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RECON is launched

A large-scale, multidisciplinary research project on whether democracy is possible today, is launched. RECON – *Reconstituting Democracy in Europe* – will run for five years (2007-2011) and will focus on the conditions for democracy in the multi-level constellation that makes up the EU.

RECON is coordinated by ARENA – Centre for European Studies at the University of Oslo, with Prof. Erik

O. Eriksen as project coordinator and scientific responsible. Around 70 researchers affiliated to a broad range of research milieus across Europe participate. At project start, there are 18 partner institutions in 12 European countries (see list to the right), and, in 2008, the consortium will be extended with two more partners after competitive calls. The research to be undertaken covers a wide range of academic fields, from political science, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, information science, law and legal theory, to economics.

See more on the back for RECON's research objectives.

RECON kick-off conference

ARENA will host the first RECON conference in Oslo, 26-27 January 2007. The two-day conference addresses the main problems regarding supranational governance and democracy in Europe and presents the main themes of the project.

Participation is open at the first day of the conference, and State Sec-



Prof. James Bohman

by RECON's coordinator Erik O. Eriksen.

Keynote speeches will be given by John Dryzek, one of the leading po-

litical scientists on democracy beyond the nation state, and James Bohman, prominent theorist in the field of normative political theory and cosmopolitanism. RECON's research fields will then be presented and discussed. The second day is restricted to RECON partners.

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Prof. John Dryzek

RECON partner institutions

ARENA, University of Oslo
(coordinator)

Center of Political and
Constitutional Studies,
Madrid

Eötvös Loránd University,
Budapest

European University Institute,
Florence

Freie Universität Berlin

Institute of Sociology, Academy
of Sciences of the Czech
Republic, Prague

Jagiellonian University, Krakow

Johann Wolfgang Goethe
University, Frankfurt

London School of Economics
and Political Science

Queen's University Belfast

Riga Graduate School of Law

Sabanci University, Istanbul

Université Libre de Bruxelles

University of Bremen

University of León

University of Reading

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Peace Research Institute
Frankfurt

Registration by January 22nd to Geir Kværk: g.o.kvark@reconproject.eu.

Conference venue:
Radisson SAS Scandinavia Hotel,
Holbergsgate 30, Oslo

More on www.reconproject.eu.

RECON's research

The research within RECON takes heed of the challenges to democracy in Europe. It seeks to clarify whether democracy is possible under conditions of multilevel governance. Three different options for democratic reconstitution in Europe are delineated and assessed:

- a) Reconstituting democracy at the national level with a concomitant reframing of the EU as a functional regulatory regime
- b) Reconstituting democracy through establishing the EU as a multinational federal state
- c) Reconstituting democracy through developing a post-national Union with an explicit cosmopolitan imprint

Which form is the most robust? RECON assesses the options for reconstituting democracy through analyzing the EU's constitutionalisation process (WP 2); the institutional complex at the EU and member state levels (WP 3); the role and status of gender within the enlarged Europe (WP 4); the democratic quality and governing capacity

of the Union within *tax and fiscal policy* (WP 7) and within *foreign and security policy* (WP 6); and the multilevel configuration of *civil society and the public sphere* (WP 5). It examines the effects of *external transnationalisation* on the EU and discerns democratic lessons from *comparison with non-European complex multilevel entities* (WP 9). RECON studies the *enlargement process* and the transition and consolidation of democracy in the new member states (WP 8). The aim is to identify strategies through which democracy can be strengthened and propose measures for rectifying institutional and constitutional defects in different policy areas.

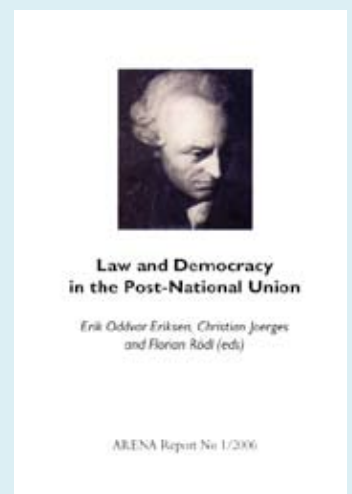


The European puzzle
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Concluding report CIDEL

RECON builds on the three-year long CIDEL project (*Citizenship and Democratic Legitimacy in the European Union*) that officially ended on 31 October 2005. With RECON, much of the research within CIDEL will be continued and further developed.

The CIDEL consortium held its concluding conference in Florence in September 2005. The conference proceedings were recently published as ARENA Report No. 1/2006, *Law and Democracy in the Post-National Union*, edited by Erik O. Eriksen, Christian Joerges and Florian Rödl. Analyses of the European polity as a rights-based post-national union, which oriented the work in CIDEL was complemented by reflections on 'Europe's unfinished agenda'. The report will be useful reading for anyone with an interest in the topics of the RECON project.



Immanuel Kant on the cover of ARENA Report No 1/2006.

Download the Report at www.arena.uio.no/cidel/Reports/ConcludingReport.htm, or request a printed copy to m.eldholm@arena.uio.no.

For more information and publications from the CIDEL project, see www.arena.uio.no/cidel.

www.reconproject.eu

RECON's website contains information about the project, its planned research and work packages, partner institutions and participating researchers, events and publications. A RECON Report Series as well as a RECON Online Working Paper Series will be established and made available here. There is also a section with news from the project where you can subscribe to this newsletter, and a press room with brochures, leaflets and media comments.



RECON is an Integrated Project supported by the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme for Research, Priority 7: Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society.



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