

Australia sued Facebook for privacy violations, claiming up to \$ 529 billion

The Australian government will sue Facebook for up to \$ 529 billion in damages. This amount is even more than the amount the government of this country collected within a year.

The Australian government's lawsuit with Facebook has been filed in the Federal Court of Australia. The government has accused Facebook of violating the privacy of Australian citizens by sharing the personal information of many people through an application called This is Your Digital Life in March 2014 - May 5, 2015.



The developers of the app later sold information to Cambridge Analytica, the company involved in the scandal that leaked tens of millions of Facebook user information in 2018.

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) stated that Facebook did not take appropriate steps to protect the personal information of users in Australia, and let the information be shared for unauthorized purposes. This violated the Australian Privacy Act enacted in 1988.

Information Commissioner and Australian Security Commissioner Angelene Falk emphasized: *"We are reviewing the design of the Facebook platform. Users are not authorized to select and properly control their personal information. Facebook's default setting makes it easy to reveal personal information, including sensitive and private information of each individual"*.



According to the lawsuit, the Australian government accused Facebook users of stolen and sharing unauthorized information and did not even download This is Your Digital Life.

Because the data is collected through their Facebook friends. Those are the people who downloaded the application. So they don't know what they are and can't decide whether or not to share the data.

According to the indictment, each violation will come with compensation of up to 1.7 million USD. Multiplying that number by about 311.1 thousand Australians has leaked personal information, which amounts to \$ 529 billion. As noted above, this compensation is even more than the Australian government's income in 2019 of \$ 513.7 billion.

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