



SALTGIANT ETN – Early Stage Researcher in Geography of Energy – ESR 14

Title	The contested geopolitics of Eastern Mediterranean Oil and Gas discoveries and exploitation process
Duration	36 months
Expected start date	October 2018
Host Institution	Sciences Po, Paris (Centre de recherches internationales) - www.sciencespo.fr
Primary Supervisor(s)	Eric Verdeil

The PhD will examine the impact of recent discoveries of natural gas under salt deposits on the geopolitics and the economic development of the whole region. It will do so by mobilizing a geographical approach, with a relational understanding of matters, capital, people and ideas that will enrich the more classical accounts of international relations and development studies. The project asks whether the cooperative/competitive strategies designed to exploit the new resources can challenge the existing political and economic order at three levels: the internal country level, the regional one, and between the region and the neighboring countries:

Objectives

- a) at the internal level, the struggle over the control of the new energy flows will go along with new hopes and political schemes to turn the new income into collective (or individual) wealth and national pride.
- b) at the regional level (East Mediterranean), neighboring states, currently in a state of competition if not war, are struggling for accessing to gas resources, including delimiting exclusive economic zone, attracting investments for drilling, as well as pumping and exporting. This process can trigger new conflicts but also push former foes to cooperate, for instance in building common exports routes;
- c) the discoveries may modify the geopolitical relations with distant states and regions, for instance decrease the dependence of Arab Levant states vis-à-vis the Gulf monarchies, hence modifying the political primacy Gulf states gained in recent years.

The research will carry in-depth fieldwork survey in at least one of the countries of the region. The goal is to connect the institutional (technological, scientific, political and economic) framework built to exploit the new resources and the broader national and regional issues regarding economic development and national unity, with an emphasis on the geographical dimension (relations between the Mediterranean shore region and the whole country).

The candidate must hold a masters' degree in social sciences or in the humanities, preferably geography but also international relations, political sciences, sociology or economics. At least a basic knowledge of Arabic will be a strength. Some knowledge of French is also welcome but not compulsory.

The candidate will strongly engage in the interdisciplinary training activities of the Saltgiant network (see website).

Expected results	A monography based on the analysis of the geographic, economic and political processes involved in the exploitation process, taking into consideration the Egyptian case, potentially with comparative insights from another Mediterranean case studies.
Planned secondments	(1) CEDEJ : Centre d'études et de documentation juridiques et économiques, Le Caire. This Cairo based research center, headed by Geographer Karine Bennafla, is part of the network of Humanities and Social Sciences French Institutes Abroad, under the joint tutelage of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and the National Center for Scientific Research. (2) University of Durham (UK)/Dept of Geography/International Borders Research Unit: Prof. Gavin Bridge is currently leading a research endeavor oriented toward the new geopolitics of offshore in the Eastern Mediterranean (which is currently in the process of submission to various European funding). The PhD candidate will greatly benefit from the theoretical and comparative insights developed in this unit. (3) IPEMED : Institut de prospective économique du Monde méditerranéen. The Institut is based in Paris. The PhD candidate will spend two months at the Institute and will be involved in their activities, and benefit from their knowledge of the business networks in this region (M. J.-L. Guigou, director; P. Bekouche, scientific advisor).
Provided by SALTGIANT partners to ESRs; duration 1-6 month each	
Keywords	Geopolitics; socio-technical studies; geography of energy
Application	Applications will comprise a resume, a cover letter explaining their previous experience in social sciences or humanities research, the interest for the project (including its pluridisciplinary dimension), a proposal (5-10 pages) clearly identifying a research question and locating it in social sciences debates, and first reflections about methodology (including the choice of a preferred fieldwork if any). It will also include the master thesis, the transcripts, any published documents of interest, and two recommendation letters. Candidates must check eligibility criteria (http://www.ipgp.fr/fr/eligibility-criteria). Send application via : http://www.ipgp.fr/fr/etn-saltgiant
For further information	For scientific enquiries, please contact primary supervisor: eric.verdeil@sciencespo.fr For other issues, check http://www.ipgp.fr/fr/etn-saltgiant