



# EU-CONSENT NEWSLETTER

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN

**Dear friends,**

Welcome to the January 2008 issue of the EU-CONSENT Newsletter!

In a recent report published by the Foreign Policy Research Institute (USA), two EU-CONSENT partner institutions were named among the top 10 think tanks in the world while another two partner institutions were named on the list of the top 30 think tanks. See page 2 of this issue to find out which ones. Further good news is that Nathalie Tocci from the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI, Italy) will receive the 2008 Anna Lindh Award. From all of us, a big congratulations Nathalie!

This issue also contains information on the fifth PhD School, to be held at the University of Pau (France) in June 2008, as well as reports from Loukas Tsoukalis' EU-CONSENT lecture at the University of Potsdam and two workshops recently organized in Brussels. We also bring attention to several interesting new publications, as well as the notable achievements of some of our colleagues at EU-CONSENT partner institutions. At the end of this issue you will find a presentation of one of our partner institutions, the Bulgarian European Community Studies Association (BECSA).

Finally, do not miss the latest issues of 'Consent for Europe' and 'CFSP Forum'.

Best wishes from Stockholm,

*Gunilla and Martin*

**!Out now!**

**'Consent for Europe'**

PhD Online Journal, Volume 4

The latest issue of 'Consent for Europe' contains the following articles.

### Index

- **Florian Trauner:** 'From membership conditionality to policy conditionality: EU external governance in south-eastern Europe'
- **Elli Siapkidou:** 'Legitimacy and consent in the European Union: does one go without the other?'
- **Aris Trantidis:** 'The economic underpinnings of semi-authoritarianism: explaining preferences and power relations in the case of Belarus'
- **Tomislav Marsic:** 'Europeanisation of political parties in EU candidate countries: the effects on post-socialist consolidation?'

You will find 'Consent for Europe' at [www.eu-consent.net](http://www.eu-consent.net).

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## NEWS ON THE NETWORK

### EU-CONSENT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS NAMED AMONG TOP THINK TANKS IN THE WORLD

Four EU-CONSENT partner institutions have been listed among the top think tanks in the world by a survey, based on peer review, conducted over 18 months by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute. The **Center for European Policy Studies** (CEPS, Belgium) and the **German Institute of International Politics and Security** (SWP-Berlin, Germany) were both named on the list of the 'Top 10 Think Tanks in the World'. In addition, **Istituto Affari Internazionali** (IAI, Italy) and the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute** (SIPRI, Sweden) were listed among the 'Top 30 Think Tanks in the World'.

As many as 5080 public policy organizations that aim to 'bridge the gap between knowledge and policy' were considered. Out of these, 228 institutions were nominated by their peers and evaluated by a panel of about 50 international experts. To read the full report, go to <http://www.fpri.org/research/think-tanks/mcgann.globalgotothinktanks.pdf>.

### NATHALIE TOCCI TO RECEIVE ANNA LINDH AWARD



Nathalie Tocci from the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI, Italy) will receive the 2008 Anna Lindh Award for outstanding work in European foreign and security policy research. The prize is awarded in the context of the European Foreign and Security

Policy Studies programme, run by the Compagnia di San Paolo, the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, and the Volkswagenstiftung. The three foundations support research projects that look beyond the national views currently dominating academic and practical

approaches towards European foreign and security policy. The award ceremony will take place in October. We would like to congratulate Nathalie on this great achievement!

### PICTURES FROM THE TEPESA PRE- PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE IN LJUBLJANA

Below are some pictures from the TEPESA Pre-Presidency conference in Ljubljana, organized on 3-4 December in cooperation with the Center of International Relations of the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Ljubljana. For an extensive report from the conference, see the December 2007 issue of the Newsletter.



Foreign Minister of Slovenia Dimitrij Rupel and Marjan Svetlicic during one of the panels.



Wolfgang Wessels giving a presentation.



## UPCOMING EU-CONSENT EVENTS

### EU-CONSENT LECTURE BY NIKOS FRANGAKIS (EKEME)

*Budapest, 1 February 2008*

*Organised by the Institute for World Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*

Nikos Frangakis, Director of the Greek Centre for European Studies and Research, will deliver a lecture on the topic 'Experience of using the EU financial resources (structural and cohesion funds, CAP support) in Greece'. For more information, please contact Eva Nagy: [nagyeva@vki.hu](mailto:nagyeva@vki.hu).

### EUROPE 2008: DIFFERENTIATED OR FUSED?

*Cologne, 11 or 12 March 2008  
(date to be confirmed)*

This will be the sixth meeting of Work Package II/III 'Theories'. The workshop will focus on the question of whether European integration has led to functional and/or structural differentiation within the EU. It will also examine strategies and scenarios for the future development of European integration. As a central aim of the workshop it is of core interest to analyse whether differentiation (if it were to be found) added/adds an 'anarchic' element to the development of the EU's political system that in future might be re-enforced by the mutual effects of deepening and widening. For more information, please contact Gaby Umbach: [gaby.umbach@uni-koeln.de](mailto:gaby.umbach@uni-koeln.de).

### THE EXTERNAL EFFECTS OF INTERNAL SECURITY: CHALLENGES FOR THE ENLARGED EUROPEAN UNION

*Vienna, 8-9 May 2008*

*Conference organised by Team 23 'Internal Security' under Work Package VII 'External Relations'*

The European Union policies relating to the internal security of the EU have been growing rapidly in recent years. "Justice and Home Affairs" of the Maastricht Treaty evolved into an "Area of Freedom, Security and Justice", introducing new and remarkable tools, a case in point being the European Arrest Warrant.

But the way the EU has tried to tackle its internal security problems (such as illegal/irregular migration, organised crime and terrorism) has also induced changes in its relations to third countries. EU policy-makers have increasingly emphasised the external (even extra-European) origins and dimensions of these threats and strived to tackle them at their sources. As a result, the distinction between internal security and foreign policy has gradually been blurred.

At the Conference, first the challenges for the EU will be discussed. After presentations of the theoretical approaches and the potential of the Lisbon Treaty the focus of the discussions will be the main geographical hotspots. Finally, the cooperation of the EU with the United States and international organizations is to be examined.

The Conference in Vienna will be the culmination of three years' work of Team 23 (dealing with "The External Effects of Internal Security"). The host will be the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. Fi-



## UPCOMING EU-CONSENT EVENTS

financial support for travel (up to 400 euros) and accommodation (one night, in exceptional cases also two nights) for participants presenting papers, for discussants and PhD students will be available (on a first come, first served basis).

Please, send your inquiries concerning participation (presentations, registration) to Ms. Katrin Alas, [alas@oiip.at](mailto:alas@oiip.at). Information on the contents of the Conference can also be obtained from Dr. Paul Luif ([PaulLuif@oiip.at](mailto:PaulLuif@oiip.at) or [PaulLuif@compuserve.com](mailto:PaulLuif@compuserve.com)).

- The link between macroeconomic policy and long-term growth;
- The obstacles to co-ordination in the EU;
- The role of size in national growth strategies;
- The political economy of European growth policy

A call for papers will be made sometime in February and the **deadline for submission of papers is 15 March 2008**. For more information, please contact Anne Perrin: [anne.perrin@univ-pau.fr](mailto:anne.perrin@univ-pau.fr).

### FIFTH PHD SCHOOL: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EUROPEAN GROWTH: GEOGRAPHY, DEMOGRAPHY AND DEMOCRACY

*University of Pau (France), 2-7 June 2008  
(dates to be confirmed)*

The fifth EU-CONSENT PhD School, held in Pau in June 2008, will be dedicated to the economics and political economy of long-term sustainable economic growth in the EU. It will address such themes as: the consequences of population ageing processes, both within the EU and in relation to the rest of the world; EU policies with respect to both short- and long-term macroeconomic management; Lisbon-strategy type policies; and the longer-term aspects of sustainability relating to energy, food and the environment. Emphasis will be put on the collective and multilevel dimensions of the policy making process in each area, with special focus on the issues arising from differences in the size of member states.

Themes to be addressed:

- The demographic dynamics of the EU and its consequences on growth;
- The global consequences of European demographic dynamics;
- The Lisbon strategy and the appropriate institutional framework for sustainable growth;

### Papers to be Presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions

At the ECPR Joint Sessions in Rennes 2008, two papers of the research project on “The Politics of Time: The Temporality of EU Eastern Enlargement and Europeanisation” led by Klaus H. Goetz at the University of Potsdam will be presented. First, **Katja Lass-Lennecke** and **Annika Werner**, (University of Potsdam) will present a paper on “EU Enlargement policy as a driver of institutional change in the European Commission”. This will be done during the workshop on “Intra- and inter-institutional relations in EU decision-making”, led by **Anne Rasmussen** (European University Institute, Florence) and **Daniel Naurin**, (University of Göteborg). Second, **Laszlo Kovats** (University of Potsdam), will present a paper on “Is Discontinuity Necessary? A Quantitative Assessment of Election(s) Surviving Legislation in the European Parliament”. This will be done during the workshop led by **Natalia Ajenjo** (University of Burgo) and **Mariana Llanos** (German Institute for Global and Area Studies) on “Comparing Legislatures Worldwide: Roles, Functions and Performance in Old and New Democracies”.



## REPORTS FROM EU-CONSENT EVENTS

### EU-CONSENT LECTURE BY LOUKAS TSOUKALIS

*Potsdam, 22 January 2008*

*Organised by the Chair of German and European  
Government and Politics at the University of  
Potsdam*

In the third round of the EU-CONSENT lectures, **Klaus H. Goetz**, chair of German and European Government and Politics at the University of Potsdam, Germany, welcomed **Professor Loukas Tsoukalis** on 22 January 2008. Tsoukalis is Jean Monnet-Professor of European Organisation at the University of Athens, President of the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), and Special Advisor to the president of the European Commission, **José Manuel Barroso**.

In his lecture on 'Global, Social and Political Europe' Tsoukalis spoke about the future perspectives of the European Union and its challenges in the 21st century. He pointed out that after an unprecedented success story of European integration and the *de facto* achievement of the initial goals of the founding fathers of the Union – peace, stability and relative prosperity on the continent – the EU lacks a new orientation for the future.

In his view, the political crisis after the negative votes of the French and the Dutch populations on the Constitutional Treaty stresses the need for Europe to redefine its purpose and to gain legitimacy *vis-à-vis* the peoples in its member states. Professor Tsoukalis argued that European integration has reached levels where the EU is involved in distributive policy which directly affects its citizens. It has hence to change from an elite-driven project to a more democratic one backed by the majority of a European demos.

Therefore, the EU has to find its place in an ever faster changing globalised world. The inward look-

ing perspective of the first six member countries, which accepted a given bi-polar world that was beyond their sphere of influence, has to be re-thought. The now 27 members need to ask themselves whether they want to play a role in world politics and the global economy. If the answer is yes, they have to act in relative unity. The European peace project (*Pax Europae*) has to be extended to the direct and mid-range neighbourhood through different kinds of "semi-membership".

Social policy at European level also becomes a key issue. Liberalization in the European Economic and Monetary Union directly creates a growing number of 'winners' and 'losers' within the member states. The ones that feel like 'losers' become sceptical towards the EU, which may weaken its support within the countries and their elites. To win them back, social policy measures by the EU, such as the European Globalisation Fund, should complement national social policy.

Finally, the EU needs to be linked to the people. The gap between European institutions and citizens has become so wide that the people forget about them. Therefore, direct democratic powers – the election of the Commission's president could for instance be placed in the hands of the European people – would be more than a symbolic measure.

For the full text please see: [www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/global\\_social\\_political\\_europe.pdf](http://www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/global_social_political_europe.pdf)

*Katja Lass-Lennecke*  
University of Potsdam

## REPORTS FROM EU-CONSENT EVENTS

### CONSTITUTIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE EU: WIDER EUROPE, DEEPER INTEGRATION?

*Brussels, 17 January 2008*

*Workshop organised by the cross-cutting working group 'Deepening: Constitutional and Institutional Change in the EU'.*

Members of EU-CONSENT's Cross-Cutting Working Group "Deepening: Constitutional and Institutional Change" convened at the Fondation Universitaire in Brussels on the 17th January 2008 for a workshop in preparation of a joint publication on the Treaty of Lisbon, edited by Edward Best, Brigid Laffan and Wolfgang Wessels.

The aim of the workshop was to share first reflections on the Lisbon Treaty from both a theoretical and practical perspective, and to define a research and publication agenda for the coming months. The main output is to be an edited volume, published within EU-CONSENT's publication series at Edward Elgar Publishing immediately after ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. The book will assess the implications of the Lisbon Treaty, as the Union concludes and digests the recent enlargements, in the light of a number of cross-cutting thematic questions loosely grouped around the areas of context, content and consequences of Lisbon Treaty.

During the workshop most contributions highlighted the complex nature of the trade-offs in the Union's strife towards both increased efficiency and legitimacy. The revision of old and the introduction of new procedures as well as new players in the institutional architecture serve to heighten complexity and create new and recreate existing tensions. This complexity dilutes the allocation of competencies in the new structure and renders any prediction about future effects highly speculative. The contributors pre-



dict intense intra- as well as interinstitutional competition (turf wars) for influence on decision-making processes and funding. This is true for the new leadership quartet (High Representative, the Presidents of the Commission and the European Council and the Council team-presidency) which will impact on most policy areas as well as on specific innovations such as the External Action Service, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the increased role of national parliaments. Legitimacy may prove another such battleground with the element of popular contestation becoming increasingly prominent. The question whether the Lisbon Treaty achieves a robust equilibrium (however defined) remains highly contestable. This ambiguity can be interpreted as a result of a lack of consensus about fundamental constitutional questions such as market vs. state, pooled sovereignty vs. national autonomy and – with respect to Europe's role in world politics – soft power vs. hard power.

As follow-up of the workshop, final chapters will be presented and discussed during a cross-cutting conference on 'Deepening: Constitutional and institutional change' organised in late 2008 by EU-CONSENT's Work packages IV 'Institutions', II/III 'Theories' and I 'Communication'.

*Gaby Umbach*  
University of Cologne



## REPORTS FROM EU-CONSENT EVENTS

### FIRST MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE RESEARCH FRAME

*Brussels, 20 December 2007*

EU-CONSENT's Task Force Research Frame convened for the first time to discuss the potential for generating theoretical insights into the interconnectedness between EU 'deepening' and 'widening'. The Task Force intends to produce an integrated research frame for EU-CONSENT activities (and beyond) to better compile research conducted within in the network and enhance its external impact.

In general, comments pointed at the difficulties in identifying causal mechanisms between the two variables in question. These difficulties start with the cumbersome effort of satisfactorily defining EU 'deepening' and 'widening'. EU 'deepening' appears to be a more complex phenomenon. Does 'deepening' refer to any shift of competences to the European level even where such a shift is based on intergovernmental decision-making procedures or open coordination, or should it more narrowly signify shifts towards a 'communitarisation' of policies with close involvement of supranational institutions and decisions by majority? The process seems to go beyond institutional reform to equate to the question: 'What do we want to do together and how do we want to go about it?'

The discussion revealed both preliminary results as to the interconnectedness of both processes and a multitude of open questions. The participants agreed that an important question to be asked is whether enlargement necessarily produces new policies. While a certain shift of emphasis in objectives can be identified (such as a shift of foreign policy interest towards the East and energy policy), it remains unclear whether this is substantially new or a continuation of existing dynamics. Participants further agreed that the interrelation between EU 'deepening' and 'widening' needs to be embedded in a wider approach

encompassing an external dimension ('the world pressing down') and a domestic dimension ('domestic pressure').

The meeting resulted in a multitude of open questions which cluster around a definition of the central concepts and the nature of their interconnectedness. Next steps include the production of a revised conceptual paper based on the outcomes of the meeting and the feedback of network members in the period after the meeting. This revised paper shall serve as a basis for discussion until the next workshop of the Task Force Research Frame scheduled for September 2008.

*Gaby Umbach*  
University of Cologne

**!Out now!**

**New issue of 'CFSP Forum'**

Volume 6, No. 1, January 2008

The latest issue of 'CFSP Forum' contains the following articles.

#### Index

- **Sophie Vanhoonacker and Hylke Dijkstra:** 'Beyond Note-Taking: CFSP Challenges for the Council Secretariat'
- **Edith Drieskens and Roos Van de Cruys:** 'EU Representation at the UN: The Peacebuilding Commission as a Paragon of Complexity'
- **Malgorzata O. Gorska:** 'The Development of the Legal Bases of EU-UN Cooperation'
- **Sonia Lucarelli:** 'European Political Identity and Others' Images of the EU: Reflections on an Underexplored Relationship'

You will find 'CFSP Forum' at  
[www.eu-consent.net](http://www.eu-consent.net).



## NEW PUBLICATIONS



andrewduff.eu.

**Andrew Duff** (MEP) has written a paper entitled *True Guide to the Treaty of Lisbon*, in which he provides a detailed account of all the institutional changes contained in the Treaty of Lisbon. The paper can be downloaded at [www.](http://www.andrewduff.eu)

**Daniela Kietz** and **Volker Perthes** have edited a volume entitled *The Potential of the Council Presidency. An Analysis of Germany's Chairmanship of the EU, 2007* (SWP Research Paper 2008/RP 01). By shedding light on the reasons for their success as well as identifying 'best practice', a critical dissection of EU presidencies can improve the functioning of the Union's Council system. The contributions to this study grapple with two questions, namely: what demands were placed on the German Council Presidency by different negotiating situations, and whether the Chair effectively and efficiently delivered on its different roles in the EU process. An object of particular attention is the processes and strategies by which the German Presidency adapted its performance to the demands it encountered. The study closes with a critical look at the question whether the German *modus operandi* might be adopted by other presidencies. It then sets these developments in the context of the remoulding of the Council system set out in the Lisbon Treaty. The changes contained there will alter the working conditions of all presidencies from 2009. The English version can be downloaded at: [http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/common/get\\_document.php?asset\\_id=4656](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/common/get_document.php?asset_id=4656)

**Mark Rhinard** from the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) has, together with his colleagues, published several articles and chapters. These include:

- 'Protecting Europe's Critical Infrastructure: Problems and Prospects' (with **Åsa Fritzon**, **Kristin Ljungkvist**, and **Arjen Boin**) in

the *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* (15: 1, 2007)

- 'What the Reform Treaty Means for National Administrations' (with **Malena Britz**), Chapter in *Challenge Europe*, a journal of the European Policy Centre (EPC), December 2007
- 'Societal Security: An Emerging Role for the European Union', Introduction to Working Paper No. 27, *Building Societal Security in Europe: the EU's role in managing emergencies*, European Policy Centre (EPC), Brussels. April 2007.

The following three articles on EU issues have appeared in the latest issue of the *The International Spectator* (number 4/2007), the English-language journal published by **Istituto Affari Internazionali**:



- **Walter Posch**: 'The European Union and Iran: What Next?'
- **Flavia Zanon**: 'EU Foreign Policy in the Italian Parliament: The Debates on China and Iran'
- **John Pinder**: 'Altiero Spinelli's European Federal Odyssey'



**Sergio Fabbrini** and **Simona Piattoni** (leader team 9) have recently edited a volume entitled *Italy in the European Union: Redefining National Interest in a Compound Polity* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers). Based on an analytical evaluation of both the weaknesses and strengths of the Italian

political system, this book offers a detailed and comprehensive description of Italy's contribution to European Union policy-making combining

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

empirical investigation and theoretical analysis. The contributors systematically explore the role played by Italian institutional and noninstitutional actors in several decision-making processes. The book gives a nuanced picture of Italy's role in the EU's evolution. The book explores the concept of compound polity of twenty-seven member states: the formation of stable hegemonic coalitions is implausible and the concept of national interest, which still informs much of the literature on the EU, is logically and empirically unusable in many EU policy realms. To order the book, visit: [www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com).

reform and tries to formulate reform options for the two main spending blocks, the CAP and the cohesion policy, as well as for the revenue side of the EU-budget. Finally, the paper concludes with the discussion of the prospects of success of the review. The paper can be downloaded at [www.eu-consent.net](http://www.eu-consent.net).



**Werner Weidenfeld** and **Wolfgang Wessels** have edited the *Annual Yearbook of European Integration* (Nomos, Baden Baden, 2007) of the Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP-Berlin). The Yearbook has since 1980 closely documented and analysed the process of European integration.

The result is a unique documentation of modern European history. In the numerous articles, authors trace European political events from the perspective of their research focus and provide information on the work of European institutions, the development of individual policy areas and the role of Europe in the world. Several of the contributors to this year's volume are members of EU-CONSENT. More information on the Yearbook, as well as earlier issues, can be found at: [www.iep-berlin.de/index.php?id=89&L=1](http://www.iep-berlin.de/index.php?id=89&L=1).

**Peter Becker** (SWP-Berlin) has recently published an EU-CONSENT EU-Budget Working Paper entitled *Reforming the European Financial Framework*. The paper starts with a short examination of the final compromise on the Financial Framework 2007-2013 and then describes the main lines of conflict defining the very controversial negotiations. Based on this analysis it then identifies the main areas of

## NEW FROM PARTNER INSTITUTES

### Instituto Affari Internazionale (IAI)

IAI's research fellow **Riccardo Alcaro** has been selected to take part in the research and training programme "European Foreign and Security Policy Studies", an EU-wide initiative jointly developed by the foundations Compagnia di San Paolo (Italy), Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Sweden), and Volkswagen Stiftung (Germany). Mr. Alcaro has been awarded a grant to conduct a year and a half research on the topic "Exploring the potential and limits of the CFSP: the EU diplomatic action on Iran's nuclear issue". The grant was assigned after Mr. Alcaro successfully presented his research project to a panel of European studies experts, academics, and representatives from the three funding foundations. The interview took place in the context of an international conference on "Europe in the New World Order: Global Leadership for Peace and Security?", held in Lund, Sweden, on 10-12 January 2007. The conference was the final step of a two-tier selection process that resulted in the assignment of around 20 grants out of the 115 originally presented applications.



### Institute for International Relations (IMO, Croatia)

**Dr Igor Vidacak**, IMO Research Fellow, has been selected as the Person of the Year 2007 on the Croatian civil society scene. Although he recently left IMO as he was appointed Head of the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs in April 2007, he maintains close research links with his home institute.

The nomination was based on the latest assessment by Croatian web portal H-Alter ([www.h-alter.org](http://www.h-alter.org)) of the most positive and the most negative civil society developments in 2007. In addition to being named the Person of the Year on the Croatian civil society scene, civil society experts ranked highly his vital role in improvements that the Government

Office for Cooperation with NGOs, and the National Council for Civil Society made during the past year. Considering the prevailing critical attitude of NGOs towards the government, this is one of the rare occasions when civil society leaders ranked highly the positive role of the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, and the National Council for Civil Society Development.

The survey showed that significant progress was made in improving cooperation with NGOs, including improvement of the financial, institutional and legal framework. This is especially related to the adoption of the Civil Society Strategy and its Operational Action Plan, and improved infrastructure of the sector (Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, National Council for Civil Society Development, and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development). During the past year the new Law on Volunteerism and a new Code on Public Financing of NGOs were also enacted. Details on the survey are available in Croatian at: [www.h-alter.org/tekst/5-+-5-anketa-civilno-drustvo-2007./7541#hot](http://www.h-alter.org/tekst/5-+-5-anketa-civilno-drustvo-2007./7541#hot).

Dr Igor Vidacak joined IMO in 2001 and his research interests particularly include the impact of EU integration on governance structures and policy paradigms in accession countries, patterns of interest representation in the enlarged EU and the role of organised civil society in the European integration process. In EU-CONSENT he participates in WP V "Democracy, Legitimacy and Identities: Citizens on the Construction of Europe".

## PRESENTING PARTNER INSTITUTES

### BULGARIAN EUROPEAN COMMUNITY STUDIES ASSOCIATION (BECSA)

Back in 1993, in the early days of Euro-enthusiasm among Bulgarian academic circles, the Bulgarian European Community Studies Association (BECSA) was created in a small house in Sofia, which stands on its emblem today. Being a not-for-profit NGO, it is an inter-university forum for debate, teaching assistance, research, policy advice and information activities on EU integration studies. Having been hosted for several years by a public institution (the Centre for European Studies in Sofia), since 2003 BECSA has established an independent office with its own employed staff. BECSA members (over 50 by 2008) come from most public and private universities in the country and from think tanks, but also from civil service and even include Bulgarian researchers from abroad. The association takes part in several international scientific networks, among which the most prominent are the ECSA-World network of sister-associations of EU studies, and the Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA).

In the first years of its existence, BECSA's main mission was to help establish European studies curricula in Bulgarian universities and to create a network of professors interested in legal, political and economic aspects of European integration. As time advanced, and as Bulgaria's pre-accession efforts were stepped up, the association's portfolio was broadened and focused more on inter-disciplinary research, policy advice on topical issues (e.g. the elaboration of Bulgarian positions in the "future of Europe" debate that unfolded after the Nice Treaty, or on the EU's Black Sea policy today), or EU-related communication activities (such as the development of information strategies). BECSA has taken part in a number of research and networking projects under FP5, FP6, the Phare or the Jean Monnet programme, as well as in several smaller national programmes. Its activity record has consolidated its capacities to bring added

value as an interface between academia, government and civil society.

The main areas in which the association has developed scientific expertise are the EU's institutional development and constitutionalisation, enlargement and Europeanisation, European democracy and citizenship, EU structural policies, monetary integration, foreign and security policy, regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe and the area's EU integration path, the ENP and its Black Sea dimension, etc. In most of these fields the association has published edited volumes, collections of conference papers, research studies and policy reports, as well as smaller commentaries and information material.

### Researchers involved in EU-CONSENT



**Krassimir Nikolov** is a Founding member, Secretary General and a member of the Managing Board of BECSA. His main areas of research are: political integration in the EU and its theoretical foundations, relations of the EU with the countries from Central and Eastern Europe and with EFTA, the political and institutional architecture of a united Europe and the EU's external relations and CFSP/ESDP.

**Dobrin Kanev** conducts research on and teaches about: political sociology, theories of democracy, politics and government in contemporary Bulgaria, and democratisation in central and eastern Europe.

