Is your freedom and privacy under threat?

What is free software?

"Free software" means software that respects users' freedom and community.

More specifically users have the freedom to **run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve** the software they are using.

Software is written by programmers in a programming language. This form of the program is the "source code".
Anyone who knows how to write in a programming language can **read the source code, understand its functioning and change it.**
It is a requirement for a program to distribute its source code for it to meet the definition of free software.

Why is this important?

Most people use software that does not give the user these basic rights software of this kind is referred to a "non free" or "proprietary" software.

This is a big problem as it means instead of the user controlling what the program does the program controls what the user can do.

With proprietary software as the developers control the source code the user can not know what the program is doing and therefore accountability becomes nearly impossible.
As a result proprietary software is often a threat to privacy, freedom of speech, is insecure and sometimes malicious.
You can find examples of malicious behaviour in proprietary software at **gnu.org/proprietary/**

The user also loses the ability to improve on the program and in most cases loses the ability to share it with others.
This slows development of proprietary software as only a select few can improve upon the software and prevents people from being able to help each other using computing.

How can I learn more?

You can visit **gnu.org** and **fsf.org** for more Information.
And if you have any questions about the issues raised in this leaflet you can visit **trisquel.info/en/forum** where you will find many people happy to answer your questions.