

25,000 join Europe class action lawsuit against Facebook

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A logo created from pictures of Facebook users worldwide is pictured in the company's Data Center on November 7, 2013 in Lulea, in Swedish Lapland

An Austrian waging a battle against Facebook's privacy policies said Wednesday that 25,000 users of the social networking giant have signed on to his class action lawsuit.

The suit, filed by lawyer Max Schrems, claims a symbolic 500 euros

(\$660) per plaintiff from Facebook for several out of a "long list" of alleged violations of the law, his advocacy group Europe-v-Facebook said.

These include its [privacy policy](#), Facebook's alleged participation in the US National Security Agency's PRISM snooping programme, and tracking users' visits to other websites with for example the "Like" function.

Media-savvy Schrems, who first took on Facebook several years ago as a student, filed the legal action in Vienna last week. He had to limit numbers signing on to it to 25,000 after some 7,000 signed up every day.

"With this number of participants we have a really excellent basis not just to complain about Facebook in Europe but actually to do something," Schrems said in a statement on his website [facebook.org](#)" target="_blank">[www.europe-v-facebook.org](#).

The suit is directed against Facebook's Ireland-based subsidiary, the US firm's headquarters for its overseas operations, and was not open to users from the United States and Canada. The subsidiary has to abide by EU data protection laws, which are more stringent than those in North America.

The majority of those who signed up were from Europe, with the biggest numbers from Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. Facebook had 829 million active users worldwide on average in June, according to its website.

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