



Press Release

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The Hellenic Data Protection Authority declares the Hellenic Police's "Smart Policing" system unlawful: How were €4 million in European funds spent on an unlawful system?

In 2019, the Hellenic Police signed a contract with Intracom Telecom for the implementation of the Smart Policing programme, with a total value of €4 million, 75% of which was financed by European funds. The project envisaged the procurement of 1,000 "smart" portable devices capable of facial recognition, fingerprint recognition, and the scanning of documents and vehicle licence plates, to be used during on-the-spot police checks.

Homo Digitalis was the first organisation to publicly expose the case, through a joint investigative publication with AlgorithmWatch in December 2019. In the same month, we submitted an access-to-documents request to the Ministry of Citizen Protection, without receiving substantive answers to critical questions regarding legality and the protection of personal data. In March 2020, we filed a complaint with the Hellenic Data Protection Authority (HDPa). The Authority accepted our complaint and launched an official investigation in August 2020. Meanwhile, the Greek State paid the full €4 million, and the devices were duly delivered to the Hellenic Police in September 2021. Since then, the system has only been used on a pilot basis.

On 31 December 2025, the HDPa issued **Decision 45/2025**, explicitly warning the Hellenic Police not to activate the Smart Policing system, as any full-scale operational use under the current legal framework would constitute unlawful processing of personal data. The Authority found that there was no legal basis for the intended processing through the system and that the required data protection impact assessment had not been carried out in a timely manner during the pilot phase.

Six years later, it is now confirmed that the concerns we raised from the very beginning were fully justified. At the same time, the case starkly highlights the waste of €4 million in public and European funds on a system that could never lawfully operate. This case underscores the urgent need for rigorous legality checks, transparency, and accountability before adopting high-risk technologies, particularly when they are financed with public money and have a direct impact on all our lives.

More Info:

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