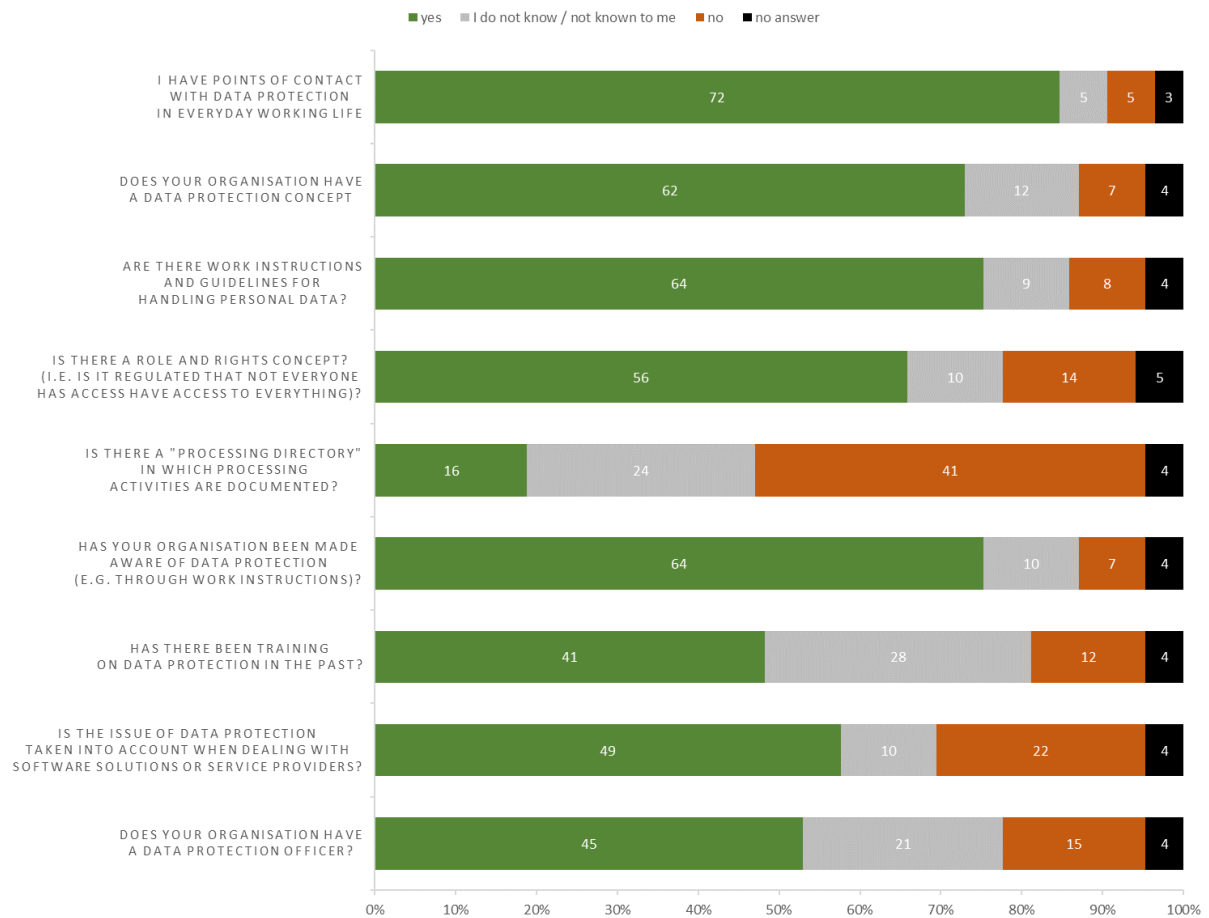
Half of the organisations (53%) have a data protection officer. Only a quarter (25%) do not have their own data protection officer and 18% could not make a statement on this. Among the organisations that do not have a data protection officer, there were three public institutions with more than 100 employees.

### **CONCLUSION**

Data protection plays a role in the majority of organisations. Technical and organisational measures are used by the majority of companies (e.g. role rights system 66%, third-party auditing 58%). Work instructions and guidelines for handling personal data also exist for a majority of employees (75%). However, awareness-raising measures are only carried out by just under half (48%) of the companies through employee training .

A good half of the organisations (53%) have a data protection officer. Only a quarter (25%) do not have their own data protection officer.

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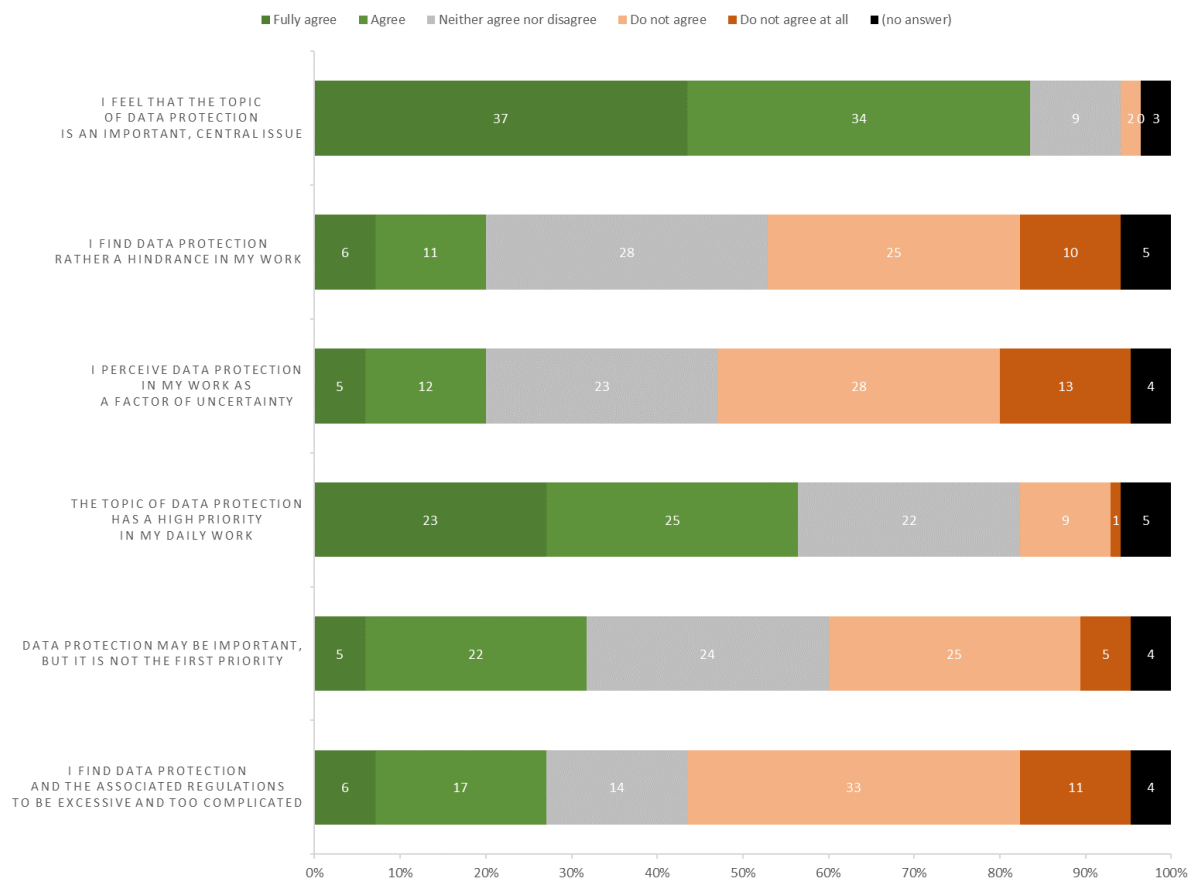
## Assessment of data protection from a professional perspective

In the first part of the survey, we wanted respondents to give a personal assessment of data protection from a personal perspective. At this point in the survey, we also wanted a subjective assessment of data protection from a professional context. We also wanted to find out whether there are any differences in the perception of data protection in private and professional life.

88% of respondents feel that data protection is also an important topic in their professional lives. For 56%, data protection also has a high priority in their daily work.

One fifth of the participants perceive data protection as both a factor of uncertainty (20%) and a hindrance (20%). And 27% perceive data protection and the associated regulations as excessive and too complicated.

A closer look, however, does not reveal a clear distribution among other parameters of the survey. The responses are fairly evenly distributed across organisational size, activities and other data.



## Use of online services in a professional context

We asked about the use of known services and tools in a professional context to get an impression of which providers and online services are in use.

### Mail and data storage

39% use Gmail in a professional context. 64% use email solutions from Microsoft. Here, 26% of respondents state that they use both solutions and only 14% use neither.

In the area of online storage, a total of 34% of respondents use Google Drive to exchange data and 41% use Microsoft Sharepoint. It should be noted that 70% of Gmail users also use Google Drive, whereas only 52% of Microsoft Mail users also use Microsoft Sharepoint. Here, too, a fifth of the respondents (21%) have a double use.

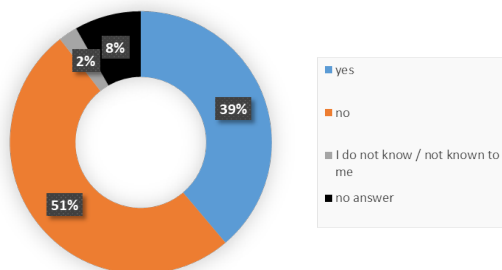
Alternative solutions such as Nextcloud are used by 19% (in Germany even by 28%). In addition, more than a third of respondents (34%) say they use solutions other than the online storage solutions mentioned.

There are differences in the use of online services in the countries. In Germany, only a few use Google solutions (9% Google Mail and 7% Google Drive). Microsoft, on the other hand, is much more common (34% Mail and 20% Sharepoint).

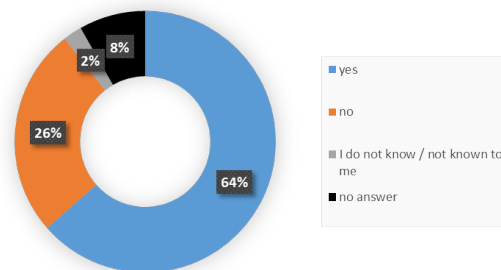
In comparison, the use of the two market leaders is different in Greece. Google in particular is used more frequently here: 65% use Gmail and 52% Google Drive, as well as 48% Microsoft Mail and 39% Sharepoint.

### Are the following solutions in use professionally?

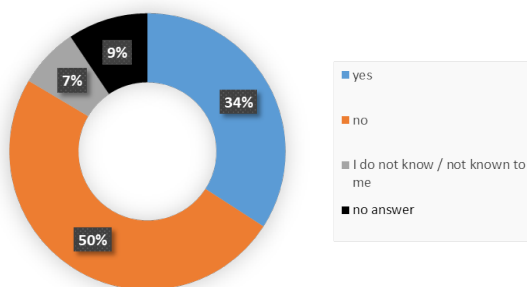
**Google Mail**



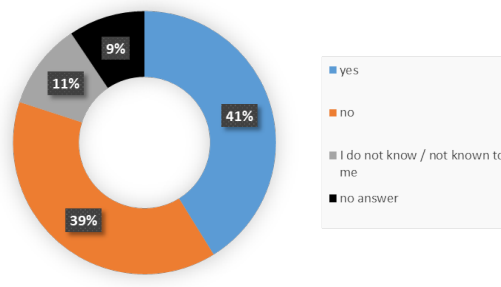
**Microsoft (Mail, Exchange)**



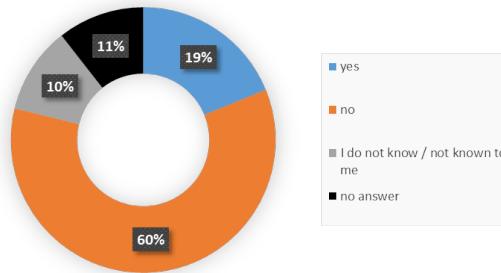
**Google Drive**



**Microsoft Sharepoint**



### Nextcloud



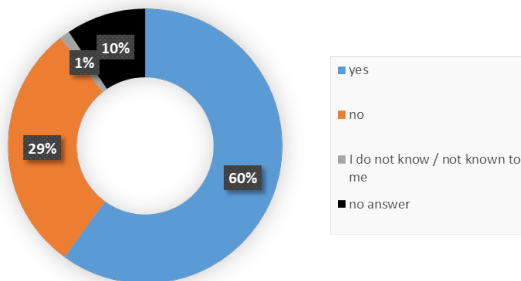
### \_Video Conferencing

In the area of video conferencing systems, Zoom (34%) is in the lead, followed by Microsoft Teams (26%). The open-source solution BigBlueButton is still used by 15%. However, a quarter of the respondents (25%) use a completely different tool.

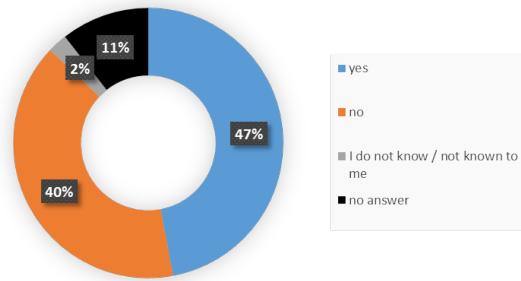
It should be noted here that almost all BigBlueButton users come from Germany. Here, BigBlueButton use is 40% overall. Otherwise, there were only three other mentions, one each from Estonia, Greece and the Scandinavian countries.

### Are the following solutions in use professionally?

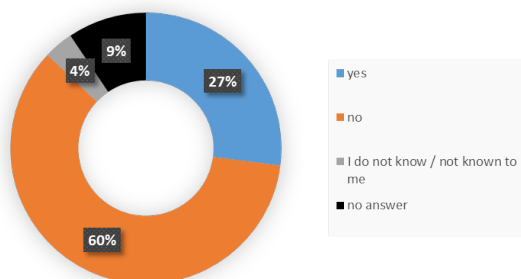
#### Zoom



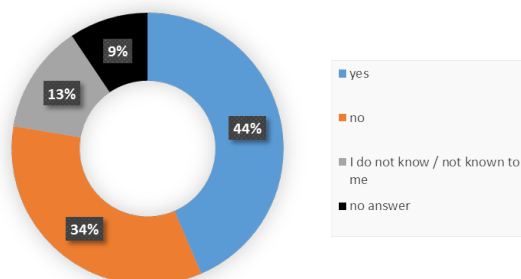
#### Microsoft Teams



#### BigBlueButton



#### Video conference: other



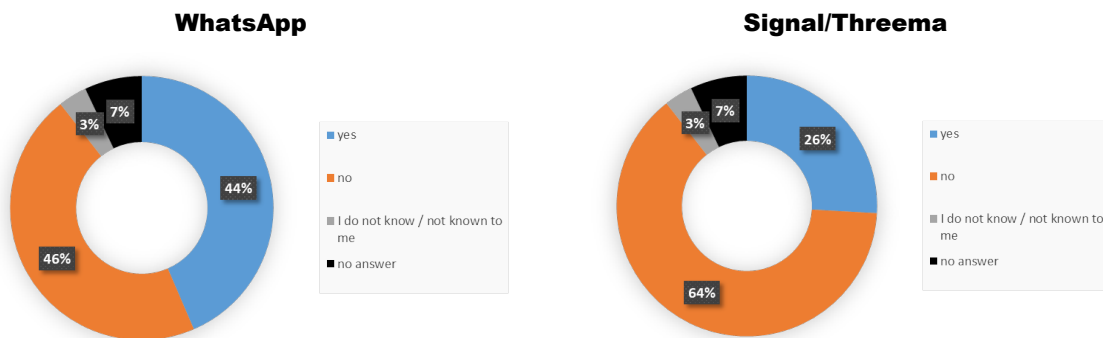


## Messenger

When it comes to the use of messengers, 44% of respondents use WhatsApp and 26% use alternative services such as Signal or Threema. Here, too, it can be observed that the use of Signal and Threema is exclusively in Germany. Here, the use is also 42%. WhatsApp, however, is still used by 36% in Germany in a professional context. In Greece, the usage is 43%.

For the other countries, there is too little data to make a statement.

### Are the following solutions in use professionally?



## Learning platforms

Moodle is used as a learning platform by 32%. 24% of the respondents also use their own learning platform. However, 4% (question about Moodle) and 7% (question about another learning platform) of the respondents could not say whether a learning platform is used at all.

## CONCLUSION

The majority of Google and Microsoft products are used in a professional context. With Google, there is a direct connection between the use of Google Mail and the online storage Google Drive - whoever uses Mail also uses the online storage. This direct link cannot be observed with Microsoft.

Alternative solutions (such as Nextcloud or BigBlueButton) are definitely in use. However, mainly in Germany. This is also evident in the use of alternatives to WhatsApp. Although 36% of respondents from Germany still use WhatsApp, the use of alternatives such as Signal and Threema is 42%.

## Wishes for data protection

After the respondents took the time to answer questions about data protection in their private as well as professional environment, we wanted to know at the end of the survey what they would like to see in the future.

This feedback was implemented via a free text field. More than 90 keywords were submitted by the participants.

Most people would like to see more "safety", "simpler rules" and "clear rules" in the future. But the desire for "training" and more education is also very strongly represented. The terms "sensitivity", "protection" and also topics such as "practical relevance" are also frequently mentioned.

However, the desire for more "control" as well as "enforcement of existing rules" or even "stricter rules" is also expressed quite frequently.

It can therefore be assumed that the respondents certainly recognise the sense and importance of data protection but would also like to see stricter enforcement of the regulations. In addition, many would like training to better understand the topic.

