

Written question by MEP Caterina Chinnici

The use of facial recognition software systems

In the answers provided to Hon. Breyer, Mr Ebner, Deputy Executive Director Governance, states that Europol uses two semi-automatic facial recognition software systems to carry out its investigations and to facilitate the detection / cross-checking of suspicious people. A system developed internally at EUROPOL, and another Griffeye Analyze DI Pro, purchased through a Swedish company at and used in 2019 to support investigations relating to the sexual exploitation of minors online.

1. With reference to the use of these systems, how is respect for privacy guaranteed, obviously for the citizens involved who are not involved in the investigations, established by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)?
2. Imagining the existence of a database? How many profiles / faces does it contain?
3. Are these databases updated? If yes, how long is this data kept?
4. Based on the experience gained, can the error rate of these facial recognition systems based on biometric data already be established?
5. How is the balance between the needs of the investigation and the respect of the involved child's right to be forgotten, i.e. the possibility of obtaining the immediate removal of content that could jeopardize his dignity?