

**Facebook fined £8.9m by Italy
for misleading users over data
use**

Personal information harvested from personality quiz app downloaded by Italians

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[Facebook](#) has been fined almost £9m by Italian authorities for misleading users about how it used their data.

Italy's competition watchdog handed the [social media](#) giant two fines totalling €10m (£8.9m), the first for "misleadingly" encouraging people to sign up "without informing them in an immediate and adequate way" of how their data would be sold to third parties.

The second fine was for "aggressively" discouraging users from trying to limit how the company shared their personal information, by telling them that doing so risked them experiencing "significant limitations".

The fine dwarfs the [£500,000 fine](#) imposed on the social network by the British Information Commissioner's Office earlier this year for breaking data laws.

Italy's AGCM consumer and market watchdog also [said in a statement](#) that Facebook does not make clear to users that the social network makes money from data, "simply stressing the fact that it's free".

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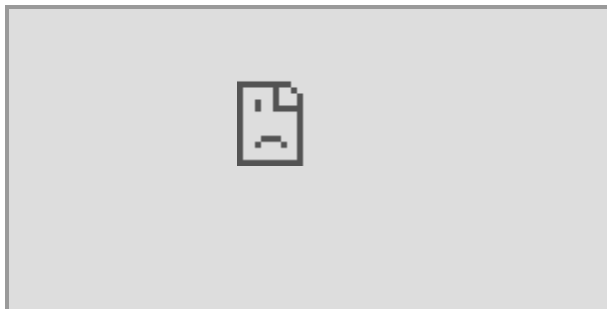


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It ordered Facebook to publish a “corrective statement” to all users on the desktop site and mobile apps.

The data at the centre of the ruling was harvested from a personality quiz app downloaded by hundreds of thousands of people in Italy. As permitted by Facebook’s rules at the time, the app gathered details about users’ Facebook friends without their knowledge.

The data was then allegedly used by British firm [Cambridge Analytica](#), which [filed for bankruptcy](#) earlier this year, and is now facing damages claims totalling more than £40bn from Facebook users whose personal information was allegedly misused by the firm.



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Professor David Carroll told the High Court in London he was suing the company for up to £20,000 in damages under the Data Protection Act, over what his solicitor described as "Cambridge Analytica's misuse of his data".

Prof Carroll's solicitor, Ravi Naik of ITN Solicitors, said in a witness statement he represented "numerous others" bringing similar claims against the company.

Prof Carroll "has a claim of between £5,000 and £20,000 in respect of Cambridge Analytica's misuse of his data", Mr Naik said, and referred to Facebook's estimate that Cambridge Analytica had harvested up to 87 million users' data.

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"Even if one conservatively uses the lowest end of the range, both in number and value of each claim, and calculates on the basis of 10 per cent of the estimated 87 million affected Facebook users only, with claims of £5,000 each against Cambridge Analytica, that still implies a total potential claim value of £43.5bn," he said.

Of the Italian fine, a Facebook spokesperson said: “We are reviewing the authority’s decision and hope to work with them to resolve their concerns.

“This year we made our terms and policies clearer to help people understand how we use data and how our business works. We also made our privacy settings easier to find and use, and we’re continuing to improve them. You own and control your personal information on Facebook.”