# Biometric data emerges as the new digital currency amid growing security threats



Biometric data—encompassing fingerprints, facial scans, and iris patterns—has transitioned from niche applications to integral components of everyday life, underpinning services from smartphone security to airport passenger verification. As the utilisation of these unique identifiers accelerates, their valuation is soaring, with many experts asserting that biometric data might soon eclipse traditional financial assets. This paradigm shift not only underscores the urgent need for expanded discussions surrounding data privacy but also highlights potential risks, including the emergence of a burgeoning black market for stolen biometric information. The challenge now is to understand these developments, the factors driving the increased value of biometrics, and the crucial steps required to safeguard this new form of digital wealth.

The appeal of biometrics lies in their superior security features compared to traditional identity verification methods. With 81% of consumers believing that biometrics offer more security than passwords, the market for biometric payments has seen unprecedented growth, with 671 million users in 2020 projected to reach 1.4 billion by 2025. This trend is mirrored by financial institutions and fintech companies that actively promote fingerprint and facial recognition technologies, citing not only security but also user convenience. As banks implement biometric verification, the seamless experience replaces conventional login methods, elevating the economic significance of biometric identifiers to levels comparable to physical cash or cards.

However, the very characteristics that make biometric data invaluable also render it a target for breaches, leading to significant privacy concerns. Unlike hacked passwords, individuals cannot simply "reset" their biometric attributes. The notorious BioStar 2 incident left over a million users’ fingerprints and facial recognition data exposed, illustrating the irrevocable impact of such breaches. As surveillance technologies become more commonplace, the potential for misuse grows. For instance, the unchecked utilisation of facial recognition technology in public spaces has sparked ethical debates regarding individual privacy rights, prompting scrutiny from UK regulators amidst increasing calls for transparency regarding how this data is collected, stored, and utilised.

Moreover, the illicit trade in biometric data is on the rise. Cybercriminals have expanded their operations into the dark web, where tools like “fingerprint kits” and compromised facial images are available for purchase. This burgeoning market capitalises on the permanence of biometric data, where a stolen credit card can be easily cancelled, yet a fingerprint once hacked is a lifetime liability. Such products are not just singularly useful; criminals often bundle them with personal documentation to bypass security checks with startling ease. Given the substantial fines for mishandling biometric data under British law, this growing black market illustrates the urgency for firms to adopt stringent security measures while remaining transparent about data use to cultivate public trust.

As technological advancement propels the biometric market to potentially reach USD 171.98 billion by 2033, it is vital to ensure that regulatory frameworks keep pace. UK bodies such as the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) face the formidable task of evolving policies that will safeguard personal rights in an increasingly digitised world. The call for robust data protection and compliance is echoed across sectors, particularly as biometric market solutions proliferate in areas like banking and finance, which are projected to see substantial growth in the coming years.

Looking ahead, the trajectory of biometric authentication suggests a gradual standardisation across various applications, potentially reshaping online interaction and security paradigms. However, this evolution must occur alongside enhanced regulatory measures aimed at mitigating risks associated with deepfakes and identity fraud. While the potential for misuse looms large, the proper handling of biometric technology could lead to significant reductions in fraud, alongside streamlined processes and heightened convenience. By prioritising responsible implementation and vigilant oversight, both organisations and regulators can harness the advantages of biometrics while safeguarding user rights and trust.

In this transformative era, where biometrics may evolve into "the new currency" of the digital economy, it is imperative that comprehensive safeguards are instituted, ensuring that this powerful technology is developed and employed ethically, securely, and transparently.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.techradar.com/pro/why-your-biometric-data-will-soon-be-more-valuable-than-money), [[2]](https://www.oloid.com/blog/biometrics-by-the-numbers-a-deep-dive-into-trends-adoption-and-challenges)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.oloid.com/blog/biometrics-by-the-numbers-a-deep-dive-into-trends-adoption-and-challenges), [[4]](https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/amp/biometric-payment-market-110461), [[6]](https://www.numberanalytics.com/blog/next-five-years-biometric-security-bank-finance)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.techradar.com/pro/why-your-biometric-data-will-soon-be-more-valuable-than-money), [[3]](https://rss.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/08/06/2924715/0/en/Global-Biometric-Technology-Market-Size-To-Worth-USD-171-98-Billion-by-2033-CAGR-of-13-97.html), [[5]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202212/biometrics-trends-for-2023-multimodal-and-mfa-to-grow-alongside-privacy-regulations)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.techradar.com/pro/why-your-biometric-data-will-soon-be-more-valuable-than-money), [[3]](https://rss.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/08/06/2924715/0/en/Global-Biometric-Technology-Market-Size-To-Worth-USD-171-98-Billion-by-2033-CAGR-of-13-97.html), [[6]](https://www.numberanalytics.com/blog/next-five-years-biometric-security-bank-finance)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://rss.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/08/06/2924715/0/en/Global-Biometric-Technology-Market-Size-To-Worth-USD-171-98-Billion-by-2033-CAGR-of-13-97.html), [[4]](https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/amp/biometric-payment-market-110461), [[7]](https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2023/11/16/2781745/32656/en/Next-Generation-Biometrics-Market-to-Reach-USD-166-7-billion-at-a-18-6-CAGR-by-2031-Transparency-Market-Research-Inc.html)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.techradar.com/pro/why-your-biometric-data-will-soon-be-more-valuable-than-money> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.oloid.com/blog/biometrics-by-the-numbers-a-deep-dive-into-trends-adoption-and-challenges> - This article provides an in-depth analysis of biometric authentication trends, highlighting that 81% of consumers consider biometrics more secure than traditional methods. It also notes that 72% globally prefer facial biometrics over passwords for online processes. The piece discusses the rapid adoption of biometric payments, with 671 million people using facial biometrics for payments in 2020, a number expected to reach 1.4 billion by 2025. Additionally, it addresses concerns about data breaches, noting that 57% of experts believe policy and regulation will struggle to keep pace with biometric development.
3. <https://rss.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/08/06/2924715/0/en/Global-Biometric-Technology-Market-Size-To-Worth-USD-171-98-Billion-by-2033-CAGR-of-13-97.html> - This report forecasts significant growth in the global biometric technology market, projecting it will reach USD 171.98 billion by 2033, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 13.97%. The article highlights the increasing adoption of biometric technologies across various sectors, including financial services, government, and consumer electronics, driven by the need for enhanced security and convenience. It also discusses the challenges related to privacy and data security, emphasizing the importance of robust protection measures and compliance with regulations.
4. <https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/amp/biometric-payment-market-110461> - This market analysis report details the growth of the biometric payment market, which was valued at USD 8.53 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach USD 34.71 billion by 2032, exhibiting a CAGR of 17.0%. The report discusses the increasing adoption of biometric payments, such as fingerprint and facial recognition, due to their enhanced security features compared to traditional methods. It also highlights the role of governments and regulatory bodies in supporting the adoption of biometric technologies for secure financial transactions.
5. <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202212/biometrics-trends-for-2023-multimodal-and-mfa-to-grow-alongside-privacy-regulations> - This article outlines key biometric trends for 2023, including the growth of multimodal biometric authentication and multi-factor authentication (MFA), alongside the development of privacy regulations. It discusses the increasing adoption of interoperable digital IDs based on decentralized and blockchain technologies, as well as the rise of frictionless access control solutions. The piece also highlights the anticipated tightening of privacy and legal aspects of biometrics, with regulators likely to continue to evolve guidelines to ensure innovations do not jeopardize personal rights.
6. <https://www.numberanalytics.com/blog/next-five-years-biometric-security-bank-finance> - This article examines the future of biometric security in banking, highlighting the rapid adoption of biometric authentication methods such as fingerprints and facial recognition. It discusses the projected growth of the biometric banking market, with estimates reaching $9.8 billion by 2028, growing at a CAGR of 19.7%. The piece also addresses regulatory and ethical challenges, noting that data protection laws vary across jurisdictions, creating a complex compliance landscape for global financial institutions. It emphasizes the need for robust data protection measures and compliance with regulations.
7. <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2023/11/16/2781745/32656/en/Next-Generation-Biometrics-Market-to-Reach-USD-166-7-billion-at-a-18-6-CAGR-by-2031-Transparency-Market-Research-Inc.html> - This report forecasts the growth of the next-generation biometrics market, predicting it will reach USD 166.7 billion by 2031, growing at a CAGR of 18.6%. The article highlights the role of machine learning and artificial intelligence in improving biometric accuracy over time. It also discusses the increasing adoption of contactless biometric solutions, such as facial recognition and iris scanning, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. The piece emphasizes the importance of ethical and responsible standards and regulations in the collection and use of biometric data.