

GUESS WHO? HOW DIGITAL ID IS CHANGING CIVIC SPACE

Digital ID Scenario 1: Health QR Codes

As COVID-19 cases continue to drop for the fourth consecutive month, the Minister for Health announces that nation-wide lockdown will be lifted in 4 weeks' time. The same day, his department releases the government's post-lockdown plan for managing contagion levels and for reducing the likelihood of outbreaks while they continue to distribute vaccines.

As part of this plan, the Ministry for Health is partnering with the Ministries for Labor, Education, Transport, and Culture; individuals will be required to produce a "green" QR code of health status on their mobile device to access public transport, enter public workspaces, and access public areas like libraries, schools, and concert halls.

The QR code was developed in partnership with tech giant, Doodle, and will be issued upon medical examination by an approved physician, vaccination, and download of the government contact tracing mobile app.

No Blinders is a non-profit organization that caters to socio-economically disadvantaged communities, particularly those without proper documentation. Many of their clients are too scared to register for health-insurance or to provide government officials with a permanent address because of their visa status. Others cannot afford to take the 2 - 3 days leave necessary to get a physical exam and two doses of a vaccine; any leave of absence will see them unable to make ends meet and/or fired from their jobs. A small number even lack the financial means to afford the data-plans or smartphone technology necessary to run the government's contact tracing app as all funds not going to rent or food is being relegated to their children's schooling and vaccinations.

Prompts:

1. What is this system intended to do?
2. Who benefits?
3. Who is being harmed?
4. What other approaches might be preferred?