



Corona-Warn-App

Behind the scenes: Invisible, yet important

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December 30, 2020

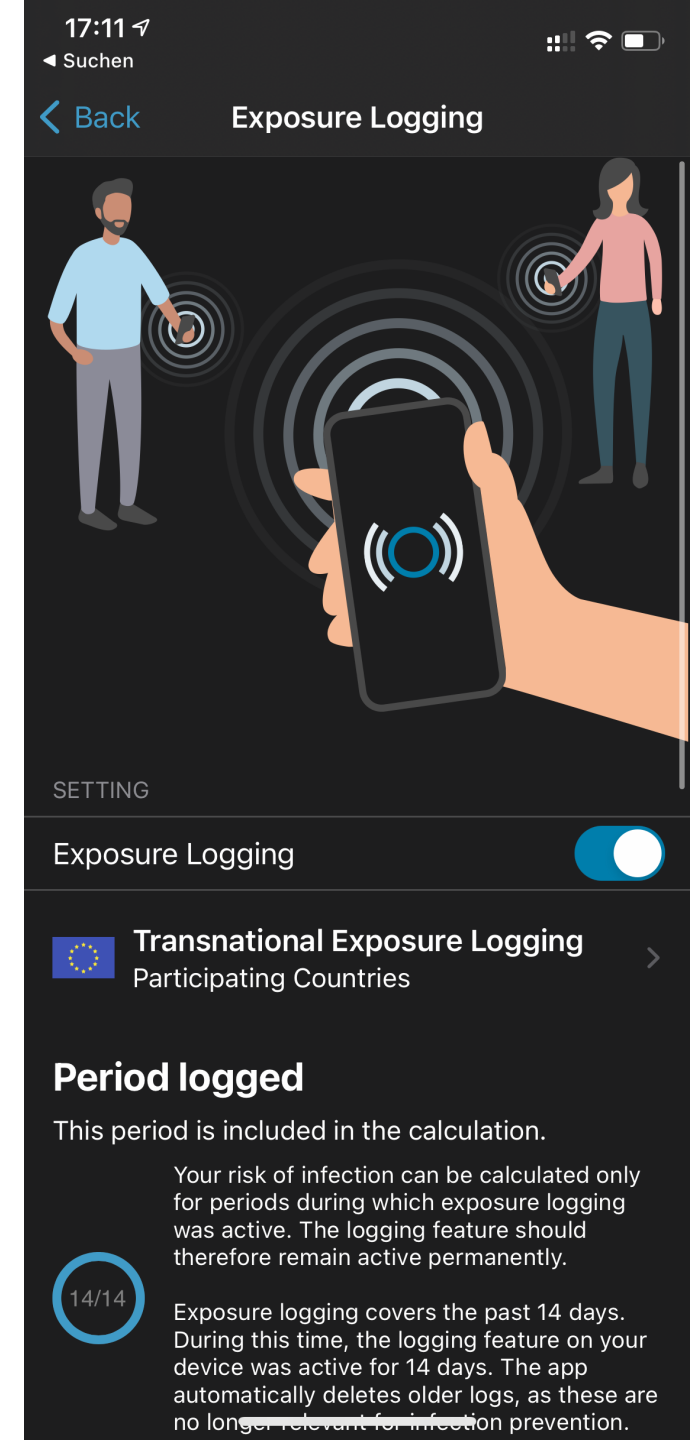
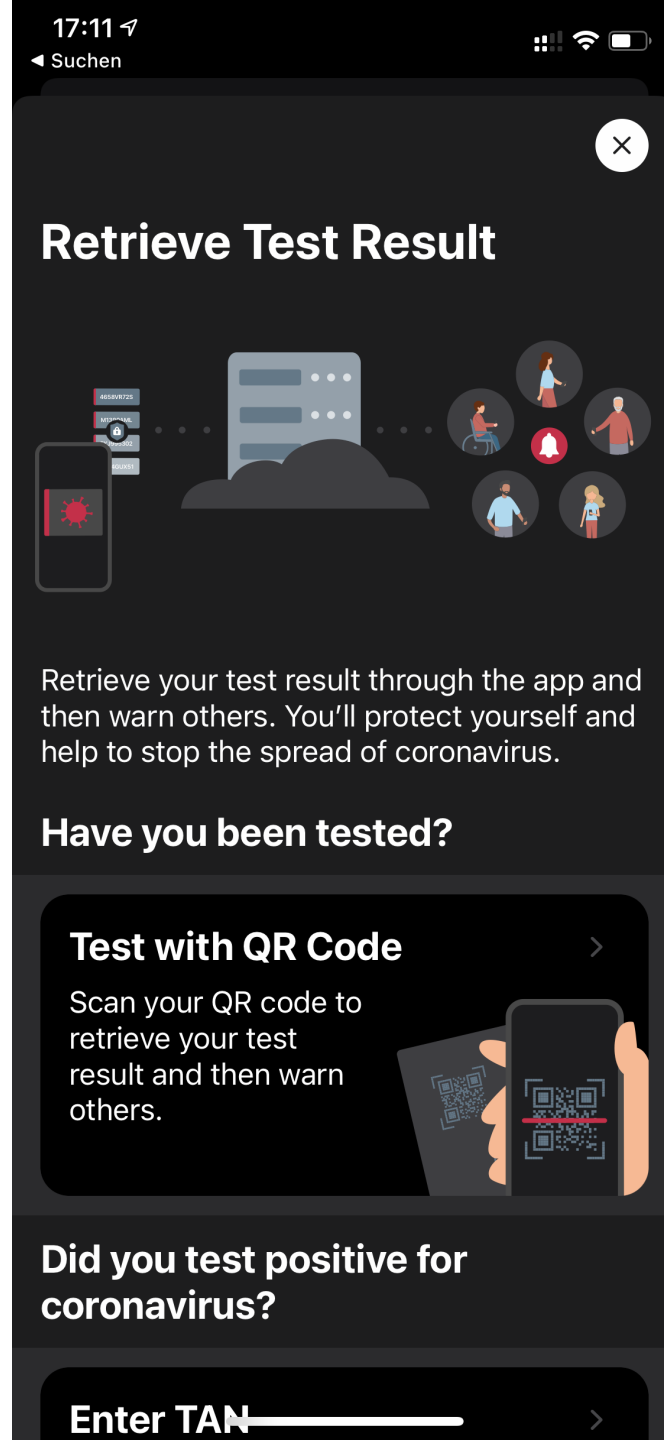
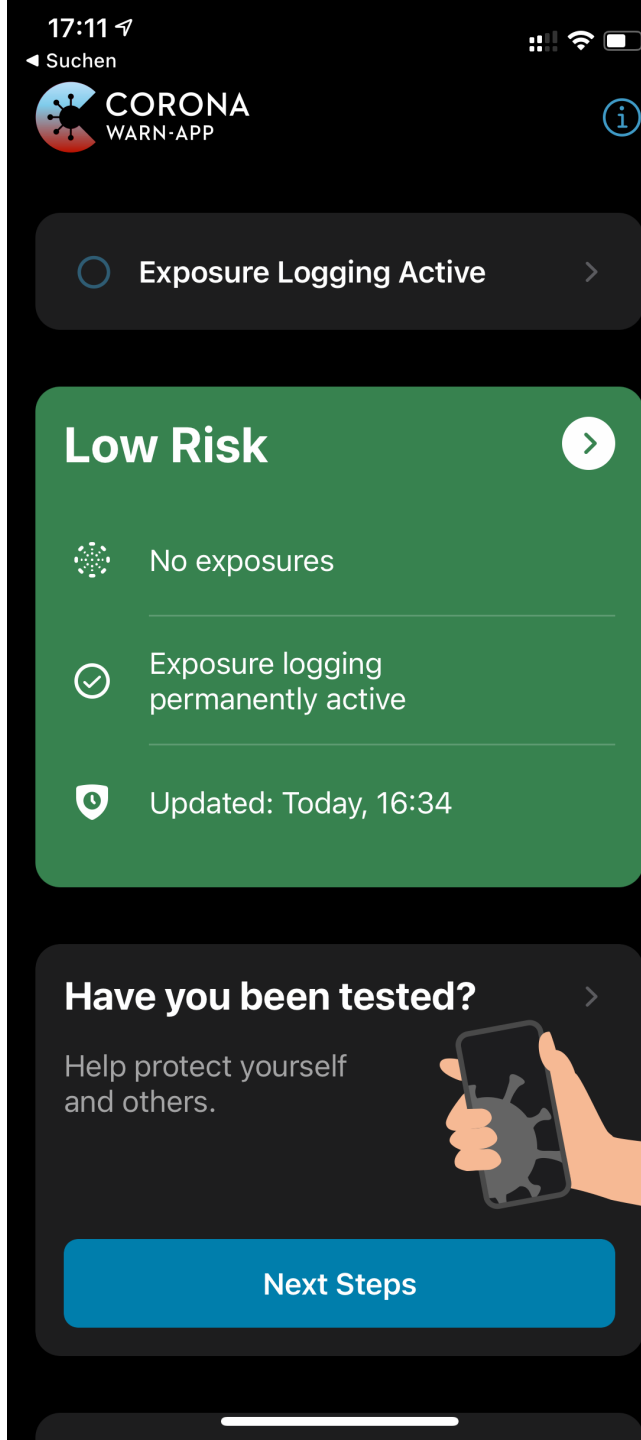
PUBLIC

Agenda

- **Introduction to the app and its architecture**
- **Communication with the backend**
- **Risk calculation**

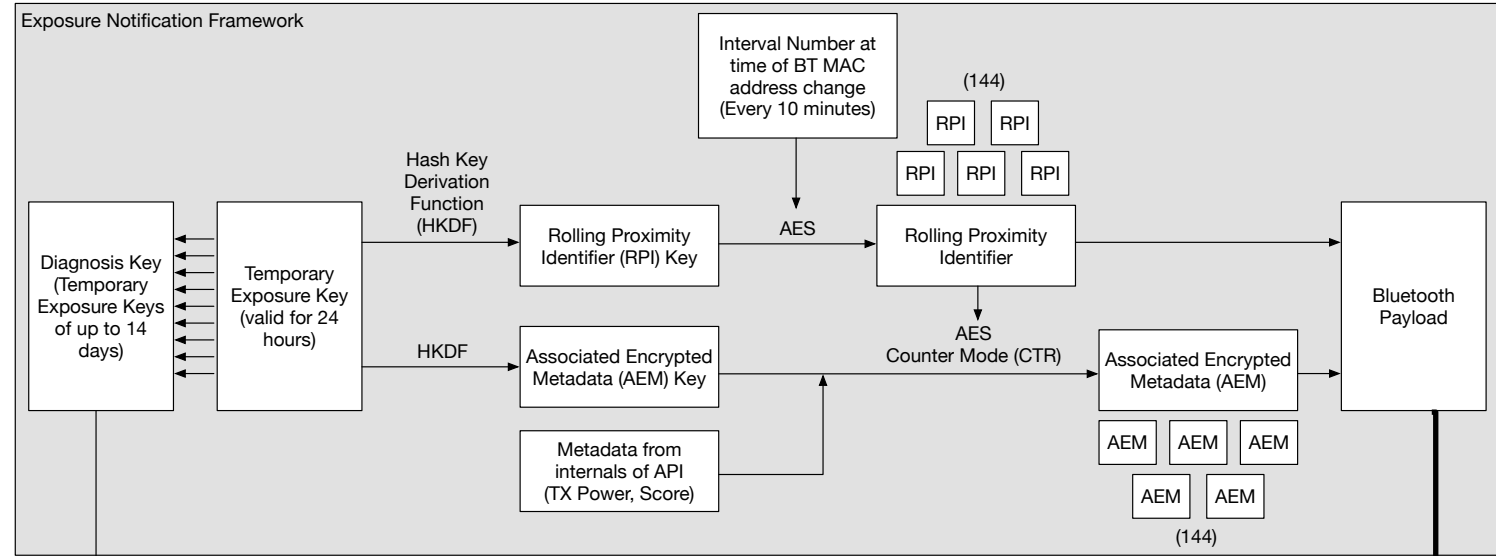
Introduction:

Corona-Warn-App? What's that?



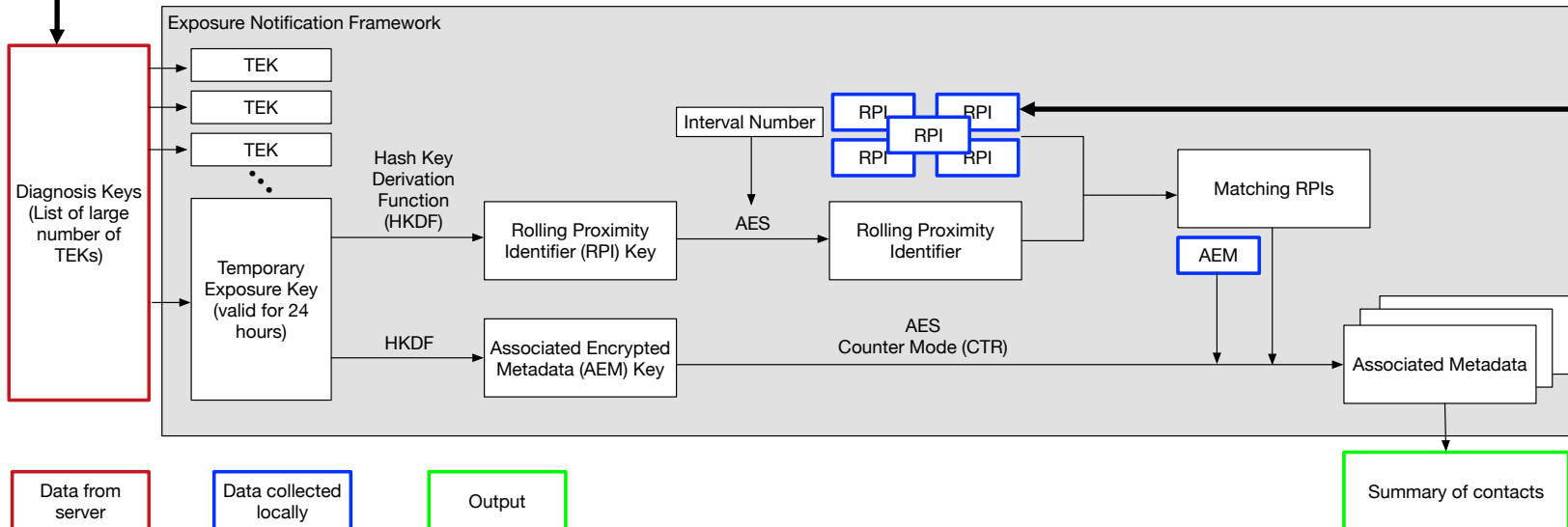
Exposure Notification

Terminology



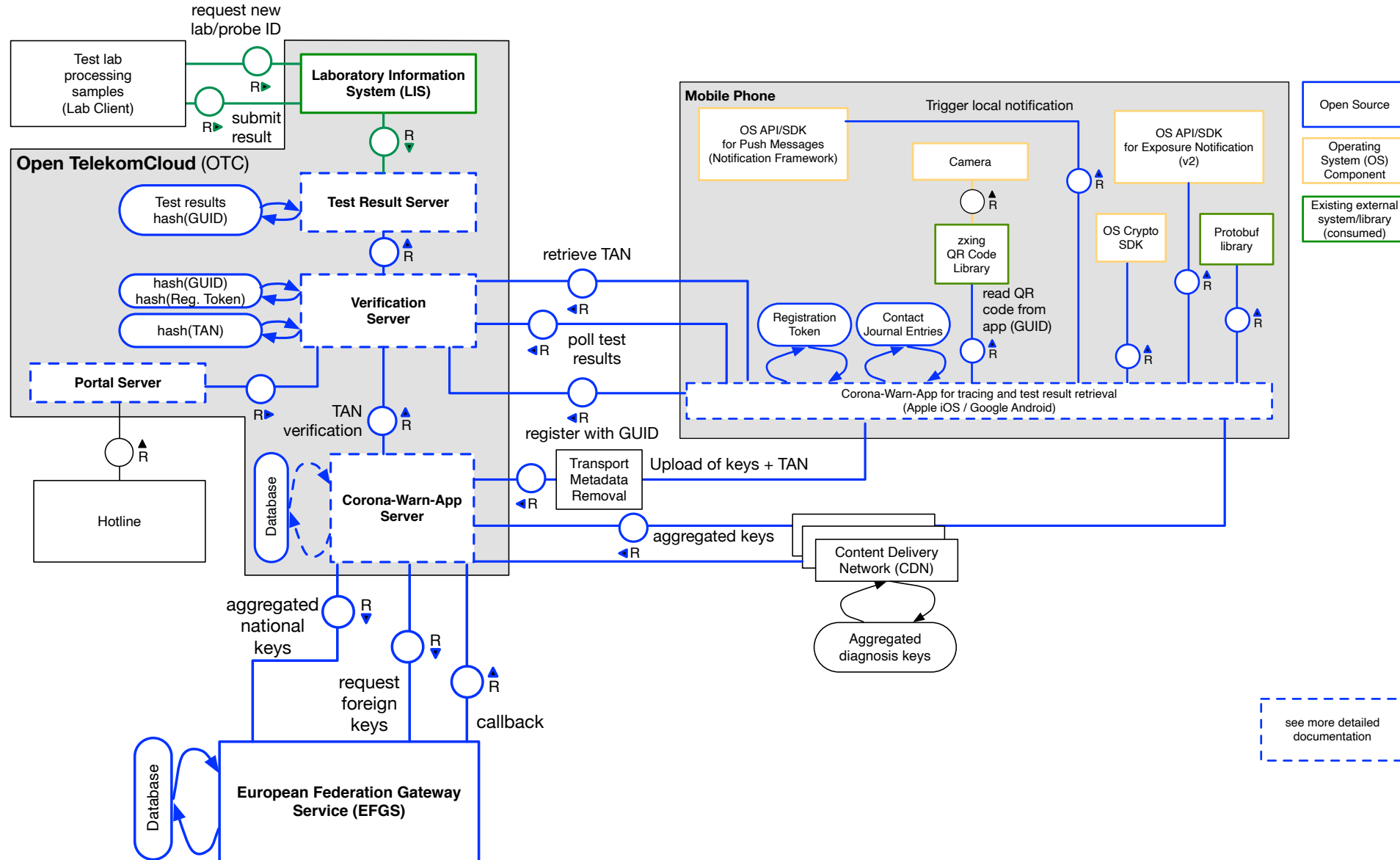
through server

Diagnosis Key for upload



BLE Beacon mechanics

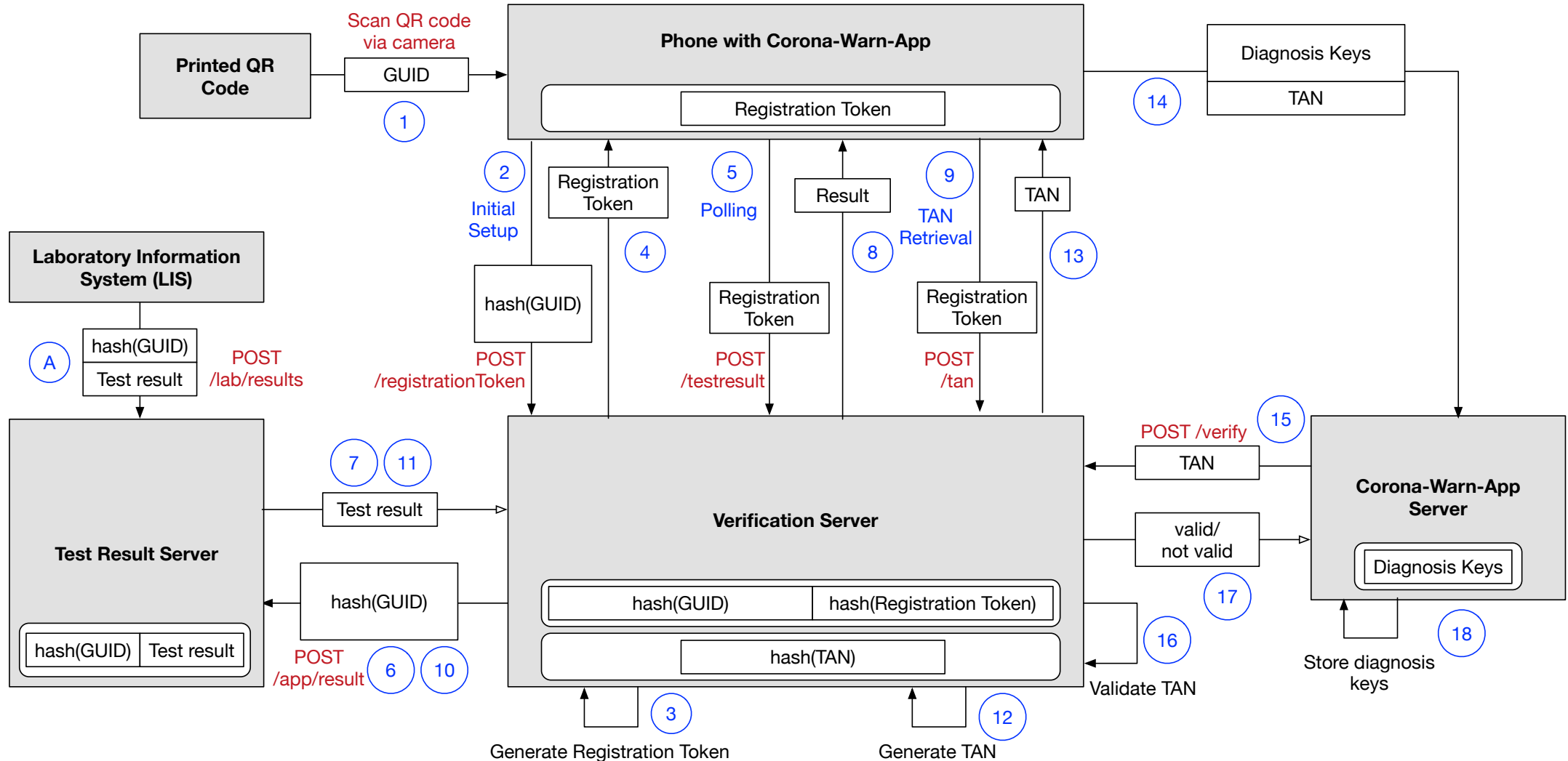
Architecture Overview



Communication with the backend

What happens if someone is listening?

Data flow for test result retrieval using QR codes



What could be found out by **observing the network traffic**

Assumption: The content of the messages is secure, only connections and size of transfer are observable

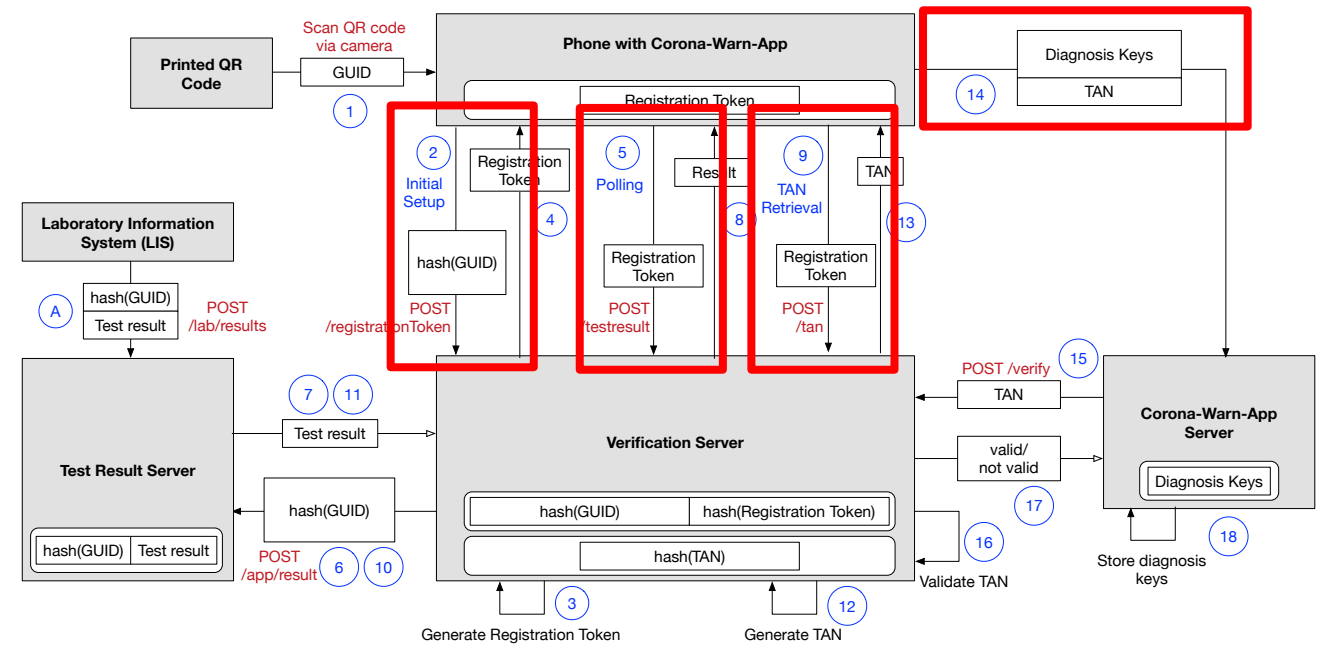
(2) The person has been tested

(5) The person has been tested and still has not received the test result yet

(9) The person has been tested positive

(14) The person has been tested positive and is in the process of sharing keys

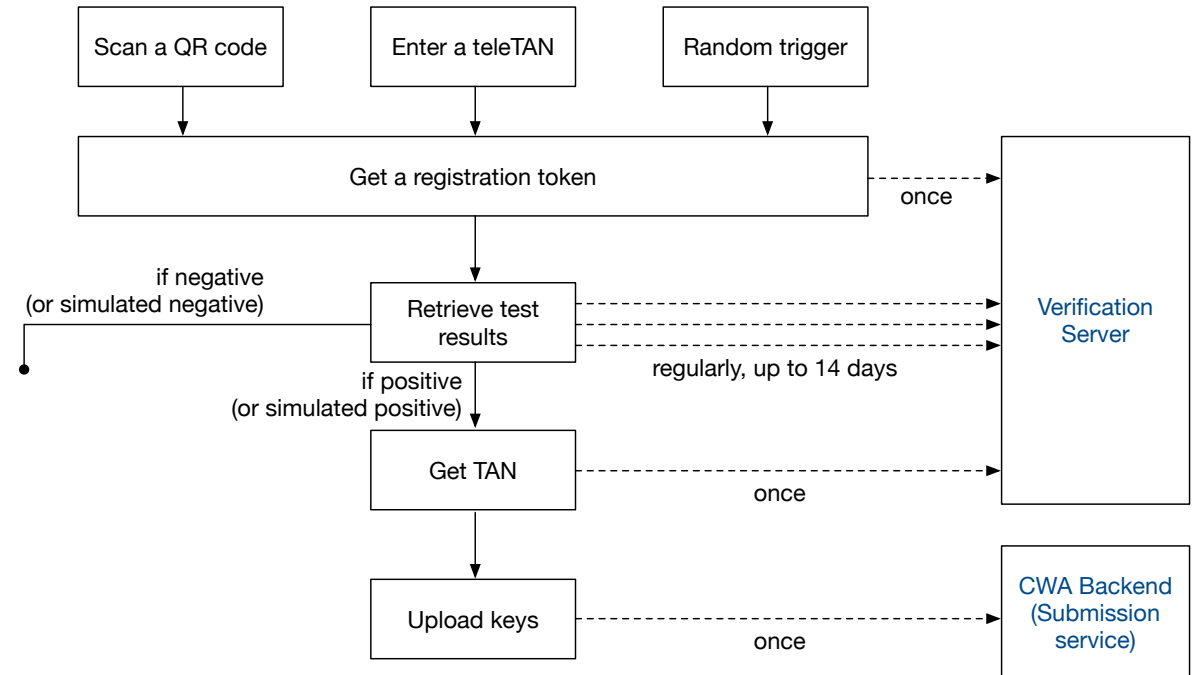
+ Keys could be related to an origin address



We need to establish plausible deniability

How to **prevent** extraction of information through **observation**

- Apps simulate backend traffic by sending „fake“ or „dummy“ requests
 - Either triggered by a real event or randomly
 - Apply padding to requests
- Special header field informs backend to react accordingly
 - Do not interact with underlying database
 - Delay response according to real behaviour
 - Apply padding, so size does not give away content of response
- No extra cost for mobile data → zero rating



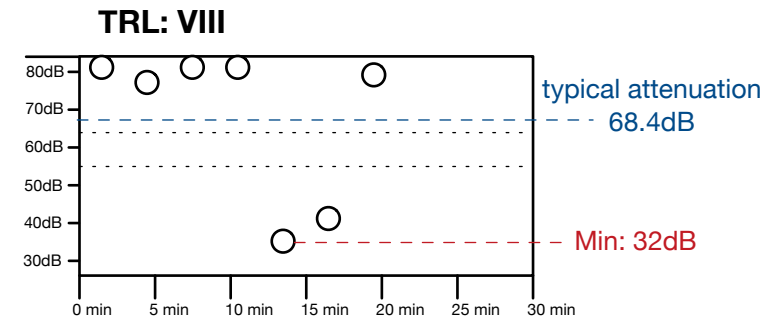
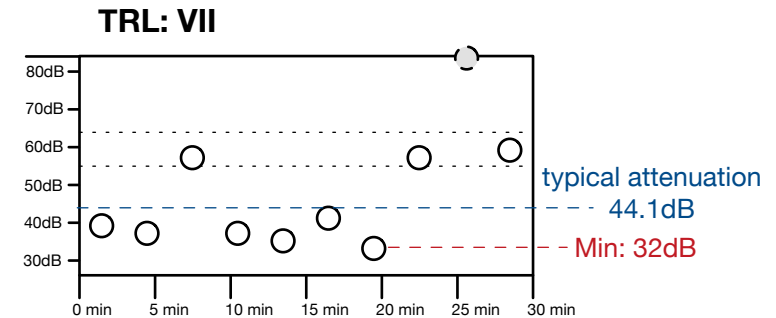
How to **prevent** extraction of information through **metadata**

- When uploading keys, the HTTP(S) request from the mobile phone carries metadata
 - Source IP address
 - User agent (Operating System, possibly also OS version)
- Before the request reaches the backend server, the metadata is removed
 - only the content is forwarded to the backend service

Risk calculation

How the risk is being calculated

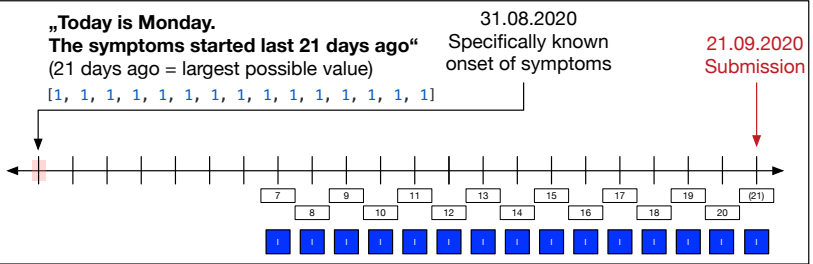
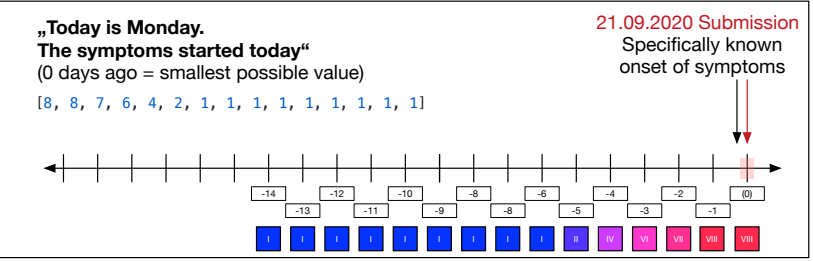
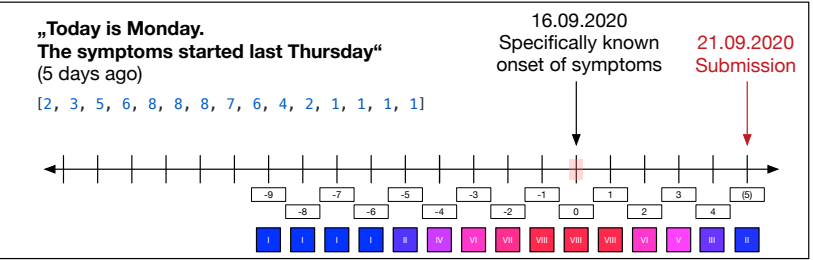
- Information about encounters (calculated at device receiving the RPI), provided in 30 minute exposure windows
 - number of scan instances (=duration of the encounter)
 - signal attenuation (minimum/average per scan instance)
 - reported TX power – RX = attenuation
 - low attenuation → close
 - higher attenuation → farther away
- Information provided within the uploaded keys
 - Transmission Risk Level (= infectiousness)



Transmission Risk Level - based on symptom status

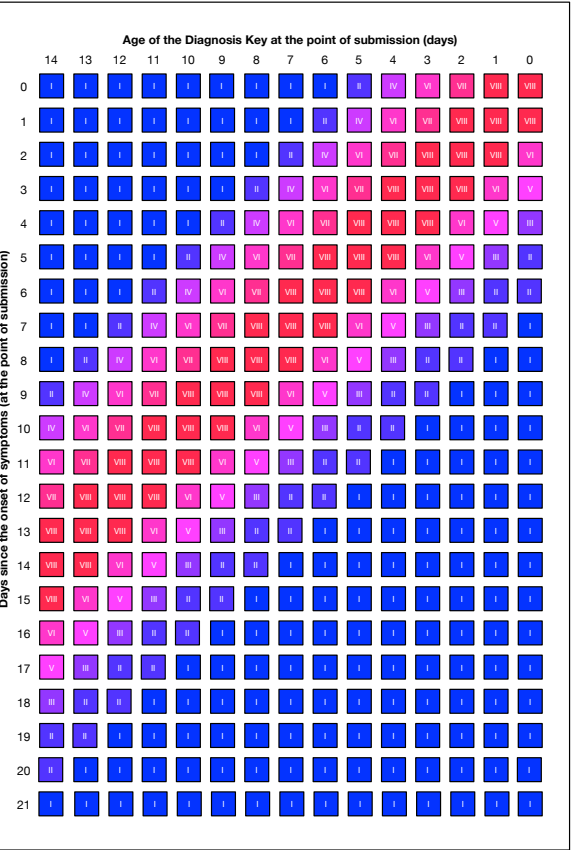
Deriving the Transmission Risk Level from
Days since Onset of Symptoms (specific date is known)

Value range (EFGS): -14 to 21



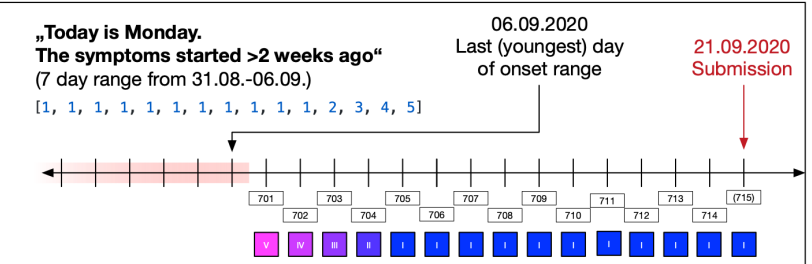
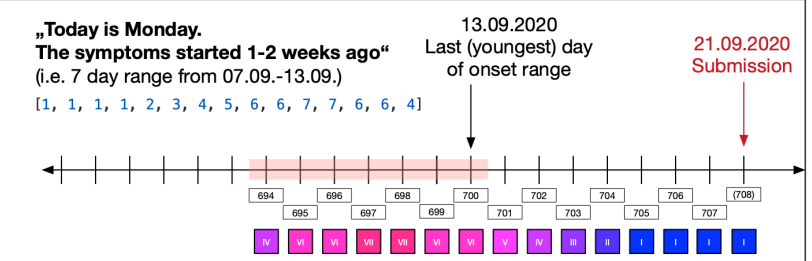
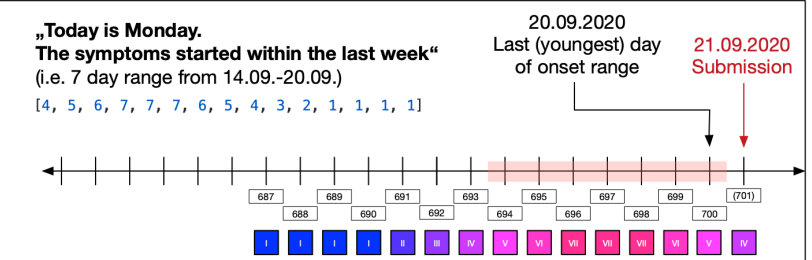
Transmission Risk Level

low high



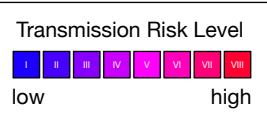
Deriving the Transmission Risk Level from
Days since Onset of Symptoms (day range is known)

Value range (EFGS): 186 to 1921



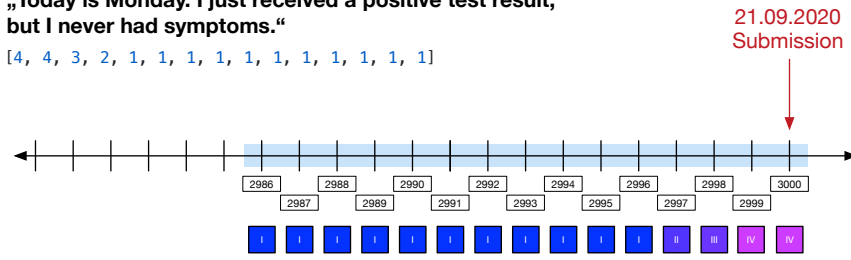
Transmission Risk Level - based on symptom status

Deriving the Transmission Risk Level from
Days since Onset of Symptoms (explicitly no symptoms)
—> technically „days since submission“
Value range (EFGS): 2986 to 3000

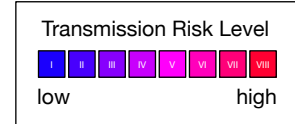


„Today is Monday. I just received a positive test result,
but I never had symptoms.“

[4, 4, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1]

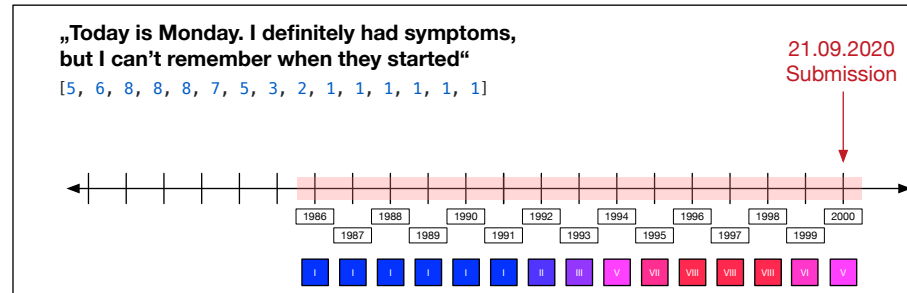


Deriving the Transmission Risk Level from
Days since Onset of Symptoms (onset day **not** known)
—> technically „days since submission“
Value range (EFGS): 1986 to 2000

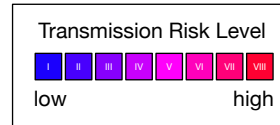


„Today is Monday. I definitely had symptoms,
but I can't remember when they started“

[5, 6, 8, 8, 8, 7, 5, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1]

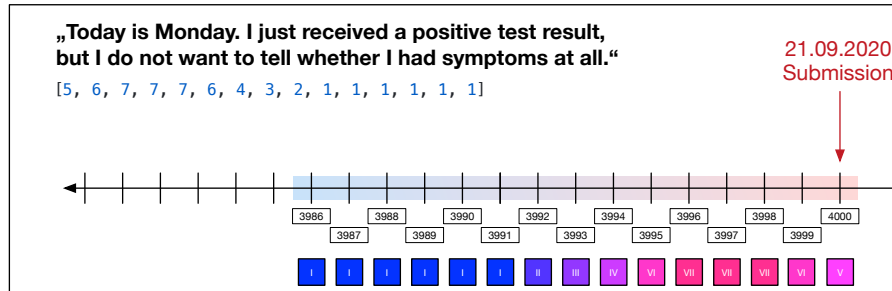


Deriving the Transmission Risk Level from
Days since Onset of Symptoms (no information)
—> technically „days since submission“
Value range (EFGS): 3986 to 4000

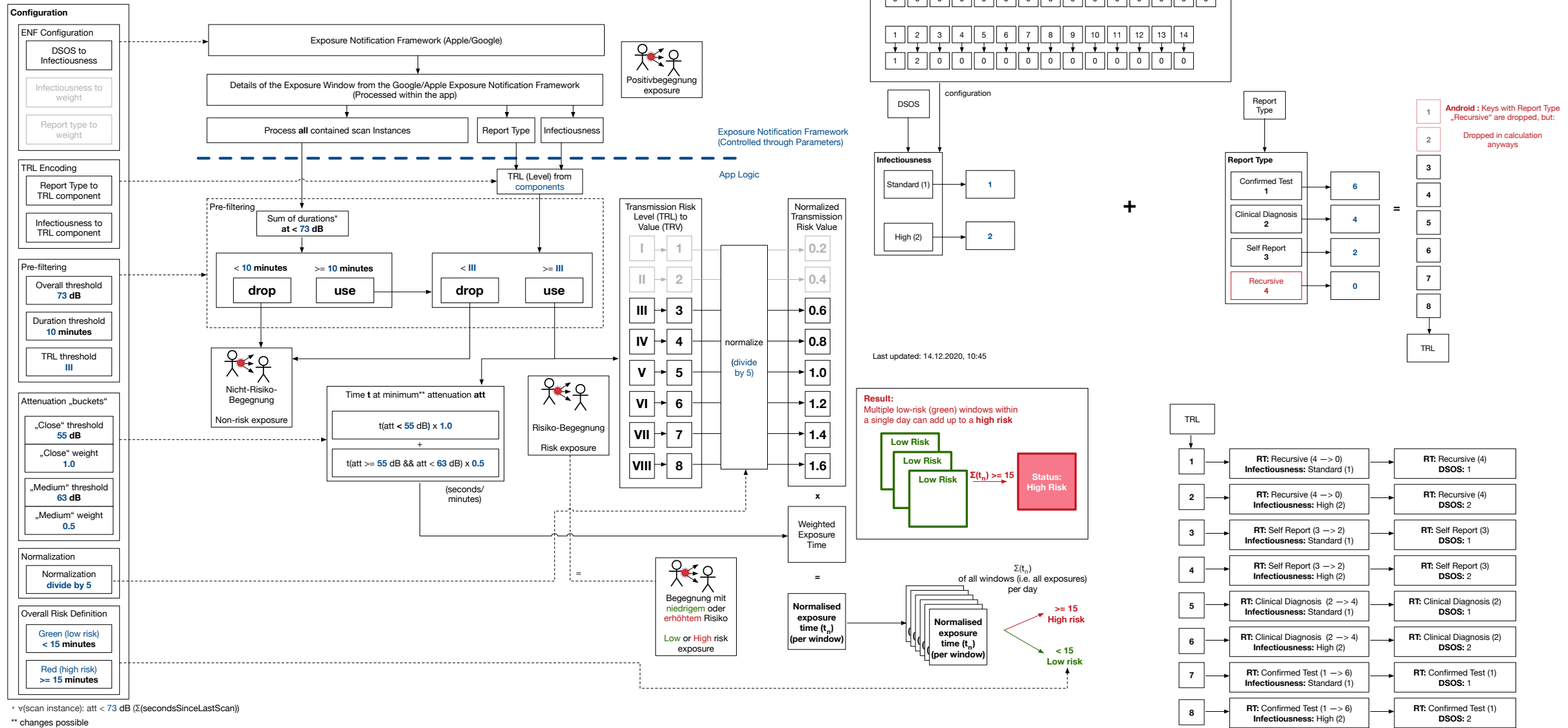


„Today is Monday. I just received a positive test result,
but I do not want to tell whether I had symptoms at all.“

[5, 6, 7, 7, 7, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1]



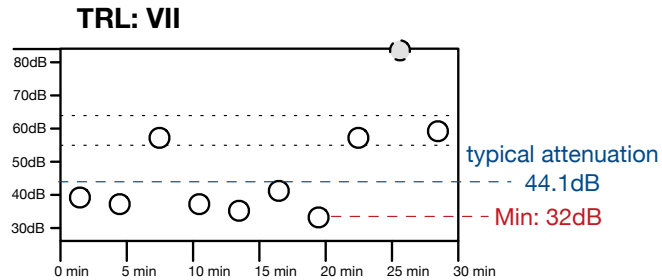
Risk calculation



Last updated: 16.12.2020, 14:40

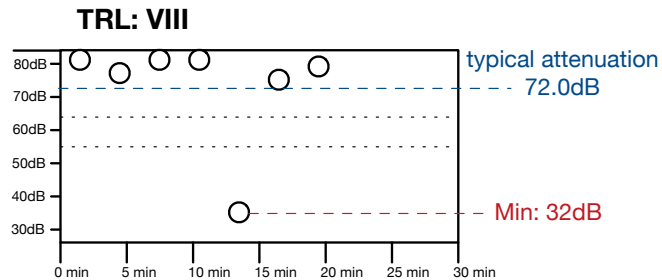
Last updated: 14.12.2020, 10:00

High or low risk for those windows? Red or Green?

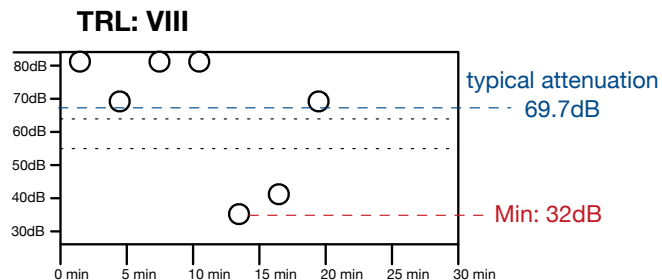


- Pre-Filtering
 - At least 10 minutes <73dB? Yes.
 - At least TRL III? Yes.

- Calculation:
 - 18 minutes at low attenuation → 18.0 minutes
 - 9 minutes at medium attenuation → 4.5 minutes
 - TRL VII → $(=7/5) \rightarrow \times 1.4$
 - $(18.0+4.5) \times 1.4 = 31.5$ minutes → **red!**



- Pre-Filtering
 - At least 10 minutes <73dB? No.
→ Dropped



- Pre-Filtering
 - At least 10 minutes <73dB? Yes.
 - At least TRL III? Yes.

- Calculation:
 - 6 minutes at low attenuation → 6.0 minutes
 - 0 minutes at medium attenuation → 0.0 minutes
 - TRL VIII → $(=8/5) \rightarrow \times 1.6$
 - $(6.0+0.0) \times 1.6 = 9.6$ minutes → **green.**

Thank you!

Learn more at

www.coronawarn.app

<https://github.com/corona-warn-app>