

## Title

European studies with a focus on multi-level governance of data infrastructuring for migration management

## Project description

This position is opened in the context of the project *Processing Citizenship: Digital registration of migrants as co-production of citizens, territory and Europe* (1.3.2017-28.2.2022, now in its third year), Acronym: ProcessCitizenship – G.A. 714463. The Project is funded by the European Research Council (ERC), with prof. A. Pelizza as the Principal Investigator (PI). More information is available at <http://processingcitizenship.eu>.

The *Processing Citizenship* project aims to investigate how data infrastructures and practices of third-country population management at and across European borders simultaneously enact alterity, the European order and territory. Current migration waves – and the methods to manage them – are challenging not only national and European policies, but also the way knowledge about individuals, institutions and space is produced. Interoperable data systems and data practices are key enablers of this knowledge (Bowker and Star 1999). They crystallize security, humanitarian, administrative and technical dynamics that compete to define what “alterity”, “citizenship”, “state”, “space” and “Europe” are (Aus 2003; Broeders 2007).

*Processing Citizenship* asks whether emergent couplings between citizenship and territory (Soysal 1994; Sassen 2006) can become visible by focusing on information systems that are key to the nation state and Europe: those used for foreigners’ identification and registration. Within this framework, *Processing Citizenship* offers a **12-month postdoc position** (renewable up to 30 months, pending favorable performance review) at the University of Bologna, Department of Philosophy and Communication Studies (FILCOM). The position is open to candidates wishing to focus their research on European multi-level and multi-sectorial governance, with attention to data infrastructuring for migration management.

**The appointed researcher is expected to study multi-level and multi-sectorial arrangements, changes and tensions triggered by informational infrastructures for migration management in Europe.** While a rich scholarship in the history of technology has stressed the infrastructural dimension of European integration (Schipper and Schot 2011), less attention has been paid to data infrastructures, and even less to data infrastructures for third-country population management, affecting the transformations of contemporary Europe. Yet the info-technical European management of migration in the last 25 years can share light on tensions between intergovernmental and supranational approaches (Balch and Geddes 2011), as well as on the emergence of non-governmental actors.

The appointed researcher is expected to engage with policy and design texts, as well as with empirical sociological research (e.g. interviews) on European and national data infrastructures for migration management. The candidate is asked to identify possible sources to start their analysis and report them in the motivation letter. The dataset

collected will then be analyzed from a performative sociological and historical perspective, and contextualized in relation to key issues addressed within the *Processing Citizenship* project:

- 1) The way institutional and organizational boundaries are de facto shaped by the **circulation** of data (Pelizza 2016) about third-country nationals;
- 2) How relationships between EU and Member States, on one hand, and between governmental and non-governmental actors, on the other hand, are enacted through efforts to build **interoperable** information systems;
- 3) The emergence of new de facto *loci* of power. For example, international organizations and contractors have a major role in setting the **standards** for what counts as “data” and what does not (Broeders and Dijstelbloem 2016; Pelizza 2019);
- 4) The **coupling** between citizenship and territory occupies a central role in *Processing Citizenship*. In particular, we are interested in mapping which rights and limitation are associated to membership of specific databases.

#### *Selected list of references*

- Aus, J. P. 2003. *Supranational Governance in an "Area of Freedom, Security and Justice": Eurodac and the Politics of Biometric Control*. University of Sussex: Sussex European Institute.
- Balch, A. and Geddes, A. 2011. "The Development of the EU Migration and Asylum Regime." In H. Dijstelbloem and A. Meijer *Migration and the New Technological Borders of Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bowker, G. C., and S. L. Star. 1999. *Sorting things out: Classification and its consequences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT press.
- Broeders, D. 2007. "The New Digital Borders of Europe. EU Databases and the Surveillance of Irregular Migrants." *International Sociology*, 22 (1): 71–92.
- Broeders, D and Dijstelbloem, H. 2016. "The Datafication of Mobility and Migration Management: the Mediating State and its Consequences." In I. Van der Ploeg and J. Pridmore (eds.) *Digitizing Identities: Doing Identity in a Networked World*. London: Routledge, pp. 242-260.
- Jasanoff, S. 2004. *States of knowledge: the co-production of science and the social order*. New York: Routledge.
- Mukerji, C. 2011. "Jurisdiction, inscription, and state formation: administrative modernism and knowledge regimes." *Theory and Society*, 40(3): 223-245. DOI: 10.1007/s11186-011-9141-9.
- Pelizza, A. 2016. "Developing the Vectorial Glance: Infrastructural inversion for the new agenda on governmental information systems." *Science, Technology and Human Values*, 41(2): 298-321. DOI: 10.1177/0162243915597478.
- Pelizza, A. (2019), 'Processing Alterity, Enacting Europe. Migrant registration and identification as co-construction of individuals and polities', *Science, Technology and Human Values*, first published online on February 6th: 1-27. DOI: 10.1177/0162243919827927
- Sassen, S. 2006. *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schipper, F. and Schot, J. 2011. "Infrastructural Europeanism, or the project of building Europe on infrastructures: An introduction." *History and Technology*, 27(3): 245-264, DOI: 10.1080/07341512.2011.604166
- Soysal, Y. N. 1994. *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*. Chicago University of Chicago Press.

## Plan of activities

The researcher will be presented with two main research challenges. The first challenge requires identifying and analyzing textual sources from heterogeneous and multi-lingual institutional informants. The second challenge will require engaging and shaping interdisciplinary collaboration with the ongoing work carried out by the other team members.

In particular, the appointed candidate will:

- Conduct a policy review of European and national laws and regulations concerning the circulation of migrants' data;
- Conduct an annotated literature review of European migration policies and IT in an historical perspective;
- Identify sources and fieldwork opportunities. Methodological expertise and preferences should be expressed in the motivation letter to be included in the application;
- Conduct interviews with relevant stakeholders. This activity will require European fieldwork research;
- (Co-)author one peer-reviewed article in an international journal;
- Work in close relationship with the PI and rest of the *Processing Citizenship* team, in order to contribute to the comparative approach of the project. The analyses at the core of his/her research will be compared with the analyses produced in the other milieux under investigation within the *Processing Citizenship*. Technical sections of the investigated texts are also expected to constitute the basis for digital visualization of data circulation;
- Actively participate to the activities of the *Processing Citizenship* team (e.g. organisation of workshops, conferences and panels; editing a special issue; access-aimed networking with authorities and individuals; dissemination of the scientific results; communication with stakeholders);
- Support to Project's administration and organization.

## Desirable skills (on top of requirements indicated in the call text)

- PhD degree in political science with a focus on European integration, EU public policy, European history, European law, International Relations with a focus on European integration, sociology with a focus on European integration, and neighboring disciplines
- Knowledge of German and/or Italian
- Knowledge of infrastructural studies of national and European construction
- Knowledge of major STS approaches and/or STS literature in data infrastructures
- Ability to think across disciplinary boundaries, creating an inclusive and creative culture
- Scientific writing editing skills
- Ability to think across disciplinary boundaries, creating an inclusive and creative culture
- Willingness to adopt a performative understanding of institutional bodies and relationships, as well as to engage with infrastructural studies of European construction
- Willingness to embark in international fieldwork research

- Commitment to the Project's success, including willingness to embark in international fieldwork research, collaborate in a research team, share data and write joint publications
- Excellent administrative and organizational skills, including the ability to plan one's and others' work and meet deadlines
- Willingness to accept Horizon2020/ERC administrative, financial and ethical requirements
- Sound understanding of the potential non-academic impacts of the research and ways of engaging with it

## **Conditions of employment and organizational environment**

We offer a fulltime postdoc position in an inspiring multidisciplinary and international environment. As it is known, ERC grants are among the most prestigious research environments worldwide. The position is initially for one year – to be renewed up to 30 months. The salary indicated in the call is intended as gross per month; taxes are minimal. Health insurance is already covered in the gross salary. The salary amply assures comfortable living conditions for singles and families in Italy. The appointee is expected to take office in March 2020, although a later start date may be negotiated.

The terms of employment are in accordance with the Italian Law Concerning the Organization of Universities (Law 240/2010), as well as with the regulation for postdoc positions (i.e. 'assegni di ricerca') issued by the University of Bologna. Given our attention to diversity, we particularly welcome applications by women.

The Processing Citizenship team offers a dynamic ecosystem of enthusiastic colleagues (6) at different stages of their careers. The team is composed of sociologists of technology, ethnographers and computer scientists from diverse countries, who share a passion for collaborative and trans-disciplinary research. The Project is composed of the Bologna unit and of a smaller unit based at the University of Twente, The Netherlands. Exchange and communication among the two units are systematic.

The University of Bologna stands for quality research and education connecting past and future. Not only is Bologna the oldest university in the Western world, but it also scores among the three top Italian universities for both research and education. Hosting a remarkable amount of European-funded research grants, internationalization is an important part of the University's strategic agenda. The research offices of the University of Bologna provide highly specialized support for ongoing international grants, as well as for new grant acquisitions. Thanks to this arrangement, talented researchers are given scope for developing groundbreaking research in a liberal environment.

Last but not least, with one fifth of its population made of students, a thriving entrepreneurial scene and an enviable quality of life, Bologna is one of the most sought-after areas to live and work in Italy and Europe. The University's facilities are entwined in the medieval layout of a vibrant, young city. Its international airport can be reached from the city center in a few minutes, public transport is capillary and fast train connections make reaching other Italian and European sites fast and convenient.