

February 6, 2019

Threatening letters from police circles –

complete clarification required

In the past few days, the press has reported repeated threatening letters to the NSU

Victim lawyer Seda Başay-Yıldız, who is believed to be employed by the Hessian

State Criminal Police Office have been written. Similar incidents also occurred in Berlin at the end of 2017

given, which have not yet been fully elucidated. Due to the current events in

Hesse calls the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information the Berliners

Police again to fully cooperate with the data protection authority and the

to fully investigate possible crimes.

In the winter of 2017, several Berlin institutions belonging to the left-wing autonomous scene received threatening letters

received, which contained personal data of a total of 45 people. In the letters

included photographs and information of 21 people who appeared to be police

or judicial authorities. The Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

filed an application for criminal prosecution against unknown persons for violations of

the Berlin Data Protection Act.

In the further course of the criminal investigations, the data protection authority only got

limited information from the Berlin police and the Berlin public prosecutor's office. Although in

August 2018 a police officer was finally convicted. To date, however, it is not clear how

the perpetrator got access to the large amount of personal data and where he collected or stored it.

saved. In addition, the Berlin police still did not explain with which ones

organizational measures prevent data protection violations of this kind in the future

should be. Due to a lack of cooperation on the part of the police, it was the

Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information not yet possible

To fully clarify the facts and to identify any structural changes that may be necessary
bring about changes in the police force.

Maja Smolczyk:

“This incident is serious. When police officers are politically motivated

Extracting personal data from police information systems is one thing

Criminal offense severely damaging public confidence in the security organs. I

I expect that the Berlin police will do everything possible to make this incident completely and transparently
to clear up. This is the only way to prevent such violations in the future.”

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