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[Press release](#) | 04.04.2019

Compulsory biometric data in ID cards a security smokescreen and a danger for privacy

ID cards

Today, Members of the European Parliament have just voted in favour of including compulsory biometric data, such as fingerprints, in identity documents, on the proposed regulation to increase the security of identity cards.

Supporters argue that fingerprints on identity documents will reduce mass identity theft and increase security. In the European Commission's own impact assessment it comes to the conclusion that biometric data such as fingerprints are not necessary. The Greens/EFA group voted against this invasion of personal privacy.

Eva Joly, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the file, comments:

"Fingerprints embedded in identity documents are a security smokescreen for personal data collection and a risk to privacy. EU governments, the EPP and Liberals claim to be solving a problem that does not exist. Current identity cards already provide sufficient protection against identity theft.

"The frantic race to collect data that can be used by the police and security services is not only ineffective but also unacceptable, including for the majority of citizens who see it as an invasion of their privacy. It is no coincidence that the German government recently tried to impose this measure in Germany without success and this policy is now being taken to the European level. When a government has difficulty getting a measure accepted in its country, it's a well-known reflex to try and get it pushed across by 'Brussels' instead.

"In France fingerprints are already stored on a huge database, the TES, which goes against EU data protection rules and is now redundant with this new obligation to store fingerprints on an identity card itself. The French government should delete the TES. The fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens must be respected."

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Responsible MEPs



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