

Hosting Offer for MSCA-IF-2020 at the Faculty of Law (University of Coruña, Spain)

HOSTING DESCRIPTION:

1. Research / Project Description

Over the past decades, autonomous systems (e.g. lethal autonomous weapons systems, systems for data mining and analysis, robotic surgical devices, algorithm-based analytic and predictive software) have gradually been introduced to replace humans in carrying out functions in a number of areas. These areas include the control and security domain (i.e. in the form of predictive policing), automated judicial sentencing systems, autonomous weapons systems carrying out combat operations in armed conflicts, etc. These systems' increasing ability to act on their own with limited human control raises many criminological, legal and ethical concerns. The overall objective of this research is to explore how the enforcement of law, i.e. criminal justice at the national level and enforcement of international law at the international level, is changing with the ever-increasing use of autonomous systems. In so doing we will aim to determine how and why autonomous systems might be useful and beneficial to society on the one hand, and how and why they might represent a risk for human rights and other fundamental values of our societies on the other hand.

The research will focus on areas of international and domestic criminal law. In these areas, the use of autonomous systems (e.g. predictive and analytic computer programs) is leading to significant changes in criminal justice systems. A number of computer-analytic solutions have found their way into criminal justice systems in order to assist police, prosecutors, judges and other decision-makers with various kinds of judgments they have to make on a daily basis. This trend has been described as the automation of justice. Our purpose is to explore the debate surrounding the automation of criminal judicial systems, taking into account both the benefits and dangers of relying on algorithms in judicial decision-making. Research on artificial intelligence and cybersecurity is also an important focus of our project.

Research areas (as established in MSCA):

Social Sciences and Humanities

2. Brief description of the Centre / Research Group:

The research group "Criminología, Psicología Jurídica y Justicia Penal en el siglo XXI" (ECRIM; www.ecrim.es) integrates researchers of Social Psychology, Criminal and Procedure Law areas of the Universidade da Coruña (UDC) in which the participant will incorporate.

Fundraising in competitive calls

Since 1994 the ECRIM group has been obtaining funds on a continuous basis through competitive calls. In this sense, the group's capacity to raise funds and manage projects is reflected in the fact that, in the barely five years that the group has been working in a consolidated way (after a first stage of training, in the second half of the 1990s), thirty projects have been developed, obtained in competitive European calls, as well as state and regional, integrated/complementary ministerial actions and, to a lesser extent, calls from the Universidade da Coruña itself. It is particularly noteworthy that between 2017-2019 ECRIM has achieved 4 research projects funded by the European Commission: a) the Action Grant "RePers" (DG Justice and Consumers); b) the Action Grant "Trust and Action" (DG Justice and Consumers); c) the COST Action "Police Stops" (COST Association); and d) the Marie Skłodowska-Curie - Global Fellowship Action "Governmigration" (European Research Agency - Horizon 2020).

National and international networks

The group regularly collaborates for the development of joint projects with other Spanish research groups, such as those from the universities of Alicante, Barcelona, the Balearic Islands, the Basque Country, Valencia and Cadiz. In the same way, the group has been articulating a cooperative work with groups from other Galician universities participating in a research network funded by the Xunta de Galicia. At present it leads a Network of Excellence ("Redes de excelencia") with the Universities of Alicante, Cadiz, Balearic Islands, Oviedo and Basque Country funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO).

ECRIM also maintains fruitful networks with research groups from other European countries, with whom there is a permanent teaching and research exchange. For example, with groups from the Universities of Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra (Portugal), groups from the Universities of Modena-Reggio Emilia, Genoa, Bari, Bologna, Palermo, Trento, Como, Pavia, Milan and Turin (Italy), groups from the Universities of Glasgow, Stirling and Edinburgh (United Kingdom), a group of the University of Utrecht (Netherlands), and with the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law and the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies in Freiburg (Germany). On the other hand, there are also consolidated contacts with Latin American groups from the Universities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba and Nacional del Litoral (Argentina), Católica do Paraná, Federal do Paraná, Unisinos Porto Alegre, La Salle Canoas, Federal de Santa Maria and Sao Paulo (Brazil), Autonomous of Chile, Rancagua, Talca and Arturo Prat (Chile), Santo Tomás (Colombia), San Carlos de Guatemala (Guatemala), Central American and El Salvador (El Salvador), Universities of Chicago and California (United States), Toronto (Canada) and the University of Western Cape (South Africa). And finally, in Australia there is close collaboration with the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane.

Internationalization of research results through publications in collective books and foreign journals

In addition to an intense publishing activity in Spain, the ECRIM group has published its research results in journals and books in various Latin American and European countries, as well as in Australia, and in different languages. It is worth noting the significant number of publications in high quality scientific journals, integrated in Web of Science or Scopus.

Training capacity

ECRIM offers privileged conditions in order to consolidate the curriculum of young doctors joining the group's networks and activities and congresses it organize and participate in. In particular, the experience of the research group in publishing in journals of high scientific quality, integrated in Web of Science or Scopus, both national and international, is especially relevant for postdoctoral training. These circumstances allow researchers in training to increase the possibilities of accessing and successfully passing the peer review process and publishing in prestigious journals, an essential aspect for young doctors to be able to apply for competitive positions.

3. Applications (Documents to be submitted and deadline)

For the evaluation of candidates, please submit electronically to Patricia Faraldo Cabana (patricia.faraldo@udc.es, and CC to otri.cienciaexcelente@udc.es): before 15th June

- CV describing your academic achievements and your research expertise, focusing on those aspects relevant in the context of this project.

Institution: University of A Coruña

Centre: Facultad de Derecho

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