



Written by [James Murphy](#) on April 27, 2022

Italian City to Initiate “Pilot” Social Credit System for “Virtuous” Environmental Behavior

The city of Bologna, Italy, is set to offer a new system that has been likened to Communist China’s social credit system. Starting in September, the citizens of Bologna will be allowed to participate in what the city refers to as a “Smart Citizen Wallet,” which will reward people with “digital points” for engaging in behavior such as recycling, using public transportation, and actively trying to use less energy in their daily lives.

The digital points can be redeemed to make purchases or receive discounts on cultural experiences.



emicristea/iStock/Getty Images Plus
Bologna, Italy

“In September, we will start with a pilot project for the city: at the center is the virtuous citizen, the one who, for example, separates waste well or does not waste energy, or uses public transport and does not receive fines, or actively uses the Bologna Welcome Card,” said Bologna councilor Massimo Bugani.

A citizen’s carbon footprint (or lack thereof) will be central to earning those digital points. The city’s focus in creating the system is to promote “climate-friendly behavior.”

“The citizen will [receive benefits] if he recycles; if he uses public transport; if he manages [his energy consumption] well; if he does not receive sanctions from the municipal authority; if he actively uses the Culture Card,” Bugani said.

According to Bugani, the new system will be voluntary, although he hopes that many will be tempted to sign on to participate in the prizes available.

Although Bologna officials claim that their system will be completely voluntary, privacy advocates say that such a system, once in place, could quickly be made mandatory and abused by the government to punish those who don’t agree with their policies.

“The assignment of bonuses to citizens, dealing with information collected in more areas than those in which the incentive is actually issued, has numerous implications from a legal, ethical and social point of view,” said a [statement](#) from Privacy Network, an Italian organization that endorses internet privacy and digital rights.

The [statement](#) continued, “These practices, if poorly developed or used, can also lead to serious limitations and violations of citizens’ rights and freedoms, as well as discriminatory practices, also pursued through technological means, such as ‘social credit’ systems (or social scoring).”

Not surprisingly, the new Italian system has been compared to [China’s system](#), which is not fully nationalized as of yet, though that is the communist government’s ultimate goal. China’s system ranks citizens based upon their adherence to communist philosophy and on whether they purchase too many



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computer games, are caught driving poorly, or are guilty of any number of other infractions. If their social credit score is too low, Chinese citizens can be banned from flying or subjected to slow internet speeds.

As *The Hill* recently reported: “China’s social credit system is a combination of government and business surveillance that gives citizens a ‘score’ that can restrict the ability of individuals to take actions — such as purchasing plane tickets, acquiring property or taking loans — because of behaviors.”

So far, at least, officials in Italy have offered only rewards for participation in the system — not punishments.

“Obviously, no one will be forced to participate, and whoever wants to give consent can download and use a special application, but I believe there will be many to join,” Bugani said. “We want citizens to understand that they are not losers but that their behavior is rewarded.”

But, of course, that’s an easy thing to change should a government, such as China for instance, make participation mandatory instead of voluntary. At that point, a government could decide to sanction what they consider poor behavior instead of only rewarding so-called “virtuous” behavior. And that, of course, is what has privacy experts so spooked.

The European Union is said to be closely monitoring Bologna’s pilot program. A similar test program is already running in some other Italian cities as well, including Rome.

Many believe that a new economic system of the future might be based on such a social credit system rather than currency.

With all the globalist talk about the “Great Reset,” one can imagine nation-states abandoning the notion of currency in favor of a new system where citizens’ worth can be measured in how compliant they are to the government’s commands, rather than how productive they are.



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