

French NGO threatens Facebook with privacy lawsuit

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An advocacy group says Facebook is continuing to breach EU rules on users' privacy which were enacted this year

A French NGO said Friday it was pursuing a class action suit against Facebook, saying the social network was violating users' privacy despite

the enactment of strict new EU rules this year.

Internet Society France, part of the Internet Society global advocacy group, said it had sent Facebook a formal notice listing seven areas where it had allegedly failed to respect [personal data](#).

It said several hundred people had joined its campaign, part of the "eBastille" initiative, and it hopes to get 100 million of Facebook's 278 million users in France to back the lawsuit.

"This action aims to show that individuals are neither alone nor powerless to have their rights respected," said Odile Ambry, the group's honorary president.

"We hope this will create a European dynamic," she said.

Facebook's alleged faults include gathering data on users' sexuality, religious beliefs and political views, and not allowing people to partially block data gathering.

The group also claims Facebook uses cookies to trace [internet](#) activity of people who simply consult its website without being members.

The social media giant has four months to respond to the notice under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation or (GDPR) which came into effect last May. Failing to respond could trigger the [class action suit](#).

The new rules give internet users more control over their personal data, and requires companies to be more explicit in how such data is used.

Internet Society France estimates that if the social media giant is found to have breached privacy laws, it should have to pay damages to each user.

Its campaign comes ahead of Unesco's annual internet governance forum which opens in Paris on Monday, in which the NGO is participating.

Facebook executives will also be in Paris next week as part of Paris Digital Week alongside the Paris Peace Forum being hosted by President Emmanuel Macron.

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