

CAIDP Update 2.25 (June 21, 2021) – EU Privacy Agencies Back General Ban on Face Surveillance

In a [statement](#) released today, the EDPB and the EDPS, the two lead privacy agencies in the European Union, call for a “general ban” on the use of AI for biometric identification in public spaces. The ban on remote identification would include recognition of faces, gait, fingerprints, DNA, voice, keystrokes and other biometric or behavioral signals.

Regarding the proposed [EU AI Regulation](#), the EDPB and EDPS also stressed the need to make clear that EU data protection law applies to any processing of personal data falling under the scope of the draft AI Regulation.

The EDPB and the EDPS support the EU AI provision that designates the EDPS as the competent authority for the supervision of the Union institutions, and also recommended that the national Data Protection Agencies be designated as national supervisory authorities pursuant to Article 59 of the Proposal.

Andrea Jelinek, EDPB Chair and EDPS Wojciech Wiewiórowski said, “The proposed regulation should also prohibit any type of use of AI for social scoring, as it is against the EU fundamental values and can lead to discrimination.”

European NGOs, with the [ReclaimYourFace](#) campaign, have led the effort to prohibit the use of AI for remote biometric recognition. Ella Jakubowska, a campaign organizer, [tweeted](#) “Big news: the Board of European data protection regulators all agree that we need to ban #FacialRecognition in public across the #EU!”

In the 2020 report, [Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values](#), CAIDP concluded that “Countries must halt the use of facial recognition for mass surveillance.” The CAIDP report found that facial recognition for mass surveillance was the AI application most likely to distinguish democratic and authoritarian governments.

And the [Universal Guidelines for AI](#) state that “No national government shall establish or maintain a general-purpose score on its citizens or residents.” More than 300 experts and 60 organizations in 40 countries have endorsed the human rights framework for AI.