

BEING A CERGU POSTDOC

Being a postdoctoral fellow at CERGU implies a dual affiliation. partly with your own subject field, in which you are expected to contribute in the same manner as postdocs and teachers/researchers at your own department do. And partly because of the diverse research environment at CERGU. Your office and formal job will remain at your department, but you will be required to meet and interact with colleagues from the CERGU network at Tuesday morning breakfasts, working seminars, workshops, and conferences every week. At CERGU, you will always have access to research assistance, and there are several chances to initiate new interdisciplinary partnerships, such as multidisciplinary research projects, conferences, publications, and so on.

Meet Three Former CERGU Postdocs

Check out what these former postdocs say about their time at CERGU

Meet Markus Johansson

Markus is a researcher at the Centre for European Research (CERGU) with a placement in the Department of Political Science. He is also affiliated with SIEPS, the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies.

Where were you before you became a CERGU postdoc, and what were you doing?

I had a temporary position at the Department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg as a researcher and lecturer. I wrote my PhD thesis at the same department, which I defended in 2015, and after that I worked on different research projects and with teaching, primarily at the University of Gothenburg.

What initially caught your attention about the CERGU postdoc position?

I was introduced to CERGU during my first semester as a PhD student in political science at the University of Gothenburg, and some of the research projects that I worked in after defending my thesis were placed at CERGU so I was already integrated into the network. To me, CERGU has always been a very welcoming environment, and my research interests fit very well, which made it a natural affiliation for me already before the postdoc position was announced.



Did you move to Gothenburg for the postdoc position, what was that like?

I already lived in Gothenburg so the postdoc position did not mean a big change in my personal life. But I was new to CERGU and Gothenburg when I started my PhD position a few years earlier, and I can only testify to the very social atmosphere that CERGU has, which makes the introduction to it really smooth.

BEING A CERGU POSTDOC

During your two year postdoc at CERGU you organized a workshop/conference. What was your workshop/conference focused on? Did you publish any special issues or articles afterward as a result of it?

My postdoc project was about member state non-compliance with EU law, what explains it and what effects past non-compliance has on future cooperation. The conference I arranged was about the causes of non-compliance with international law, although most contributions were about the EU. The conference was arranged during the pandemic and was therefore held online, but nevertheless provided an opportunity to gather key scholars within the field and establish valuable contacts.

Where have you been and what have you been up to since your time here at CERGU?

During the first months of the postdoc, I was awarded an external research grant together with another colleague at CERGU and the Department of Political Science, which meant that I had research funding waiting for me when the postdoc finished. I have therefore stayed in the CERGU network and the Department of Political Science. Since a year back, I combine this with a part-time researcher position at the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (Sieps) in Stockholm.

What would you say to prospective CERGU postdoc applicants? Any words of wisdom?

The main word of wisdom: apply! CERGU is a great research environment because of its transdisciplinary composition, which is very inspiring and great for getting truly innovative perspectives on your planned research. The external project grant I got during the postdoc benefitted greatly from the research application seminars at CERGU, where transdisciplinarity is a great asset. CERGU also provides a truly social and open atmosphere, which makes it a joy to be part of it.

Meet Brian Shaev

Brian is a former CERGU postdoc who is now working at Leiden University. There he is presently a Lecturer at the Institute of History. Brian explores multilevel politics between local, regional, national and international levels, within the European Union with a focus on France, Germany, and The Netherlands.

Where were you before you became a CERGU postdoc, and what were you doing?

Before coming to CERGU, I was a PhD student in history at the University of Pittsburgh where I participated in Pittsburgh's European Union Center of Excellence. The day after my dissertation defense I was in the office applying for the postdoc at CERGU. I was thrilled to be invited for an online interview and had several months over the summer to prepare and fine-tune my postdoctoral research proposal.



BEING A CERGU POSTDOC

I also had a short-term international fellow position at New Europe College in Bucharest, Romania, and was able to conduct archival research in the Netherlands before starting my postdoc at CERGU in September 2015.

What initially caught your attention about the CERGU postdoc position?

My research is on transnational social democracy and the history of European integration, so the CERGU position immediately caught my eye because it would allow me to continue my research into European integration while in Sweden, the quintessential home of social democracy and a country I had not had the opportunity to visit. Also the program, city, and country all have excellent international reputations--and pay is also quite high in Sweden, which made life affordable.

Did you move to Gothenburg for the postdoc position, what was that like?

I moved to Sweden in September 2015. My colleagues were very kind to help me find housing, which is a challenge in Sweden. September 2015 was the height of the so-called 'migration crisis,' so it was really an eye-opening experience going several times to the migration office in this period. Fortunately for me, CERGU staff accompanied me there and their assistance was really indispensable in facilitating a stressful situation.

During your two year postdoc at CERGU you organized a workshop/conference. What was your workshop/conference focused on? Did you publish any special issues or articles afterward as a result of it?

I organized a workshop conference after a successful RJ conference funding application that CERGU assisted and advised me in putting together. This was on the history of social democracy and cartel and competition policy in Europe. The coming publication is under contract with Routledge Explorations in Economic History. This project afforded me an opportunity to work with Prof. Susanna Fellman at Gothenburg, who is an expert on the history of cartels in business history, and I've published on international cartels in the origins of the German merger law of 1973 in a volume she co-edited with Martin Shanahan. I intend to work further in the field of cartel and competition law in the history of European integration in the years to come.

Where have you been and what have you been up to since your time here at CERGU?

Fifteen months into my postdoc at Gothenburg I was hired for a 5-year assistant professor position in European Union Studies in the Institute for History at Leiden University in the Netherlands. I remained affiliated with CERGU though for several years as I also was awarded a CERGU-backed research grant to compare municipal reception policies of migrants in postwar Europe. I was able to move to a permanent position teaching European Union Studies and international studies at Leiden in the Institute for History in 2019-2020. Currently I am turning an expanded version of my postdoc into a book for Routledge History under the provisional title, Transnational History and European Integration: Political Economy and Ideas of Democracy in the early European Communities, 1948-1972.

BEING A CERGU POSTDOC

What would you say to prospective CERGU postdoc applicants? Any words of wisdom?

CERGU is a special, wonderful place. For postdocs leaving their country, family, and friends, its commitment to socializing and communal activities quickly turns it into a surrogate family. I have been back to Gothenburg many times to see colleagues and friends and for conferences and CERGU events since I moved to Leiden in 2018 --I'll be travelling to Gothenburg again in just a few weeks from the time of writing this. I could not recommend a postdoctoral program more for those willing to take an international adventure in their career.

Meet Christina Reimann

Christina is a lecturer at the Department of History at the University of Gothenburg, CERGU, and has had projects at Stockholm University and Södertörn University. She has been a member of the French-German research institute Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin since 2012. Her research spans the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a focus on "high modernism".

Where were you before you became a CERGU postdoc, and what were you doing?

I earned my PhD in history from Humboldt University in 2014. Before coming to Gothenburg in 2016, I held short-term postdoc research positions at the Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin, at the Phillips University Marburg and at the Institute for European History in Mainz.



What initially caught your attention about the CERGU postdoc position?

CERGU's European and interdisciplinary profile, which corresponds so well with my own. Educated in France and England and holding a PhD from a German university, I identified as a European early-career scholar. As to interdisciplinarity, it had been part of my studies all throughout, starting from my transdisciplinary undergraduate studies in Nancy (France) to my PhD-studies at a graduate school at the Humboldt Faculty of Law. I was eager to continue on this path and to experience still another academic culture, which I came to appreciate very much.

Did you move to Gothenburg for the postdoc position, what was that like?

Yes, I moved to Gothenburg in 2016 together with my partner, thinking that we would relocate to Berlin after two years. Gothenburg made me feel like being 'at home' very quickly, although finding an apartment in the city was not an easy task. Six years later I am still a Gothenburg resident – now also a Swedish national with two children – trying to make my transitory into a permanent stay.

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During your two year postdoc at CERGU you organized a workshop/conference. What was your workshop/conference focused on? Did you publish any special issues or articles afterward as a result of it?

In 2017, I organized an international conference on the topic 'port cities and migration'; most of the conference contributions were published in the edited volume *Migrants and the making of the urban-maritime world. Agency and mobility in port cities, c. 1570-1940*, Routledge/Taylor& Francis, 2020 that I edited together with my colleague at the History Department, Martin Öhman.

Where have you been and what have you been up to since your time here at CERGU?

-In 2018, I was part of a successful project application to *Östersjöstiftelsen* with a project on 'Baltic Hospitality' that has been running since 2019. Additionally, I earned a position within a HERA research project, which was running from 2019 until 2022. With these two research projects, I have been employed at Södertörn University and Stockholm University respectively, while at the same time holding part-time lectureships at the History Department at GU. Also, I have been on parental leave twice since 2018.

What would you say to prospective CERGU postdoc applicants? Any words of wisdom?

CERGU is definitely one of the most vibrant and at the same time welcoming and supportive research environments that I have been part of. It is to a large extent thanks to CERGU and the nice colleagues there that I have decided early on that I would like to continue my career at the University of Gothenburg.
