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Encouraging move for consumers as Norwegian authority fines dating app Grindr for disregarding GDPR

Today online dating app Grindr has been served a €6m fine for illegally exploiting its users' data following an initial complaint by Norwegian consumer group Forbrukerrådet, a BEUC member, in January 2020.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) hopes this decision will have a domino effect and lead to substantial changes that stop the damaging practices of the behavioural advertising industry.

Ursula Pachi, Deputy Director General of the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), said:

"Grindr illegally exploited and shared its users' information for targeted advertising, including sensitive information about their sexual orientation. It is high time the behavioural advertising industry stops tracking and profiling consumers 24/7. It is a business model which clearly breaches the EU's data protection rules and harms consumers. Let's now hope this is the first domino to fall and that authorities start imposing fines on other companies as the infringements identified in this decision are standard surveillance ad-tech industry practices."

Finn Myrstad, director of digital policy in the Norwegian Consumer Council (Forbrukerrådet) said:

"Surveillance-based advertising, where companies collect and share personal data for commercial purposes, is completely out of control. With that in mind, we are happy that the Data Protection Authority has upheld our complaint and concluded that Grindr has been operating in breach of the law."

Background

In 2020, the Norwegian Consumer Council (Forbrukerrådet) filed a complaint against Grindr after uncovering how the app collected and shared sensitive personal data about users with several commercial third parties, who reserved the rights to share information onward with potentially thousands of further companies, in the service of targeting surveillance-based advertising. The complaint came hot on the heels of a [report](#) the Norwegian Consumer Council (Forbrukerrådet) published to denounce the tracking-based ads industry which said the tracking-based ads industry is systematically breaking the law.

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