

# Commission Admits Initiative against Biometric Mass Surveillance

Thomas Wahl



## News

On 7 January 2021, the Commission [decided to register](#) a European Citizens' Initiative entitled: "[Civil society initiative for a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices](#)." The organisers call on the European Commission to strictly regulate the use of biometric technologies in order to avoid undue interference with fundamental rights. In particular, EU law should prohibit, in law and in practice, indiscriminate or arbitrarily-targeted uses of biometrics which can lead to unlawful mass surveillance. Intrusive systems should not be developed, deployed or used by public or private entities insofar as they can lead to unnecessary or disproportionate interference with people's fundamental rights.

The Commission's decision only means that the Initiative is legally admissible. An analysis of the substance of the plea has not been carried out at this stage.

Following the registration, the organisers can start the process of collecting signatures of support. Should the Initiative receive 1 million statements of support within 1 year from at least 7 different Member States, the Commission will have to react within 6 months. The Commission could decide either to follow the request, or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning.

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