

PRESS RELEASE

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Berlin, 15 November 2021

Ethics Council invites to public discussion of the ethical and aesthetic aspects of self-quantification

Together with experts and the audience participating online, the German Ethics Council will discuss on 17 November the phenomenon of self-measurement in various contexts, from everyday self-measurement such as step counting to medical applications and self-optimisation. The focus will be on the ethical and aesthetic reflection of the thus changing concepts of (normal) corporeality.

How quantified is our approach to our bodies? How do the numerous new possibilities of collecting data on our own lives change our concept of (normal) corporeality, and how can we reflect on this ethically and artistically?

With simple tools that have become almost indispensable in some cases, such as smartphones and wearables, it is now possible to digitally record and analyse a wide range of parameters – for example, the steps we take each day, the heart rate, or the duration of sleep. The aim is to gain knowledge about oneself through data collection and thus to optimise one's lifestyle. In addition, self-measurement serves as the basis for applications to compensate for physical limitations up to enhancement.

During the conference, the Ethics Council particularly addresses altered corporeality that is associated with the use of such techniques and its effects on holistic or primarily mind-focused conceptions of the human being. The current state of development and future technical possibilities will be examined, as well as ethical, social, cultural and political science aspects of the issue. Moreover, there are reports on experiences from various application contexts such as medicine, prosthetics, social media, top-class sports and dance.

More information about the programme can be found (in German) at <https://www.ethikrat.org/weitere-veranstaltungen/selbstvermessen>.

The event will be held in German and broadcast online at <https://www.ethikrat.org/live>. A registration is not required.

During the event, we invite participants to use the online question module to contribute to the debate or to join the discussion on Twitter using #Selbstvermessen.

There will be subtitling and sign-language interpreters for the hearing impaired.

Members

Prof. Dr. med. Alena Buyx (Chair)
Prof. Dr. iur. Dr. h. c. Volker Lipp (Vice-Chair)
Prof. Dr. phil. Dr. h. c. Julian Nida-Rümelin (Vice-Chair)
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Susanne Schreiber (Vice-Chair)

Prof. Dr. iur. Steffen Augsberg
Regional bishop Dr. theol. Petra Bahr
Prof. Dr. theol. Franz-Josef Bormann
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Hans-Ulrich Demuth
Prof. Dr. iur. Helmut Frister
Prof. Dr. theol. Elisabeth Gräß-Schmidt
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Dr. phil. Sigrid Graumann
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Armin Grunwald
Prof. Dr. med. Wolfram Henn
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Ursula Klingmüller
Stephan Kruip
Prof. Dr. phil. Dr. h. c. Dipl.-Psych. Andreas Kruse
Prof. Dr. theol. Andreas Lob-Hüdepohl
Prof. Dr. phil. habil. Annette Riedel
Prof. Dr. iur. Stephan Rixen
Prof. Dr. iur. Dr. phil. Frauke Rostalski
Prof. Dr. theol. Kerstin Schlögl-Flierl
Dr. med. Josef Schuster
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