

# CERGU Winter 2021 Newsletter

## Director's Letter



The 21<sup>st</sup> year of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is here. For the first time in its history, the EU has seen a member state leave as the United Kingdom withdrew on December 31, 2020 after 47 years in the union. On the January 1, 2021, the [African Continental Free Trade Area](#) took effect. On January 6th, the US Capitol was stormed for the first time since the British invasion of Washington in 1814. In the following weeks Donald Trump left office and became the first US president to be impeached twice. 2021 has also already seen the number of Covid-19 cases surpass 100 million globally. The spread of a British Covid-19 mutation has led to renewed closed borders, lockdowns, and ensuing public protests in many European countries. The first weeks of the year have already produced enough material to occupy

researchers for years to come, and we will most probably see these events discussed in this semester's CERGU seminars and public programs.

[CERGU](#) enters a third semester of quarantine and digital distancing. Who would have thought? Our regular activities have changed format, but most of them have and will be arranged as usual. See the program in this newsletter for all dates and details. And make sure to inform your friends and colleagues, including those in far-away places, that they are welcome to register and Zoom in to CERGU activities.

Our weekly breakfasts keep running in digital format every Tuesday at 8.30. Instead of buying bread and butter, this semester we ask for your participation in preparing European conversation themes. On March 10th, we will hold this year's [European Research Day](#) (in English). This is an open webinar, and the topic is '[European Borderlands](#)'. The program was planned last year but was cancelled in the early days of restrictions. Now we have an updated digital version. CERGU will also be taking part in the [International Science Festival](#), held annually in Gothenburg in April. We will, of course, also continue to support the student organization [Brännpunkt Europa](#) and their digital lunch seminars.

The CERGU internal research conference will be postponed until early in the autumn semester with the hope that we might be able to invite you to an in-person conference by then.

One positive digital opportunity has been the chance we have to engage our [international advisory board members](#) as presenters in the CERGU research seminar program. We are very happy that so many of our international advisors will join our research seminars and engage in discussions with us.

2021 has also already presented us with opportunities for joy and celebration. On the January 2nd, [Maja Hultman](#) started her CERGU postdoc at the Department of Historical Studies researching transnational cultural-economic networks before and after the Holocaust through the prism of two Swedish-Jewish families. See her presentation in the [autumn newsletter](#).

On January 22nd, CERGU's own Alexandra Bousiou successfully defended her doctoral thesis "Governing the European Asylum System at the Greek Border Islands". Congratulations, Dr. Bousiou!

Klas Grinell

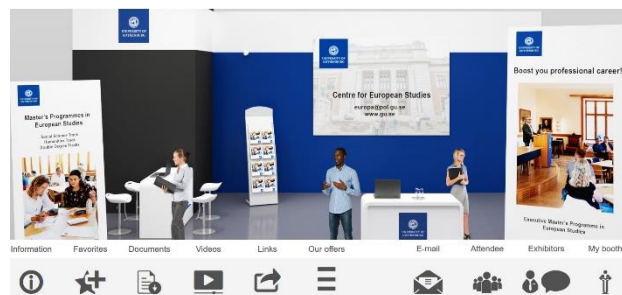


## Information from CES – Winter 2021



We have some news regarding the [Centre for European Studies \(CES\)](#). Mats Andrén, professor of intellectual history, will become co-director of studies from 1 July 2021. He will take over from Ann Ighe, who has had this role for several years now. We are very pleased to see the strong, continuous connection between CERGU and CES, as Mats, like Ann, is part of the CERGU steering committee. Moreover, like Ann, Mats has also been actively involved in teaching in our European Studies Programmes for many years. We are happy to have such engaged and highly appreciated teachers, who are also willing to be involved in the overall planning, as part of the management team.

CES participated in the virtual [Politico EU Studies & Career fair](#) 4-5 February. Director of studies Linda Berg, study administrator Kajsa Evertsson and two students, Uwe Fromm and Rebecca Sava, were online for two days to answer questions from visitors. The fair had around 550 visitors. It was a good experience, but it was noticeably more



difficult to engage visitors in chat and/or video call, compared to real life interaction with passers-by.

During spring of 2021 one of our programmes, the [Executive Master's Programme in European Studies](#), will be evaluated. It is very useful to learn from evaluations. This is also the programme least affected by the pandemic as it was already mainly taught online. For our other programmes and courses, the changes have been more obvious. We have had predominantly online teaching since March last year, and it looks like it will be the same for the remainder of the spring semester 2021. This is, and has been, very hard for our students, teachers and administrators – who have nonetheless performed excellently despite the circumstances. Thank you all for your endurance! We look forward to when we can resume on-campus teaching, and at the same time take advantages of useful new online knowledge.

Linda Berg

## Alexandra Bousiou Successfully Defends Her Dissertation

Former CERGU PhD candidate [Alexandra Bousiou](#) recently defended her dissertation, the culmination of many years of diligent work and studies at both CERGU and Bousiou's home department, the School of Global Studies. The defense was held remotely with committee members, Gregor Noll (University of Gothenburg), Micheline van Riemsdijk (Uppsala University), and Isabell Schierenbeck (University of Gothenburg) joining digitally or in-person while respecting the physical distancing recommendations currently in place at the University of Gothenburg. Bousiou's opponent was the renowned migration scholar and sociologist, Anna Triandafyllidou (Ryerson University). The title of the PhD project and dissertation was "[Governing the European Asylum System at the Greek Border Islands](#)" within the field of Peace and Development Research. To receive a copy of Bousiou's dissertation, reach out to her directly, or contact [CERGU administration](#). We wish Alexandra the absolute best!



## Annual Book Seminar Moves Online

CERGU helped to co-arrange the 24th edition of [Europaperspektiv \(European Perspective\)](#) which was livestreamed from Stockholm for the first time this year. This year's

book focused on ways toward a sustainable EU, taking into account the global Coronavirus pandemic, what kinds of reforms are necessary in order to achieve an environmentally-sound economy, examining an aging population, societal demands, and a subpar level of integration into the European society. As usual, the book featured well-known contributors, including Louise Bengtsson, Carl Fredrik Bergström, Karin Borevi, Karin Bäckstrand, Jens Forssbäck, Magnus Henrekson, David Langlet, Titti Mattsson, and Eskil Wadensjö. Cecilia Garme served as the moderator and Christian Danielsson, head of the EU-Commission's representation in Sweden, was the guest speaker. A free copy of the annual book can be secured [here](#), but contact the organizers by February 28th, at the latest.



## European Research Day to be Held Online

The CERGU English-language research day event was canceled in 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic, but this year it will be held entirely online. An interesting program on the topic of [European Borderlands](#) has been created, with input and current research from CERGU researchers from a wide variety of disciplines. The entire program can be viewed on the CERGU website, and all are welcome to join, no matter where you find yourself in the world!

Title: European Borderlands

Date: March 10, 2021

Time: 13:00-16:00

Location: Online via Zoom. Contact Birgitta Jännebring ([birgitta.jannebring@cergu.gu.se](mailto:birgitta.jannebring@cergu.gu.se)) or Angie Sohlberg ([angie.sohlberg@gu.se](mailto:angie.sohlberg@gu.se)) for the link to the event.



## Researcher Profile: Mats Andrén



*Mats Andrén is a professor of intellectual history at the University of Gothenburg. He has been involved in the CERGU management team and served as director, steering committee chairperson, and as deputy dean for the Faculty of Humanities (formerly Faculty of Arts). Mats will step into the role of co-director of studies alongside Linda Berg for the Centre for European Studies beginning in summer 2021. CERGU research administrator Angie Sohlberg recently had the opportunity to ask Mats about his current research, which is based on the idea of Europe.*

**Angie Sohlberg:** Thank you for agreeing to chat with me! You have been a vital part of the CERGU network for many years, Mats. What would you say is the main reason to join a research network, and what has CERGU meant to you, in particular?

**Mats Andrén:** Most important is to have the multidisciplinary spectrum on Europe, to meet and interact with researchers from many disciplines, to learn from what is being done in other disciplines. Also, the inspiration of meeting people with different backgrounds and interests. I am the kind of person who enjoys working in different environments. Somehow, I get much inspiration in the moving back and forth between my own discipline and CERGU. To me, it has also meant a lot to be part of the teaching cohort at the [Centre for European Studies](#).

**AS:** You recently completed an RJ research sabbatical for your project '[Europe in the Mind: Unity, Borders, Crisis](#).' Could you tell us about what you did during that time?

**MA:** I completed a substantial manuscript on the idea/concept of Europe. The main focus was on completing the final three chapters. Having done that, it turned out to be a real challenge to write an introduction and conclusion that tied it all together. Hopefully I found a way. Right now, the manuscript is with the publisher (Berghahn Books) and undergoing a peer review process. Feedback should be coming in March. Nervous for that.

**AS:** That is completely understandable with such a massive project. Now a question about our current working environment. What has been more challenging or easier than you imagined about working remotely?

**MA:** It's weird not to meet people in real life and on a more daily or weekly basis. As I had a sabbatical last year I was away from teaching and now I only meet students via Zoom. Teaching online is certainly a challenge. On the positive side, it has been easy to join in on seminars and conferences. Also, the online practice has facilitated my engagement with the [Karl Jaspers Society](#) and the new international journal, [Existenz](#). The chair and editor in chief is in California, when he begins a meeting in the morning local time, with members from Europe joining in the early evening.

**AS:** Historically, times of crisis can often lead to times of great innovation and creativity. In

your professional opinion, as a historian, do you feel like we will emerge from this crisis with new ideas?

**MA:** Yes, we will. Let's hope - and contribute to - that the ideas will be for the better of our common future. Times of crisis and new ideas tend to come together with both hopes and fears, possibilities and threats. European research has a lot of important work to do!

**AS:** Could you tell us about any new plans you have? What is next on your docket for 2021?

**MA:** There are two articles to write on themes that lay outside the scope of my book, also two papers for upcoming conferences, and importantly, the outlining of new project applications. Hopefully, it's possible to attract further interest (and grants) in studies on the concept of Europe and European borderlands. In addition to this, I am very much looking forward to taking on the position beside Linda Berg to assist her in directing the [European Studies Programmes](#).

Follow [CERGU](#) on social media! You can stay up-to-date with current seminars, events, and conferences, as well as the latest publications and news about CERGU by following us on [Twitter](#), liking our [Facebook](#) page, and joining our [LinkedIn](#) group. CERGU is now on [Instagram](#), too!



## Upcoming CERGU Events

CERGU will continue to hold events, conferences, seminars, and meetings remotely until the University of Gothenburg lifts restrictions. Contact Angie Sohlberg ([angie.sohlberg@gu.se](mailto:angie.sohlberg@gu.se)) for more information and the Zoom links to events you are interested in attending.

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| 16/2, 9.15-10.45  | <a href="#">Working Seminar: Mats André</a> n "Europe: A Unifying and Dividing Idea" via Zoom                |
| 2/3, 9.15-10.45   | <a href="#">Guest Seminar: Jan Beyers</a> via Zoom   |
| 10/3, 13.00-16.00 | <a href="#">European Research Day: European Borderlands</a> via Zoom   |
| 6/4, 9.15-10.45   | <a href="#">Guest Seminar: Stefan Berger</a> "Memory of De-Industrialisation in Global Perspective" via Zoom |

- 8/4, 13.15-15.00 **Guest Seminar: Johanna Kantola** "Gender, Party Politics, and Democracy in Europe: A Study of the European Parliament's Party Groups" (co-organized with the Department of Political Science) via Zoom
- 12/4, 13.15-14.45 **Guest Seminar: Jan Hallenberg** "The Biden Administration and U.S. Foreign Policy After Trump" (co-organized with the International Politics Research Seminar) via Zoom
- 13/4, 9.15-10.45 **Working Seminar: Annika Lindberg** "Towards a Harmonized European Deportation Regime? The Role of EU Technocrats" via Zoom
- 20-21/4 **Conference: The Century of Sputnik and Chernobyl** arranged by Ettore Costa



*Photos from Alexandra Bousiou's doctoral defense and Corona-safe outdoor gathering, January 2021*

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