

CoronApp_Colombia application technical analysis - Synthesis report

Bogotá, April 17, 2020

This report is based on research conducted primarily upon versions 1.2.29, 1.2.30, 1.2.31, and 1.2.32 of the CoronApp mobile phone application. During the investigation, new versions were released every 3 or 4 days. Release notes detailing changes made in each version are not available.

A previous version of this report was sent to those government entities involved in the development and implementation of this application, as well as COLCERT (Colombian Computer Emergency Response Team). Several changes were implemented by the corresponding entities, taking into account some of the report's findings. As of the date of this publication, the current version of the application is 1.2.36. Some comments in italics correspond to the changes that have been made since then.

Although they have been corrected, the details of the vulnerabilities that we have found are not published here.

The goal of this exercise is to contribute to an improvement in digital security and privacy.





0. Methodology

In addition to examining the available public information about CoronApp, which appears in the application itself and in the Google Play Store, the following non-intrusive methods were used:

- static analysis of permissions and trackers included in CoronApp's source code using Exodus Privacy¹ and ClassyShark 3xodus²;
- static analysis of the app's accessible source code using Apktool³ and analysis of the app's manifest (Android Manifest);
- analysis of the data flows generated and received by the application when installed on a phone running Android 7 using Wireshark⁴. Tests include sending data through the registration and health report forms;
- passive traffic analysis using virtual machines and Burp Suite⁵; Burp is a traffic analysis tool that uses an HTTP proxy to allow client-side data packets to be analyzed, including data that goes through an SSL (HTTPS).

Note 1: A deeper analysis has still not been possible to implement using the Burp tool since the last two analyzed versions of the app do not work on virtual machines (apparently they only work on computers with arm64 processors).

Note 2: Before carrying out the analyzes that involved filling out forms, a warning email was sent to several people related with CoronApp's management (working with the Instituto Nacional de Salud -INS-, the Agencia Nacional Digital -AND- and the Ministry of ICT -MINTIC-, see Annex [0]) looking to ensure that they would identify these forms and would not take that information into account in their respective analyzes and the alerts generated by their system.

^{1 &}lt;u>https://exodus-privacy.eu.org/en/</u>

^{2 &}lt;u>https://f-droid.org/en/packages/com.oF2pks.classyshark3xodus/</u>

^{3 &}lt;u>https://ibotpeaches.github.io/Apktool/</u>

^{4 &}lt;u>https://www.wireshark.org/</u> To make this capture, we generated a WIFI access point from the computer that was running the WireShark program. The cellphone using the CoronApp application accessed the Internet through this WIFI access point.

⁵ https://portswigger.net/





1. Data collected by the application

The application collects the following data (see screenshots in Annex [1]):

Type of data	Data
Personal data from the registration form	 Name and surname ID type and number Cellphone number Gender Date of birth Country, State, City of residence Email Password
Sensitive personal data from reporting and registration forms	 Ethnic origin Health report: I feel fine / I feel sick Symptoms Contact with people with symptoms Medical care received Previous travel to other countries
Data that may be collected by the application in a "not visible" way	 Phone contacts Device location (systematically sent by the app⁶) Nearby WIFI networks Information available via Bluetooth, particularly about other nearby Bluetooth devices

The last part is related to the broad amount of authorizations requested by the application.

In the latest versions, the data collected by the registration form was reduced to name and surname, ID type and number, phone, and cellphone number.

⁶ The GPS coordinates appear in the captures made with WireShark.





2. Application permissions and passive data collection

2.1 Application permissions

This application requests a huge amount of permissions⁷. The following is the list that appears when Exodus Privacy is used. These coincide with the application manifest, see annex [2]):

	4% 📕 16:53		% 📕 16:53	BLUETOOTH_PRIVILEGED
Exodus Privacy	\$	Exodus Privacy	\$	android.permission.BLUETOOTH_PRIVILE GED
19 Permissions We have found the following permissions	in the	WAKE_LOCK impedir que el teléfono entre en modo de suspensión		BLUETOOTH_ADMIN
application: MAPS_RECEIVE		SET_ALARM establecer una alarma		RECEIVE recibir datos de Internet
INTERNET		FOREGROUND_SERVICE		BIND_GET_INSTALL_REFERRER_SER VICE
tener acceso completo a la red	C	CALL_PHONE		API Install Referrer de Play
ACCESS_NETWORK_STATE ver conexiones de red		llamar directamente a números de teléfono		The icon ! indicates a 'Dangerous' or 'Special' level according to <u>Google's protection levels.</u>
ACCESS_COARSE_LOCATION acceder a tu ubicación aproximada (basada en red)		READ_PHONE_STATE consultar la identidad y el estado del teléfono		Permissions are actions the application can do
ACCESS_FINE_LOCATION acceder a tu ubicación precisa		BLUETOOTH vincular con dispositivos Bluetooth		
(basada en red y GPS)		ACCESS_WIFI_STATE		
READ_CONTACTS		ver conexiones Wi-Fi		
consultar lus contactos		CHANGE_WIFI_STATE		
RECEIVE_BOOT_COMPLETED ejecutarse al inicio		conectarse a redes Wi-Fi y desconectarse		
		BILIETOOTU DDIVII ECED		

There are several permissions that can be intrusive in terms of privacy:

- Device location access: the analysis of WireShark logs shows that the application regularly sends the GPS coordinates of the device;
- access to contacts;
- access to the information of available WIFI networks detected by the device;
- access to Bluetooth devices that the phone can detect.

⁷ Most are not explicitly requested to the user during installation or use.





Also, after installing the application, it runs automatically at startup ("RECEIVE_BOOT_COMPLETED" permission).

It is important to note that version 1.2.29 of the application requested 14 permissions. These permissions have been expanded to 19 from version 1.2.30 and are maintained in the following analyzed versions. Three Bluetooth-related permissions are new and we couldn't find an explanation or information about it in the application's documentation.

As shown in the screenshot below, the BLUETOOTH_ADMIN permission can be quite intrusive as it can detect nearby devices (those with Bluetooth function activated).

BLUETOOTH 🗸 🗸
vincular con dispositivos Bluetooth Permite que la aplicación acceda a la configuración de Bluetooth del teléfono y que establezca y acepte conexiones con los dispositivos sincronizados.
ACCESS_WIFI_STATE
ver conexiones Wi-Fi
CHANGE_WIFI_STATE conectarse a redes Wi-Fi y desconectarse
BLUETOOTH_PRIVILEGED
android.permission.BLUETOOTH_PRIVILE GED
BLUETOOTH_ADMIN
acceder a los ajustes de Bluetooth Permite que la aplicación configure el teléfono Bluetooth local y que detecte dispositivos remotos y se vincule con ellos.

In the latest version of the app, 16 permissions are requested. Access to phone contacts has been removed. Permissions related to device location, Bluetooth, and nearby WIFI networks remain.





2.2 A curious fact: the inclusion of the HypeLabs library in the latest versions of the application

The inclusion of the software development kit (SDK) called "Hypelabs"⁸ is shown in the Android manifest of the application. HypeLabs is a company that develops this type of SDK to give applications the ability to create local "mesh" networks using the communication features available on the phone such as Bluetooth and WiFi. This may be related to the new app permissions we just mentioned.

CoronaApp introduces this SDK in version 1.2.30. The few changes introduced in version 1.2.31 are related to this same library. This change raises questions since in the published documentation of this application a feature that requires this functionality is never mentioned. However, this library can allow someone to deduce the relative location of a person compared with another, in combination with the use of personal data collected by the application. The ethical and legal conclusions of this type of surveillance should be reviewed if this hypothesis were to be confirmed.

It is important to note that it has not been concluded that this is the use that will be given to the capabilities of this library. In fact, the application was not making use of this library until the latest version.

Further analysis is necessary to produce a conclusive answer to this issue.

Regarding the mentioned permissions as well as the inclusion of this library, the National Digital Agency answered the following:

"The application's request for geolocation, WiFi and Bluetooth networks permissions, as well as the processing of said data, is necessary to identify the location of users and any close contact they may have with people around them since this will allow locating citizens with potential symptoms, possible sources, and chains of COVID-19 contagion, allowing the National Institute of Health to collect the necessary and timely information to act diligently in the face of the great risks of spread identified in the population."

⁸ https://hypelabs.io/





3. Application's data transfer security

3.1 An unsafe data transfer up to version 1.2.31

Until version 1.2.31, after analyzing the data-flow generated by the application from the phone (Wireshark) or from an emulation environment (Burp) showed that personal registration data was transferred without security nor encryption, using the HTTP⁹ protocol. Data were transferred to a dedicated subdomain of the Government's National Digital Agency ("apicovid.and.gov.co"), hosted on an server of Amazon Web Service located in the State of Washington¹⁰ (see Annex [3]). This web server is a Nginx server version 1.17.9 (latest version).

The analysis also shows that the GPS coordinates of the device are regularly sent to this same server using the same protocol.

Regarding the transfer of health data (reports), data packets were not possible to identify with certainty because the information is encoded since these fields were checkboxes. However, since when transferring this data the application communicated only using the HTTP protocol (towards a server with the same IP address), it can be deduced - almost certainly - that this data transfer was not secure either.

As of version 1.2.32 (from March 31) the use of the HTTP protocol was replaced by the secure HTTPS protocol (HTTP encapsulated in the SSL / TLS encrypted protocol). A new subdomain was created ("apicovid2.and.gov.co") and linked with a new web server¹¹, with which the application currently communicates.

This is a major improvement in terms of the application's security as data is now transferred using an encrypted channel.

However, this vulnerability persists on the devices of people who have not updated the application since the old server is still active and data continues to be transferred to it in an unsafe manner. In addition, complementary analyzes conducted by the NGO Access Now showed that the new server continued to respond to HTTP requests with the same HTTP protocol.

This issue was corrected and in the latest versions the possibility for the application to communicate with the server using the HTTP protocol has definitively been removed.

⁹ HyperText Transfer Protocol. The transfer is done using an unconventional port (5000) but this does not change the lack of protocol security.

¹⁰ The web server has the IP address: 52.87.234.39.

¹¹ The new server has the IP address: 34.199.57.23. It is also hosted by Amazon.





3.2 A Serious Vulnerability issue in the Application's Authentication method

[Although the vulnerability issue mentioned in this section has been apparently fixed, we have removed some details in order not to facilitate attacks. The goal of this exercise is to contribute to an improvement in digital security and privacy.]

This vulnerability involves an authentication flaw that could allow an attacker to access personal data of users registered in the application's backend server (with which the application communicates).

The backend server used by Coronapp_colombia does not exert sufficient access control to resources that should be restricted for each user, allowing an attacker to have the ability to access user resources without the need for any authentication. This vulnerability could lead to a possible listing of huge amounts of sensitive data from users registered in the application.

In a package review done in the application flow, it was found that some packages that should include an authentication token do not include it, and yet the API sends responses that correspond to actions that should normally carry authentication.

This issue is found in the server that had been used until version 1.2.31 of the application (server using HTTP without SSL / TLS, domain "apicovid.and.gov.co" and IP address: 52.87.234.39 ") and that had apparently been replaced in version 1.2.32 as mentioned (server using HTTP with SSL / TLS, domain "apicovid2.and.gov.co" and IP address: 34.199.57.23). However, the original server hasn't been put out of operation so this vulnerability issue persists.

[...]

With this in mind, other application "endpoints" (URLs) are likely to have the same problem. [...]

which would facilitate automating an attack to extract information.

We think that this vulnerability issue can be reproduced by making a request to the API hosted at: [...]

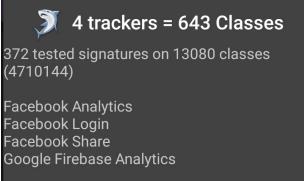
In order to evaluate our findings, we asked the support line for security incidents from NGO Access Now to review our diagnosis of this vulnerability issue and they agree with our analysis.





4. Trackers in the application

The analysis of trackers found directly in the application code shows us the following (the same ones appear in version 1.2.31):



The consequence of using these trackers is that connections with Google and Facebook servers can be observed in the flow captures (Wireshark). This generates a direct user trace by these third parties through the use of an application that processes sensitive data.

It should also be noted that because the purpose of this application is to provide information, it is connected to the websites of the Presidency, the National Institute of Health, and the Ministry of Health. Connections to various third-party servers are shown, including advertising platforms:

in ans	Q 🕆 🖬 📶	af 28% 🛢 16:35
÷	Actualidad	
Medidas	del Gobierno	\rightarrow
Coronavi	rus en Colombia	÷
Instituto	Nacional de Salud	\rightarrow
Estados	de los casos	\rightarrow

However, the presence of the latter is not directly due to the application but to the external Internet sites from which they extract the information.

In the latest version of the app, there are two trackers (Google CrashLytics and Google Firebase Analytics). Facebook's trackers have been removed.





ANNEXES - References

[0] Preliminary email sent to INS, AND and MINTIC

Subject:	Analysis of the Coron	App application	
Date:	Sat, 28 Mar 2020 15:	35:43 -0500	
From:	XXXXXX - Karisma <>	XXXXXXX@karisma.org.co>	
Organization:	Fundación Karisma		
To:	XXX@ins.gov.co,	XXX@mintic.gov.co,	XXX@and.gov.co,
	XXX@mintic.gov.co		
CC:	XXX XXX	<xxxx@karisma.org< th=""><th>.co>, XXX</th></xxxx@karisma.org<>	.co>, XXX
	XXX <xxxx@karism< th=""><th>a.org.co></th><th></th></xxxx@karism<>	a.org.co>	

Good afternoon,

Karisma Foundation is a civil society organization, founded in 2003 and located in Bogotá, that seeks to respond to the opportunities and threats that arise in the context of "technology for development" for the exercise of human rights. Karisma carries out activism with multiple perspectives - legal and technological - in coalitions with local, regional and international partners.

For several years we have been evaluating security and privacy aspects of some web pages and applications associated with procedures and services of public interest. These analyzes have been reported to the Ministry of Technology (MINTIC), which on several occasions has provided us with means of communication with those teams or individuals responsible for the operation of the analyzed platforms. We hope to receive this kind of support in this occasion.

Right now **we are conducting a non-intrusive analysis of the CoronApp application**, promoted by the National Institute of Health, in terms of privacy and digital security. Part of our evaluation includes the analysis of the data traffic generated by the forms that collect personal information, and for this reason, we want to inform you that you will find records in the name of Karisma, associated with the email XXX@karisma.org.co. This data is not real and should not be taken into account for health reports or alert generation.

Once we have the full report of our findings on the CoronApp application, we will send it to you in the first place.

If you have any questions or concerns about the subject, you can contact us by answering this email. We look forward to answering any questions.

Sincerely,

Karisma Foundation

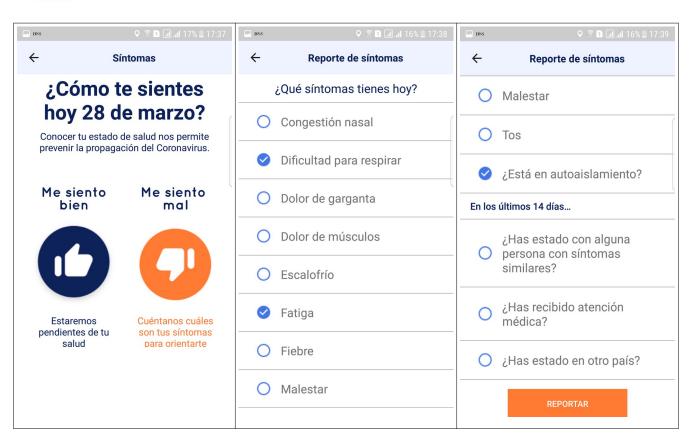




[1] CoronApp application data collection forms

(completed for analysis)

All 20% 🖬 17:18	■ ins ♀ 🛜 1 🗐 🗐 19% 🛙 17:21
← Registro	← Registro
Nombres	Fecha de nacimiento
Fundacion Karisma	01/01/1940
	País de residencia
Apellidos	Colombia
TestNotomarEnCuenta	Departamento
Tipo de documento	Bogota D.C.
Cédula de Ciudadanía 🗸	Ciudad
Número de documento	Bogota
1234567890	Pertenencia étnica (opcional)
Celular	Negro, mulato o afrodescendiente 🔹
3123456789	Correo electrónico
Sexo	test@karisma.org.co
Mujer	Contraseña
Fecha de nacimiento	•••••











[2] Application permissions. App manifest (Android Manifest)

(Android Manifest, .xml file made by developers to describe the application technically)
AndroidManifest.xml (~/karisma/coronapp/co.gov.ins.guardianes 33 apps.evozi.com) – 💉 🔕
File Edit View Search Tools Documents Help
<pre>er/and version="1.0" encoding="uft-8" standane="no">=emailfest xulus:android="http://schemas.android.com/apk/res/android" android:complesdkVersion="29" android:complesdkVersiondemae="log opv.ins.guardianes".petromBuildVersionCode="29" platformBuildVersionName="10"> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.NMPS_PECEUVE'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.XCESS FUENDORK_STATE"/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.ACESS FUENDORK_STATE"/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.ACESS FUENDORK_STATE"/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.ACESS FUENDORK_STATE"/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.ACESS FUENCORK/STATE"/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ CONTACTS'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ PONDE SFWICE'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ PONDE SFWICE'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ PONDE SFWICE'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ PONDE STATE'/> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-feature android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-permission android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-feature android:name="android.permission.REDUETONT//> uses-feature android:name="a</pre>
Theme.NoActionBar">
The state of the s



01d0 63 6f 22 2c 22 70 61 73 73 77 6f 72 64 22 3a 22

 01e0
 41
 7a
 65
 72
 74
 79
 37
 38
 22
 2c
 22
 63
 6c
 69
 65
 6e

 01f0
 74
 22
 3a
 22
 61
 70
 69
 22
 2c
 22
 67
 65
 6e
 64
 65
 72

 0200
 22
 3a
 22
 46
 65
 6d
 65
 6e
 69
 6e
 6f
 22
 22
 26
 170

 0210
 70
 5f
 74
 6f
 6b
 65
 6e
 22
 3a
 22
 64
 34
 31
 64
 38
 63



[3] Sending Registration data using the HTTP protocol (version 1.2.30)

	Wireshark • Packet 535 • Captura WireShark 2 (Registro).pca
→ Fra	ame 535: 925 bytes on wire (7400 bits), 925 bytes captured (7400 bits) on interface 0
	hernet II, Src: MurataMa_18:e0:1f (b8:d7:af:18:e0:1f), Dst: klab-Inspiron-7559.local (84:ef:18:ce:6a:21)
Int	ternet Protocol Version 4, Src: 10.42.0.202 (10.42.0.202), Dst: apicovid.and.gov.co (52.87.234.39)
Tra	ansmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 57220, Dst Port: 5000, Seq: 1, Ack: 1, Len: 859
	A protocol ip.access, type: unknown 0x53
	DataLen: 20559
	Protocol: Unknown (0x53)
0000	84 ef 18 ce 6a 21 b8 d7 af 18 e0 1f 08 00 45 00 ·····j!·· ·····E·
0010	03 8f 5f 52 40 00 40 06 ae a4 0a 2a 00 ca 34 57
0020	
0030	
0040	
0050	
0060	
0070	
0080	
0090	
00a0	
00b0	
0000	
00d0	
00e0	
00f0 0100	
0110 0120	,
0120	
0130	
0150	
0160	
0170	
0180	- 11
0190	
0130	
01b0	
0100	

Here you can see an HTTP packet transferring the form data. The unusual use of port 5000 causes Wireshark to not recognize the HTTP protocol, but its content shows that it is (POST / user / create HTTP /1.1) and shows the data filled in the registration form: firstname: Fundacion Karisma, lastname: TestNoTenerEncuenta, document number 1234567890, phone: 3123456789, email: test@karisma.org.co, gender: femenino e incluso el password: Azerty78. In the part that follows, all the other data entered in the form is shown.

co", "pas sword":" Azerty78 ","clien t":"api" ,"gender

":"Femen ino","ap p_token" :"d41d8c

Data is transferred to the domain "apicovid.and.gov.co" on a server with IP address 52.87.234.39.





[4] This Annex has been removed.

In order not to facilitate attacks, even though we know that the reported vulnerability issue is currently corrected, we will not disclose the details of this annex. The goal of this exercise is to contribute to an improvement in digital security and privacy.





[5] Wireshark captures Extract, app version 1.2.31, executed on an Android 7 phone

In order not to facilitate attacks, even though we know that the reported vulnerability is currently corrected, a section of this annex (the request) has been removed. However, we leave a portion of the server response that shows the personal datas that it was possible to access.

HTTP/1.1 200 OK

Server: nginx/1.17.9 Date: Mon, 30 Mar 2020 00:04:43 GMT Content-Type: application/json; charset=utf-8 Transfer-Encoding: chunked Connection: keep-alive 25a {"error":false,"message":[...]","member":{"id":[...]","picture":0,"dob":"1942-01-01T00:00:00","city":"Bogota","state":"Bogota D.C.","gender":"Hombre","firstname":"Fundacion Karisma dos","user":"[...]","platform":"android","client":"api","country":"Colombia","race":"Indigena","relati onship": "Conyugue","lastname":"PruebaNotomarEncuentaEstosDato","app_token":"d41d8cd98f00b204 e9800998ecf8427e","createdAt":"2020-03-30T00:04:43.2472659+00:00", "updatedAt":"2020-03-30T00:04:43.2472702+00:00","document_number":"1234567899","document_type":"TI"}}





[6] Burp flow extract (app version 1.2.29)

Only part of the original Annex (server response) is shown.

Raw Headers Hex

- HTTP/1.1 200 OK Server: nginx/1.17.9 Date: Tue, 31 Mar 2020 20:47:39 GWT Content-Type: application/json; charset=utf-8 Content-iclose Content-Length: 2361

------5