

AppClubhouse: Information on the protection of privacy

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HmbBfDI requires information about the protection of privacy from the operators of the Clubhouse app

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The Clubhouse app is currently on everyone's lips and has seen a significant rush of users. That's understandable. Right now, many people have an overwhelming interest in a new discursive platform that promises exciting communication and informal exchange with others. However, the app raises many questions about protecting the privacy of users and third parties.

The address books in the mobile devices are automatically read out by those users who invite other people and stored by the operators in the USA. As a result, contact details of numerous people fall into the wrong hands without them even coming into contact with the app, where they can then be used for advertising purposes or contact requests. According to their own statements, the operators also save the recordings of all conversations held in the various rooms in order to track abuse without the detailed circumstances becoming transparent.

Providers targeting European users must respect their rights to information, access, objection and erasure. At the same time, there is an obligation to ensure the technical and organizational measures to protect the data. There are currently some doubts about all of this with the Clubhouse app. The HmbBfDI has therefore coordinated with the other German supervisory authorities and sent a catalog of questions to the operators in California to check compliance with European data protection law.

Johannes Caspar, Hamburg Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information: "Unfortunately, it often happens that providers from the USA push their way onto the European market or are simply successful with their products and services without complying with the most basic data protection regulations of the European digital market . Here it is important to quickly point out which rules apply on the European playing field and to enforce them. It is in the interest of all European users to be able to use services that do not infringe their own or third-party rights and that do not open up to the principles of privacy protection only after years of successful user retention in Europe."

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