

Italy fines Meta over data use, account transparency

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Italy's competition authority on Wednesday fined global tech giant Meta 3.5 million euros (\$3.8 million) for a lack of transparency in its use of

data and management of Instagram and Facebook accounts.

The AGCM watchdog said the fine was for "unfair commercial practices".

"Meta failed... to immediately inform users registered to Instagram via the web of the use of their personal data for commercial purposes," it said in a statement.

It also said Meta "did not accurately manage" the suspension of users' Facebook and Instagram accounts.

"In particular, Meta did not indicate how it decided to suspend Facebook accounts, whether as a result of an automated or 'human' review," the watchdog said.

And Meta "did not provide Facebook and Instagram users with information on the possibility of contesting the suspension", including using an out-of-court dispute resolution body or a judge, it said.

In addition, it said, Meta set a short deadline of just 30 days for consumers to challenge the suspension.

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In a statement, Meta said it disagreed with the decision and "are assessing our options".

"Since August 2023, we have implemented several changes for Italian users that address the (authority's) concerns," it said.

This includes "increased transparency on how we use data to show

advertising on Instagram and provided enhanced information and options on how users can appeal account suspensions", it said.

"We welcome the (authority's) acknowledgement of the effectiveness of our tools to help users regain access to their accounts."

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