



# DATAFICATION OF BORDERS AND MIGRATION

## Call for Papers Extended

*For an international workshop, co-convened by the  
Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration, Toronto Metropolitan University;  
Intimacy in Data Driven Culture project, Tampere University;*

*Co-Designing a Fair Digital Asylum Research Project and Digital Migration Special Interest Group, Utrecht University*

**Date:** Thurs. May 25, 2023

**Location:** CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University

Digital technologies and datafied systems are increasingly used to surveil, control and manage migration, shifting the balance in the humanitarianism-securitization nexus. New automated systems from facial recognition to language detection have profoundly intensified and changed migration and border policies (Nalbandian, 2022). Data driven technologies have rendered borders ubiquitous, multi-layered and mundane: the outside border control has become increasingly mobile, now travelling with and tracking migrated bodies after border crossings (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2023; Aradau & Tazzioli 2020; Dijstelbloem, 2021; Metcalfe & Dencik, 2019; Chouliaraki & Georgiou, 2022; Ahouga, 2022).

Datafication is often framed as a phenomenon that concerns everyone: in a highly networked digital world, datafication cannot be escaped. However, datafication does not treat everyone in the same way. Automated social sorting, critical data studies highlighted, is often based on categorizations and assumptions that echo existing social biases and historical power structures, as well as pervasive and accumulative surveillance of the already marginalized (Gangadharan & Niklas, 2019; Ajana, 2019; Colman, 2016; Nikunen & Valtonen, 2023). At the same time, data driven technologies also provide systems of help, aid and witnessing, as well as new forms of resistance and activism to support people who are seeking asylum or who are on the move (Gillespie et al., 2018, Glouftsiou & Scheel, 2020; Latonero & Kift, 2018).

The goal of this one-day conference is to bring together scholars to introduce their research on digital technologies and datafication in migration and discuss the ambivalent and contradictory role of datafication and digital technologies for migrants and refugees, as well as the unsettling consequences of datafication in bordering and policymaking.

We invite papers that explore these issues from different global contexts and disciplines, from media and communication, migration studies, critical data studies, cultural studies, gender studies, postcolonial studies, science and technology studies, law, social anthropology, criminology, data science and geography. The event fosters cross-disciplinary dialogues of qualitative research, ethnography, digital methods and critical data studies.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

Affect and emotions related to border practices  
Biopolitics of borders  
Border and migration policy and datafication  
Data biases  
Datafied border infrastructures  
Detention, incarceration and data  
Digital bordering

Digitization of asylum procedures  
Experience of data and borders  
Gender, decolonial, postcolonial and critical race studies  
Resistance, protest and activism  
Information practices  
Surveillance  
Witnessing

Submissions for papers should include an abstract (300-400 words indicating main research questions, methods and expected results) and a short biographical note (150 words) about the author including her/his/their current position and interest in the field of digital media and migration.

Submissions should be emailed to [cerc.migration@torontomu.ca](mailto:cerc.migration@torontomu.ca) by **17 January 2023**.

Accepted participants will be notified by 30 January 2023.

For further questions please mail: [Kaarina.nikunen@tuni.fi](mailto:Kaarina.nikunen@tuni.fi) and [K.H.A.Leurs@uu.nl](mailto:K.H.A.Leurs@uu.nl)

**Organizing committee:**

Koen Leurs, Utrecht University

Kaarina Nikunen, Tampere University

Anna Triandafyllidou, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University

Younes Ahouga, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University

Lucia Nalbandian, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University and University of Toronto

The conference is organized in collaboration with the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration, Toronto Metropolitan University; Intimacy in Data Driven Culture (IDA) project, Tampere University; the [Co-Designing a Fair Digital Asylum Research Project](#) and the Digital Migration Special Interest Group, Utrecht University.



Canada Excellence  
Research Chair in  
Migration & Integration



Utrecht  
University

**IDA**

intimacy in data-driven culture

