

Could government bodies lose collected biometric data?

In the modern world, plastic biometric documents are gradually replacing paper ones. More and more processes are beginning to be automated, so this raises the following questions: could something happen to my data, in particular biometric? Who has access to them? Could someone use my fingerprints?

We are answering these questions and telling what one needs to know about the protection of biometric documents.

What biometric documents exist in Ukraine?

Biometric documents are identity documents containing an electronic medium on which information about the biometric data of the owner of the document is recorded for the purpose of his or her identification.

These documents are the most protected from forgery and exclude the possibility of using them by any person other than the owner.

Among the biometric documents valid in Ukraine are a passport of a citizen of Ukraine, a passport of a citizen of Ukraine for traveling abroad, a diplomatic passport of Ukraine, a service passport of Ukraine, a driver's license, a temporary residence card, a migrant card, a refugee certificate, a refugee travel document, an identity card that needs additional protection and so on.



Information on these documents is stored in the Unified Public Demographic Register kept by the State Migration Service of Ukraine.

Biometric documents confirming the citizenship of Ukraine, identity or the special status of a person are finalized and issued exclusively by the system of the Unified Public Demographic Register (a system designed to store, protect, process, use and distribute information about a person and about documents that are issued after evidencing identity of the person – UPZhyttya).

These documents contain electronic contactless media that **cannot be changed or copied**.

Biometric data – fingerprints, digital facial images and digital signatures – are recorded on this medium, in addition to personal data specified in the visual verification part of the document.

It is worthy of note that the contactless electronic media, which are used in all biometric documents of Ukraine, as well as all information systems that provide processing and recording of biometric information on the document microchip, have passed the state evaluation in the field of information security and have affirmative statements of experts from the State Service of Special Communication and Information Protection.

How data in biometric documents are protected?

Biometric data are not saved as images that can be printed and used for illegal purposes. Immediately after taking fingerprints with the help of a digital scanner, the fingerprint automatically turns into a mathematical template and is stored in the system in this form.

The main reason for the introduction of biometric passports was **protection against counterfeiting**.

Moreover, within the framework of the IMMIS project, the EU has invested heavily in the creation of an infrastructure that reserves all electronic data of citizens and foreigners received by the Migration Service during processing and issuing identification documents.

For example, modern and reliable storage of personal data of citizens of Ukraine and foreigners is provided. The main data processing centres for the State Migration Service and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine upgraded thanks to the project and the provision of backup data processing centres for these bodies with a total cost of more than EUR 9 million guarantee uninterrupted and round-the-clock operation of all introduced IT solutions, as well as data storage during emergencies.

Could someone steal your biometric data from government bodies' systems?

As the State Migration Service said, the Unified Public Demographic Register has a comprehensive information protection system with state-confirmed compliance, which ensures the safety of data and their protection from unauthorized access by third parties, loss and distortion of information. That is, the system automatically records a so-called action control log and one can immediately track who tried to enter the system and what information the person wanted to receive.

Could someone misuse fingerprints of a person?

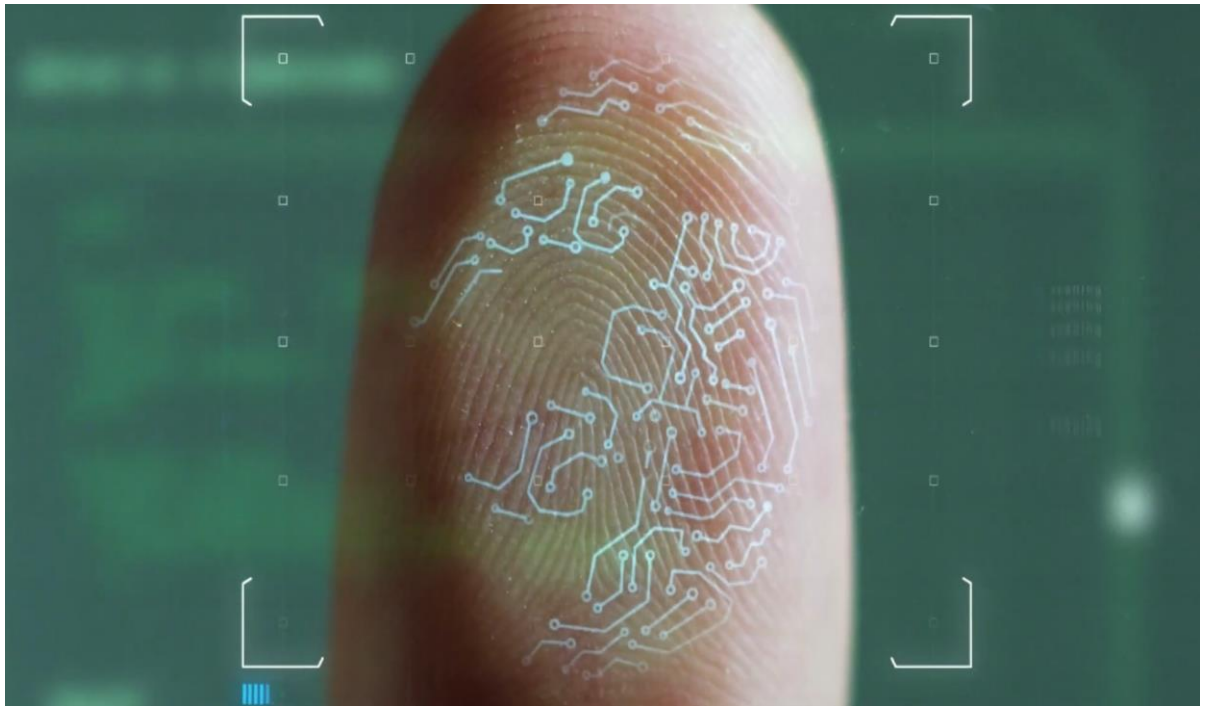
The State Migration Service clearly said that this is impossible. Digital images of fingerprints after registration and issuance of a passport are removed from the Unified Public Demographic Register and destroyed:

"The register stores mathematical templates based on digital fingerprints. Reverse reproduction of these templates to their photographic images is technically impossible. Digital fingerprints are placed on the contactless electronic medium of a passport in the protected area, excluding unauthorized access to them."

How border guards collect biometric data?

For daily convenient work with the flow of passengers at border crossing points, compact equipment, allowing to automate and speed up the processes of checking documents and identifying persons as much as possible, is used.

These are devices for reading fingerprints, automatic readers of biometric passport documents, computers with connection to range of databases against which border guards can check people.



"For example, since January 1, 2018, the biometric data of 1,224,396 people from 70 countries of migration risk have been recorded. Another, one might say perfect tool, based on an automatic identification system, is being tested. The camera in the inspector's cabin captures a picture of a person crossing the border and with the help of special software matches the image against the photo in the passport."

Advantages of modern passport

"A passport of a citizen of Ukraine issued as a plastic card is more convenient, more protected from counterfeiting and more wear-resistant than a paper one," the State Migration Service said.

Each person will have to go through the identification procedure only once, because in the future information about the person will be kept in the Unified Public Demographic Register. If the passport is lost or stolen, persons with bad intent will not be able to use it due to the impossibility of being identified as the owner of the passport.

To read information from a passport, for example at the border, **automated control systems for holders of biometric passports** are used.



This, firstly, removes **subjectivity and the possibility of abuse when passing control**, and secondly, this **reduces the time to complete this procedure**.

In addition, all sessions of any official's access to someone's personal data are automatically recorded by the system and these data are stored.

Later, each person will be able to **receive information without charge about who, when and for what purpose viewed information about a person in the register**.

Separate records about who, when and for what purpose made changes to the personal data in the register are kept.

Biometric documents are more secure, convenient and durable than paper ones. They can also store additional information, for example, about the place of residence, about children and marriage. Also, an electronic digital signature can be recorded on the microchip of the passport of a citizen of Ukraine, which will allow using various electronic services in the future, including administrative services without leaving home.

Thanks to the support of the European Union, there are more and more systems and services in Ukraine that meet European standards. This improves the processes and life of not only the entire state, but also every citizen.