Kuwait attempting to genotype entire population as counter-terrorism measure

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

DNA testing and genomics is now so prevalent there are national genotyping platforms. Iceland became the first country in history to sequence the genomes of its population. Other countries are lining up.

The Faroe Islands, an autonomous region of Denmark, is sequencing its population of 50k. GenomeDenmark released its first 30 reference genomes. The Genome of the Netherlands project published a reference genome for the Dutch based on 750 genomes from two-parent-one child 'trios'. Genomic England is working on a 100k genomes project. The United States is interpreting a million genomes as part of Obama's precision medicine initiative. The Korean Genome project aims to sequence all 50 million living Koreans.

Now Kuwait is changing the playing field. In early July, just days after the deadly Imam Sadiq mosque bombing claimed by ISIS, Kuwait ruled to instate mandatory DNA-testing for all permanent residents. This is the first use of DNA testing at the national-level for security reasons, specifically as a counter-terrorism measure.

An initial $400 million dollars is set aside for collecting the DNA profiles of all 1.3 million citizens and 2.9 million foreign residents. The ready date for this unbelievably ambitious database is September 2016. If completed, especially in this short time-frame, it will forever change the history of the use of DNA in society.

Naturally, the announcement by Kuwait is drawing concerns about human rights. The creation of such a database would be illegal in the United States or Europe due to privacy protection laws.

Read full, original post: Kuwait's war on ISIS and DNA