



We invite applications from outstanding candidates in the early stage of their research careers.

## 15 vacant PhD positions (Early Stage Researchers)

Would you like to research a PhD on the legitimacy of the European Union after the financial crisis? Would you like to start your career in a European training network of leading research universities and professionals from the policy advice, consulting and civil society sectors?

PLATO is an EU-funded PhD network coordinated by Prof. Christopher Lord at ARENA Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo. PLATO brings together [nine university partners from across Europe](#) to recruit a group of 15 of the best 'early' researchers to undertake a common multidisciplinary investigation into crisis and the legitimacy of the Union. The doctoral researchers will work together with senior researchers from across the network.

Each candidate will be employed at one of the nine universities and enrolled in a local PhD programme, while at the same time being part of an integrated research team and research project at network level.

The starting date for all positions is between 1 September and 1 October 2017. The positions are full-time for 3 years.

### What PLATO offers

PLATO's Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) will follow the same mandatory training programme. It provides a unique opportunity for internationally oriented, ambitious and team-minded early stage researchers to follow an intensive programme that pools resources from excellent European research institutions and leading scholars in the field.

The ESRs' career perspectives and employability will also be expanded beyond academia. Each ESR will undertake one three-month stay at a partner institution and one four-week secondment to gain first-hand work experience from the policy advice, consulting and civil society sector. PLATO moreover provides a quality framework for supervision and individual career development plans offered by the global leader in the professional development of researchers, Vitae. Read more on PLATO's [training programme and possible career paths](#).

A [multidisciplinary faculty of scholars](#) as well as professionals from other sectors will give PLATO's early stage researchers exceptional access to resources and opportunities across the network. Among PLATO's [training partners](#) are several leading European think tanks, a consulting firm for trade associations, as well as civil society organisations promoting democracy and citizen participation.

The MSCA-ITN funding scheme offers attractive salary and working conditions, including family allowance depending on the candidates' status at the time of recruitment.

### A common research agenda

PLATO will be a fully integrated, thematic research school with its own research question. PLATO aims to go well beyond the state-of-the-art by building a theory of legitimacy crisis in the EU from a uniquely interdisciplinary understanding of how democracy, power, law, economics and societies all fit together with institutions within and beyond the state to affect the legitimacy of contemporary political order.

PLATO will create 15 individual PhD projects on specific topics as part of its study of the EU's legitimacy challenges.

### Who you are

- MA degree in political science, law, sociology or related discipline
- Original research idea and project proposal ([guidelines](#))
- Strong academic abilities
- Team-minded
- Excellent language and communication skills
- Networking capabilities

### We offer

- International faculty at the forefront of research
- Tackling key policy issues for Europe
- Professional career development
- Transferrable skills
- Work experience from the policy advice, consulting and civil society sector
- 36-month work contract with generous allowances
- Great opportunities after your doctoral degree

### Our network

- 30 professors/senior researchers at nine university partners
- 11 training partners from the policy advice, civil society and consulting sector, media and career development

Each application should identify one of the topics, and submit a research proposal (see [Application](#)). The proposal should cover what is already in the project description. However, it should also go further. It should set out an original yet feasible way of researching the project you have selected. Candidates can submit up to three separate applications.

[What you need to know about PLATO's research in preparing your proposal \(pdf\)](#)

## Individual PhD projects

The link in the call directs you to the local announcement. The link will be added below as soon as a call is published.

- ESR1: Legitimacy crisis and core state powers, Berlin Graduate School of Transnational Studies (Germany)
- ESR2: The legitimacy of multi-level orders, Twente Graduate School (The Netherlands)
- ESR3: Legitimacy crisis and inter-institutional conflict, Centre d'études européennes, SciencesPo Paris (France)
- ESR4: Legitimacy crisis and interface mechanisms between the EU and member states, Berlin Graduate School of Transnational Studies (Germany)
- ESR5: Legitimacy crisis and the delegation of powers, Antwerp Centre for Institutions and Multilevel Politics (Belgium)
- ESR6: Legitimacy crisis and policy failure, ARENA Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo (Norway)
- ESR7: Legitimacy crisis and parliamentary representation, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna (Austria)
- ESR8: Legitimacy crisis and anti-corruption, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague (Czech Republic)
- ESR9: Legitimacy crisis and democratic state failure, ARENA Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo (Norway)
- ESR10: Legitimacy crisis and political trust, Twente Graduate School (The Netherlands)
- ESR11: Legitimacy crisis and identity, Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University, Krakow (Poland)
- ESR12: Legitimacy crisis and societal interests, Antwerp Centre for Institutions and Multilevel Politics (Belgium)
- ESR13: Legitimacy crisis and anti-politics, Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), University of Cambridge (UK)
- ESR14: Legitimacy crisis and the public sphere, ARENA Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo (Norway)
- ESR15: Legitimacy crisis and European elections, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna (Austria)

## Early Stage Researcher (ESR)

- The ESR category is defined by EU-funded Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN)
- An ESR cannot have resided in the country of recruitment for more than 1 year in the last 3 years. [FAQ mobility rule \(ec.europa.eu\)](#)
- An ESR is in the first four years of her/his research career and does not have a doctoral degree. [FAQ career stage \(ec.europa.eu\)](#)

## Qualifications

PLATO's ambitious and demanding training programme will require highly motivated ESRs, who will be required to perform above the average PhD student. The 15 PhD researchers will work together as an integrated team within a carefully designed research programme aimed at jointly developing state-of-the-art theory and methods.

In assessing the candidates, particular emphasis will be placed on originality and creativity of the proposal, academic qualifications, and the individual project's fit within the overall research programme. Candidates must have excellent writing skills as well as English language skills. Teamwork will be given emphasis, as PLATO is looking for dynamic and enthusiastic candidates collaborating well with other members of a team.

## Eligibility

Two specific eligibility conditions apply to this funding scheme, the Innovative Training Networks (ITN) of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) in the EU's Horizon 2020 programme:

- **Mobility rule:** The recruited researchers cannot have resided in the country where she/he is recruited for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the date of recruitment and not have carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in that country.
- **Career stage:** The recruited researchers must at the date of recruitment be in the first four years (full-time equivalent) of her/his research career and not have a doctoral degree. This four-year period is measured from the date of obtaining the degree, which would formally entitle to embark on a doctorate.

If it is not evident from the application that the two criteria are met, please include an explanation as part of your application.

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Further details can be found in the [European Commission's Participant Portal](#), where a number of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are assembled.

## Application

Applications must be sent according to the procedures and requirements set out in the individual calls.

Some general requirements apply and the following documents must be submitted as part of each individual application. Please make sure that any particular local criteria is met for the individual positions, which may vary depending on local PhD programmes and admission procedures.

Make sure that the criteria specified in the [individual calls](#) are met. These may vary depending on local PhD programmes and admission procedures.

- Letter of motivation
- Project proposal ([guidelines for the project proposal](#))
- Two letters of recommendation
- Copy of MA degree diploma(s) and academic transcripts
- CV
- Proof of English language proficiency, if applicable (see individual calls)

**Please read the qualifications for the positions carefully. We will only consider those who meet the listed requirements.**

## Recruitment timeline



- Deadline for application for all positions: 31 January 2017
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews in the period 6-17 March 2017
- Job offers will be made to the selected candidates by the end of April 2017
- Start date of all position will be 1 September – 1 October 2017, depending on local admission programmes