

Bonn/Berlin, October 23, 2019

Press release 24/2019

Data Ethics Commission report strengthens data protection

In the final report presented today, the Data Ethics Commission (DEK) emphasizes the outstanding role of data protection in the digital age and provides a number of forward-looking recommendations for action. The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI) hopes that the Federal Government will take up and implement the results of the report as guidelines for its future data policy.

Ulrich Kelber, who was involved in compiling the report as a member of the DEK, praises the results of the commission: Here, experts from a wide range of disciplines have jointly found answers to solving the urgent challenges in dealing with the ongoing digitization of society. It was clear from the start that strong data protection must be an essential part of these solutions. This is an unmistakable message, precisely because voices are being raised again and again that do not see data protection as a necessity and opportunity in the digital age, but as a stumbling block.

In addition to the general emphasis on the importance of basic data protection principles, the BfDI believes that the demand for more transparency - including in connection with profiling and consumer devices - stands out from the DEK's 75 recommendations for action. For example, according to the DEK, end devices should be given pictograms related to data protection in order to enable consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. With any type of profiling, data subjects should also receive meaningful information about the algorithm used.

Another requirement that should be emphasized is that of effective algorithm control. Here DEK pursues a risk-adapted regulatory approach. The greater the potential for damage, the more requirements must be placed on the use of the algorithm and the more control options must be provided. This ranges from applications with no or little potential for damage, for which neither special quality requirements nor special control mechanisms are required, to applications with an unacceptable potential for damage, which must be completely or at least partially banned.

The DEK was set up by the federal government on July 18, 2018 to deal with the key questions on the subject complexes of algorithmic forecasting and decision-making processes, artificial intelligence and data. In addition to representatives from science, politics and industry, its members also include data and consumer protection groups.

[PDF download of the report](#)

Opinion of the data ethics commission Opinion of the data ethics commission - summary

PDF download in English

Opinion of the Data Ethics Commission - Executive Summary

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.