Get to know Simon Hanisch

Interview + Transcription: Jennifer von Olnhausen

Scientist: Simon Hanisch

[smoothed transcription]

The Question is, why did I join the chair?

I was studying in Dresden where Professor Strufe had his former chair. I was very interested in networking and security at that time and that's why I also did a masters' thesis at his chair in this field and when CeTI, a new excellence cluster in Dresden, was formed he had an open position and asked me if I wanted to do network security research – and I said yes – and then about a year later he got a new chair in Karlsruhe and I decided to follow because I was only in the beginning of my PhD. I knew if I wanted to finish it would be wise to follow.

The Question was, what am I currently working on?

I used to work on network security as it was my main topic in my masters', but I soon realized in my first year that a lot of research has been already done in this field and since I was in the excellence cluster I was in contact with a lot of people capturing human motions. I got interested in 'how can we anonymize this kind of data' because in the future, if we will have something like a metaverse, more and more of this behavioral data will be captured, like our fingerprints, it's very unique to us, it can be used to identify us and therefore the question was 'how can we anonymize it?' and 'how can we make it more privacy friendly?'.

The Question is, what do I want to achieve with my research?

I think, first of all, I don't have like a clear goal, like a product or something that I want to achieve, but rather I'm very curious about 'how can we do certain things?' and 'how can we protect this kind of data?' Maybe the ideal outcome would be that we have something like a perfect anonymization framework. We have some application that we want to use, perhaps a motion data that we recorded for it and then we can use this framework and anonymize the data in a form that it's a) still usable for what we want to do with the data, so the application, and b) is privacy friendly for the people using the application, that it doesn't reveal more than it has to. Ideally would be something like an android sensor notification, we could say 'this app can use my camera' and then you'd say 'this app can use my motion data but please remove my gender, my age and all the private information which I like to keep.' I think this would be like a really good outcome.