

Germany fines Facebook \$2.3 million under hate speech law

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German authorities said Tuesday that they have imposed a 2 million-euro (\$2.3 million) fine on Facebook under a law designed to combat hate speech.

The Federal Office for Justice said the social networking company had failed to meet transparency requirements for its handling of hate speech complaints.

The agency said Facebook's report for the first half of 2018 didn't reflect the actual number of complaints about suspected illegal content, which in Germany includes anti-Semitic insults and material designed to incite hatred against persons or groups based on their religion or ethnicity.

It said there was also incomplete information about the language skills and training of staff tasked with processing hate speech complaints.

Facebook responded that it complies with its transparency obligations under German law and "accurately and comprehensively disclosed the number of reports about unlawful content we received."

"We are confident our published ... reports are in accordance with the law but as many critics have pointed out there are a number of areas where this law lacks clarity," the company said in a statement. "We will analyze the fine notice carefully and reserve the rights to appeal."

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