

## Tool for Transparency



When it comes to consenting to data and privacy settings, very few users pay enough attention © Shutterstock

Privacy settings on the Internet are often confusing and not user-friendly. For this reason, many users often unconsciously give their consent to the collection of personal data and do not even know what far-reaching access rights they grant websites and platforms in their private lives. The manufacturer of browser, search engine and data protection technologies Cliqz has therefore published the free software tool *Re:consent*, which discloses to users what data they share on the Internet through their consent based on their data and privacy settings.

### **Transparency instead of hidden settings**

When visiting Google, Facebook and the numerous websites that use the so-called Consent Management Framework of the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), *Re:consent* shows which data it discloses and thus creates transparency. With *Re:consent*, users directly access hidden or complex privacy settings and can prohibit location access, facial recognition or tracking of their Internet activities using cookies and other tracking technologies. *Re:consent* is integrated into the Cliqz browser for Windows and Mac and is also available as an extension for the desktop browsers Chrome and Firefox.

### **Deception by dark patterns**

Internet companies such as Google and Facebook use manipulative user interface design - so-called "dark patterns" - to induce their users to reveal more data about themselves than necessary. A study by Forbrukerrådet, a Norwegian consumer protection organisation, shows that it takes much longer to click through the confusing privacy notices on the strictest settings on almost all websites than to agree to the much less strict default settings. Facebook requires 13 instead of 5 clicks for the most privacy-friendly settings, Google 9 instead of 2 clicks. Especially since the General Data Protection Regulation ( GDPR) came into force at the end of May, dark patterns are increasingly being used for declarations of consent for the use of cookies, with which almost all websites now welcome their visitors.

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Category **Brands**

Tags **Cliqz, re:consent**

URL <https://www.burda.com/en/news/tool-transparency/>