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One year GDPR - a success with further potential for growth

One year after the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force, the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI), Ulrich Kelber, draws a positive conclusion. Data protection is strengthened by the new pan-European law, although there are still areas where improvements can be made.

Looking back on the last 12 months, the BfDI sums it up: The first year of the GDPR is undoubtedly a success story for me. If you think about the sometimes absurd scaremongering that accompanied the start of application last year, you have to realize today that the GDPR has brought data protection not only in Germany and Europe, but even worldwide significantly forward.

Many people and companies who previously did not care about data protection have dealt with the topic. Even in countries such as the USA and Japan or Brazil and India, the GDPR has an effect and is used as a model and point of reference for their own national data protection legislation.

The new data protection awareness associated with the GDPR is also reflected in the massive increase in the number of inquiries and complaints to the supervisory authorities. The BfDI alone received almost 15,000 complaints and reports of data protection violations in the period from May 25th to April 30th this year. Compared to the whole of 2017, this represents a threefold increase.

Irrespective of the positive development, the sometimes absurd discussions about doorbells or blackened kindergarten photos prove that it will also be important in the future to communicate the new law to citizens and companies even better. It is also important to address concerns and criticism of the GDPR and to discuss them in the context of the upcoming evaluation next year. Attempts should be made to remove unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, e.g. in the information and documentation obligations, and to close existing gaps in the law, e.g. in the area of profiling and scoring, as best as possible. It is just as important to pass the E-Privacy Regulation, which was originally supposed to come into force a year ago when the GDPR came into force, as quickly as possible.

The BfDI therefore warns not to rest on our laurels for too long on the successes of the GDPR so far: the next year will be an indicator for us. We will only see how well the GDPR really protects people when we effectively enforce it in practice against large IT companies such as Facebook or Google. To this end, we as data protection supervisory authorities will have to work

together even better and more closely, not just nationally but throughout Europe. This is one of the most important tasks for the next year.

Information on the specific changes to the GDPR and new rights for citizens can be found on the BfDI website at www.bfdi.bund.de. In addition to leaflets such as "Data Protection - My Rights" or brochures such as "Info 1" with explanations of the legal texts of the GDPR and the Federal Data Protection Act, the so-called short papers on the new data protection law can also be downloaded here. These should serve as an initial orientation as to how the data protection conference believes that the General Data Protection Regulation should be applied in practice.

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.