

EU activists launch legal fight over Meta's 'pay for privacy' scheme

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An Austrian activist group filed a complaint against tech giant Meta on Tuesday arguing that the firm's scheme allowing Europeans to pay to opt out of data sharing was illegal.

Meta has long struggled to comply with EU privacy rules as its business model relies on sucking up [user data](#), which it sells for a huge profit to advertisers.

The Silicon Valley firm has lost a series of legal battles in Europe and earlier this month began allowing users of Instagram and Facebook there to pay between 10 and 13 euros (around \$11 and \$14) a month to opt out of [data sharing](#).

But NOYB, the privacy group that has won countless cases against Meta, said it had filed a complaint with Austria's data protection authority arguing that the new system violated the law because consent was not "freely given".

The EU's mammoth data protection regulation (GDPR) says users must be given a "genuine or free choice" on whether or not to share their [data](#).

NOYB said the paid subscription model was "the exact opposite of a genuinely free choice".

"It's neither smart nor legal—it's just pitiful how Meta continues to ignore EU law," said NOYB chairman Max Schrems in a statement.

The group said if Meta was allowed to get away with it, other companies would soon follow suit.

AFP has asked Meta for their response.

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