

I.d. cards essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

An ID card is a type of smart card that contains information about the holder. It can be used to prove the identity of the person and also to let the person access some services. Also, when there is a need to provide identity over the telephone, the card would be easy to use. A smart card is a plastic card that contains a microchip holding information. For it to be feasible the whole population of the country should have one if it were to be used with services.

There are different types of ID card schemes that could be used. There is the Voluntary ID card scheme: it is up to the person whether or not they want to have an ID card, and if they choose not to, there would always be a way to gain access to any service, although it would probably be harder and take longer to process and additional direct or indirect charges may occur. A Universal card scheme would be one where everyone over a certain age must have one and that you could only access certain services with one – like a driver must produce their provisional driving license to take a test. Or a Compulsory ID card scheme could be enforced, where it would be illegal to not carry the card on you. The card would be needed to get a pension, see a doctor, be allowed a job, etc.

With the introduction of cards that contain personal information, there would most certainly be the subject of privacy to discuss. The database containing the information would hold, at least, the persons name, address, date of birth, sex and a unique personal number. The database would have to be clear and also have strict safeguards. With a Voluntary scheme this is surmountable, yet if it the scheme were voluntary then service providers would have to pay more to provide alternatives for people with no card. In

the UK, the government wishes to run a universal compulsory ID card scheme because it wants to put an end to a number of problems, e.

g. threats of terrorism and illegal immigration. People naturally don't agree with this, saying that all the government wants to do is monitor them and govern what services they used, even though the people pay tax for the services. The Government quotes that the universal entitlement card would:

- (i) Provide people who are lawfully resident in the UK with a means of confirming their identity to a high degree of assurance
- (ii) Establish for official purposes a person's identity so that there is one definitive record of an identity which all Government departments can use if they wish
- (iii) Help people gain entitlement to products and services provided by both the public and private sectors, particularly those who might find it difficult to do so at present;
- (iv) Help public and private sector organisations to validate a person's identity, entitlement to products and services and eligibility to work in the UK.

(Homeoffice Executive Summary) Some people will be naturally unsure of the fact that any government department could access their personal information.

There would need to be one main database linked up to several others and the possibility of misuse is high. Also, a hacker may be able to break into the computers and misuse the information. It also may be a hindrance to have to remember to use a card and carry it around all the time for simple tasks such as buying a product, especially for elderly people. The government believes that the card will help combat illegal immigration by the fact it will remove the idea that once a person is in a the country they can gain job and

use public services. Also, employers don't have to check the immigration status of their workers, just check a card.

Other benefits are that people don't have to give their information out again and again to different services. It can stop criminals pretending to be dead people and also helps prove the identity young people when buying age-restricted things. The government also wants to incorporate within the entitlement card a unique identification of the holder, possibly in the shape of a fingerprint or iris scan. This would stop any possible fraud that occurs with ID cards at the moment that just use a picture. The government realises that people may have problems with these ideas so they launched a consultation in mid 2002 to January 2003, which asked whether people were bothered if they had to go to a place where the equipment was that recorded the information.