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How would you describe the state of the bilateral German-Romanian relations?

The bilateral relationship between Germany and Romania is something of a paradox. Economic relations are excellent, with Germany being Romania's most important trading partner since 2007, the year Romania joined the European Union, and the third biggest investor in the Romanian economy. Over the same period, however, they were not matched at the level of political relations. This is all the more striking in the light of the respect and sympathy enjoyed by Romania in

the Federal Republic during the 1960s and 1970s when Romania's readiness, alone among the Warsaw Pact countries to establish diplomatic relations with Germany in January 1967 against strong Soviet opposition, cleared the way for Bonn's new "Ostpolitik". As Susanne Kastner, until recently Chair of the German - Romanian Forum, pointed out in the course of a radio interview, "Germany was distrustful of Romania, although Romania looked with hope towards Germany." Romania's public image is generally considered to be the main reason for Germany's lack of support and sympathy for this country's efforts to join the European Union and for still blocking its accession to the Schengen area. The deterioration of the relations between Berlin and Bucharest reached an unprecedented low during the 2012 political crisis in Romania. Their slight, yet steady recovery after the parliamentary elections held in Romania in December 2012 is expected to further improve under the new German coalition government... **p.2**

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publications _____

Romanian Journal of European Affairs – Spring Issue 2014

In the March issue of the RJEA, the contributors bring forward topics concerning the EC initiatives related to the evidence of non-compliance with the social objectives targeted in the EU 2020 Strategy, the EU as an international diplomatic actor, the relations between the EU and Turkey, the EU's intervention in the Iranian crisis and a book review on strategic divisions in EU-Russia Relations ... **p.3**



“[...] there are a number of fields in which the two countries (Germany and Romania) can successfully cooperate in the years to come. Regional cooperation along the Danube, in the Black Sea area and in the Balkans, but also in the Middle East, Africa and China offers plenty of opportunities for combining Germany’s political weight and economic capabilities with Romania’s experience and traditional relations in the respective areas.”

How do you assess the role of the German-born community in Romania in contributing to the shaping of Romania’s image at the level of the German society?

At the end of World War II, Germany’s bilateral relations with Romania were not burdened by the painful legacy of the minority issue affecting its relations with other communist countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia. Whereas the German ethnics living in these countries before the war were expelled by force, Romanian-born Germans were not evicted. Those who had come to reside in Germany were the victims of Nazi policies pursued vis-à-vis the German community in Romania during World War II, on the one hand, and Soviet retaliatory measures against this community on the other. These were Saxon and Swabian soldiers included into Nazi Germany’s armed forces (“Wehrmacht” and “Waffen-SS”), barred from returning to Soviet-occupied Romania, Transylvanian Saxons from the Hungarian-occupied Northern part of Transylvania (who were able to leave the country with the retreating German army in 1944) and, last but not least, returnees from the Soviet forced labour camps to which all able-bodied Romanian-born ethnic Germans had been deported in January 1945 on Moscow’s orders. Yet, despite the coercive measures taken against the German population during the early years of Romania’s Soviet occupation - temporary loss of civic rights, deportation to forced labour camps and total expropriation of ethnic German peasants in 1945 - German ethnics in Romania saw their rights restored and were afterwards allowed to use their language in public and to attend schools of all grades in their mother tongue - an exception in the East bloc.

When the Bucharest government embarked on an autonomous course in foreign policy in the 1960s, the Saxon and Swabian

associations (“Landsmannschaften”) encouraged the West German government to establish diplomatic relations with Romania in 1967. Instead of burdening bilateral relations, the German minority from Romania living in Germany turned into a bridge between the two countries. After the resumption of diplomatic relations, Romania allowed a fixed number of them to leave in exchange for economic benefits every year. Emigration to Germany continued at an accelerated pace after the fall of the communist regime in December 1989. From 359 109 Romanian citizens belonging to the German minority in 1977, this number declined to 119 462 in 1992, reaching a mere 36 000 at the 2011 census. At present, several topics connected with the minority issue debated in the German media contribute to the still - or again - rather negative image of Romania: deportation, emigration and, more recently, the restitution of German property illegally confiscated by the pre-1989 regime. Unfortunately, despite efforts made since 2012 by the new government, the sluggish pace of the restitution and rehabilitation processes has the potential to burden the bilateral German-Romanian agenda for some time to come.

As a keen observer of the German and respectively Romanian realities both before and after the fall of communism, how would you comment on the post-communist realities in the two countries? Could you share with us some thoughts on the German reunification and its implications for the present?

United Germany is a unique political construction in the European context. Let me try, however, to compare the incomparable - the former German Democratic Republic, which in 1990 acceded to the Federal Republic of Germany, and former communist Romania.

Anneli Ute Gabanyi, Ph.D., is a Political Scientist based in Berlin. Senior Research Associate at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin (2001-2007) and at the Southeast-European Institute, Munich (1988-2000); Senior Research Analyst and Head of the Romanian Department of the Radio Free Europe Research Institute, Munich (1969-1987).

Main areas of research: Contemporary History (Communism in Eastern Europe, the Warsaw Pact and CMEA); the 1989 Revolutions; the Collapse of the Soviet Union; Romania – EU and NATO Integration, Political and Party System, Institutional and Economic Transition; The Republic of Moldova – Political, Institutional and Economic Transition, the Transnistria Conflict, EU Policy vis-à-vis the Republic of Moldova.

Books – selection:

Systemwechsel in Rumänien. Von der Revolution zur Transformation. Untersuchungen zur Gegenwartskunde Südosteuropas, herausgegeben vom Südost-Institut, Band 35. München, Oldenbourg Verlag 1998.

Revoluția neterminată, Publishing House of the Romanian Cultural Foundation, Bucharest 1999.

The Ceaușescu Cult. Power Politics and Propaganda in Communist Romania, Publishing House of the Romanian Cultural Foundation, Bucharest, 2000.

- a) Both countries were affected by similar phenomena such as: deindustrialization, loss of job security, an ageing population and emigration;
- b) However, since 1990, the former GDR area is receiving transfer funds in the range of 2 trillion Euros i.e. 100 billion euros every year. This sum bears no comparison with the financial support from the EU enjoyed by Romania;
- c) Moreover, by uniting with the Federal Republic of Germany, East Germany automatically became a member in NATO and the EU, whereas Romania had to undergo ten years of geopolitical insecurity before starting accession negotiations with the EU and getting a clear NATO perspective;
- d) Whereas East Germans were incorporated into the social security systems of the united Germany, the social security and health care systems of Romania are still suffering from the lack of funds;
- e) After almost a quarter of a century, East Germans are still to some degree dissatisfied with the fact that their salaries and pensions are not yet identical with - although very close to - those touched by the citizens of the former West German "Länder", whereas Romanians can only dream of the salaries and, more generally speaking, the living conditions enjoyed by the former GDR citizens;
- f) Last but not least, despite the comparative advantages enjoyed by the citizens of the former GDR on the road of transition to democracy and market economy (or maybe precisely because of these advantages?), nostalgia for pre-1989 times (called "Ostalgie" - "Eastalgia") is stronger in Eastern Germany than in Romania. This explains why "Die Linke", the direct successor party of the former GDR communists, enjoys a surprisingly high amount of popular support there.

Which are, in your opinion, the main fields in which Germany and Romania can cooperate to further develop the European integration project?

Provided Romania will make European integration its number one political project, something that has been somehow neglected since the country's joining the EU in 2007, there are a number of fields in which the two countries can successfully cooperate in the years to come. Regional cooperation along the Danube, in the Black Sea area and in the Balkans, but also in the Middle East, Africa and China offers plenty of opportunities for combining Germany's political weight and economic capabilities with Romania's experience and traditional relations in the respective areas.

Interview by Agnes Nicolescu

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Romanian Journal of European Affairs – Spring Issue 2014



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Laura Gómez Urquijo, Associate Professor of Economics of the European Union at the University of Deusto, Bilbao, analyzes in her article the significance of the recent European Commission initiatives in the face of evidence of non-compliance with the social objectives targeted in the 2020 Strategy. Within the debate on austerity and growth, the author stresses the need to further the EU trend toward differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation. Given that "conditionality" is a new keystone of the economic governance and cohesion policy, the difficulties faced by Member States and the diversity of their social protections give a new meaning to the European coordination policies that are intended to promote social cohesion. This study highlights the trend of emphasizing social aspects of the market and the need to face social challenges in order to help compensate for the pernicious effects of fiscal responses to the crisis.

In her paper, **Ruxandra Laura Boșilcă**, PhD candidate in International Relations at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest, deals with EU's *sui generis* status of less than a nation-state, but more than an international organization, also reflected in its conduct of diplomatic relations with third states and

international organizations. The article analyzes some of the main challenges posed to the international diplomatic law by EU's emergence on the diplomatic scene, in the light of the significant new changes brought by the Lisbon Treaty aimed to add more consistency and visibility to EU's external action. Building a global EU diplomatic service is however a "work in progress" and numerous challenges still arise from the current institutional and legal framework.

Tamás Szigetvári, PhD, Associate Professor at the Institute of International Studies and Political Sciences, within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, discusses the new approach on the EU-Turkey relations. Among the potential EU candidates, Turkey has always had a special and sensitive place. The article examines some of the most important issues of mutual interest – common foreign policy challenges (such as Syria); energy transport issues; mobility and visa free travel, customs union and other trade issues – and tries to analyze their effects on the dynamics of EU-Turkey relations. A few questions still remain to be clarified, such as: how the relations between the EU and Turkey will be institutionalized, what kind of European integration will there be in the future: a strong, federal system or a looser, differentiated one, with "variable geometry"?, what will Turkey's place be in this kind of Europe? Different solutions, such as a privileged partnership, or a new type of associate membership, lead however to a common point, which *is something less than full membership*.

Nicoleta Lașan, PhD in International Relations and European Studies, lecturer at the Faculty of Human, Political and Administrative Sciences, "Vasile Goldis" West University, Arad, aims to offer a sociological institutionalist perspective on EU's intervention in the Iranian crisis. While in the past the EU used to react to this type of problems by issuing declarative documents or by silence due to internal divisions, this time EU Member States were willing to react promptly and unitedly. The paper analyzes the influence of EU's values and norms, as well as of processes like social mobilization, learning from other experiences and mobilization of non-state actors on the specific approach towards the Iranian nuclear crisis.

Miles Maftean, PhD Fellow in the School of Political Science, Public Policy and International Relations at Central European University, Budapest, presented the book "Divided States: Strategic Divisions in EU-Russia Relations", edited by Scott Nicholas Romaniuk and Marguerite Marlin. The volume highlights the main aspects of the European Union's relation with the Russian Federation. It introduces the topic by presenting the two major players involved, underlining the fact that many scholars have regarded the EU as the "good" and Russia as the "bad." Referring also to the regional impact of each actor, the review examines the role of third parties, civil society and minorities in official relations between the two entities. The influence of the Western world, often periods of hostility and isolation, as well as relations with other actors represent some of the main aspects of the research carried out by the authors.

Full articles will be available on <http://rjea.ier.ro>.

Oana Mocanu

opinion

Digital Agenda for Europe: EU initiative of implementing technology in every day life

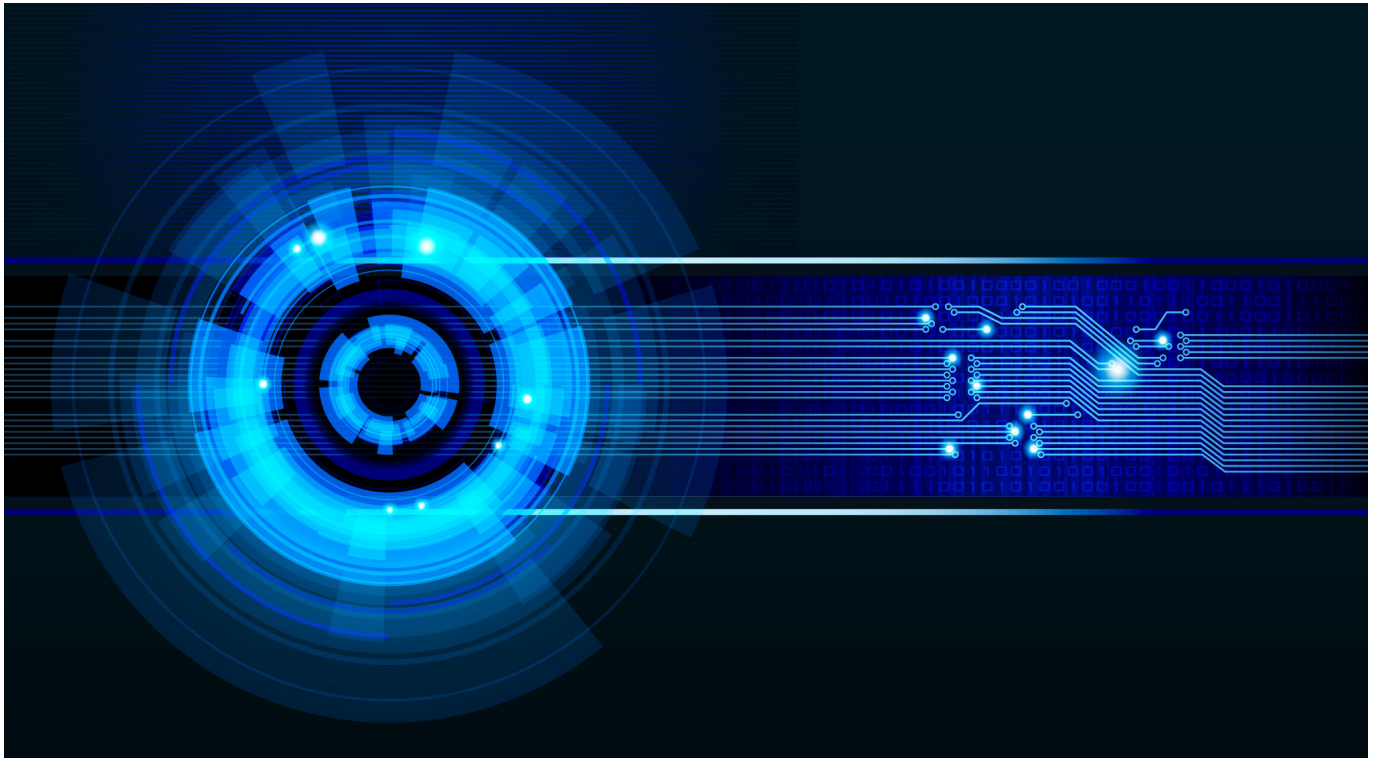
The economic crisis has revealed the European Union weaknesses, has slowed the Europeanization process due to the major discrepancies between the Member States and has created distrust in the European institutions among the citizens. The European Commission, as an answer to all these problems, has launched the Europe 2020 Strategy in March 2010. Its agenda is proposing the growth of employment, a low carbon economy, productivity and social cohesion, methods for the European Union to overpass the economical crisis and to prepare itself for the new decade challenges.

The Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) is one of the seven pilot initiatives of Europe 2020 Strategy and it was conceived with the purpose to present the fundamental role that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are having in fulfilling the objectives of Europe 2020 Strategy. DAE wants to transform the European Union into a global centre for sustainable, smart and inclusive growth. The main objective of Digital Agenda is to offer sustainable economical and social benefits through a Digital Single Market based on fast and ultra-fast Internet and interoperable applications.¹

*"Information and communication technology (ICT) is increasingly impacting all segments of society and the economy. It is estimated that half of all productivity growth derives from investment in ICT...The internet is empowering people to create and share their ideas, giving rise to new content, entrepreneurs and markets. ICT is the essential transformative technology that supports structural change in sectors like health care, energy, public services, and education."*²

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/about-our-goals>, last accessed on 3 February 2014.

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0784:FIN:EN:PDF>, last accessed on 5 February 2014.



The Digital Agenda of Europe contains 101 actions, in 7 pillars, with the purpose to reboot the European economy and to enable the European citizens and businesses to access the benefits of the digital technologies. The seven pillars³ are:

- Pillar 1: Digital Single Market
- Pillar 2: Interoperability and standards
- Pillar 3: Trust and Security
- Pillar 4: Fast and ultra-fast Internet access
- Pillar 5: Research and innovation
- Pillar 6: Enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion
- Pillar 7: ICT-enabled benefits for EU society

DAE contains thirteen specific objectives⁴ which comprise some of the changes that this initiative is bringing:

- Internet broadband for the entire European Union by 2013;
- Broadband above 30 Mbps for the entire European Union by 2020;
- 50% of the EU population should be subscribed to Internet broadband above 100 Mbps by 2020;
- 50% of the EU population to buy online by 2015;
- 20% of the EU population to buy online cross-border by 2015;
- 33% of the SMEs to engage in online sales by 2015;
- The difference between roaming and the national tariffs to approach zero by 2015;
- Regular Internet usage to grow from 60% to 75% by 2015, and from 41% to 60% among disadvantaged persons;
- To reduce to half the number of persons who never use the Internet, from 30% to 15% by 2015;
- 50% of the citizens to use *eGovernment* services, and more than half of them to return the forms completed online;
- All key cross-border public services, to be agreed by Member States in 2011, to be available online by 2015;
- To double the public investment in R&D in ICT to € 11 billions by 2020;
- To reduce energy use for lighting by 20% by 2020.

All these Digital Agenda for Europe targets are trying to develop the ICT infrastructure and to enhance the population's access to Internet and its benefits.

What are the benefits that EU is trying to introduce through this initiative? Through his objectives, DAE is not only encouraging and facilitating the access to the digital technologies but it is also impacting the European welfare system and promoting a new type of European welfare system which will be available to every citizen of the Member States.

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:RO:PDF>, last accessed on 4 February 2014.

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/about-our-goals>, last accessed on 3 February 2014.

Using programmes like *eGovernment*, the bureaucratic services – that until now were available only at the public offices (e.g. paying bills and taxes, requesting the record, applying for a passport or I.D.) – are available online, thus giving the citizens and businesses the opportunity to save time and money. Moreover, the whole bureaucratic process becomes easier.⁵

eHealth services aim to offer the European citizens the possibility to access online their medical background and data and also to create a cross-border care system through which a person can benefit from safe and efficient care services regardless of the country in which that person is. More precisely, all the medical background and data of a patient will be available to the doctors regardless of the country in which the patient is asking for health services. Plus, embracing all the digital technologies in health related services will help the national and European institutions to find solutions to problems like the population aging, the shortage of medical professionals and the high cost of health services.⁶

The digital technologies have also been launched in the cultural area through the creation of the *Europeana* programme. This project aims to digitalize the European cultural heritage and to grant access to online material and books to groups that in the past did not have the access to these sources (such as disabled or elderly people).⁷

The above examples represent a small part of the actions which are implemented by the Digital Agenda for Europe. For more information, please go to <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/about-our-goals>.

To sum up, a lot of European Union's current problems can be solved by the digital technologies, which through innovation, research and free access to information can support the economy and improve the social benefits of the European citizens.

Ionela Maria Ciolan, intern

EU

EP Plenary Sitting, 3 – 6 February 2014, Strasbourg: Free Movement of Citizens and Businesses

The *Committee on Legal Affairs* submitted in this session a series of reports necessary to carry out the legislative process. Thus, the report on **Promoting free movement by simplifying the acceptance of certain public documents**, concerning a proposal for a regulation, substantiates the necessity to issue EU multilingual standard forms. The forms will eliminate the necessity to translate public documents and will facilitate authorities' activity. Citizens will be able to use them by filling in their legal facts regarding birth, death, marriage, registered partnership. The forms will also facilitate the free movement of persons representing companies, thereby ensuring free movement across the EU.

The same Committee notes, in the report on the **2013 EU Justice Scoreboard** (on civil, commercial and administrative matters), having regard to the European Commission's Communication of 27 March 2013, that the Scoreboard compares national justice systems using particular indicators, but does not present an overall ranking of national justice systems. Taking note with great interest of this EU Justice Scoreboard, deemed **a tool to promote effective justice and growth**, the EP calls on the Commission to take this exercise

forward while bearing in mind the need to avoid unnecessary duplication of work with other bodies.

During the same session, the *Committee on Legal Affairs* submitted for debate aspects of the functioning of the legislative process in its report on **EU Regulatory Fitness and Subsidiarity and Proportionality - Better Lawmaking**.

The *Committee on Regional Development*, in its report on **Local and regional consequences of the development of smart grids**, starts off from a number of best practice examples for the efficient use of energy and decentralised energy production by citizens and local communities. It is pointed out that there are new opportunities for the regional economy, since many European regions have pursued projects within the existing EU framework which have fostered synergies in selected areas and promoted sustainable and renewable energy. In addition, the report notes the positive impact of such initiatives on the local employment market. As the role of citizens is essential, they need to be provided with better information, as well as incentives such as dynamic pricing mechanisms and appropriate ICT tools.

⁵ YIU, Chris, and Sarah FINK (eds.), *Smaller, Better, Faster, Stronger: Remaking government for the digital age*, Policy Exchange, London, 2013, p. 16

⁶ European Disability Forum; AGE, AGE - EDF Position on the Future EU Digital Agenda, Brussels: Center for European Politics, February 2010, http://www.age-platform.eu/images/stories/pdf_AgeEdf_Position_FutureEuDigitalAgenda_February2010_FINAL.pdf, last accessed on 9 February 2014.

⁷ <http://www.europeana.eu/portal/aboutus.html>, last accessed on 10 February 2014.



Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/european_parliament/

The *Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection* put forward for debate the report on **An integrated parcel delivery market for the growth of e-commerce in the EU**, which indicates that, since e-commerce is a channel with enormous potential to combat the economic and financial crisis, it helps strengthen the single market and create economic growth and employment across the EU. According to the Commission's Communication on e-commerce and online services of January 2012, the delivery of goods purchased online is one of the priorities for boosting e-commerce by 2015. The report emphasizes that consumer interests are key to the delivery process. To this end, the report proposes

innovative and interoperable solutions for a truly European delivery market, encouraging cross-border transactions and a better interoperability of call-centres dedicated to consumer complaints.

Plenary debates elaborated on issues put forward in other reports as well, followed by resolutions: The *Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality* tackled the issue **Undocumented women migrants in the European Union**.

The *Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs* drew the MEPs' attention on **Criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation**.

The *Committee on Industry, Research and Energy* submitted reports on **Investment projects in energy infrastructure and Steel industry in Europe**.

In addition, the right to education in the Transnistrian region, in the light of the conflict in the region, was the object of several statements made by MEPs, who called for respect for human rights, civil society and freedom of information.

For further information, please see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/en/pressroom/press-release/plenary>

Mariana Bara

Stakeholder Conference on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region

More than 500 representatives from the national, regional and local administrations, businesses, civil society, academia, regional associations and media gathered together to participate at the **Stakeholder Conference on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic - Ionian Region**¹, in Athens, 6-7 February. The conference aimed to further advance the new macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, marking also the end of a wide consultation that has involved civil society and stakeholders across the countries involved, and therefore to integrate successfully the Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, adopted by the Commission on 30 November 2012. The event was jointly hosted by the European Commission and the Hellenic Presidency of the Council of the European Union. At the Conference, Johannes Hahn - Commissioner for Regional Policy and Maria Damanaki - Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Commissioner, as well as political representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of all Adriatic Ionian Member States (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Serbia, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro), addressed the event on the first day.

The aim of the conference was to present the findings of an extensive consultation with stakeholders that took place from September to December 2013 and also to encourage a debate with participants on the future challenges and opportunities from a macro-regional approach. The debate alone served to further support the preparation of the future Communication and Action Plan of the Strategy, which the Commission is due to present before the end of 2014. The conference presented also for the first time a reunited strategy, with initiatives coming both from EU countries and non-EU countries, in which the goal is to work together in order to meet common challenges. The focus of the events was on connecting the region (transport and energy networks), protecting the environment, blue growth as well as sustainable tourism, subjects that contribute actively to creating prosperity and jobs in the region. The Agenda of the Conference included a welcoming address, a Plenary Session with statements from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, a presentation by the European Commission

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/adriat_ionian/doc/04_02_2014_programme_conference_eusair.pdf

of the state of play of the strategy and its future prospects and also four parallel thematic workshops on the main pillars of the Strategy.

²Speaking ahead of the conference in Athens, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn stated³ that despite all the positive changes that have taken place since the beginning of the 90s, we are still facing considerable disparities in the region and while countries like Slovenia and Croatia have already found their place inside the EU, some other potential candidates are still a long way from entry. The aim of the new strategy is to make a significant contribution by offering new ways for candidates and also potential candidates to work alongside EU member states, despite all the economic disparities or political challenges.

Previously the Commission conducted an evaluation of the existing macro regional strategies found in the Baltic and the Danube and the evaluation concluded that a macro regional approach can indeed bring results but only if the countries involved take certain actions. The European Commissioner concluded by stating that in order to participate to a successful macro-region strategy, the parties involved must set a number of objectives, more particularly to implement the four pillars that are fundamental in order for the region to develop and prosper.

In his address, Prime Minister Antonis Samaras mentioned³ the large potential for economic growth that exists in the Adriatic-Ionian Region, structured around the four pillars that sustain the strategy. *“The time has come to proceed not in a fragmented way but in a holistic approach and a joint strategy, which is no longer a vague concept but a path that has already been taken”*, he commented. During the event, a number of subjects were addressed such as the implementation of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline, the importance of the Strategy for the Ionian and Adriatic Region and also the state of play and future prospects for the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

The overall objective of the *Stakeholder Conference on the EU macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian* in Athens was to present the outcome of the discussions with the stakeholders on the four pillars of the EUSAIR (EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region), strategy that promotes economic and social prosperity as well as growth and job creation in the targeted area. Following the Athens event, the European Commission will draft a Communication on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, as well as an Action Plan.

Ruxandra Popescu, intern

² http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-106_en.htm

³ http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/greece/2014/02/06/EU-Adriatic-Ionian-Macro-region-the-launch-pad_10028123.html

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