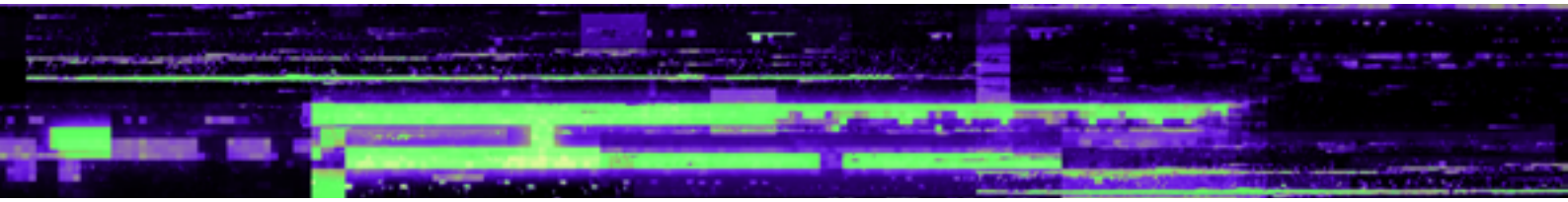
Introducing REAL-PETS

REAL-PETS

Next-generation privacy-enhancing technologies for a safer digital future

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The Horizon Europe project "REAL-PETS" will develop scalable, usable and adaptive privacy-enhancing technologies to detect and curb emerging online tracking across web, mobile, IoT and next-generation digital platforms.

The right to privacy and the protection of personal data are fundamental rights in the European Union. Yet rapidly evolving tracking methods—such as fingerprinting, ID bridging and cross-platform surveillance—continue to challenge existing regulation, platform controls, and privacy tools. Current privacy-enhancing technologies are often fragmented, platform-specific and reactive, leaving important blind spots across devices, applications and network layers.

REAL-PETS addresses this socio-technical challenge through an interdisciplinary approach that combines empirical privacy research, legal analysis, and human-centred design. The project will establish new privacy threat models and deliver modular tools and methods that operate across the system stack—from network to application level. Real-world pilots with established privacy-technology providers and end-users will validate the effectiveness, usability, and practical relevance of the developed solutions.

The key innovations and aims of REAL-PETS are:

- Develop agile, open-source methods to detect and model emerging cross-platform privacy threats.
- Analyse the lawfulness of tracking practices and translate relevant EU requirements into more effective compliance-auditing approaches.
- Create adaptive privacy technologies, including smart noise-based traffic protection, post-quantum-ready encryption, privacy-preserving analytics and anonymous credentials.
- Develop cross-platform blocking and mitigation methods for web, mobile, IoT, and emerging technologies.
- Ensure that privacy technologies are understandable, usable, and trusted through human-centred design and real-world evaluation.
- Establish the REAL-PETS Observatory as an open interdisciplinary resource for researchers, developers, regulators, standardisation bodies, and other stakeholders.

REAL-PETS is a 36-month project funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101309318. The consortium brings together nine partners from six countries—Austria, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Italy and Switzerland—combining top academic expertise in privacy research (Fundacion IMDEA Networks Institute, Radboud Universiteit, Karlstads Universitet, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid) covering usability, legal and technical research expertise, with innovative SMEs (Technikon Forschungs- Und Planungsgesellschaft mbH, MULINI SRL, NYM Technologies SA, AppCensus Europe SL and Mullvad VPN AB) that lead in VPNs and large-scale auditing. This balanced composition ensures scientific excellence and strong exploitation capacity to accelerate Europe's leadership in privacy innovation.

By connecting continuous threat detection, evidence-based regulation, usable technology, and operational deployment, REAL-PETS will strengthen Europe's capacity to counter online tracking, protect fundamental rights, and advance technological sovereignty in privacy and cybersecurity.

About the coordinator: *Technikon is a private research service company based in Austria with extensive experience in coordinating and communicating technology-oriented European collaborative research projects. As coordinator of REAL-PETS, Technikon is responsible for administrative, financial and organisational management and leads the project's communication, dissemination and exploitation activities.*

For more information about the REAL-PETS project, visit our website or contact the project coordinator:

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