

Press release of the Conference of Freedom of Information Officers in Germany from June 2, 2021

Conference of the Freedom of Information Commissioners in Germany calls for more transparency in the protection of the Constitution

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At their 40th conference on June 2, 2021, chaired by Saxony-Anhalt, the freedom of information officers in Germany called on the federal and state legislators to ensure access to information from the authorities for the protection of the constitution and to limit exceptions to the protection of specific security concerns. "It is incomprehensible that the constitutional protection authorities have to provide information under press or environmental information law, but are allowed to remain silent on general questions from citizens," said Mr. Albert Cohaus, who, as Deputy State Commissioner for Saxony-Anhalt's freedom of information, is leading the conference Has. "More transparency also strengthens trust in the way the Office for the Protection of the Constitution works!"

In addition, the conference called for the mandatory introduction of official freedom of information officers. Albert Cohaus: "It benefits both the authority and the citizens if a competent contact person is available in an authority who coordinates information access requests, provides legal advice and offers support." In Saxony-Anhalt, the introduction of an official freedom of information officer was planned. However, it did not materialize during this legislative period. "There is still a need for action here!"

Furthermore, the conference asked the federal legislature to create a transparency law with a role model function in the new legislative period! In a twelve-point paper, the conference made proposals for the further development of the Freedom of Information Act into a Transparency Act with a transparency register, for the areas of exceptions and reasons for exclusion of the Act, for regulations to promote freedom of information and for the intervention powers of the Federal Commissioner for

Data Protection and Freedom of Information. Albert Cohaus: "Such a 'transparency law' could also serve as a role model for the states." In Saxony-Anhalt, the state government had initiated a reform of the freedom of information law, but had not completed it. The state representative for freedom of information hopes that the state parliament will take up this reform again in the next legislative period.

Further topics were the development of freedom of information law in the federal and state governments and the corresponding case law. The next conference will take place on November 3, 2021, again chaired by Saxony-Anhalt.

The resolutions that have been passed can also be accessed on the website of the state commissioner.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Albert Cohaus, Tel. 0391-81803-0; poststelle@lfd.sachsen-anhalt.de.

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