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PRESS RELEASE

Data Protection Day 2024 – Deceptive Design Patterns

Data Protection Day is an annual event celebrated internationally on 28 January. Its aim is to raise awareness of the importance of privacy and data protection, particularly in light of the ever-increasing challenges faced in our increasingly globalized and digitised world. This year, the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority (**the "GRA"**), as the Information Commissioner, has published an awareness-raising audio-visual, highlighting key information relating to deceptive design patterns in online platform interfaces (**the "Video"**).

Deceptive design patterns are considered conniving interfaces and user journeys implemented by online platforms. They may show up as tricky colour schemes, frustrating mazes, sneaky designs, and confusing language. Online platforms use these techniques to influence you into making unintended, unwilling and potentially harmful decisions, often into a direction that benefits them more than it benefits you.

The Video, accessible on the data protection section of the GRA's website and social media platforms, offers practical guidance to the public and organisations on how to assess and avoid deceptive design patterns which so regularly influence users' online journeys. Deceptive design patterns may, for example, mislead individuals into making unintended, unwilling, and potentially harmful decisions, which consequently hinder their ability to effectively protect their personal data.

The six categories of deceptive design patterns addressed within the Video result from an interdisciplinary analysis of existing interfaces as explored by European Data Protection Authorities and published guidelines.

Further to this awareness raising initiative, over the coming weeks, the GRA will also be reviewing the practices of local entities as part of an international initiative of the Global Privacy Enforcement Network.

By raising awareness, the GRA aims to empower the public against deceptive design patterns, whilst the regulatory reviews and initiatives will focus on promoting compliance and best practice locally, taking appropriate action where necessary.

The GRA's focus on deceptive design patterns is in keeping with current and emerging risks identified by the international community of data protection and privacy regulators.

For further information, please contact the GRA by telephone on +350 200 74636 or by email using privacy@gra.gi.