

Norway court rejects Meta bid to defer ban

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Meta is racking up fines of nearly \$100,000 per day in Norway for failing to comply with a ban on targeted advertising using client data without their consent.

A Norway court on Wednesday rejected US tech giant Meta's request to defer a ban on behavioral marketing based on users' personal information, which has landed it a heavy fine in the country.

Since August 14, Meta has been incurring a fine of one million kroner (\$97,000) per day of non-compliance under an order issued by the Norwegian data protection agency Datatilsynet.

It says Meta has failed to comply with a July 14 ban on sending Facebook and Instagram users targeted advertisements based on their personal data which the social media platform collects without their explicit consent.

Meta wants the ban suspended, saying it is already taking measures to comply with an earlier crackdown in Ireland, where its European headquarters is based.

"We are disappointed by today's decision and will now consider our next steps," a Meta spokesperson said after Wednesday's verdict.

The group had argued that it had already committed to asking users' consent following the Irish decision.

In January, the Irish regulator—acting on behalf of the EU—slapped Meta with heavy fines totalling 390 million euros (\$417 million) for breaching EU personal data laws on Facebook and Instagram.

On August 1, the social media giant said it would ask users in the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland to give their consent before allowing targeted advertising on its networks.

But the Norwegian regulator had deemed that insufficient, demanded an immediate end to the practice, and questioned what would happen with several years' data already collected.

Datatilsynet director Line Coll hailed the Oslo court's decision as "a great victory for the protection of privacy".

The regulator said it was considering bringing the case to the European Data Protection Board to get the ban extended across the European Economic Area, made up of the EU, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

Austrian data protection activist Max Schrems, founder of the NGO European Centre for Digital Rights, last weekend hailed Datatilsynet's pioneering role in the matter and said he hoped other European regulators would follow suit.

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