

Report: Biometric Data Being Collected with 'Little to No Standards, Oversight, or Transparency'

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[A report](#) [1] released by the IPC was highlighted and summarized by Security Management:

The extensive collection and sharing of biometric information among government agencies is detrimental to both immigrant communities and U.S. citizens because of possible errors and a breakdown of privacy, says a joint white paper released by the Immigration Policy Center and Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) on Wednesday.

The government is collecting large amounts of data with “little to no standards, oversight, or transparency,” said Jennifer Lynch, EFF staff attorney and author of the report.

The paper outlines new government initiatives and technology that have the potential to exponentially increase the amount of data the government collects on people in the United States.

“Data sharing can be good for solving crimes across borders or jurisdictions, but can also perpetuate inaccuracies throughout all systems and can allow for government tracking and surveillance on a level not before possible,” says the 23-page report.

Some highlights from the report:

- ▶ Facial recognition is dependent on consistent lighting conditions and may also be less accurate with certain ethnicities, causing a high rate of false positives.
- ▶ To make data collection easier, the use of handheld devices to collect biometric data has increased.
- ▶ As criminal, immigration, and national security databases begin to overlap, it makes it difficult to determine where information originally came from and errors are no longer limited to the reach of one database, increasing the probability of data inaccuracies. “This has happened with the Secure Communities program,” Lynch said. Approximately 3,600 U.S. citizens have been caught up in the program because of incorrect immigration records.
- ▶ The FBI has been working with states since January to collect facial recognition-ready photos of suspects arrested and booked and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) collects around 300,000 fingerprints per day from non-citizens crossing U.S. borders.
- ▶ Government databases are being expanded to include iris scans, DNA profiles, and palm prints.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/fingerprints-dna-biometric-data-collection-us-immigrant-communities-and-beyond>