DATAFICATION OF BORDERS AND MIGRATION

Call for Papers

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, Glouftsios & 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	Digitization of asylum procedures
Biopolitics of borders	Experience of data and borders
Border and migration policy and datafication	Gender, decolonial, postcolonial and critical race studies
Data biases	Resistance, protest and activism
Datafied border infrastructures	Information practices
Detention, incarceration and data	Surveillance
Digital bordering	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@ryerson.ca by **10 January 2023.**
Accepted participants will be notified by 30 January 2023.
For further questions please mail: Kaarina.nikunen@tuni.fi and K.H.A.Leurs@uu.nl

Organizing committee:
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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.