

FRA Press Release  
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## **IT: rights protection vs rights violations?**

**IT systems can help trace missing migrant children and combat identity theft. But there are also significant risks to people's fundamental rights, for instance not being fairly treated within the asylum procedure. So finds the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in a new report. As authorities increasingly rely on these systems, the report suggests ways to better defend the rights of those affected.**

*"IT boosts efficiency but what are the risks to fundamental rights?" asks FRA Director [Michael O'Flaherty](#). "This question, often posed but rarely examined in detail needs close attention to ensure the rights set out in the EU's Fundamental Rights Charter are upheld. Adequate safeguards will help minimise rights violations and build trust in the greater use of IT systems for enhanced security and smoother migration flows."*

As IT systems are increasingly being used for migration and security, the '[Under watchful eyes – biometrics, EU IT-systems and fundamental rights](#)' report explores the impact of these systems. It also sets out how to safeguard people's fundamental rights:

- About 50% of European border and visa officials interviewed by FRA spoke of data entry mistakes in their IT systems. This can result from misspellings, lack of interpretation, or fingerprints being assigned to the wrong person. This shows the need for the EU and its Member States to strengthen quality assurance. They should also ensure people know why data is being collected and how to easily correct or delete inaccurate personal data.
- Data may be hacked; oppressive regimes may access data of people seeking refuge; data of children may stigmatise them into adulthood. Such issues call for strong safeguards controlling data access as well as ways of monitoring how data are being used.

IT systems can also be a force for good. Nearly a third of border guards had come across children flagged as missing. This shows how IT systems can help trace missing and trafficked children. They can also provide information about people who arrive without travel documents if they are already in the system. They can thus help ensure that people are not unlawfully refused access.

**For more information please see the [Q&A](#) and/or contact: [media@fra.europa.eu](mailto:media@fra.europa.eu) / Tel.: +43 1 580 30 642**

### **Notes to editors:**

- The EU already has large-scale border management IT systems (the [Visa Information System](#), the [Schengen Information System](#) and [EURODAC system for identifying asylum applicants](#)) with plans to create more. It also proposes making these and future IT systems interoperable to share information.