[AT] New service centre for artificial intelligence at the RTR-GmbH

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The EU's AI Act will have massive implications for Austria. Still, the government decided not to wait an additional two years up until EU law enters into force but to respond to the challenges of artificial intelligence (AI) at the national level and prepare well ahead. Even before the EU AI Act comes into force, Austria will implement a labelling requirement for AI systems for transparency purposes. A survey on the use of AI applications in the federal ministries has already been carried out for this purpose.

Thus, in December 2023, an amendment to the KommAustria Act and the Telecommunications Act was submitted to the Austrian Parliament, which would designate the Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungs-GmbH (RTR-GmbH) – the operational support body of the Austrian regulator, KommAustria – as the central service centre for AI. The aim of setting up this AI Service Centre is to build up relevant expertise and provide a wide range of information and advice for AI projects and applications in media, telecommunications and postal services – including via an information portal. This includes, for example, information on the regulatory framework and any effects of AI on cyber security, conducting research and analyses, providing guidelines for the use of AI in the media sector, including best practice models,; advising public and private legal entities and regular exchanges with market participants in the media sector.

The AI Service Centre will be supported by a designated AI Advisory Board, which will also advise the federal government on implementing the EU's AI Act and using AI opportunities. The tasks will include specifically:

• advising on current developments in the field of AI, including ethical and social aspects;

• monitoring the technological development of AI within and outside the European Union; and

• supporting the government in setting strategic goals and developing policy within the framework of the AI Policy Forum.

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The board should consist of eleven members (seven of whom have already been appointed) with extensive experience and expertise in the fields of ethics, research, economics, law and technology. The annual budget provided for the Service Centre is EUR 700 000. After Spain and the Netherlands, Austria is the third country in Europe to introduce such an AI service point.

Austria also plans to implement a "regulatory sandbox" – an experimental field for AI – at the beginning of 2024. The aim is to further test potential regulatory actions in a controlled environment.

Neue Servicestelle für Künstliche Intelligenz bei der RTR

https://www.parlament.gv.at/aktuelles/pk/jahr_2023/pk1428

New service centre for artificial intelligence at RTR

KommAustria-Gesetz,Telekommunikationsgesetz, Änderung (3821/A)

https://www.parlament.gv.at/gegenstand/XXVII/A/3821

KommAustria Act, Telecommunications Act, Amendment (3821/A)

Auftakt im BMF: Österreichische KI-Servicestelle soll bei RTR eingerichtet werden

https://www.rtr.at/medien/aktuelles/publikationen/Newsletter/Newsletter_2023/NL_05_2023/Auftakt_KI-Servicestelle.de.html

Austrian AI service centre to be set up at RTR

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