

PhD Support Programme

The EU, Central Asia and the Caucasus in the International System



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What is EUCACIS?

“The EU, Central Asia and the Caucasus in the International System” (EUCACIS) is a PhD Support Programme for doctoral researchers in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus, organised by the Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP) and the Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE). Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and the Erasmus+ Programme, it offers **scholarships for three years (2016-2019) to excellent postgraduates** who are working on their doctoral thesis in political science, contemporary history or economics on a topic related to the programme’s thematic focus (see page 2) at a university or academy of sciences in the Southern Caucasus or Central Asia, namely in **Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Kashmir region in India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and the Xinjiang region in China.**

EUCACIS provides intensive PhD research training and support until the EUCACIS fellows submit their doctoral theses, and helps them to establish their own networks with other young researchers in the target regions and in Europe. This will be achieved through:

- four international conferences in Europe and the target regions
- three PhD schools
- one three-week research training stay
- continuous online coaching
- individual mentoring
- publication opportunities

Topics

The thematic field of EUCACIS covers the following topics:

- bilateral relations between the EU and its member states, Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus
- foreign policies of countries in Central Asia or the Southern Caucasus
- regional integration and cooperation in Central Asia or the Southern Caucasus
- transformation, state building and social change in the region
- the role and competition of regional or international organisations in the regions
- mutual politics perceptions in media/society
- conflict resolution processes in Central Asia/the Southern Caucasus
- analysis of the EU's Central Asia strategy or the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)
- external powers in Central Asia or the Southern Caucasus and their geopolitical interests



Source: <http://louisjsalome.com/images/Asia-MidEast-Map.gif> (colour added); accessed 23 August 2016.

Programme Structure

Conferences

During the four international conferences, different programme-related topics will be discussed with senior and junior researchers, renowned experts and officials from around the globe, in particular from Central Asia, the Southern Caucasus and Europe. **The EUCACIS fellows will present their doctoral projects and policy or research papers** and receive feedback and comments from the EUCACIS team and invited researchers.

PhD Schools

Three PhD schools of up to one week provide intensive coaching for the EUCACIS fellows in **seminars, lectures, exercises, discussion rounds, colloquia and individual consultation hours**.

Lectures and exercises focus on different quantitative and qualitative research methods. Additional lectures present theoretical approaches of the academic disciplines covered. During the seminars, fellows improve their academic writing skills and learn how to find suitable sources and choose appropriate research methods. These offers are complemented by individual consultation hours to discuss the fellows' working plans and research progress.

During the PhD schools, the fellows work on the publication of research and policy papers. Additionally, they learn how to publish in international peer-reviewed journals and are supported during the revision and submission process. Further elements of the curriculum include project management skills such as writing project applications and applying for funding as well as teaching undergraduate courses.

Programme Structure

Research Training Stay

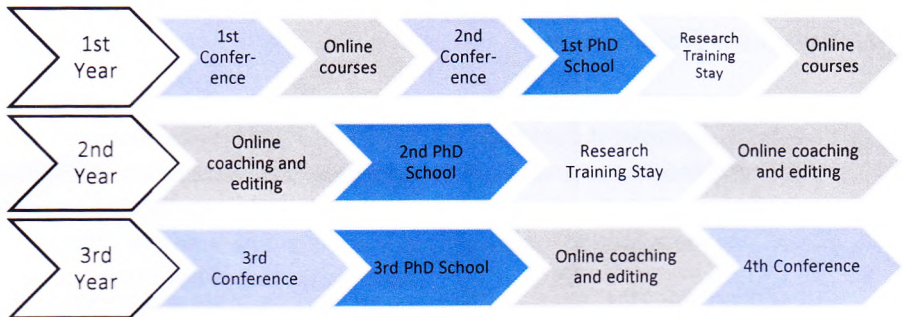
Each fellow participates in one research training stay of three weeks under direct supervision of the EUCACIS team in Berlin. Fellows may also use the stay in Berlin to conduct interviews related to their research project. Additionally, interviews in other European cities can be conducted during short research trips.

EUCACIS provides the fellows with individual working space and access to Berlin libraries. **The fellows concentrate on advancing their policy or research papers.** Together with the EUCACIS team, they agree on individual working schedules for their papers. Weekly colloquia are used to discuss research-related concerns. Depending on the fellows' research interests, EUCACIS invites guest speakers and organises visits to research institutions.

Online Working Periods and Coaching

To guarantee continuous supervision and to provide support during the programme, online courses in **research methodologies of political science, contemporary history and economics** are offered in between the conferences, the PhD schools and the research training stay. The online courses also focus on research and policy papers. Individually attributed mentors continuously support fellows throughout the process of writing policy or research papers and doctoral theses. In Skype-based consultations, the project team offers the EUCACIS fellows help and advice for deepening the lessons of the PhD schools. Further, the programme facilitates discussions between fellows, mentors and project staff via an online platform.

Programme Overview



Programme Objectives and Offers

The objective of EUCACIS is to support excellent doctoral students in writing their thesis and obtaining their doctorate, to bring its participants closer to international academic standards and to help them establish their own networks with other young researchers.

The EUCACIS fellows will be enabled to:

- improve their academic skills in research and writing for conducting and completing their PhD
- improve their methodological competences in accordance with international standards
- write policy and research papers in English
- present their findings at international conferences and workshops
- establish networks with other young researchers from the greater Central Asia, the Caucasus, Europe and beyond

Team

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Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE)

Established in 1954, CIFE is a private institute of higher education and research which receives special funding by the European Union. CIFE has offices in Nice, Berlin, Brussels and Istanbul. The programmes of CIFE encompass educational and research activities concerning European integration, federalism, regionalism and changes within the structure of contemporary society in accordance with a federalist perspective.

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Institut für Europäische Politik e.V. (IEP)

Since its founding (1959), the IEP has been a non-profit organisation dedicated to the study of European integration. It is one of the first foreign and European policy research centres in the Federal Republic of Germany and serves as a forum for exchange between academia, politics, administration and political education.

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