

Press Release /2021

Responsible use of digital data is a basic requirement for freedom and prosperity

Expert alliance hands over white paper to the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

150 experts from science, business and civil society have developed a guide for the responsible use of digital data in the DiDaT project funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The recommendations were recorded in a white paper that was handed over today by the project managers to Professor Ulrich Kelber, Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI).

Professor Wolf-Dieter Lukas, State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, commented on the handover of the white paper as follows:

“I consider the responsible use of digital data to be one of the core requirements for a life in freedom and prosperity in Germany and Europe. Research-intensive companies and research institutions in particular need reliable access to digital data. Digital, often highly personalized data is an extremely sensitive asset that must be protected in a free and democratic basic order. To do this, we need more solutions that enable the use of digital data for innovative applications, while maintaining the data sovereignty of each individual and counteracting any negative social side effects. The DiDaT project makes an important contribution to the debate at a time when digitization is penetrating all areas of life. It is in our hands to show how we, as an open society and as a high-tech location, can intelligently shape this challenge.”

In addition, Prof. Ulrich Kelber, Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI) explains:

“I was happy to advise on data protection issues as part of the DiDaT research project. The project follows a promising approach that takes into account many different areas of life. Therefore, the stakeholders concerned were fully involved. It is important to take a closer look at the unintended side effects of digitization. Only then can the necessary steps be taken, such as creating a legal framework.

Politics and society have to deal with the possibilities and consequences of digitization again and again. When it comes to topics such as automated driving, health apps or social media, we have to actively shape the process. As a data protection officer, it is particularly important to me that all the consequences of the ever-increasing processing of personal data are analyzed scientifically. Only with this basis can we make the right decisions for our future. The White Paper presented today

can make an important contribution here.”

Background:

The project "Digital data as the subject of a transdisciplinary process" (DiDaT), co-financed by the BMBF in the period from November 1, 2019 to October 31, 2021 with 400,000 euros, is developing proposals for how to use the diverse digitally generated data in various subject areas such as mobility, agriculture, Health, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Social Media can be used responsibly. To this end, the project carried out a broad-based process, at the end of which a white paper was drawn up jointly by science, business and civil society. The white paper serves as a signpost that provides orientation and guidelines for the sustainable use of digital data for civil society, business and politics.

Further financial contributions to the DiDaT project came from DB-Bahn AG, TMG-Systemhaus, Bernhard and Ursula Plettner-Foundation in the Stifterverband, Fraunhofer-FOKUS, NABU, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies Potsdam, Brandenburg Technical University Cottbus-Senftenberg, Danube University Krems, University of Bremen. In addition to Prof. Kelber, BfDI, the white paper is also sent on behalf of Ms. Hanna Gleiss (civil society network against hate speech on the Internet), Yvonne Hofstetter (essayist, lawyer, entrepreneur, lecturer; civil society perspective) and Dr. Claus D. Ulmer (Deutsche Telekom; business perspective).

DiDaT is an example of the transdisciplinary and participatory approach of the BMBF's socio-ecological sustainability research, which is being further expanded with the new FONA strategy. Further information on DiDat can be found on the project homepage: <http://www.didat.eu/>.

Other priorities of the BMBF for a modern and secure data policy as part of its digital strategy include the cloud and data infrastructure GAIA-X for a secure European data and infrastructure ecosystem, the national research data infrastructure and the currently tendered funding announcement for data trust models for secure and trustworthy data exchange in research and business. The BMBF bundles the data strategy measures in its Research Data Action Plan.

The heads of the DiDAT research project approached the BfDI at the beginning of 2020 and presented the research project. You have asked for support in this regard. The BfDI complied with this request and examined all chapters of the white paper from a data protection perspective.

The white paper can be viewed here:

White Paper DiDaT

contact finder

Here you can find out in just a few clicks who is responsible for your inquiry or complaint about data protection.

public bodies

The term public body not only includes the traditional administrative authorities, but also courts, parliaments and public foundations. This also includes social insurance, such as health insurance.

company

Private companies are mostly supervised by state authorities, but there are some exceptions. Private organizations such as clubs and associations also fall into this category.

Press, radio, church

Special responsibilities apply in these areas. Churches and public broadcasters have e.g. B. via their own data protection officers. The federal and state supervisory authorities are not responsible for other organizations either.