

Post-Doctoral Researcher (1 Vacancy)

CES/19/2026-PD-DeAppeal

The Centre for Social Studies (CES) – Associate Laboratory - University of Coimbra (Portugal), invites applications for one (1) Post-Doctoral Researcher position (CES/19/2026-PD-DeAppeal) in the project “DeAppeal – Deconstruct and Resist Autocratic Appeal to Reinvigorate Democracy”, funded by the European Commission through the programme Horizon Europe, a consortium coordinated by Cristiano Gianolla at CES.

CES provides a stimulating intellectual environment in the domain of social sciences and humanities. The project is part of the research line Democracy, Justice and Human Rights.

A. Project Description

DeAppeal – Deconstruct and Resist Autocratic Appeal to Reinvigorate Democracy

Democracy is under threat across the globe and, increasingly, within the European Union. Populist and authoritarian actors hollow out institutions and normalise illiberal practices. At the heart of this trend lies autocratic appeal—the capacity of authoritarian projects to resonate with citizens. Despite its urgency, the understanding of autocratic appeal remains fragmented. DeAppeal responds with the first comprehensive, interdisciplinary programme to explain why autocratic projects gain traction and to identify the societal and institutional conditions under which democratic appeal can be revived and mobilised. Using the lens of assemblage, the project examines how affective, discursive, and material drivers interact to generate both autocratic and democratic appeal. The project applies this framework across five crucial domains—gender, youth, everyday, institutions, and transnational—to investigate how authoritarian actors generate appeal and how resistance practices can contest authoritarian encroachment while cultivating vibrant democratic imaginaries.

Expected duration of the project execution: from October 1, 2026 to September 3, 2029.

B. Scientific Field

Social Sciences and Humanities

E. Workplace

Research will be performed at the Centre for Social Studies facilities in Coimbra, Portugal, as well as in fieldwork sites. Selected researcher will occasionally need to travel in Portugal and abroad to perform research and research management tasks with the consortium, under the coordination of the PI, Cristiano Gianolla.

F. Duration of the Contract

The temporary contract (“termo incerto”) will be signed for the sole purpose of the execution of the project and will automatically end with the completion of the activities foreseen in the activity plan. Moreover, according to Article 112 of the Labour Code, paragraph 2 a), a trial period of 30 days is established.

The contract will foreseeably start in October, 2026.

G. Application dates

Opens: August 14, 2026

Closes: August 31, 2026.

After August 31 (23h59 Lisbon time) 2026, applications will not be considered for evaluation.

H. Application process

Applications must include:

a) Presentation/Motivation letter with the call reference (CES/19/2026-PD-DeAppeal) of maximum 2 pages in English in which the candidate addresses at least four points:

- (1) motivation to be part of the DeAppeal;
- (2) why they consider to be the right choice to execute the project tasks described above;
- (3) to what extent education and previous experience match the selection criteria listed;

The jury reserves the right not to select any candidate.

J. Monthly Salary

The monthly salary will be 2 408,11 Euros gross (plus months 13 and 14), meal allowance, and all social security charges, in accordance with the Portuguese Labour Code.

K. Mandatory requirements

a) Applicants must hold a PhD in the subject area indicated above by the application deadline; Applicants with an academic degree and diploma issued by a foreign Higher Education Institution must present proof of recognition of the academic degree by the Portuguese Higher Education System, (law DL66/2018). Any candidate without the recognition of the degree(s) will be admitted to the competition, but during the evaluation process the selection panel, cannot:

- i. recognize the candidate's grades and assess according to the possession of such grades;
- ii. give equivalence to, or validate, the grade of her/his degree;
- iii. use that note or its conversion as an evaluation parameter.

In case of selection, the contract can only be signed after the recognition of the academic degree by the Portuguese authorities, under the terms of the Law-decree n. 66/2018, August 16. The selected candidate must deliver the recognition of the degree within 30 days after the communication of the results. After the 30 days, the jury may decide to (1) either extend the deadline for the candidate to prove the recognition; (2) assign the position to the next candidate for merit; (3) or not award the position.

- b) Be proficient in English and Portuguese;
- c) Demonstrate expertise on the topics of the project (see criteria A. to C. above).

L. Selection Process

Applicants will be selected based on their scientific merit and curricular path. The candidate best ranked will be selected. As an option, in case of equivalent curricular profiles, the best-positioned applicants will be short-listed for an interview,

meant to assess each applicant's potential contribution to the development of the project. The Interview will weigh 10% in the final score. The scale applied to each criterion is 0 to 20.

The jury reserves the right to not select any applicants for the positions, if applications do not meet the necessary standards and/or profiles in terms of absolute merit.

M. Selection Panel

- Cristiano Gianolla (President)
- Inês Amaral (Permanent Member)
- Júlia Garraio (Permanent Member)
- Irina Velicu (Substitute Member)
- Rita Basílio de Simões (Substitute Member)

N. Communication of Results

The results of the selection process will be emailed to all candidates, and the meeting minutes of the selection panel will become publicly available.

Additional comments

Equality of opportunities

CES abides by the national law that regulates the prevention, prohibition and fighting against discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic identity, colour, nationality, family background, territory of origin, and disability (Law nº 93/2017, 23 August; Law nº 4/2019, 10 January).

「Edital」



Centro de Estudos Sociais
Universidade de Coimbra

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Data protection

By submitting your application, you are agreeing with the use of your personal data by CES administrative services for the sole purpose of the current call, namely to be contacted directly by CES services and allow the communication of results as in point n. of this call. CES abides by the principles of GDPR.

Contact:

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