

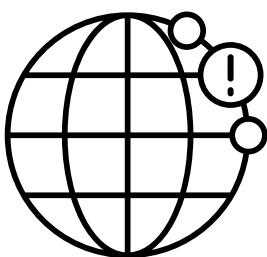
14 are we human enough?

At the most basic level, rights are ideas. Therefore, they are invisible. You can neither see them, nor touch, nor hear.

davide onestini

Actually, we rarely even think about human rights because we (luckily) live in a country where they are generally respected. We more often talk about rights when they are missing and even in that case, we do not have a proper knowledge or a clear image regarding countries and communities where they are denied.

Are we human enough? is a web application with the aim to visually evaluate the evolution of human rights' protection and violation in every country of the world over the last decades.

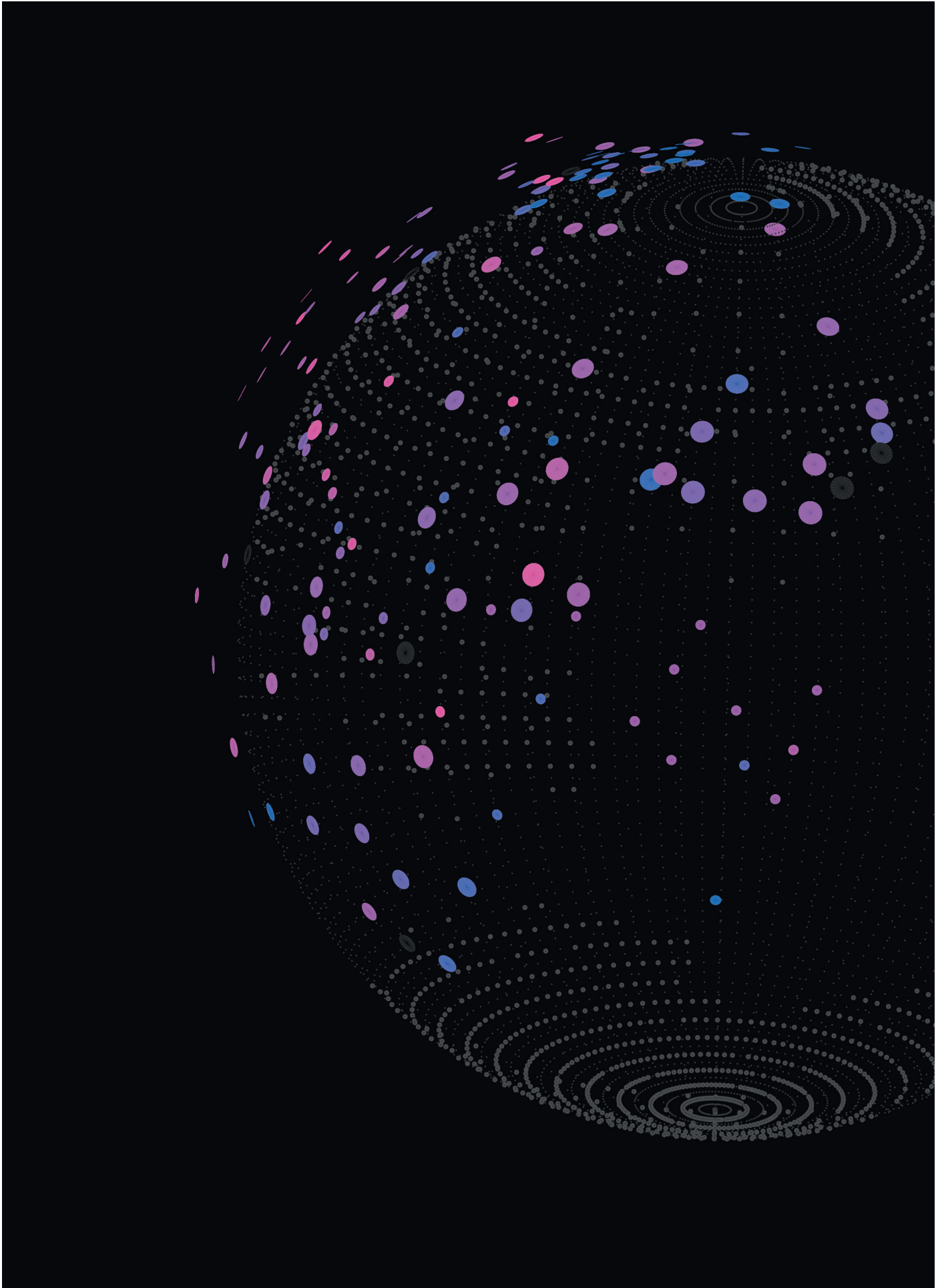


#humanrights
#violations
#awareness
#alert

github.com/davideonestini
github.com/dsii-2017-unirms

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Are we human enough?
web application concept
- global overview.



Since 2015 I have been volunteering for CISV International¹, a global organization dedicated to educating and inspiring for peace through building inter-cultural friendship, cooperation and understanding. CISV's peace education has four main content areas: diversity, human rights, conflict and resolution, sustainable development. Every year, it puts the spotlight on one of them and 2017 is CISV's year for human rights. This is the reason why I have been researching and reflecting about this theme for a few months and why I decided to commit myself and my project to human rights.

Definition

Human rights are a set of principles concerned with fairness and equality among people. They identify the most essential freedoms and entitlements we have as human beings. They describe the free and safe life that all people, everywhere, should be able to live. The core of human rights was set in 1948 on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)², partly in response to the atrocities of World War II.

Statement of purpose

When we take human rights for granted, as we generally do, they become invisible to us. What I aim to do by means of this project is making people reflect on the subject. Specifically, I want them to be able to actually see human rights and all the relatives issues again; to think about what they have and other people have not; to make people realize that if they were born in another country, they would not have the same rights; and that what we take for granted is a rare privilege elsewhere.

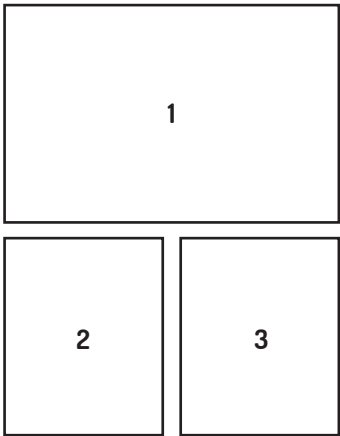
First things first

The first phase of my research was about looking for reliable data regarding missing or denied human rights all over the world. The main issue I came upon was the enormous amount of different kinds of existing violations. Therefore, I started researching what could go under the name of 'human rights abuse' and what could not. Of course, there is not a neat line between

¹ <http://www.cisv.org>

² The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948. <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

- 1
One of the winning images of a photography competition organized by OSCE Office in Yerevan, aimed at raising awareness for the protection of human rights. (2013)
- 2
Demonstration against Pass Laws in Sharpeville, Transvaal. (1960)
- 3
Eleonor Roosevelt and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (1949)





them, and there are different opinions on the matter. Soon, I came across the question: are some rights more important than others? An inspiring answer I found out was the one given by Mausi Segun, Nigerian Researcher at Human Rights Watch³: “[...] *these rights are interwoven, they are interrelated, there is no difference: the right to life is meaningless without, for example, the right of access to health services. Where illness or diseases that are easily treatable kill human beings, then their rights to life have been affected because the rights to health have been affected.*”⁴

³ Human Rights Watch is a nonprofit, nongovernmental human rights organization known for its accurate fact-finding and impartial reporting. <https://www.hrw.org>

⁴ Human Rights 101 – “Are some rights more important than others?” (Elaine Pearson and Mausi Segun) <https://www.hrw.org/human-rights-101>

⁵ <http://www.humanrightsdata.com>

Who violates what

The CIRI Human Rights Data Project⁵ provides annual standards-based information about government respect for a broad array of human rights in nearly every country in the world. Founded by David L. Cingranelli, David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay, CIRI Dataset used the annual country reports from the US State Department and Amnesty International as its primary sources and was designed for use by scholars and students who seek to test theories about the causes and consequences of human rights violations. It includes information about 202 countries, for the years 1981 to 2011. Most of the CIRI indicators are ratings on a scale of 0-2 for their respect of human rights, as follows: 0 = frequent violations of this right; 1 = some violations of this right; 2 = no reported violations of this right. The selection of the particular rights in the CIRI Dataset does not imply that these rights are considered to be more important than other human rights. Rather, these are the rights for which information are reliable and systematically available across time and space.

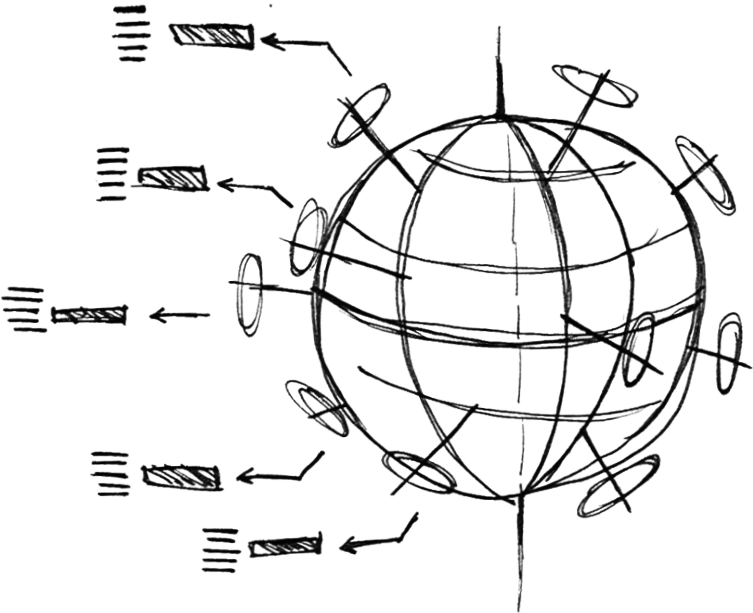
Since some of the rights rated by the CIRI Dataset are about similar topics, for the purpose of my project, I selected 10 based on easy understandability, trying to cover as many areas as possible: extrajudicial killing, political imprisonment, torture, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of foreign and domestic movement, freedom of speech, electoral self-determination, freedom of religion, worker’s rights.

in alto
CIRI Dataset extract
and rating system.

in basso
Are we human enough?
globe sphere concept sketch.

COUNTRY	YEAR	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10
Afghanistan	1981	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Afghanistan	1982	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
...
Albania	1981	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Albania	1982	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
...

R1	= extrajudicial killing	R 6	= domestic movement	0	= frequent violations of the right
R 2	= political imprisonment	R 7	= speech	1	= some violations of the right
R 3	= torture	R 8	= electoral self-determination	2	= no reported violations of the right
R 4	= assembly and association	R 9	= religion		
R 5	= foreign movement	R 10	= worker's rights		



References

The research for graphic and non-graphic inspiration mainly included projects using data about countries and representing them on the globe sphere.

Stats of the Union (Fathom Informative Design, 2011)

Stats of the Union is an iPad app for exploring data from the Community Health Status Indicators report, which contains health and lifestyle data from federal agencies including the Census Bureau, Department of Health & Human Services, Department of Labor and the Environmental Protection Agency. It lets the user explore the nation's vital signs — from life expectancy to access to medical care — and make him/her reflect about America's health.

Eye on Cuba (People in Need, 2014)

Designed in order to provide information to the international community with regard to the human rights situation in Cuba, *Eye on Cuba - Monitoring Human Rights Abuses in Cuba* is a website that visualizes violations reported by activists on the ground on an interactive map. It does not reflect all cases of human rights abuse in Cuba, but it transmits a more personal view of some of the abuses and offers a closer insight into the stories of the victims.

FIFA Development Globe (Truth & Beauty, 2013)

The *FIFA Development Globe* visualizes FIFA's development work across the world. The development projects are placed on a 3D globe as triangle based constructions, and can be filtered by their individual program types. The globe itself is based on an adaptive subdivision process, representing country shapes in abstracted geometry. In addition, financial assistance budget spending per country and a timeline of events as well as some background information on the FIFA development programs can be accessed within the application.

in alto

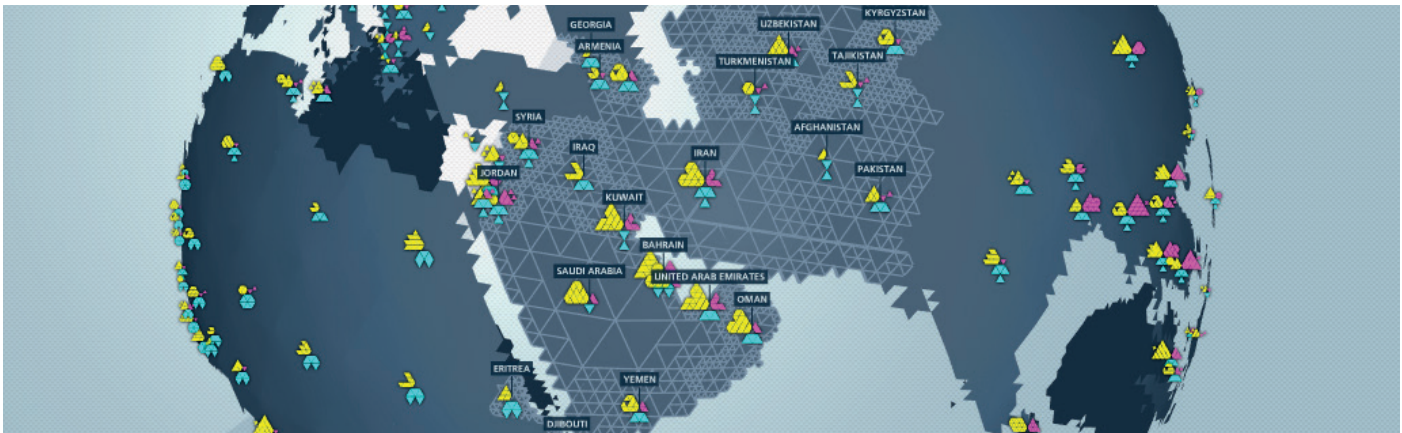
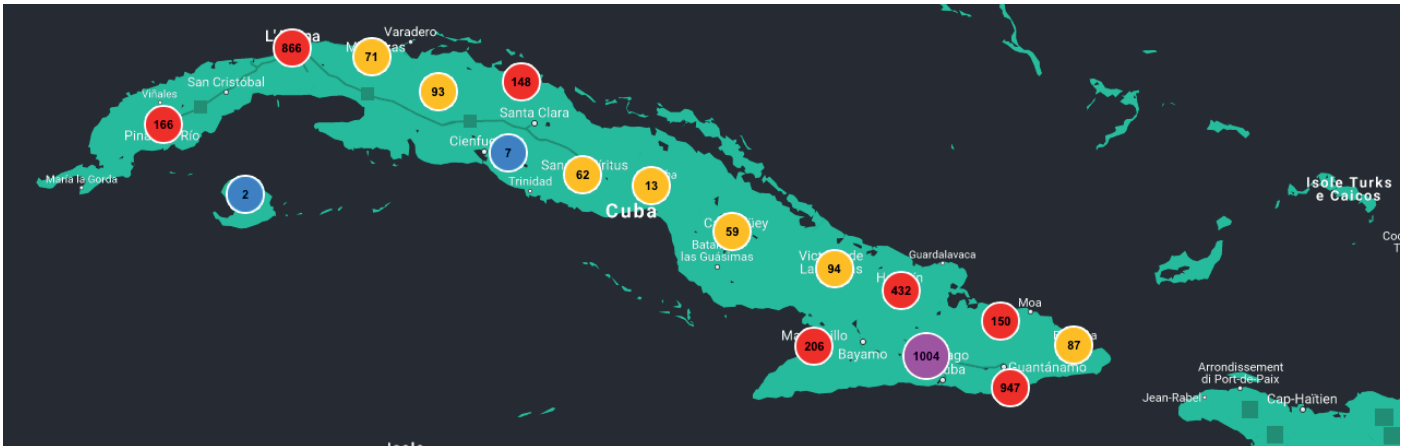
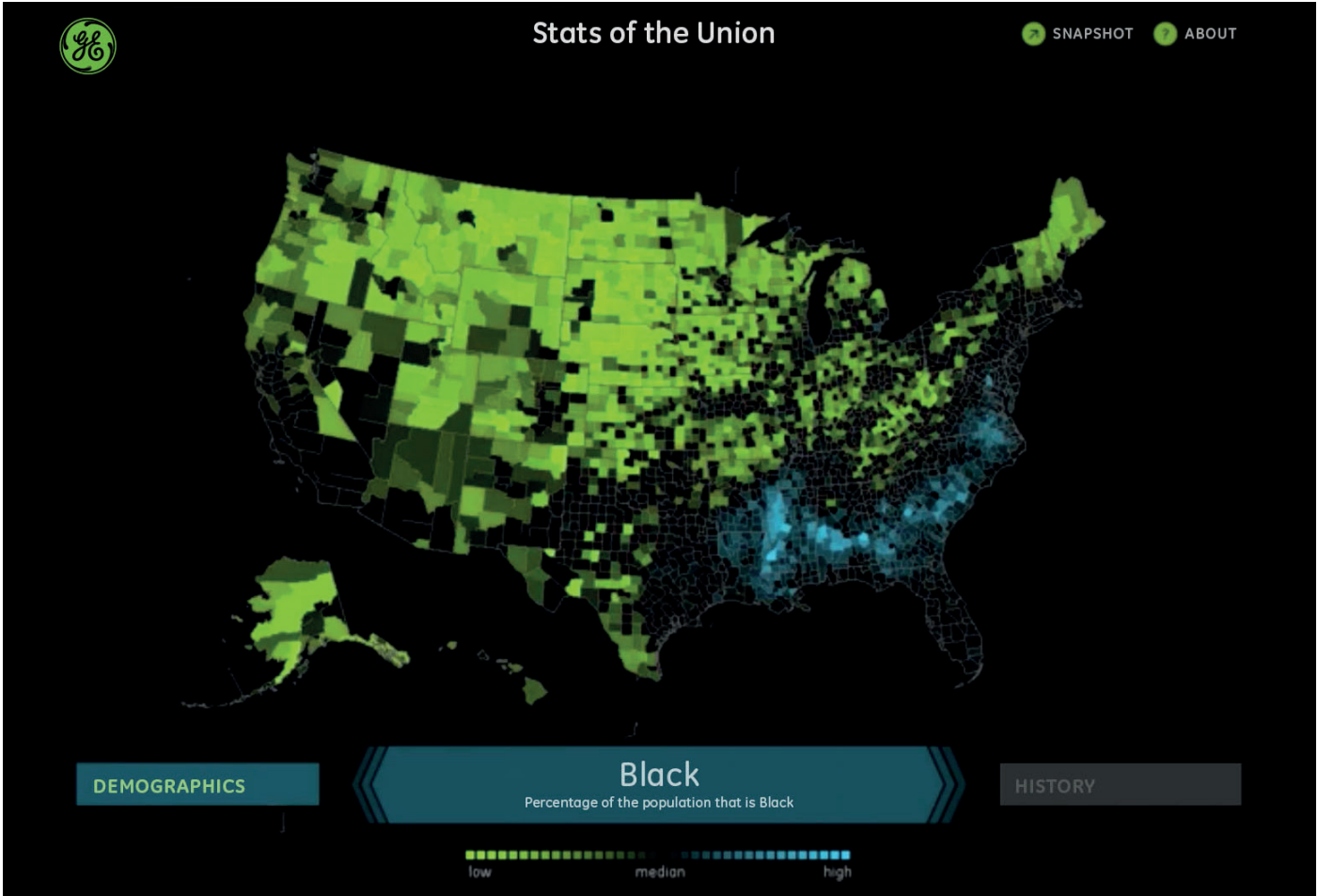
Stats of the Union
(Fathom Informative Design, 2011)

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Eye on Cuba
(People in Need, 2014)

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FIFA Development Globe
(Truth & Beauty, 2013)



Visualizing the invisible

Are we human enough? is a web application that aims to promote and raise awareness about human rights' violation over the world. It offers a visual global overview of the rankings provided by CIRI Human Rights Project, analysing each country's state of play from 1981 to 2011 in order to present how human rights' protection has evolved through the years. The user can both watch the situation in a certain year or let the application show the evolving development over time.

The application maps the data on a globe sphere through accordingly-colored circles that pulsate based on the country's ranking in CIRI Dataset.

On top of every country's centre, therefore, there is a vibrating circle that represents the country's situation in a particular year.

Both the color and the pulsation are a graphic representation of the ranking: the warmer the color of circle and the higher the circle is moving, the more rights the country is violating in that year. In this way, circles become alerts: they have something to say.

This choice reflects the idea that human rights' abuses can not be invisible anymore and do need to be well seen. The pulsation gives the sensation that there is something going on and, more importantly, that the country requires attention.

Selecting a circle, the user gets the details of each right and some additional information with regard to that country, e.g. the year when the right started to be respected, or news articles about recent abuses, or nowadays demonstrations and protests on the matter.

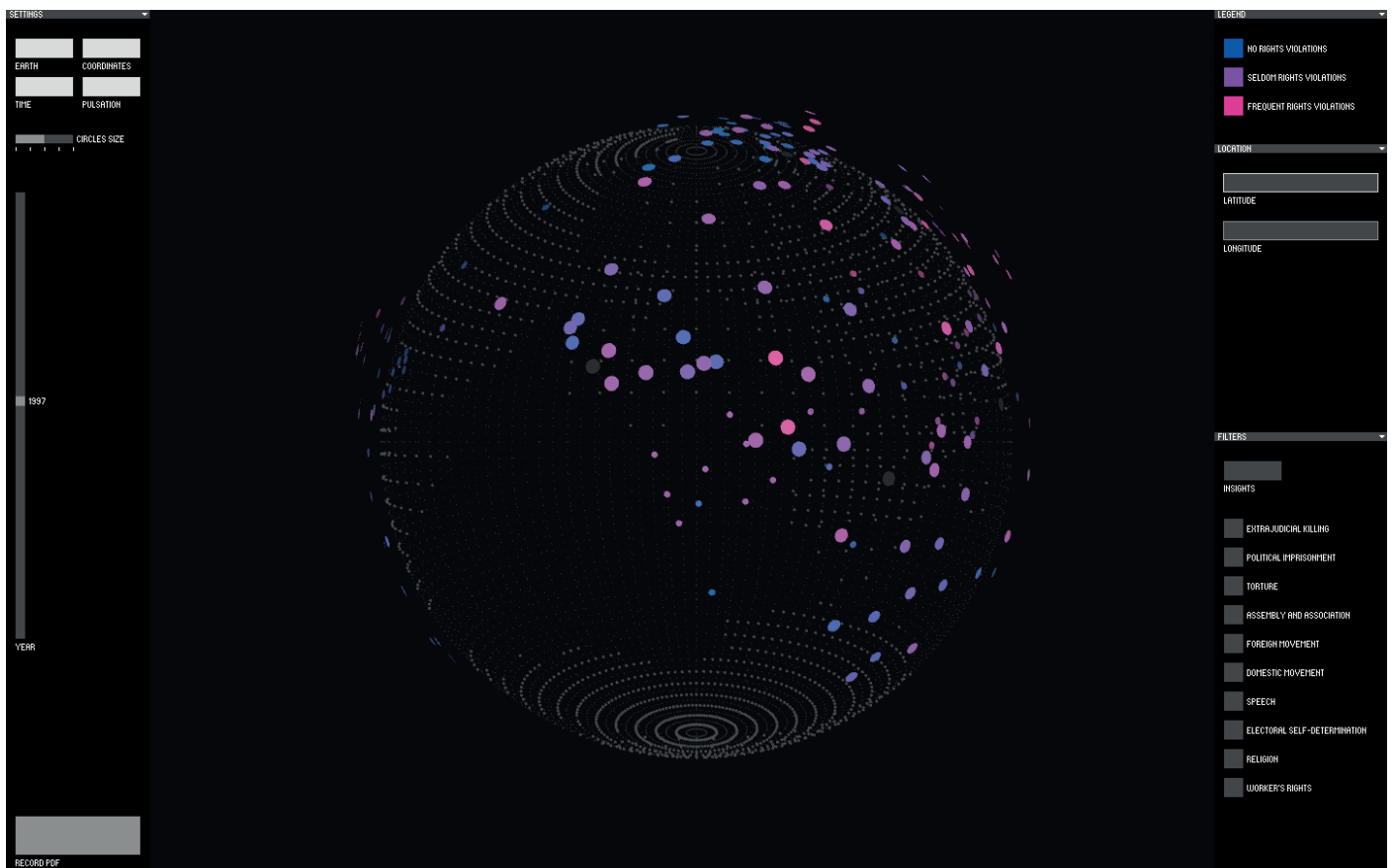
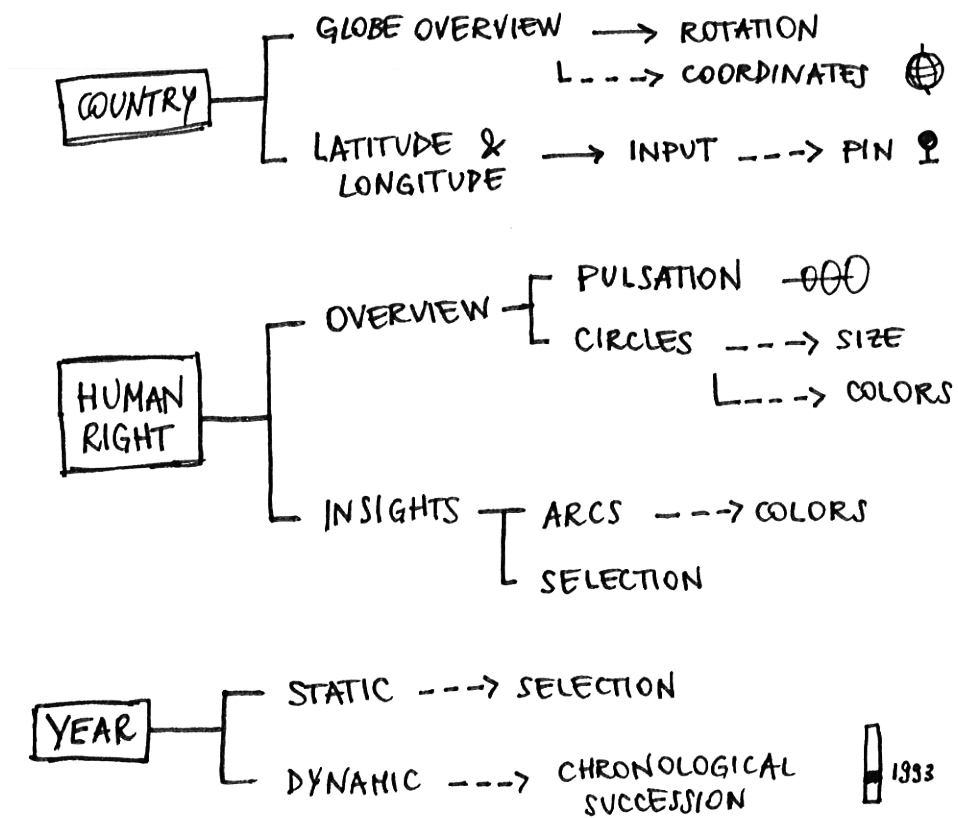
Are we human enough? is able to detect your location as well, and to inform you on which rights the country you are in respects and which violates, making also a comparison with all the other countries. To analyse a different country, you can write its name and the application will zoom in on the respective country.

in alto

UI navigation flow per country, per human right and per year.

in basso

Prototype global overview.



It is possible to examine the evolution of a single right as well, by picking one from the list. In this way, the user can analyse the development of that particular right only over time.

Prototyping

In order to test the effectiveness of the global data visualization, I prototyped a demo version of *Are we human enough?* in Processing⁶ programming language. It is a off-line prototype that retrieves data from a CSV file⁷, which I completed using parts of Version 2014.04.14⁸ of the CIRI Dataset. I selected only the ratings of the 10 rights I chose and added the coordinates of the respective centroid⁹ to each country's row.

The prototype hosts a 3D environment with a globe sphere, as the main project requires. The see-through globe sphere uses dots to give a delicate idea of the Earth, but it does not clearly define the countries. On top of each centroid you can see the accordingly-colored and -pulsating circles, whose position is determined by a meticulous mapping of the centroid's coordinates onto the sphere. It automatically shows the evolution from 1981 to 2011 through the different coloring of the circles (current year can be seen on the vertical timeline in the left-side navigation bar). At any time the user can stop the automatic flow, by selecting a particular year or clicking the `TIME` button. In the same way, it is possible to stop the pulsation of the circles (`PULSATION` button) and to hide the dotted globe sphere (the `EARTH` button controls the Earth outline and the `COORDINATES` button the meridians/parallels system). Right-side navigation bar allows the `INSIGHTS` view, which gives a more detailed partition of the country's situation. The 10 arcs visualized in this view represent the 10 human rights examined. By selecting one the right in list, the corresponding arc will be underlined.

In the `LOCATION` tab, lastly, users are invited to write the coordinates of a city (`LATITUDE` and `LONGITUDE`),

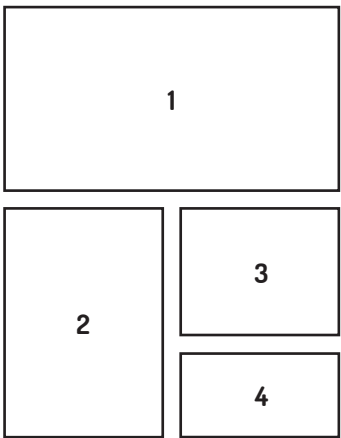
⁶ <https://processing.org>

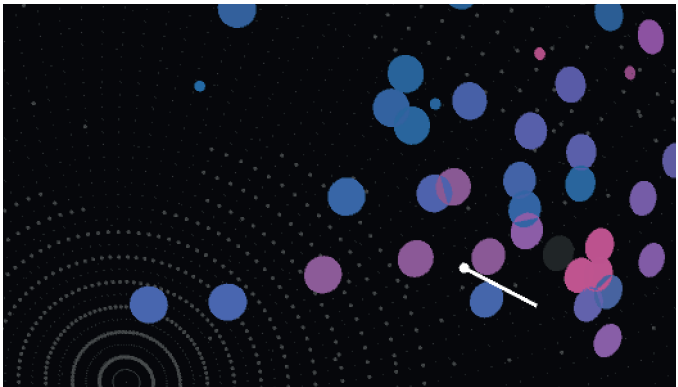
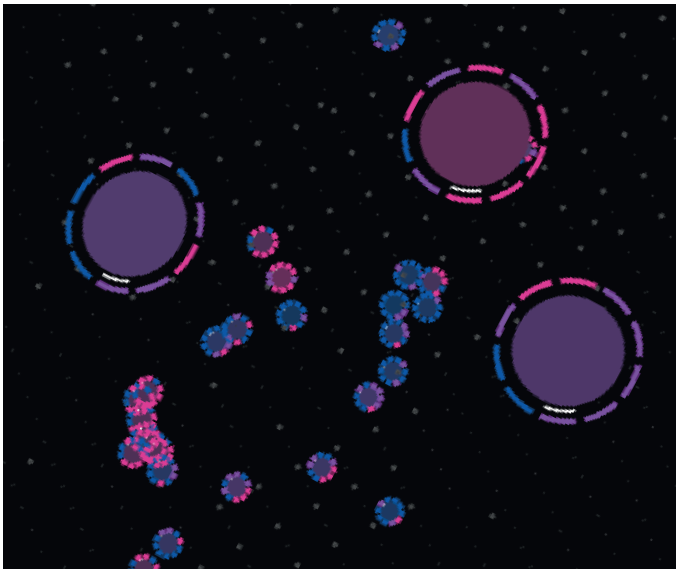
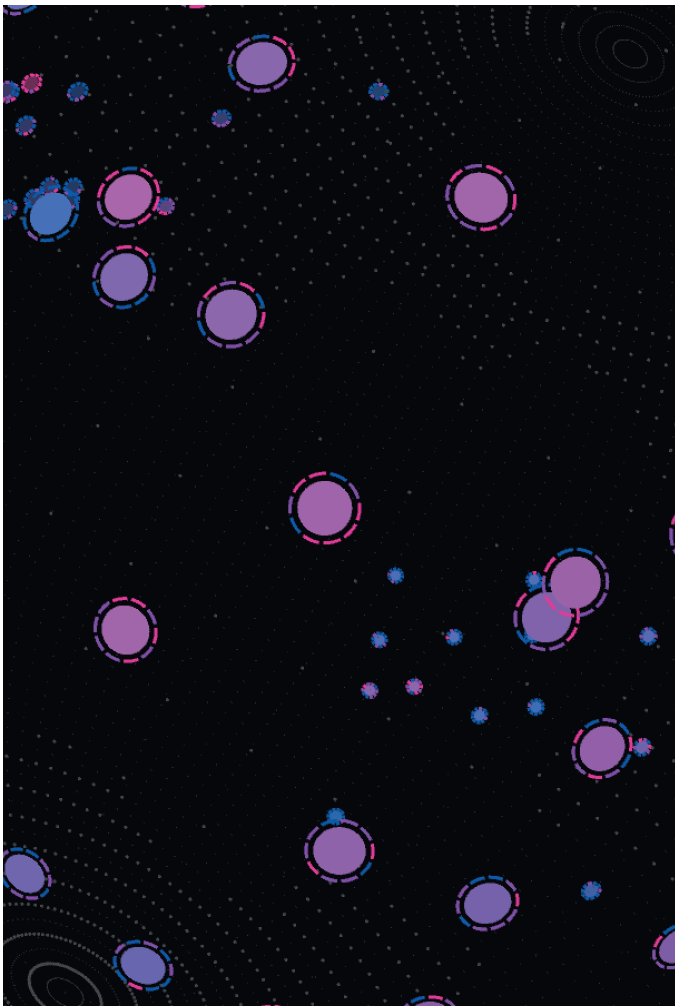
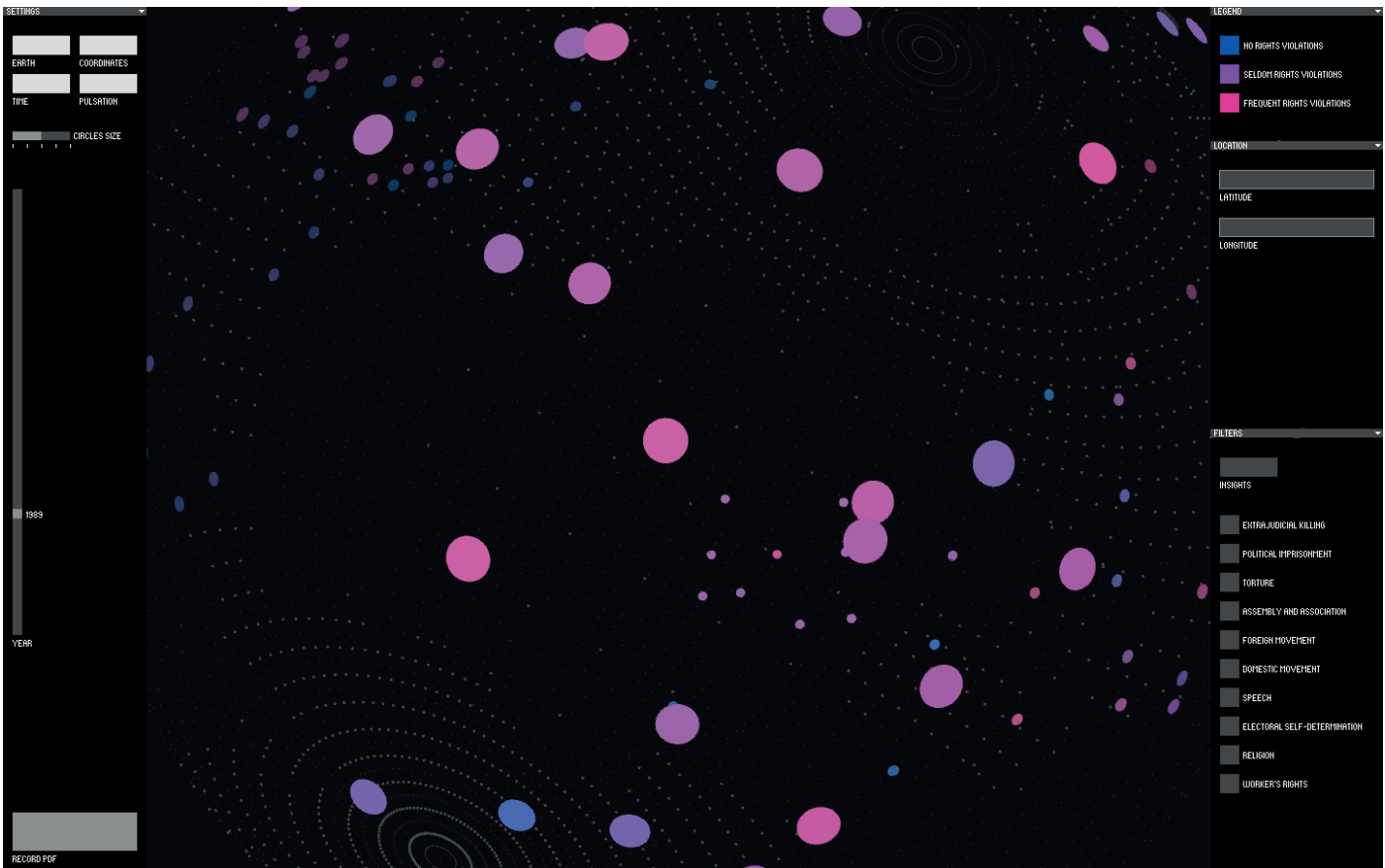
⁷ The online version of the document can be found on Google Sheet: <https://goo.gl/nNRkxq>

⁸ <http://www.humanrightsdata.com/p/data-documentation.html>

⁹ In geography, the centroid of the two-dimensional shape of a region of the Earth's surface (projected radially to sea level or onto a geoid surface) is often known as its geographical centre. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographical_centre

- 1
Prototype global overview zoom-in.
- 2
Prototype insights view detail.
- 3
Prototype insights view detail with a single right selection.
- 4
Prototype detail of the location research by coordinates.





in order to visualize its position onto the sphere, making the geographical orientation a bit easier.

Future development

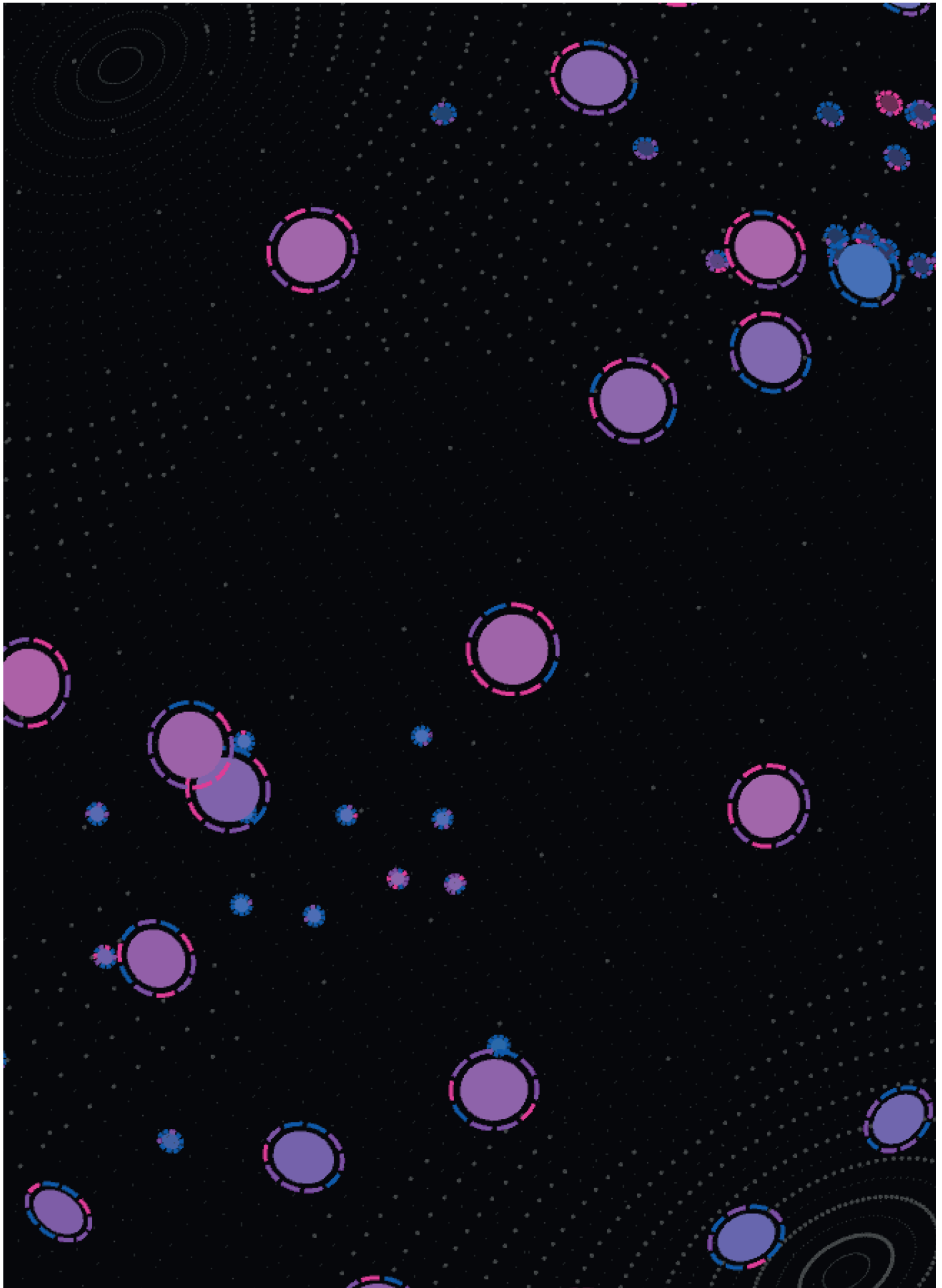
What I imagine for a future progress of the project is a more hands-on experience that will make the user think and reflect on the topic during everyday activities. I am thinking about a notification system that alerts the user, while doing a certain action, about the lack of freedom to do the same in other countries. For example, when you are inside a church in the United Kingdom, the application would let you know that in Burma, if you are Christian, you are not allowed to practice your religion. In addition, it would be interesting to have a easy and simple access to related articles and information on the human right linked to that action. Continuing the same example, the application would let you know that the Act of Settlement (1701) in Great Britain discriminated against all religions other than Protestantism.

At the same time, the addition of the missing human rights could be a huge improvement to the project. That could be easily done in case a reliable analysis on the other rights will be published. Taking into consideration the right to an adequate standard of living, I imagine *Are we human enough?* evolving into an open-air installation next to, for example, a drinking fountain, informing passers-by on countries where it is not granted.

The same applies for recent years situation: since CIRI Human Rights Project stops in 2011, it would be interesting to see nowadays state of art as well, with the possibility of a live update perhaps.

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Are we human enough?
web application concept
- insights overview.



Sitography

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https://developers.google.com/public-data/docs/canonical/countries_csv

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