

press release

Appointment of Prof. Dr. Alexander Rossnagel

03/01/2021

Prof. Dr. Alexander Roßnagel took up his post today as Hessian Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

Prof. Alexander Roßnagel rot.jpg

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Prof. Dr. On December 10, 2020, Alexander Roßnagel was unanimously elected to the office of Hessian Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information by the Hessian State Parliament at the suggestion of the state government. Until now, he was a full-time senior professor for public law with a focus on technology law and environmental protection at the University of Kassel. There he heads the "Project group for constitutionally compatible technology design (provet)" and is director of the Scientific Center for Information Technology Design (ITeG). After his dissertation in Gießen and his habilitation in Darmstadt, he was first a professor at the Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences and since 1993 a university professor at the University of Kassel. His research focus is data protection law. As a project manager, he has carried out many interdisciplinary research projects on data protection issues. From 2003 to 2011 he was Vice President of the University of Kassel.

Regarding his new tasks, Roßnagel states: "The increasing digitization of all areas of life leads to ever more intensive processing of personal data and thus to interventions in informational self-determination. At the same time, it makes it more difficult to recognize risks to fundamental rights, to defend oneself against encroachments on fundamental rights and to find ways to protect oneself. While the data-processing offices in business and administration know more and more about citizens, data processing is becoming less and less transparent for them." Here, the data protection officer, as an independent authority, must ensure protection and balance of power as far as possible. In a technology-dominated world, this is most effective if data protection is already built into information technology systems. Interventions in fundamental rights that are not technically possible in the first place no longer need to be banned, prosecuted and sanctioned. "Therefore, one of my most important goals will be to advocate for a data protection-compliant design of information technology systems," emphasizes Roßnagel. It is also important to create transparency about the processing of personal data and to inform and sensitize data processors,

data subjects and the public to risks, requirements, guarantees and rights.

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