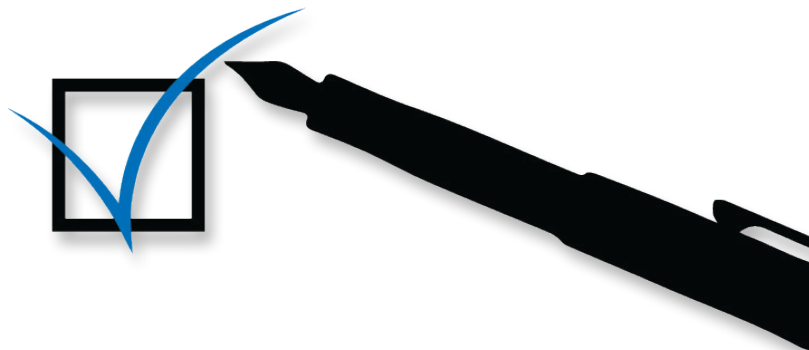# CONSENT

WHAT IS "CONSENT"?

Consent is one of the ways that you can allow your data to be used. In order to "consent" to your personal data being used, you should be aware of why your data is needed and how it will be used. Consent is essential to build the trust needed for the roll-out of new services. For example, you could be interested in one of your connected objects being able to play music when you order it to do so, but not to record your conversations permanently. On the other hand, giving your consent to process your musical taste so that you could be targeted with specific political advertising based on your perceived ideology might be less interesting for you (or for the future of democracy).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Eurobarometer 359 survey showed that 70% of Europeans are concerned about how companies use their data and feel they have only partial if any control; 74% want to be asked to give specific consent before their information are collected and processed. These findings were backed up in the latest topical Eurobarometer.

WHAT SHOULD THE E-PRIVACY SAY ABOUT IT?

Consent will drive the trust that is needed for new services. But consent also needs to be meaningful. It must be freely given, specific, informed and explicit, so that users can actually be in a position to give meaningful consent.

In order for consent to work, it needs to be as user-friendly as possible. The way that many apps are designed does not allow real consent. Accepting to all permissions required by an app that you want to use when the only alternative is not using it at all, is not consent. Moreover, even if the person in question could "consent" to one or other permission individually, it would be difficult for a general user to know how his or her information is being used by the software or any third party that has access to that information (such as an advertiser accessing a personal calendar, for example).

Communications data are highly sensitive. This is why every update of the e-Privacy Directive insisted on users' consent for processing of this data. Despite the claims to the contrary, the new Regulation is doing little more than maintaining this principle.

Do you want to know more? Check out our series of blogposts "Your privacy, security and freedom online are in danger" and our Document pool on e-Privacy!

e-Privacy

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