

First victory in the collective action against Google

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The Amsterdam district court has declared Stichting Bescherming Privacybelangen (SBP) admissible in the collective action against Google over large-scale privacy violations. This means that the foundation, supported by the Dutch Consumers' Association Consumentenbond, may represent the interests of Dutch Google users. All objections raised against this by Google have been dismissed. This is an important first step in the collective action against Google.

The court ruled that the interests of Dutch Google users in the proceedings are adequately safeguarded by SBP. With more than 160,000 participants, the foundation has gathered sufficient support for this collective action, the court found. The court further emphasized that a collective action for damages is efficient and beneficial to all parties, since the matter may be confined to one procedure as a result. This ruling fits in well with the idea behind the collective action regime. The foundation's lawsuit can now proceed to the next stage.

Putting a stop to Google's practices

SBP and Consumentenbond are pleased with the ruling. The foundation's chair Ada van der Veer is happy that the case can now move to the next stage. 'This collective action is necessary to put a stop to Google's unlawful practices and for the purpose of obtaining compensation for the damage suffered by millions of Google users in the Netherlands as a result of the violations.'

Consumentenbond's director Sandra Molenaar: 'The district court's ruling shows that this matter can be decided in one collective procedure, as a result of which there is no need for the aggrieved users to take on a tech giant like Google all by themselves. That is exactly what the Dutch collective action regime is meant for.'

Stichting Massaschade & Consument has also been declared admissible in the proceedings against Google. It is still unclear whether the two actions will be conducted jointly and who will take the lead. This question will be addressed later. First, the foundations may comment on whether a collective action for damages for privacy violations is at all possible, a question that was already raised previously by the Rotterdam District Court in a collective action for damages against Amazon.

Data collection without consent

SBP started a collective action against Google in September 2023. The foundation accuses Google of violating Dutch and European data protection and consumer law. Through its services and products, the tech giant collects data about users' online behaviour and their locations on a huge scale, without providing sufficient information about this or having obtained permission to do so. Google subsequently shares that data, including highly sensitive personal data, with hundreds of external parties through its online advertising platform.

In addition, Google transfers personal data to countries outside Europe, for example to the United States, without providing adequate protection against surveillance by the U.S. authorities. With its practices, Google violates the fundamental right to privacy of Dutch consumers.

SBP demands that Google stop its massive privacy violations and that the tech giant pay damages of EUR 750 per user. In addition, the foundation has asked the court to determine an amount in damages based on the value of the personal data Google has collected and shared.

More information

The ruling of the Amsterdam district court will be published at a later date on both the Consumentenbond's and the foundation's website. For more information about SBP, see [Stichting Bescherming Privacybelangen – Actie tegen Google](#). Google users who were living in the Netherlands between 1 March 2012 and now can still register for the action via [Google - Consumentenbond Claimservice](#) or via [the SBP website: Deelnemen – Kom op voor je privacy](#).

See also: [Google claim | Consumentenbond](#)

This is a joint press release published by Consumentenbond and Stichting Bescherming Privacybelangen.