

06/16/2020

Corona warning app is okay from a "data protection point of view" - Kugelmann: App must not become a permanent solution

The Corona warning app presented in Berlin is "okay in terms of data protection" from the point of view of the state data protection officer Dieter Kugelmann. "Downloading and using the App is voluntary, and the collected data is stored decentrally on the individual smartphones. From a data protection perspective, these two principles are of immense importance," says Professor Kugelmann, State Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information in Rhineland-Palatinate (LfDI). "From a data protection perspective, the app is fine. You can download it with a clear conscience. Whether it is suitable is a question of health protection. However, the app must not become a permanent solution: once the corona pandemic has been defeated, the App belong to the past and no longer be activated on the smartphones." Kugelmann continues: "Every citizen should be aware, however, that the data newly collected on the smartphones, such as information about Covid 19 diseases, is the goal of criminal hacker attacks. Everyone should therefore consider installing anti-virus software on their smartphone. Most people make sure they have an up-to-date virus protection program installed on their computers. On the smartphone, on which many people enter and store sensitive data, this should also become a matter of course." "The original plans for the Corona warning app were from a data protection point of view is frightening," says Kugelmann. "It is a great success for the data protection officers of the federal states and the federal government that the app has now been designed differently. In addition to the decentralized storage and anonymization of contact data, no location data is collected. The development of the program code was also transparent. In addition, the Data deleted after two weeks. However, it is very important that the voluntary principle of the app is not undermined step by step: it must not happen that restaurant operators, concert organizers or private bus companies say at some point: 'We only accept customers and guests who have downloaded the app'." The data protection officer says: "With the app now available - according to my first assessment - freedom rights are respected. Even during the pandemic we must not prematurely give up freedom rights, especially not when effective health protection is at stake does not serve or is inappropriate. There is no doubt that that fighting the pandemic must remain a priority. However, this must be done within the framework of the rule of law so that the state order does not erode." The data protection conference, the conference of the independent data protection supervisory authorities of the federal and state governments, has issued a current press release on the Corona-Warn-App.

return