

Anita Hodea Quoted in Media on UK Government's Plans to Make Digital IDs Mandatory for Proving the Right to Work

January 16, 2026

Intellectual Property Associate Anita Hodea was recently quoted in multiple media outlets about the UK government's rollback of announced plans to make digital identifications (IDs) mandatory for proving the right to work in the United Kingdom, following concerns raised about privacy and data protection linked to a centralized digital ID system.

Anita commented: "Having recently announced its plans for a digital ID scheme that would make it mandatory for proving the right to work in the UK, the government has today rolled back on the 'mandatory' aspect of the scheme. We can still, however, expect a scheme to be introduced with the intention of streamlining 'Right to Work' checks, tackling illegal employment and making public services more accessible.

"The scheme would record a person's name, date of birth, information on nationality or residency status and a photo, as the basis for biometric security, similar to an eVisa, and would be available to those who wish to voluntarily opt-in. Private sector employers and public services, like the NHS, would still be able to accept other forms of ID, such as passports and driving licences to verify someone's identity.

"Ministers had emphasised that the scheme was designed to curb identity theft and safeguard privacy through minimal data sharing, encryption [and authentication](#), but the proposal raised significant data protection and governance concerns. In particular, reservations around the creation of a centralised repository of biometric data, which could increase the risk of data breaches and cyberattacks, especially given the high-profile cyber incidents that occurred in the UK last year.

"There was also wide concern over potential "function creep" if the use of the digital ID scheme extended beyond its intended scope, as well as questions around the scheme's software implementation and suitability of vendors.

“Ultimately, the success of any iteration of the digital ID scheme will depend on incorporating privacy by design, strong legal and operational safeguards and independent governance oversight from the outset.”

“[Government drops plans for mandatory digital IDs for right to work checks](#),” *Workplace Journal*, January 14, 2026

“[Compulsory Digital ID Scheme Dropped After Pressure From MPs](#),” *TechRound*, January 14, 2026

“[Government backtracks on introduction of mandatory digital IDs for workers](#),” *People Management*, January 15, 2026

“[The UK Government's latest u-turn on plans to make Digital IDs mandatory](#),” *The Legal Diary*, January 16, 2026

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