

DRAFT

Press Release Forum Privacy

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What comes after Cambridge Analytica? Learnings from paradoxical consumer behavior in the data economy — The necessity of new rules for consumer protection

While consumers emphasize how important privacy is to them in surveys on the one hand, they freely disclose personal information on the Internet on the other. How can this seemingly paradoxical behaviour be explained? At the Lunch Time Meeting Forum Privacy@noon scientists from the "Forum Privatheit" research association will examine this question - and demonstrate the important role played by data economy structures in this context. The following panel discussion with representatives of politics and business will discuss how consumers can protect their privacy in times of Facebook and Cambridge Analytica and which new rules have to be negotiated between the relevant players in politics, business and civil society.

Especially in the area of novel data industries, there is a systematic imbalance between the possibilities of suppliers to influence and those of consumers to deal with them: While large corporations like Google or Facebook employ top lawyers and the best software and marketing specialists, consumers often know little about technical processes, business models and the legal situation. Cost-benefit considerations are therefore difficult for them: "When using platforms and services, the individual must strike a balance between the costs incurred, i.e. the necessary disclosure of personal data on the one hand, and the expected benefits on the other, for example in the form of convenience. The decision is often to the detriment of one's own data protection, because the potential dangers are usually unclear. They also lie far in the future, while the benefits are concrete and present," explains media psychologist Prof. Dr. Nicole Krämer from the University of Duisburg-Essen the dilemma of consumers.

Seemingly paradoxical consumer behaviour cannot be solved individually

And even as consumer skills grow, there is still a great discrepancy with the industry's increasingly sophisticated data collection methods. "On the one hand, it is impossible for consumers to find the time to become Internet specialists in addition to their professional and private lives. On the other hand, virtually no one can nowadays avoid using the Internet. This is why established self-determination mechanisms, such as informed consent, are coming under pressure: "It is well known that in practice nobody reads the GTCs before consent is given to the processing of their own data," says sociologist Dr. Carsten Ochs from the University of Kassel. In addition, Prof. Dr. Jörn Lamla, also sociologist and member of the board of directors of the interdisciplinary Scientific Centre for Information Technology Design at the University of Kassel, explains: "In the digital age, self-determination hardly functions without personal data production and publication. The question is therefore whether the seemingly paradoxical consumer behaviour can actually be attributed to individuals - or whether it is not rather built into the structures of data economy itself".

What is needed is an effective organisation of consumer interests

What is therefore needed for Lamla is an effective organisation of the concerns and interests of consumers, but this is only at the beginning in the field of data economy. The public debate on the problems is getting off to a slow start. Lamla adds: "If we want to have sustainable, long-term functioning digital societies, we will have to give more thought to the functioning of data management. In this context, it will be essential to involve large sections of the population in the problem debates and corresponding stakeholders in IT design".

Event note:

Forum Privacy@noon at the Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg at the EU, Rue Belliard, Brussels: Impulse Talks by Prof. Dr. Jörn Lamla, Dr. Carsten Ochs, University of Kassel, and Prof. Dr. Nicole Krämer, Univ. Duisburg-Essen, 25 April 2018, 13:00 – 14:30: "The consumers' dilemma!" (Krämer) and "Social contradiction or 'private' paradox? Self-determination practices in data economy" (Lamla/Ochs). Panel Discussion with Prof. Dr. Jörn Lamla, Dr. Carsten Ochs, Prof. Dr. Nicole Krämer, Wojtek Talko, Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Věra Jourová, Joanna Lopatowska, EuroCommerce, Adviser, Consumer Policy & Digital, Moderator: Frederik Borgesius,

Forum Privacy is an interdisciplinary German Research Consortium funded by the BMBF. Experts from seven scientific institutions deal with questions relating to the protection of privacy on an interdisciplinary basis. The project is coordinated by Fraunhofer ISI. Other partners are Fraunhofer SIT, the University of Duisburg-Essen, the Scientific Centre for Information Technology Design (ITeG) of the University of Kassel, the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich and the Independent Centre for Data Protection Schleswig-Holstein.

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