

DATA PRIVACY DAY – 2023 JANUARY 28TH

## Barometer French people and their privacy on the Internet

**72% of French people are aware of disclosing personal information when surfing the Internet and 86% of them would like to be accompanied in implementing solutions to protect their data.**

At the occasion of the Data Privacy Day, the companies, **Qwant, Proton, Olvid and Murena**, reveal the results of their survey conducted with Kantar "French people and their privacy on the Internet" and publish a [practical guide](#) to help us keep our data truly private.

- As part of the Data Privacy Day launched at the initiative of the European Council, [Qwant](#), [Proton](#), [Olvid](#) and [Murena](#), publish the first barometer on French people and their online privacy.
- The four European companies, who offer digital services without collecting personal data, are defending an ethical and transparent Internet, and wish to raise public awareness so that the subject of personal data protection appears more prominently in the public debate.
- Three strong trends appeared from the study:
  - 92% of French people say they are aware of and concerned about the use of their confidential data. However, only 35% say they would give up a digital service (website, applications) to protect their personal data.
  - 48% of the respondents declared taking action to protect their data, such as disabling Geo localisation (44%) or using private browsing (25%); thus, very often favouring simplicity and immediacy over data protection.
  - 86% of French people would like to be accompanied in implementing solutions to protect their data: they have strong expectations to better understand the issues and implement good practices. The privacy paradox, the opposition between an awareness of the problem and the reality, is still a real phenomenon, but the French people's wish to be accompanied shows a change in progress.
- To help Internet users understand why and how to protect their online privacy and keep their data truly private, Qwant, Proton, Olvid and Murena have published a [practical guide](#) with advice, definitions, and concrete solutions for surfing the Internet in complete confidentiality.

Infography

Barometer

Guide : protect your private life on the internet

Dedicated site

## French people are concerned about the use of their personal data but place little value on the less tangible data.

Internet users are aware of sharing data when they are online: **92% of them say they are concerned by the subject and 72% are aware of disclosing personal information when surfing the Internet.**

This awareness can certainly be explained by the strong news around personal data protection, placing the subject at the heart of societal issues: consent requests are clearly visible when browsing, since the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), GAFA are penalized with record fines for collecting or misusing personal data, the authorities are beginning to limit the use of the tools belonging to digital giants especially in schools, and the implementation of the European Digital Market Act is moving forward, to create more equitable conditions among others on the market of search engines and browsers, preserving the freedom of choice for Internet users.

The French people surveyed clearly prioritize the value they place on their personal data and put tangible data first, believing that it would represent a greater risk if it were exposed online. In fact, in **the top 4 of the most valuable information to protect**, personal financial information tops the list for 76% of respondents, followed by information pertaining to personal identity (69%), medical information (37%), and photos/videos of me and/or my friends (37%).

At the end of the ranking, we find their web searches (11%), their agenda/calendar (5%) and information related to their political opinion (4%). This data seems less sensitive for French people who see this data with less value. Nevertheless, beyond being a simple time management tool, calendars give incredibly detailed information about people's lives, and this sensitive information deserves the same protection as emails and files.

## Welcome to the *privacy paradox*: although aware of how their data is used, French people are not committed to protecting it.

**While 68% of respondents say they know how to protect their data online, only 48% apply this knowledge: a gap between knowledge and practice that is reflected in the results of the barometer.**

Their first concerns are securing their mailbox (66%), their social networks (59%), their browser (47%), and their search engine (46%).

However, when asked about the already implemented solutions, they cite easy-to-access settings that do not always correspond to their protection needs, which are cited as priorities: 44% disable location tracking on their devices (54% among 18–24 year olds), 39% use a cookie blocker, 25% use private browsing (42% among 18–24 year olds), and 13% use a VPN (21% among 18–24 year olds).

However, the use of a privacy search engine is only mentioned as a priority by 8% of respondents and switching to a private messaging system by only 6%.

French people are acting, and Millennials more than others, demonstrating a growing awareness of the challenges in protecting personal data. But the solutions, when they are used, are not always adequate. Most of them correspond to the use of pre-installed options (location, blocker, private browsing), without a real approach with different and adapted solutions being taken by Internet users. Protecting oneself with privacy digital services requires a committed approach on the part of the user, which can prove more costly in terms of time and sometimes money, compared to configuring the parameters of the devices.

**This recurrent discrepancy reveals that French people, sensitive to the use of their personal data and aware of their digital traces, give up when faced with the perceived complexity of the steps to protect themselves.** This is what we call the *privacy paradox*.

French people are aware of solutions to protect their data, but they do not use the most adapted or efficient services, due to a lack of knowledge on the subject and mistakenly believing to be reserved for experts.

Frequently giving priority to their need for immediate results or access to a feature, to the detriment of protecting their data:

- 64% of French people say they do not give up a digital service for reasons of protecting their personal data.
- And 51% continue to accept cookies when browsing the Internet.

## Understanding the issues and knowing the right reflexes: a clearly expressed expectation.

Awareness is significant: **86% of French people surveyed would like to better understand and be accompanied in implementing solutions to protect their personal digital data.** This is one of the dominant results of this Barometer.

[Qwant](#), [Proton](#), [Olvid](#) and [Murena](#) are four European ethical digital players who have made the non-collection of personal data their mission. To help Internet users understand what is at stake when it comes to privacy on the Internet, and to give them the right reflexes to manage their data and the pitfalls to avoid, they have published a [simple and complete guide](#) with definitions, advice, and concrete solutions for surfing the Internet in complete confidentiality.

*« The Barometer we published reveals that the privacy paradox is still a very real phenomenon. French people are aware of the need to protect their data, but are unable to protect themselves in practice, due to a lack of knowledge. The figure that stands out for us is the need for support expressed very clearly: 86% of French people would like to better understand and be supported in setting up solutions to protect their digital data! As a French search engine and European leader that does not collect personal data, we are committed to this mission. This is why we are publishing the practical guide to protecting our digital data with our partners. Yes, it is possible to take back control of our digital footprint! »* **Corinne Lejbowicz, Chairman and Raphaël Auphan, CEO of Qwant.**

**Andy Yen, CEO and founder of Proton, says:** *"There has been a general awareness in recent years of the collection and abuse of users' personal data for profit. Users are realizing the true cost of free services and the deeply personal and private nature of their data and are now looking for more privacy-friendly alternatives. The study highlights this shift in attitude, but many people are still unaware of these alternatives. As Proton and other privacy-focused companies improve and expand their product offerings, we believe there will be fewer and fewer barriers for users to move to privacy-friendly technology."*

*"The Barometer sends us a clear message: French people are worried about the disclosure of their personal data but are nevertheless not ready to give up digital services to protect them. Our objective is obvious: not to force them to choose. Offering tools that respect their users' data will not, in itself, be enough for them to be adopted by the greatest number. These tools must be fully functional and pleasant to use. If security and technical honesty are paramount, so is ease of use. Olvid's objective is to invent new and brilliant experiences that will allow all our users to benefit from the "private" aspect of our instant messaging without difficulty. Mission accepted",* **adds Thomas Baignères, CEO of Olvid.**

*"The study we are publishing shows that the protection of personal data is at the heart of French people's concerns, and that they want to be supported in this area. Through the data protection guide developed with our partners, we wanted to provide the keys to a more virtuous use of digital technology that respects everyone's privacy. This commitment is part of our mission as a responsible digital player, mobilized to offer our users solutions that can guarantee the confidentiality of their personal data with their smartphone and in the Cloud,"* **says Gaël Duval, CEO and founder of Murena.**

**Study methodology:** Omnibus study conducted by Kantar, from December 7 to 14, 2022, among 1,000 Internet user's representative of the French population.

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### **About Qwant :**

Developed in France and leader in Europe, Qwant is the search engine that respects the privacy of its users by not collecting any personal data.

Qwant develops its own web indexing technology, designed to provide unbiased, exhaustive and unprofiled search results. Qwant provides a search service with zero search tracking, zero advertising tracking and zero sale of personal data.

In addition to [Qwant Search](#), [Qwant Maps](#), a mapping service, and [Qwant Junior](#), a search engine dedicated to 6-12 years old, Qwant offers [Qwant VIPPrivacy](#), a browser extension that allows users to browse the web without being subject to ad tracking.

Qwant is available on web: [www.qwant.com](http://www.qwant.com), or thanks to browser extensions. The browser Qwant is available on iOS and Android mobile applications.

Qwant has 6 million monthly users.

Qwant, the search engine that knows nothing about you.

[www.qwant.com](http://www.qwant.com)

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### **About Proton:**

Proton was founded in Switzerland in 2014 by scientists who met at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). Our vision is to create an internet where privacy is the absolute rule, through an ecosystem of services accessible to everyone, everywhere, all the time. Our first product, Proton Mail, is now the largest encrypted messaging service in the world. The products that followed, Proton VPN, Proton Calendar and Proton Drive rely on the same end-to-end encryption that gives our users complete control over how and with whom their data is shared. Our products are open source, developed by a team of 400 people and supported by an active community in over 180 countries. Today, Proton makes privacy accessible to everyone with over 70 million user accounts, from journalists to some of the world's largest organizations and individuals. <https://proton.me/fr>

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### **About Olvid:**

Founded in 2019, Olvid is an expert in communication encryption and offers the only instant messaging service certified by the ANSSI. The excellence of the cryptographic protocols makes it possible to mathematically prove that it is impossible for a third party to gain knowledge of the communications. There is no need to travel to find the security level of a physical conversation behind closed doors.

Olvid offers a free version of its application and paying options (secure calls, directory integration, administration console... and soon Desktop version: <https://www.olvid.io/enterprise/>).

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### **About Murena**

Founded in 2018 by Gaël Duval, an open-source expert who initiated the launch of "Mandrake Linux", Murena is a start-up committed to protecting users' privacy, with transparent and quality products and services that use open-source technologies. The developer of the /e/OS mobile operating system and Murena Cloud, a set of associated online services, Murena offers Fairphone, Gigaset and Teracube deGoogle smartphones for sale with /e/OS pre-installed.

Murena is also developing its own smartphone, the Murena One, available for sale in the United States, Canada, Europe, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland. <https://murena.com/fr/>

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