NEWS

A Social Credit System Aimed at Modifying Climate Change Behaviors is Being Deployed in Italy.

BY 2023, AUTHORITIES WILL ATTEMPT TO MODIFY CITIZEN BEHAVIOR USING A DIGITAL CREDIT SYSTEM.

BY WAHAGEN KHABAYAN · APRIL 22, 2022

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Italy will become the first European nation to implement a social credit system – where citizens will be rewarded for their "good behavior".

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Starting in the fall of 2022, the city of Bologna will begin a new pilot project. Citizens who display good behavior such as correctly recycling or using public transportation will be rewarded.

The Bologna municipality is deploying a "Smart Citizen Wallet" which will be the primary method for citizens to collect digital coins in exchange for behavioral changes. Based on the given scores, a person can also receive discounts for local shops.

The primary argument for this program is to "save resources" and promote climate friendly behavior.

As reported by Bologna Today, Massimo Bugani, the councilor for t digital agenda in the northern city, said that while no one will be

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forced to use this application, he expects a high user uptake. In its current state, the system will not be tied to others, such as online identification and social media usage.

Given the increasing interest by the European Union, some fear it is only a matter of time before more regions and nations will implement similar methods to solve "social issues". Germany and Austria (ID Austria) have already accelerated their respective digital ID plans. Both countries are introducing new platforms to integrate more public services and IDs, digitize mail, and even national passports. These new measures have been introduced under the auspicious of solving "bureaucratic problems and [saving] resources."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has also expressed keenness over introducing 'EU ID', which would integrate national IDs with internet sign-ups.

In 2021, von der Leyen said: "Every time an App or website asks us to create a new digital identity, or to easily log via a big platform, we have no idea what happens with our data. That is why the Commission will propose a secure European e-identity. One that we trust and that any citizen can use anywhere in Europe to do anything from paying taxes to renting bicycles."

Given the amount of data such a platform could log on every EU citizen, a looming privacy nightmare seems inevitable. The European ID Wallet app began its testing phase in 2021 and will also deploy in the fall of 2022.

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