Default Value	`FALSE`

Instructs `ndbd` to perform an initial start. An initial start erases any files created for recovery purposes by earlier instances of `ndbd`. It also re-creates recovery log files. On some operating systems, this process can take a substantial amount of time.

An `--initial` start is to be used *only* when starting the `ndbd` process under very special circumstances; this is because this option causes all files to be removed from the NDB Cluster file system and all redo log files to be re-created. These circumstances are listed here:

- When performing a software upgrade which has changed the contents of any files.

- When restarting the node with a new version of `ndbd`.

- As a measure of last resort when for some reason the node restart or system restart repeatedly fails. In this case, be aware that this node can no longer be used to restore data due to the destruction of the data files.

> **Warning**
>
> To avoid the possibility of eventual data loss, it is recommended that you *not* use the `--initial` option together with `StopOnError = 0`. Instead, set `StopOnError` to 0 in `config.ini` only after the cluster has been started, then restart the data nodes normally—that is, without the `--initial` option. See the description of the `StopOnError` parameter for a detailed explanation of this issue. (Bug #24945638)

Use of this option prevents the `StartPartialTimeout` and `StartPartitionedTimeout` configuration parameters from having any effect.

> **Important**
>
> This option does *not* affect backup files that have already been created by the affected node.
>
> Prior to NDB 8.0.21, the `--initial` option also did not affect any Disk Data files. In NDB 8.0.21 and later, when used to perform an initial restart of the cluster, the option causes the removal of all data files associated with Disk Data tablespaces and undo log files associated with log file groups that existed previously on this data node (see Section 23.5.10, "NDB Cluster Disk Data Tables").
>
> This option also has no effect on recovery of data by a data node that is just starting (or restarting) from data nodes that are already running (unless they also were started with `--initial`, as part of an initial restart). This recovery of data occurs automatically, and requires no user intervention in an NDB Cluster that is running normally.

It is permissible to use this option when starting the cluster for the very first time (that is, before any data node files have been created); however, it is *not* necessary to do so.

- `--initial-start`

Command-Line Format	`--initial-start`
Type	Boolean