

Germany slaps messaging app Telegram with \$5 million fine

October 17 2022



The website of the Telegram messaging app is seen on a notebook screen in Munich, Germany, Monday, Oct. 17, 2022. Germany has announced that it is issuing fines of 5.125 million euros (\$5 million) against the operators of the messaging app Telegram for failing to comply with German law. Credit: AP Photo/Matthias Schrader

Germany announced Monday that it is issuing fines of 5.125 million euros (\$5 million) against the operators of the messaging app Telegram for failing to comply with German law.

The Federal Office of Justice said Telegram FZ-LLC hasn't established a lawful way for reporting illegal content or named an entity in Germany to receive official communication. Both are required under German laws that regulate large online platforms.

German officials said they have repeatedly failed in their attempts to serve papers to Dubai-based Telegram, despite support from authorities in the United Arab Emirates.

A Germany-based law firm has since declared that it represents Telegram, but this wasn't enough to prevent the fines being issued, the Federal Office of Justice said.

German federal police warned earlier this year that the app is becoming a "medium for radicalization," used by some to target politicians, scientists and doctors for their role in tackling the coronavirus pandemic.

"The operators of messaging services and social networks bear a particular responsibility for acting against incitement to hatred and violence on their platforms," Justice Minister Marco Buschmann said in a statement. "These legal requirements and this responsibility can't be avoided by trying to be unreachable."

The fine can be appealed.



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Citation: Germany slaps messaging app Telegram with \$5 million fine (2022, October 17)
retrieved 3 May 2024 from
<https://techxplore.com/news/2022-10-germany-messaging-app-telegram-million.html>

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