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P r e s s e release

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Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information publishes annual report

2020

The Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information, Maja Smolczyk, published today their annual report for the year 2020. The document provides information on 304 pages about the Activities of the supervisory authority for data protection and freedom of information in the state of Berlin.

Information for members of the press: Ms. Smolczyk will be available on April 8, 2021 between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. ready for interviews. Please direct appointment requests and questions about the annual report to the press office at [presse@datenschutz-berlin.de](mailto:presse@datenschutz-berlin.de) or Tel: 030 13889 900.

The number of data protection and freedom of information officers at the Berlin office received cases remained at a very high level in 2020. With that sat down the trend of the previous two years continued. Overall, the supervisory authority achieved last year 4,868 submissions from affected citizens. Berlin companies and Authorities reported 925 data breaches. The authority has 308 warnings against private and public authorities pronounced as well as 47 fines totaling 77,250.00 fixed in euros.

The work of the supervisory authority in 2020 was shaped by the corona pandemic.

Countless data protection issues arose in this context

Admissibility of individual measures to combat the pandemic, such as the Management of contact lists in restaurants and cafés through to data protection-compliant design of the new digitized life.

The pandemic massively advanced digitization processes in almost all areas of life, only too often without sufficient attention being paid to data protection. The Berlin supervisory authority accepted this challenge and developed consulting services for data protection-compliant

Coping with a variety of problems. Central importance received from one day on the other learning platforms and video conferencing services as elementary tools To enable working and learning processes from a distance. To responsible in To support Berlin in the thicket of systems offered on the market

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The supervisory authority has to make an appropriate and data protection-friendly selection practical information on the data protection-compliant use of corresponding products has been published.

There were also important developments in the area of freedom of information: In the summer, the Berlin Senate Cornerstones for the long-awaited and agreed in the coalition agreement

Transparency Act known, with which the outdated Freedom of Information Act should be replaced. In the draft law presented, the Berlin Commissioner criticism of data protection and freedom of information provided for therein

However, comprehensive area exceptions are not taken into account, so progress in this area are by no means certain compared to the current legal situation.

The annual report is available at [https://www.datenschutz-berlin.de/infothek-und-service/publications/annual reports](https://www.datenschutz-berlin.de/infothek-und-service/publications/annual%20reports).

The attachment to provides an overview of selected topics from the annual report press release.

Maja Smolczyk:

“The report I am presenting today for the year 2020 is also my last responsible for the annual report, as I am not available for another term of office.

My term of office was marked by major upheavals in data protection and in society, starting with the entry into force and effectiveness of the European data protection basic regulation to the ongoing corona pandemic with its immense effects on all of our lives together. It has been a challenging time and I am very grateful that I was allowed to participate in shaping these changes.

The General Data Protection Regulation is the European answer to which more and more accelerating digitization of society and the insight that certain fundamental rights can only be made sustainable together in the EU. The outbreak of the Corona Pandemic and the digitization push associated with it last year fell right into the phase of consolidating the new data protection rules and set up data protection a tough test. It became clear in which areas after the end of the Pandemic, there is still an enormous need to catch up on sustainable development. This concerns before Above all, the implementation of the European principle of "Privacy by Design", according to which the Data protection is always considered from the start when developing products and processes has to be, in order not to be faced with the situation again in an emergency, that not data protection-compliant and therefore non-legally compliant products are used. We must learn from the experiences of the pandemic in order to be better prepared for the future.

The annual report published today shows how my authority is performing despite the difficult situation during this pandemic for data protection-compliant solutions without prevent necessary procedures. Data protection serves to protect people. this I felt committed to this goal during my tenure. I hope this also in present annual report becomes clear.”