

Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
Date: 27/11/2019
Reference: BEUC-PR-2019-027

One year after consumer groups filed a GDPR complaint against Google, consumers are still left without an answer

One year ago, on 27 November 2018, consumer groups from across the EU [filed GDPR complaints against Google](#) for its location-tracking practices. [Research](#) from the Norwegian consumer organisation Forbrukerrådet showed that Google deceived users into unwittingly handing over their location data to the company and left them in the dark about how this data was being used.

Location data can reveal a lot about people's personal lives – for instance their faith (people visiting places of worship) or their sexual orientation (people frequenting certain bars). Google uses this data for profiling and targeted advertising among other purposes.

One year after the complaints were filed, it has yet not been decided whether Google infringed the GDPR and whether the company should be fined. Google has its European headquarters in Ireland and the Irish Data Protection Commission has taken over the investigation.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

“When companies break the law, consumers need to be able to rely on enforcement bodies to get their rights respected. Carrying out thorough investigations and adopting well-grounded decisions is crucial but data protection bodies should pick up the pace. Standing up against those who disrespect consumers' privacy in the fast-moving digital world should not be something which takes years.

“The Googles of this world will not fundamentally change their practices unless they are forced to. A year has passed since consumer organisations from across the EU asked their authorities to prevent Google from spying on every step consumers make when they are online. We are still waiting for a decision.

“The GDPR is a game-changer when it comes to protecting our personal data. It's time companies like Google, which build their main revenue on the exploitation of people's data, understand that people are ready to stand up for their rights.”

ENDS

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