

**POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW**  
INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES EUROPÉENNES – UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES

Faculty/Département : **Institut d'études européennes (IEE)**

Numéro de service: TBC

Supervisor: **Professor Ramona Coman**

Contract Type: International **Post-doctoral Fellowship**

Contract Length: **2 years (24 months)**

Work Time: **Full-Time**

Start Date: **September 2022**

External Funding Source: **RED-SPINEL (Horizon Europe-RIA n°101061621)**

Reason behind the recruitment: **Research Agenda Associated with WP1 of the Red-SPINEL project**

## Job description

The selected candidate will be hired as a full-time **Post-Doctoral Fellow**.

The selected candidate will take on a **research & management mandate** on external (EU) funding.

As part of the research team based at the Institut d'études européennes (IEE), the hired post-doctoral fellow will contribute to the research capacities dedicated to the RED-SPINEL research project, specifically those associated with the project's 1<sup>st</sup> WP entitled *Conceptualising changes to EU policy instruments in the face of mounting dissensus*, under the supervision of Prof. Ramona Coman.

## Work Environment

The **Institut d'études européennes (IEE)** at the **Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB)** is a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence. As such, it is a recognised for its expertise in European Studies. The IEE-ULB carries out its own interdisciplinary research projects. At the same time, it promotes the work of its affiliated members on European issues within the [associated research units and centres](#) of its three partner faculties - the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Law and Criminology and The Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management. The IEE-ULB develops an interdisciplinary research agenda established by the Institute's Research Committee. The current agenda is based on four [research themes](#) that are articulated around political sciences, law, economics, history, values and global interactions: Europe as an area of freedom, security & justice; Europe as an area of economic & social regulation; Europe as a community of norms & values; and Europe in the world.

The hired Post-doctoral Fellow will be a member of an IEE-based research and management team coordinated by Professor Ramona Coman and dedicated to the implementation, coordination, and promotion of **RED-SPINEL**.

**RED-SPINEL** is a 36-month long, 3.2 million euro, interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral project coordinated by the *Institut d'études européennes* of the ULB (PI Ramona Coman) involving seven higher education institutions: Université libre de Bruxelles, Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai, HEC Paris, Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu and the University of Warwick. They are joined in the consortium by four non-academic partners: Peace Action, Training and Research Institute in Romania, Milieu Consulting, Magyar Helsinki Bizottság / Hungarian Helsinki Committee and Stichting Nederlands Instituut voor Internationale Betrekkingen Clingendael across eight European countries.

The project will analyse the changing nature of dissensus surrounding liberal democracy and its implications for EU supranational policy instruments. It will unpack the inter-connected drivers of contemporary dissensus surrounding liberal democracy. The project will develop a range of scientifically informed policy

recommendations and capacity-building efforts able to foster innovative democratic practices able to respond to the present-day dissensus.

Empirically, RED-SPINEL will focus on the key policy instruments and legal mechanisms shaping the EU's efforts in support of democracy and the rule of law. The studied instruments include the EU rule of law toolbox, the neighbourhood and accession instruments, the European semester, fundamental rights, and judicial instruments, as well as citizen participation platforms. Furthermore, through a series of stakeholder events, RED-SPINEL will flesh out the implications of its findings for public policy stakeholders (i.e. legal professionals, policymakers, European youth) as well as EU instruments aimed at responding to said dissensus. The project's concept-building effort will centre on the notion of '**dissensus**' as it explores how contemporary dissensus surrounding liberal democracy differs from previous debates and which more fundamental questions it raises about future democratic practices and the rule of law. Ultimately, RED-SPINEL will provide a typology of said dissensus, map the principal actors of the dissensus in Europe and unpack its two underlying drivers – i.e., heightened internal contestation over liberal democracy and external competition from alternative illiberal models.

It is to this conceptualising effort that the hired post-doctoral fellow will be attached as a member of the project's **1<sup>st</sup> Work Package (WP1)** on "*Conceptualising changes to EU policy instruments in the face of mounting dissensus*". Coordinated by Prof. Ramona Coman (IEE-ULB), WP1 functions as RED-SPINEL's overarching WP with all partner organisations involved in its concept and typology building effort. WP1 offers a direct answer to the project's first objective – i.e., to foster conceptual innovation on dissensus. It will develop and further operationalise the project's original understanding of the current swell of dissensus surrounding liberal democracy in Europe. Contemporary dissensus is understood as distinct from mere politicisation. While the latter implies both salience and a dynamic polarisation of views<sup>63</sup>, RED-SPINEL's understanding of dissensus describes a structural situation where views on liberal democracy are highly polarised without being necessarily accompanied by any increase in saliency. As such, RED-SPINEL does not look at the relative saliency of present-day dissensus surrounding liberal democracy, but rather the implications of its irreducible and often irreconcilable normative polarisation. To this end, it will accomplish three main tasks. First it will unpack and crystallise the shared defining features of current strands of ideational dissensus in EU policies, be they single-issue, multi-faceted or outright rejection of liberal democracy in the name of an alternative model. Fairly early in the project's lifespan, the scholars involved in the WP1 will produce a Think Piece on 'Dissensus on Liberal Democracy in the 21st Century', which will serve as a shared conceptual reference throughout the project. Ultimately, the conceptual discussions surrounding dissensus will be collected in a peer-reviewed edited volume on 'Mounting Dissensus and the Prospects of Liberal Democracy in the 21st Century' to be published with Routledge. Additionally, WP1 will also work towards publishing an original typology of the observed dissensus in Europe based on its relative impact on EU instruments and by way of a network analysis exercise, mapping the key actors of dissensus in Europe (see Fig. 1.3.). Lastly, one should note that WP1's concept building efforts will help mainstream the gender dimension throughout the project as said concept-building effort will systematically tease out and take on board the intersectional aspects of the studied dissensus. The main target of WP1 is the international scientific community of scholars involved in EU and Democracy Studies, yet key practitioners - i.e., policymakers, legal practitioners, and civic leaders - are to be associated in its concept-building.

## Essential missions related to the function

*in order of importance (and estimated % of work time)*

The 2022/23 academic year marks the launch of the RED-SPINEL project.

Within the framework of RED-SPINEL the IEE-ULB seeks to hire a full-time Post-Doctoral Research fellow linked to WP1. Said person would be hired by and based at the ULB in Brussels. Under the supervision of Prof. Ramona Coman, the hired individual will be directly responsible for part of the scientific agenda included in the WP1 project's programme. The Research Fellow will be involved in the conception, realisation, production, and promotion of the promised scientific deliverables.

The selected researcher will be fully committed to the programme (in terms of working hours and scientific output) and will share in the responsibilities associated with the milestones and deliverables associated with RED-SPINEL.

The hired Post-Doctoral Fellow will contribute to the following missions:

1. **Mission 1 (75%)- Produce original research, draft work to publishable standard, and deliver findings at seminars, workshops, and conferences.** This implies:
  - Data collection and literature review on the key concept of the project (i.e. Dissensus)
  - Data collection and contribution to the production of the think piece on 'Dissensus on Liberal Democracy in the 21st Century'
  - Data collection and contribution to the mapping of key actors of dissensus
  - Submission of a co-authored online publication of Visualisations of the typology of dissensus & mapping of networks of actors of dissensus
  - Contribution to the production set of peer-reviewed article proposals on 'Typologies & Networks of Dissensus in Europe' under the supervision of prof. Ramona Coman
  
2. **Mission 2 (25%)- Organize a series of international scientific workshops on specific topics related either to RED-SPINEL's overall research agenda, or specifically to its WP1.** This implies:
  - Active participation to the seminar on 'Dissensus on Liberal Democracy in the 21st Century'
  - Participation to the international conferences of the project (CES, ISA or EUIA)

## Profile

### Qualifications required

Ph.D. in political science (or a directly related field such as international relations, sociology, EU studies...) ideally a research profile focused on themes relevant to RED SPINEL

### Mobility Requirement

As the funding is provided as an international post-doctoral fellowship eligible candidates must be in a position to formally expatriate (i.e., move) to Belgium when starting the contract. This means that *"the selected candidate must not have resided or carried out their main activity in Belgium for more than 12 months over the past 3 years immediately before their recruitment date"*

### Scientific knowledge and skills

#### Candidates must have:

- Show personal expertise and/or interest in the topic of the project
  
- A strong record in qualitative & quantitative research (*e.g., interviews, network analysis, documentary analysis...*).
- Be able to coordinate the organisation of scientific events (*e.g., conferences, summer schools, workshops, panels international conferences ...*)

### General knowledge and skills

#### Candidates must:

- Very good command of English (excellent academic writing and oral skills) and French (passive knowledge is a minimum required)
- Ability to work in a team, to meet deadlines and to combine autonomy with respect of guidelines
- Experience of working in an international environment
- Demonstrate their ability to evolve in a multi-cultural environment

### Overview of the knowledge, skills, experience & qualifications required to effectively fulfil the role

REQUIREMENTS – The hire must demonstrate:	ESSENTIAL (E) or DESIRABLE (D) requirements	MEASURED BY: a) Application Form incl. CV. b) Interview c) Personal Presentation & Motivation
A PhD in a relevant field (political science)	E	a, c
Expertise in Democracy studies, EU/Global governance studies, Democracy promotion, Political Parties, Civil Society	E	a,b, c

Delivery of research findings at seminars, workshops and conferences	E	a, b, c
Ability to organise meetings and workshops	E	a, b
Working knowledge of both English and French. Excellent academic writing skills in English are required and a good understanding (passive) of French	E	a, b

## Application procedure\*

\*Additional information can be received by contacting [ramona.coman@ulb.be](mailto:ramona.coman@ulb.be)

The successful candidate will be selected based on the quality of the CV, research achievements, motivation, and intellectual congruence with the project. Each candidate should explain clearly his/her interest in the project and how and why he/she can contribute to its development. Experience and achievements in academic research in areas relevant to the project will be taken into consideration at the time of selection.

## Application Files

The application documents are to be consolidated **into one single PDF** file sent by email to Dominique Dembour ([Dominique.Dembour@ulb.be](mailto:Dominique.Dembour@ulb.be)) and Ramona Coman ([Ramona.Coman@ulb.be](mailto:Ramona.Coman@ulb.be)).

### Application files must include in a single PDF document the following information in English:

- A Filled-out copy of the application form (see below) - *incl. Name, affiliation, e-mail and phone number of three referees who can be contacted if necessary*
- A separate detailed motivation letter (2 pages) explaining the candidate's general research interest in the project and his/her potential contribution to it.
- A curriculum vitae listing all academic qualifications, relevant research experience and previous publications - *You may choose to complete a standard Europass form (<https://europa.eu/europass/en>) or not. This is left entirely up to the applicants. Once completed, whether Europass or not, the CV must be included in the single application file*
- A copy of the passport/ID, PhD and master diploma

### Application Calendar

- ✓ **Applications are open until 15/07/2022**
- ✓ **Interviews with Prof. Ramona Coman will be organised remotely on 20 July 2022.**  
Short-listed candidates will be informed **mid-July 2021**. During the interview, they will be asked to make a brief presentation outlining their prospective contribution to the project.
- ✓ **The final decision will be taken as soon as possible after the interviews.**

### Equal opportunity policy

ULB's personnel policy is based on diversity and equal opportunity.

We recruit candidates on the basis of their skills, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, origin, nationality, beliefs, disability, etc.

More details on the ULB gender and diversity policy are available at <https://www.ulb.be/en/about-ulb/gender-equality-at-ulb>.

# Application Form

Reference Number:	<input type="text"/>	<i>Please refer to the vacancy advertisement</i>
Application Number:	<input type="text"/>	<i>(For office use only)</i>
Post Title:	<input type="text"/>	<i>Please refer to the vacancy advertisement</i>

## 1. Personal Details

Last Name / Family Name:	<input type="text"/>	First/Given Name(s):	<input type="text"/>	Title:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>	Post Code	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone Numbers:	Daytime	<input type="text"/>	Evening	<input type="text"/>	
Mobile	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail Address:	<input type="text"/>		

## 2. Present or Most Recent Employment

Employer's Name:	<input type="text"/>				
Employer's Address:	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>	Post Code	<input type="text"/>		
Post Title:	<input type="text"/>				
Dates of Appointment:	From	<input type="text"/>	To	<input type="checkbox"/> Present, or	<input type="checkbox"/> Date
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Main Responsibilities: <i>(Do not overrun the page boundary; continue on a separate sheet if necessary)</i>	<input type="text"/>				
Period of Notice Required:	<input type="text"/>	Salary / Wage: £	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time
If unemployed, then please give a brief outline of your current situation / occupation (including any voluntary work): <i>(Do not overrun the page boundary; continue on a separate sheet if necessary)</i>					
<input type="text"/>					

**3. Previous Employment** (Please start with the most recent. Include all paid / unpaid / voluntary work)

*(Do not overrun the page boundary; continue on a separate sheet if necessary)*

Dates of Appointment: From To	Employer's Name:	Post Title:	Main Responsibilities:	Reason for Change:

**4. Education** (Include relevant professional and technical qualifications.)

School / College / University / Professional Body:	Qualification Obtained:	Grade / Level:	Date Obtained:

**5. Training** (Please list only those courses *relevant* to this particular post.)

Approximate Start Date:	Course Title:	Approximate Duration:	College or Organisation:

**6. References**

Please give the names of people who could provide a reference regarding your suitability for the post for which you are applying. One of these should be your present or most recent employer. School / College leavers should give the names of lecturers / tutors / headteachers. You should *not* give friends or relatives as referees.

Please note that for all academic posts (including research and teaching posts), the names and addresses of *three* referees should be provided.

	Referee n°1	Referee n°2	Referee n°3
<i>Name</i>			
<i>Job Title</i>			
<i>Address</i>			
<i>Post Code</i>			
<i>Telephone Number</i>			
<i>E-Mail Address</i>			
<i>May we request a reference prior to interview?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**7. Supporting Documents**



Please outline how you consider that your knowledge, skills and experience meet the criteria in the person specification.  
As this is an academic or research post, please also provide details of publications, unpublished research, a comprehensive CV, grants, etc.  
Any additional information should be firmly attached to this form, marked clearly with your name, the job reference number, and the post title.

## 8. Reminder of Complementary Documents to be added to the Application Form

- A detailed motivation letter explaining the candidate's general interest in the project
- A curriculum vitae listing all academic qualifications, relevant research experience and previous publications
- Name, affiliation, e-mail and phone number of three referees who can be contacted if necessary
- A copy of the passport/ID, PhD and master diploma

## 9. Declarations

To the best of my knowledge and belief, I have not lived or exercised my main activity in Belgium for more than 12 months over the past 5 years. As such, to start as a Red-SPINEL Post-Doctoral Fellow based at the IEE-ULB in Brussels I will be moving to Belgium and establish my residency in Belgium.

YES

NO

### WHERE REQUIRED, EVIDENCE OF QUALIFICATIONS WILL BE NECESSARY PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained in this form is accurate. I understand that giving false information, or failure to supply details, will invalidate an offer of employment, or lead to termination of employment.

I agree to this information being used for legitimate purposes connected with recruitment and selection monitoring, and understand that this record will form the basis of my personnel record if I am the successful candidate.

**Please note that, in submitting this application, you have accepted these terms, and agree to this declaration.**

### WHERE REQUIRED, EVIDENCE OF QUALIFICATIONS WILL BE NECESSARY PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT.

Signed: (type your name if e-mailing this form)

Date:

## 10 Submission of This Application

### Before 5pm (C.E.T) on 15 July 2022

The following application documents are to be consolidated **into one single PDF** file sent by email to Dominique Dembour ([Dominique.Dembour@ulb.be](mailto:Dominique.Dembour@ulb.be)) and Ramona Coman ([Ramona.Coman@ulb.be](mailto:Ramona.Coman@ulb.be))