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Erwan Fouéré - Associate Senior Research Fellow, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels



Ten years after the Thessaloniki Summit, which are, in your view, the main challenges faced by the Western Balkan countries in implementing the necessary internal reforms for a full European integration?

The Thessaloniki Agenda which was adopted at the Summit of the EU and Western Balkans, in June 2003, was an event which marked a turning point in the fortunes of the Balkan region. After decades of uncertainty and bloody conflicts which divided communities, the message was one of hope and a new beginning.

By confirming that “the future of the Balkans is within the European Union”, the Thessaloniki Agenda created a momentum for the much needed reforms in the countries of the region, some of which had just recently emerged from internal strife.

In the ten years that have passed since then, the developments have been numerous and substantial. Following the lead of Macedonia, which was the first to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) in 2001, most of the other countries embarked on the same process in subsequent years, Kosovo being the latest addition following the recent decision in the European Council of last June. Croatia, which was the second country to sign an SAA in late 2001 and which started accession negotiations in 2005, has become the 28th member of the European Union...

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publications _____

Romanian Journal of European Affairs - Autumn Issue 2013

In the September issue of the RJEa, the contributors bring forward topics related to the EU economic crisis, the transatlantic economic relations, the energy security challenges in the Arctic region, the Croatian accession to the EU and some developments in the protection of the Hungarian national minority in Slovenia.

Nicoleta Corbu, Associate Professor and Dean at the College of Communication and Public Relations, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest and Oana Ștefăniță, Ph.D student at the Doctoral School of Communication Sciences ...

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... Meanwhile, accession negotiations with Montenegro have already started and they are expected to start with Serbia in the next months.

These developments are all a clear proof of the positive momentum generated by the Thessaloniki Agenda and of the continued attraction of EU accession, despite the current adverse economic climate in the EU. They show the strength of the EU's "soft power", if used in a consistent manner.

But perhaps what had the greatest impact in terms of tangible benefits for the citizens of the region and what gave them a sense of belonging to the EU family was the granting of visa-free travel to the Schengen area. The citizens of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia were granted visa-free travel in December 2009 and the citizens of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina were granted the same rights a year later.

This was by no means an automatic process. It involved a detailed roadmap of institutional and administrative reforms relating to strengthening the rule of law, combating organized crime, corruption and illegal migration, as well as strengthening border control and guaranteeing the security of identity and travel documents. The success of this exercise shows that the countries in the region do have the administrative capacity to deliver if they focus their minds on the task and are given clear conditions to meet in return for the agreed benefits.

Probably the most difficult challenges the region is facing have been, and continue to be, maintaining momentum for the reforms, particularly in the areas of fight against corruption and organised crime, ensuring an independent judiciary, depoliticizing public administration, as well as respect for media independence. All of these depend on the success of strengthening the democratic process through a regular and consistent political dialogue, which remains a major weakness for a number of the countries of the region, particularly Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Now that Croatia is the 28th member state of the European Union, which would be the next steps for properly integrating the other Western Balkans countries into the European block? How do you envisage the accession progress of Serbia and Montenegro to the EU?

The European Union has judiciously sought to adapt its accession strategy in order to better address the remaining challenges facing the countries of the region. In this light, it has now put the rule of law at the heart of the accession process, rather than leaving it to a later stage. This ensures that all the issues relating to the above remain under careful scrutiny from the beginning until the end and keeps the pressure on acceding countries to deliver.

But, in a broader context, the decrease in support within the EU for continued enlargement cannot be denied. In a number of EU member states, governments hesitate to give the enlargement process more than lukewarm support for fear of alienating voters. The rise of right-wing parties, which equate further enlargement with increased levels of immigration, has further complicated the debate.

This is, in my view, a short-sighted approach which could have serious implications for the Western Balkan countries themselves. A diminishing prospect of accession would dilute

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After having pursued a career spanning 38 years with the European Union institutions, Erwan Fouéré joined the Centre for European Policy Studies as an Associate Senior Research Fellow.

His area of research is on the EU's role in the Balkan countries, seen from various angles (security and stability, enlargement, domestic policies), with a specific focus on Macedonia. He is also contributing to a number of initiatives relating to the EU/OSCE role in mediation as well as reconciliation in post conflict societies.

Prior to joining CEPS, Erwan Fouéré's most recent appointment was a Special Representative for the Irish 2012 Chairmanship of the OSCE, with special responsibility for the Transdniestrian settlement process. He was the first to assume joint responsibilities of EU Special Representative and Head of Delegation in the EU External Service when he was appointed in this double capacity in Macedonia (2005), where he served for 5 years, up to his retirement from the EU institutions.

Before that, he was Head of Delegation in Slovenia leading to accession, the first Head of Delegation in South Africa (1994), and the first Head of Delegation in Mexico and Cuba (1989).

At Headquarters, he worked successively on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and relations with East European countries, on international relations in the field of the environment and on EU relations with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

He was awarded the Order of Good Hope, Grand Officer, by President Mandela (1998).

the EU's transformative power for much needed reforms and would fuel nationalist agendas in some of the countries where political stability remains fragile.

As the Irish Minister of State for European Affairs, Lucinda Creighton, stated at the conference marking the tenth anniversary of the Thessaloniki Agenda, which was hosted by Ireland in Dublin, last May: *"The Union offers the prospect of membership to those countries in Europe that meet its conditions. By withdrawing the offer, the EU would lose one of its most effective tools for promoting peace, democracy and prosperity in Europe"*.

She went on to emphasize that: *"Enlargement must remain an integral part of the Union's future because it has proved itself a powerful tool that has the capacity to transform the lives of the people of Europe, both within the Union and beyond it. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU provided eloquent testimony to this truth"*.

This means that while the enlargement process will continue, it will require a much greater effort on the part of the EU institutions together with the member states to inform

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public opinion on the continued benefits of the enlargement policy - benefits both for the citizens as well as for the EU as a whole. The EU has always been a weak communicator. It needs to demonstrate in layman's language the success of the enlargement process to date, and how extending the frontiers of the EU has brought with it peace and stability.

The accession negotiations with Montenegro and Serbia will doubtlessly be influenced by this broader atmosphere. But there is no doubt that, with perseverance and hard work, success will ultimately prevail. It will be the best response to those marginalized groups who seek to return to the nationalist and populist agendas of past decades which brought only misery and conflict to the Balkan region.

You are familiar with the political and social context in the Republic of Macedonia; how could EU further contribute to stimulate the internal political dialogue and inclusiveness in this country, once considered a success story of the Western Balkans?

The political situation in Macedonia is both dramatic and quite alarming; it shows how easy it is in the Balkan region for a positive story one day to become a nightmare scenario the next. In 2005, Macedonia was indeed regarded as a success story in overcoming inter-ethnic tensions and promoting courageous reforms; an effort the EU rewarded by granting it candidate status for EU accession. Today it is a country marked by political instability, lack of any political dialogue, deep mistrust among the ethnic communities and a deeply divided society. All of these have put its EU accession prospects at risk. Yet the accession to the EU is the only objective that unites the entire country and its multiethnic society.

The dramatic events of 24 December 2012, when not only all the journalists, but also the opposition MPs, were forcibly evicted from the parliamentary assembly chamber, was, for many observers, the crossing of a red line. It was a tragic reminder of the continued failure of the Government to engage in any meaningful political dialogue over the past years. Unfortunately, in the following weeks, the Government made no attempt to repair the damage or even to stretch out a hand of reconciliation to the opposition. Instead, in early February, it pushed through a change in the parliamentary rules of procedure to limit debate, despite the absence of the opposition parties which continued to boycott Parliament following their forced eviction. These developments, coupled with the unwillingness of the Government to promote a spirit of compromise, have led to a further erosion of basic democratic values and standards in the country.

It required the personal intervention on 1st March of the Enlargement Commissioner, Štefan Füle, together with the European Parliament Rapporteur for Macedonia, Richard Howitt, before a compromise was reached enabling the opposition to return to Parliament in exchange for the creation of a Commission of Enquiry into the events of 24 December. Despite

this intervention, it took four months for the Government and the opposition parties to agree on the composition of the Commission; it has yet to deliver its report.

Ironically it is the name dispute with Greece that has drawn the most attention in Macedonia's EU accession debate, and which has provided the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski with a convenient scapegoat in diverting attention from the serious internal political situation and lack of willingness to engage in any political dialogue.

The response to this situation requires a more determined and forceful policy from the EU. Political dialogue and focus on the weaknesses in the democratic system of the country should remain at the forefront of the EU's attention. It is unfortunate that the Commission's 2012 Progress Report made only passing reference to the need for enhanced political dialogue between all the political parties. Yet, in previous years, for example in the 2009 Progress Report which included a recommendation that a date be set for opening negotiations, or in the Report of 2010, the issue of political dialogue was given much greater prominence and was always referred to as a key priority.

Probably, the only way to keep the EU aspirations of the country on track and to prevent it from sinking into further political instability would be for the accession negotiations to start without delay. The intrusive nature of the accession process would ensure better control over the Government's behaviour and a more consistent performance in meeting the accession criteria. Greece should be persuaded that political stability in its nearest neighbourhood would better serve its own interests. Allowing negotiations to start would be a fitting demonstration of Greece's commitment to stability in the Balkan region, as the country prepares to assume the Presidency of the EU Council on 1st January 2014.

Given the steps forward in gradually adopting and implementing European principles in the Western Balkans area, do you think that a similar path, based on a strong conditionality approach, might also work for the Eastern Partnership countries, for example for the Republic of Moldova?

The forthcoming Summit in Vilnius this November, to be hosted by the Lithuanian Presidency, offers an important opportunity to review progress since the previous Summit in Warsaw in 2011. It will also mark four years since the launching of the Eastern Partnership Programme in Prague in early 2009.

While the plans for Vilnius may be ambitious, they reflect the fundamental objectives of the Neighbourhood Policy, aimed at establishing a privileged relationship based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, strengthening economic prosperity through far reaching market reforms, while avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines within the European continent. Association Agreements as well as Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas have already been completed with both Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova and most

recently with Georgia. Visa liberalization and visa facilitation are also a vital part of the Neighbourhood agenda. In this respect, the Republic of Moldova remains in the forefront with important progress achieved in the reforms required. Progress in this area will strengthen the links between the citizens of this region and the EU and will foster greater understanding and enhanced opportunities for the younger generation to discover their counterparts in the EU member states.

There is no doubt that the potential prospect of EU accession for the Republic of Moldova, however far away that prospect is, could provide an added incentive for the reform process in that country. There are however broader strategic interests at play in this region which will require careful handling, not least the role of Russia in the Transdnistrian settlement process as well as in the overall energy sector, where the Republic of Moldova is particularly vulnerable.

In a recent speech, the Commissioner responsible for the Neighbourhood Policy, Ștefan Füle, alluded to this challenge by referring specifically to „unresolved regional conflicts”, as well

as to “the project of Customs Union and Eurasian Union with Russia which is growing in importance”. He underlined that “It is crucial to define a vision for the coexistence and mutual enrichment of the regional projects so as not to end up with two different sets of rules in the European Union economic space and in the Customs Union. I have raised this issue with Russia and a discussion has started on making the regulatory framework for the Customs Union as compatible as possible with the European Union rules” (Speech of Commissioner Füle to the Annual Conference of Polish Ambassadors, Warsaw, 25 July, 2013).

This will be, in any case, a long-term process. But so long as the prospect of closer integration with the EU remains, this in itself offers an important incentive for countries such as the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to continue with the reforms which will in themselves bring positive benefits for the citizens of both countries.

Interview by Oana Mocanu and Agnes Nicolescu

publications

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Nicoleta Corbu, Associate Professor and Dean at the College of Communication and Public Relations, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest and **Oana Ștefăniță**, Ph.D student at the Doctoral School of Communication Sciences, within the same university, speak about one of the most important challenges that the EU is currently facing in this time of crisis, namely the ups and downs in the public support for the general EU project and the confidence and credibility crisis in the economic future of the EU. The authors come to the conclusion that the crisis does influence the perspectives of the EU, but only by tempering optimism, turning it into a moderate view. This result can be extended to other Central-Eastern states as well, due to their resembling paths.

Florin Bonciu, Vice-president for research at the Romanian-American University in Bucharest, analyzes the international context in which negotiations between the European Union and United States on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership have been launched in July 2013. This context includes both the repeated failures of the Doha Round negotiations, as well as the previous attempts and achievements of the European Union and United States to create a transatlantic partnership. The author considers that the current circumstances are more favourable for a successful transatlantic partnership but, at the same time, stresses the sensitive issues that may delay or divert the negotiations. The paper concludes that there are many possible immediate positive consequences on economic growth and creation of jobs of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership as well as a high potential to expand its implementation in North America through NAFTA and in some other countries that have free trade agreements with either the European Union or the United States.

In her article, **Ana Maria Ghimiș**, PhD Candidate at Babeș Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca and Coordinator of the Research Section, Bucharest Centre for European Policy Evaluation aims to develop a critical approach on one of the most urgent energy security challenges: the Arctic region. Until recently considered only a frozen desert, upon which no one raised any legal demands or interests, the global warming, the technological development and the increased need for energy resources had transformed the High North into a very “hot spot”, where states like US, Canada, Norway, Denmark or Russia started a genuine energy race. Due to legal uncertainties, the lack of coherent and direct legal procedures of international law, the Arctic game is an open one, in which any state can intervene and ask for a solution that is suitable for its interests. This aspect complicates even further the already unstable region. Some of the actors see the region as an international area, as a common good, where everyone has the right to explore or exploit, while the rim states see the Arctic in sovereign rights terms. The author further explains how the game tends to complicate as non-rim players (the EU, China, Japan, NATO and South Korea) want to intervene in the region and try to influence its development.

Wadim Strielkowski, Assistant Professor of Economics at the Institute of economic studies, Faculty of social sciences, Charles University in Prague, **Kristýna Šárková**, graduate student at the same institute, and **Tomasz Żornaczuk**, research Fellow at the Polish Institute of International Affairs tackle the subject of the Croatian EU accession and some possible scenarios of the Croatian labour migration to the European Union. The conclusion of the authors reflects only a moderate migration inflows scenario, in manageable terms. In the long term, the annual migration flow from Croatia into the EU 15 might reach 175-185 thousand people. A successful accession period with high growth and implementation of the reforms is actually leading to the elimination of the migration pressures. The authors emphasize that the Croats who had the strongest incentives to migrate have already migrated, not in direct relation to the terms of the EU free movement of labour.

Sigrid Lipott, teaching assistant in History of International Relations, University of Trieste, Italy and currently post-doc at the bilingual University of Fribourg, Switzerland examines the developments in the protection of the Hungarian national minority in Slovenia. Besides introducing the main features and historical evolution of the Hungarian national minority, the article addresses the issue of the minority protection both at theoretical and empirical level. Best practices towards the Hungarian minority in Slovenia can be detected by the rich legislation in the field of minority protection, incorporated in or backed by numerous programmes, strategies and resolutions in different social areas.

Full articles will be available on www.ier.ro/rjea. For the printed copy, please contact sales-rjea@ier.ro.

Oana Mocanu

"European Citizens' Initiative" Brochure

The year 2013 was declared the "European Year of Citizens" in order to stimulate knowledge and information on the rights provided by the European citizenship. In this context, the Europe Direct Information Center - Bucharest has launched the brochure "The European Citizens' Initiative", addressed to the Romanian citizens, with the purpose to inform them of the benefits offered by the status of European citizen and also of the manner in which European citizens can actively participate in EU's *democratic life*.

The first part of the brochure is dedicated to the use of the "European citizen" concept and to presenting the rights that this status brings to the EU's member states' inhabitants. The understanding of these rights by the citizens represents a first step towards their awareness on *civic involvement*. The European citizenship has a multi-dimensional aspect, being a component of the social, cultural and political activity.

The citizens' initiative is presented in four aspects: the legislative basis, rules of promotion, the organizational structure and concrete examples of citizens' initiatives. It offers European citizens the opportunity to propose legislative projects in those fields in which the EU has legislative prerogatives. Therefore, the citizens' active involvement in a decision-making process which concerns them directly is assured.

The brochure offers a complete perspective on the process of elaborating a citizens' initiative. The Lisbon Treaty has



substantiated the legislative framework of the citizens' initiative and was followed by a series of regulations with the purpose of *valorization and consolidation of the participative democracy within the European Union*. Aside from the informing process and the support for the citizens' initiatives, it is also necessary for the citizens to comprehend the *criteria required* in order to commence a citizens' initiative. At the same time, a series of concrete examples of ongoing citizens' initiatives are presented: European Initiative for Media Pluralism, Unconditional Basic Income - UBI, End Ecocide in Europe: A Citizens' Initiative to give the Earth Rights. The comprehensive are of concern of these initiatives includes

education, standard of living, inter-cultural communication, protection of the environment, energy and circulation. The last section of the brochure presents the advantages granted to the Romanian citizens by their EU membership. These advantages include, among others, the access to working market full of opportunities, the possibility to travel on the European territory or to benefit from training in a European academic environment.

This brochure is the result of a joint effort of the personnel of the Studies and Analyses Unit, as well as of the EIR interns: Oana Iftime, Veronica Butoi, Sergiu Căpîlnean, Laurențiu Răducu.

Mădălina Popa, intern

Jean-Paul Bled, Edmond Jouve, Christophe Réveillard
Dictionnaire historique et juridique de l'Europe
Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2013

A multidisciplinary response to the problems of Europe and the European Union

In June 2013 the famous publisher Presses Universitaires de France issued in its collection “Major” the publication: *Dictionnaire historique de l'Europe et juridique*.

This book, prepared in the form of dictionary entries, addresses the wide range of European topics bringing together its legal and political study in order to highlight the historical and cultural contribution of Europe. Thus we are dealing with entries related both to European Union law, its policies, its institutions, history of the European Community, and to actual issues such as the eurozone crisis and border extension.

Much of the dictionary is composed of several historical entries, thus the vast geographic field expanded continental Europe and its own problems.

They cover the period of the twentieth century (from 1870 to nowadays), but allow the reader to have a basic historical knowledge in order to understand the roots and causes of contemporary issues. In this context, a special place is reserved for global and regional conflicts, the Cold War and the development of the European security treaties.

Finally, an important place was reserved for recording entries in the general cultural knowledge necessary for European issues such as developments in contemporary European thinking, based on existing philosophical trends at a time, but also depending on the existing literary movements, by choosing major writers of the twentieth century until today.

In this context it is worth noting the entry on the relations between the European Union and Romania, developed by Mihai Sebe, expert within the European Institute of Romania. The chapter deals with an overview of the European and Euro-Atlantic route map of Romania after the 1989 Revolution. The author performed an overview of the events over the past two decades highlighting the efforts of the Romanian state in achieving the membership goals.

For more details about this book, please visit: http://www.puf.com/Major:Dictionnaire_historique_et_juridique_de_l%27Europe

Andreea Nichita, intern

in focus

ECHR case-law, more and more accessible to the wider public

The number of documents regarding the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) case-law is constantly growing, not only in the Court's official languages (English and French), but also in languages of the member states, part of the *European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*.

On the Court's website (<http://www.echr.coe.int/>) there are several useful materials dedicated to a better understanding of the ECHR case-law, such as thematic sheets, ECHR convention, guidelines, (e.g. Practical guide on admissibility) etc.

HUDOC, the online platform where the Court's decisions and resolutions are uploaded, contains translations of the causes in 19 languages of the member states, apart from English and French.



As concerns the number of translated documents available online (causes and summaries), the Romanian language ranks second (almost 1 400 documents), after Turkish (almost 1 800 documents) and closely followed by Russian (over 900 documents). The number of translated documents does not reflect the number of causes ruled against a state, as there are also causes translated against other states, all of them seen as important for the Human Rights in general. Moreover, the counting of the documents translated into Romanian language is common for Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

The most important causes translated in Romanian were uploaded either with the support of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Public Corporation “Monitorul Oficial” S.A. (over 200 causes initially published in the “Monitorul Oficial”), or with the support of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the European Institute of Romania (over 700 causes, not published in the “Monitorul Oficial”).

The European Institute of Romania is translating the ECHR causes in Romanian, based on the *Trilateral Protocol of Collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the superior Council of Magistracy and the European Institute of Romania*.

Other translations available are the ones made with the support of the Fiduciary Fund for Human Rights of the

European Council (including summaries), translations made within the project *Bringing Convention standards closer to home: Translation and dissemination of key ECHR case-law in target languages* (project of about 800 000 €, which targeted the Republic of Moldova, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine).

The HUDOC database (<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/Pages/search.aspx#%7B%22documentcollectionid2%3A%5B%22GRANDCHAMBER%22%22%22CHAMBER%22%22DECISIONS%22%5D%7D>) will, perhaps, become the most important data base for the Romanian version of the ECHR causes, as it has the advantage of reuniting translations made by different entities, in one place. Also, the interface is intuitive, the search engine is complex, thus enabling documents searches based on their type, date, number of request, state, language, key-words, items raised, breached articles etc.

To conclude, the Court’s website and the associated data base will facilitate the specialists’ and wide public’s access to the ECHR case-law, not only by publishing the causes in the Court’s official language, but by translating them and the other associated documents, the ECHR standards being thus better understood, put into practice and disseminated.

Laura Mihăilescu

EIR Participation at the Third International Seminar on Neighbourhood, organised by Kadir Has University, in Istanbul, Turkey

The Centre for European Studies of Kadir Has University, Istanbul, organised between 25 - 30 June the Third *International Seminar on Neighbourhood*. The event reunited experts from the academic environment, think-tanks, international donors and analysis centres from the Black Sea, Mediterranean and Caspian sea region. The conference benefited from the participation of specialists from Harvard Kennedy School, the International Centre for Hellenic and Mediterranean Studies, the Centre for Economy and Energy - Surrey University, MGIMO State University (Moscow) and UNDP Istanbul.

Topics tackled during the keynote sessions included the main characteristics and trends in the Black Sea region: “frozen conflicts”, multiple ethnic identities, the significant economic and political disparities between states, as well as the role of BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation) as an instrument of regional cooperation, Romania being mentioned as an active initiator of numerous initiatives in this framework. At the same time, the vulnerabilities of the current cooperation context were remarked, among which the existence of competing national agendas as well as the state of bilateral relations between some of the countries in the region. Particular attention was paid during the debates to discussing the recent events in Turkey, as well as to the large street movements in the North Africa and Middle East.

Speakers invited to contribute included independent experts, practitioners and academic staff from the Black Sea, Mediterranean and Caspian Sea regions, as well as from the United States. One of the main threats to regional security and stability tackled by most speakers during their presentations was Islamic radicalism. The social and political movements of the last two years in the Middle East and North Africa have generated additional challenges to the capacity of regional actors, be they states, international or non-governmental organisations, donors, to cope with the ongoing events and their consequences.

Throughout the last two days of the seminar, participants took part in the elaboration and presentation of topical project proposals (project planning and implementation), under the guidance of Prof. Benjamin J. Broome, from Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, Arizona State University. Participants have the opportunity to formulate and discuss practical ways to put to work their project ideas, elaborated alongside their seminar fellows.

Agnes Nicolescu

The 6th edition of the Romanian Development School

Organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Federation of NGOs for Development in Romania (FOND), 15-17 July 2013, Sibiu

Representing the European Institute of Romania, I attended the 6th edition of the Romanian Development School organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in partnership with Romania's Federation of the NGOs for Development (FOND). This annual event gathered relevant actors in the field of cooperation for development - representatives of the line ministries in Romania, of the governments of the new member states of the European Union, partner states, the nongovernmental sector, both from Romania and abroad, and also representatives of the academic environment and national mass-media.

The Romanian Development School is a debate and know-how exchange forum, its objective being the consolidation of both knowledge and national capacity in the cooperation for development area.

This year's edition aimed to review the *National Strategy on Development Cooperation*, based on the expertise and potential of national actors, in accordance with the debates, priorities and principles which define the development agenda at European and international level.

On this occasion I have witnessed the presentation of the new Polish model on development cooperation and also the presentation of the Croatian model. Special attention was given to the new multiannual financial framework (MFF) from 2014 to 2020 and to the implications that it brings to the overall European context.

For more details please visit <http://www.fondromania.org/pagini/scoala-romana-de-dezvoltare-editia-201-2.php>

Mihai Sebe

analysis | opinion

EU Enlargement Perspectives

The **European Commission Representation in Romania** organized on 10 July 2013 the conference entitled *EU Enlargement Perspectives*. The conference was marked by two recent and very important EU events: the accession of Croatia to the EU and the beginning of the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council, both happening on the same day, July 1, 2013. Thus, the conference had the main purpose of identifying the key evolutions on the EU enlargement agenda in the Western Balkans and also perspectives for Turkey and Eastern Europe in a period marked by uncertainties and significant global challenges. Moreover, the debates tried to determine Romania's stance on the current challenges of the EU enlargement policy, as well as on the future path of the enlargement process. Furthermore, regarding the Lithuanian Presidency, an important topic of discussion was its agenda and how it will manage the enlargement prospect and perspectives during the six months.

Structured on three sessions of debates, the event was honoured by the presence of a great number of participants, members of the EU and public institutions, representatives of foreign countries, of the academia, as well as of the civil society. The debate was focused on the topic of EU enlargement and its perspectives in the present day context of economic instability, marked by civil and social tensions throughout many of the EU and neighbouring countries. Despite the advantages of the enlargement, as a synchronised process of progress both towards and of the EU, based on an inclusive dialogue and proactive approach (Vladimir Jarmolenko), it remains one of the most disputed European policies, contested with a populist rhetoric that builds on a certain fatigue (Leonard Orban). The increasing reluctance of member countries when considering the enlargement process is a short-sighted vision, because the stopping of the enlargement would dilute the cooperation and would intensify the nationalist rhetoric in both the periphery member states and the candidate countries (Erwan Fouéré). It is also important that the EU's door remains open because the enlargement process is very important from the point of view of the EU not only because it is a moral duty towards the Western Balkans, Turkey and Eastern Partnership countries, but also because it is an opportunity for the Union to obtain contact zones with its main partners in Asia, Russia and China (Oana Popescu). However, Mr. Sergiu Celac considers that a rethinking of the institutions and the neighbourhood policy is needed, because "one size fits all" solutions do not work in general and especially in the Balkans, a region that still experiences tensions (Bosnia-Herzegovina), emotional problems (F.Y.R. Macedonia) and scepticism towards Europe (Turkey).

Following the 2003 Summit in Thessaloniki, the Western Balkans, a challenging European region where all major projects throughout the centuries have generated tensions and irritation both there and in the neighbouring regions, received a new roadmap. This led to the stabilization of the region in parallel with setting the goal of EU membership for all the countries in the region (Ovidiu Nahoi). The main problems there are the lack of structure, of order and of public representation at the level of the political discourse. However, through its mechanisms, the EU "soft power" is starting to implement the institutional structure very much needed in those countries in order for them to obtain the necessary degree of well-being. Through its mechanisms, the EU will thus help the Western Balkans overcome the tensions, differences and conflicts and identify common denominators on which the regional cooperation to be based (Oana Popescu). Beginning with Slovenia and continuing with Croatia's success story that culminated with its recent EU accession, the other Western Balkan countries,

as well as the Eastern Partnership ones, were provided with a powerful incentive to continue their reforms. This positive evolution happened due to the emergence of a new political class, consisting of younger and more European oriented politicians that ensured the continuing popularity of the EU (Sergiu Celac), which remains the only incentive in countries like Montenegro, Bosnia and Albania (Oana Popa). Regarding Turkey, the question must be asked whether it still wants to become an EU member state, taking into account the recent events and political discourses there. Its membership would however be a stabilizing factor for the region, due to the fact that the Turkish policy has strongly influenced the Balkans for centuries (Adrian Cioroianu).

Considering a possible accession of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, it is not clear, at this moment, whether the two countries wish to join the EU or not, because they did not even start the first steps in this direction (Oana Popa). As long as the EU will not explain to the candidate countries the benefits of membership, there will always be tensions (Balasz Barabas) intensified by the fact that the ex-communist countries have difficulties in dealing with the western modernization, the second shock after the soviet one. They need to consolidate their identity and overcome nationalism and social tensions (Péter Balász). Without the perspectives for enlargement, the countries in the Eastern Partnership will distance themselves from the EU and, left with no other choice, will join the Russian project of a Eurasian Union (Armand Goşu). Thus, as Mr. Vladimir Jarmolenko emphasized, the next Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius (this autumn) will prove to be the summit of opportunities for all, the East and the EU.

From this perspective, Romania is a constant supporter of the enlargement process since it facilitates economic reforms and foreign direct investments, provides access to an open market, freedom of movement for workers etc. Enlargement also contributes to the soft and hard security of Europe and presents advantages for all parties (Luminita Odobescu). However, it must be stressed that from Romania's point of view, the EU enlargement is important to target not only the Western Balkans, but also the Eastern Neighbourhood (Armand Goşu), the EU accession of the Republic of Moldova must remain an important goal for the Romanian foreign policy. Moreover, Romania needs very good relations with all its Balkan neighbours, not only Serbia (Adrian Cioroianu).

The main problem concerning the EU enlargement is not of institutional or legal nature, but economic, because of the omnipresent inequalities. They are caused by the heterogenic nature of the EU, marked by cultural and development differences and gaps between the member states. The homogenization period has always been too short, while the crisis only increased the competitiveness differences (Niculae Idu), in a context in which the Russian Federation and Turkey appear as important poles of attraction and may play a role as alternative to the EU because the present EU-28 is more divided than ever. While internal division leads to different blocks of countries and lack of coherence, the periphery is growing (Péter Balász).

Nicolae Gavrileş, intern

Citizens' Forum: Combating the Effects of the Economic Crisis

On 15 July 2013, the European Parliament Information Office in Romania, in collaboration with the European Commission Representation in Romania and the European Institute of Romania organized the Citizens Forum debate entitled *European Measures to Combat the Effects of the Economic Crisis*.

Due to the stabilization of power at the institutional level and, at the same time, due to the common interest in establishing a banking union, among the main measures to combat the crisis that were suggested by the speakers there should be mentioned: the direct actions for supporting the member states with severe financial difficulties, tailoring the European policies to the economic context (characterized by negative economic growth or stagnation and a low degree of employment), the financial framework for the 2014-2020 period. The latter instrument will be strictly monitored by the European Commission while also having a smaller budget compared to the previous financial framework. All these measures will be implemented in accordance to the measures for constraining fraud and tax evasion.



The main idea phrased by the lecturers referred to the opportunity for implementing structural reforms that would complement the austerity fiscal and budgetary measures. Moreover, another objective would be the reform of the

economic governance through the coordination of the national economic policies of the member states, since the European Commission has relaxed the criteria regarding the extension of the period for recovering the budget deficit and public debt.

Based on the 29 May preventive agreement, a number of eight country specific recommendations were formulated for Romania. The most important ones concern the reform of the health and fiscal systems and the facilitation of foreign direct investments. The alarm will be drawn again when Troika representatives will be present in Bucharest within the 17-30 July 2013 timeframe, with the declared purpose to negotiate the terms of a new preventive agreement for Romania.

As far as the future of the member states in the European Community is concerned, for the conclusions of the debate the speakers attempted to identify which stance is best suited: „more Europe” or „less integration”. The question was raised for the necessity to reorient the governance towards economic policies for the citizen’s benefit, especially in the context of the future euro-parliamentary elections and according to the Lisbon Treaty conditions, which give extended attention to the practice of participatory democracy.

Adriana Petre, intern

EP

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT UPDATES

1-4 July 2013 Plenary Session, Strasbourg

The EP plenary session took place while **Croatia acceded to the EU**, becoming the 28th member state, and while **Lithuania took over the presidency of the EU Council** from Ireland. This was also the session during which the European Parliament approved Lithuania’s accession to the euro zone, the political agreement regarding the long-term EU budget and the new European Ombudsman. The debates also concerned subjects like the observance of the European values in Hungary, the situation in Bulgaria and the PRISM case. The Saharov prize was handed to the Cuban dissident Guillermo Fariñas, who won the prize in 2010.

The agenda of the plenary also encompassed other themes of interest, such as the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, climate change, data protection, pharmaceutical products, the closure of the national public television in Greece and road safety.

The MEPs approved a plan for the delay of the commercialization of the new CO₂ emissions permits, in order to raise their price. Through this, the plan targets the raise of the investment in green technologies as an alternative to paying the permits.

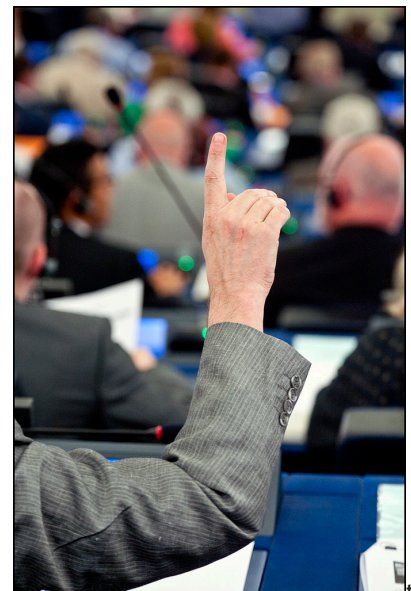
The nomination of the candidates for the position of President of the European Commission by the European political parties, with sufficient time before the elections, in order for a union-wide campaign on European themes take place, was the object of a resolution that was voted in the plenary. The Commission presidency candidates must personally present their political program in every member state, and the names of the political parties must be specified on the ballots.

The **2014-2020 multiannual financial framework** received a vote based on the resolution presented in the plenary. The final version of the legislation will be subjected to voting in September, when the European Parliament can approve the financial framework only with a qualified majority.

A **better data protection for the EU citizens** constituted the theme for a common debate with the representatives of the Commission and the Council. The debate started from the PRISM case in the USA, case which raised the topic of the implications of internet activity monitoring over the private lives of the citizens. EU emphasized the need for accelerating the reform of protection of its citizens’ personal data. Recent press articles are concerned with another secret surveillance program, Tempora, which is presumed to have been implemented by a British spying agency.

The **assessment on the observance of the European values in Hungary**, in the presence of Prime Minister Orbán, was followed by a cast of votes over a resolution regarding the recommendations addressed to the Hungarian authorities in order for them to immediately correct any violation of the fundamental values of the EU. The text of the resolution stipulates that the violation of these values by the Hungarian authorities will lead to the Parliament’s resorting to Article 7.1 from the EU Treaty, which states that the Council of Ministers can assess whether there is a clear risk of serious violation.

Greater sanctions in the entire EU are stipulated, for the cyber-criminals, in the proposal for a directive that was voted in the plenary. The Parliament and the Council agreed on new rules for preventing cyber-attacks and for deepening the cooperation in the fields of police and justice. The obligation for the member states is that the identified contact points should



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

answer in no more than eight hours to the help requests, in order for a more efficient cooperation of the police forces. The EP press release states that “Legal persons, such as companies, will be accountable for the crimes committed in their benefit (as an example, for hiring a hacker for obtaining access to a competitor’s databases). The punishments can include preventing the access of the legal persons found guilty to public contracts or the termination of their activity”.

The MEPs debated on the subject of the substances that are most likely to represent a risk for the aquatic environment, especially for surface waters. The EU monitoring list includes, for the first time, three pharmaceutical products.

Greece drew the attention of the EP, in the common debate with the Commission and Council, on the subject of the closure of the national public television (ERT), which took place on June, 11. This decision of the Greek government was the subject of numerous reactions and protests following which the third party in the governing coalition, the Democratic Left, withdrew its support for the government.

For details, please visit <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/ro>

Mariana Bara

EU

Lithuanian Presidency’s Priorities for 2013



EU2013.LT

For the first time after its accession, Lithuania is taking over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the second semester of 2013 (1 July-31 December). There are three major objectives on its agenda: restoring Europe’s credibility, growing Europe and an open Europe. The tasks will be performed in close partnership with the European Commission, the European Parliament, continuing the EU Agenda with Ireland and Greece, for the Trio’s 18-month program.

As the financial crisis has destabilized the market economy, the first objective of the Lithuanian Presidency will be to ensure a long term sustainable growth in Europe by focusing on increasing the competitiveness of the Member States, continuing with responsible public finance policies and offering incentives for investment prospects in the economy. Another target is to ensure the financial stability and restore the credibility of the financial institutions, which only represent the path for the greater scope - to reach an agreement towards the establishment of a Banking Union. Guiding steps for creating a balance (by monitoring the imbalances) in the financial policy of the EU had been drawn since 2012 through the implementation of the Intergovernmental Treaty and the second economic governance package. Member States will be under continuous surveillance in order to ensure that the economic governance is reflecting the EU’s economic and social reforms (of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance) at national level. But any of the above mentioned initiatives would have been in vain if there had not been a

constraint against tax evasion and fraud on The Lithuanian Presidency Agenda.

The second major objective of 2013 second Presidency, which complements the first one, is to gradually establish a competitive Internal Market, develop state-of-the-art technologies and, at the same time, emphasize the green economy and labour-intensive areas. As far as the financial support for these measures is concerned, the Lithuanian Presidency is going to adopt the first EU budget for 2014. On the digital agenda, the development of a common EU digital market by 2015 will be the next challenge. Other important initiatives, regarding the single market consolidation, have been proposed regarding Product Safety and Market Surveillance Regulations (electronic invoicing in public procurement and cutting down the costs for broadband communications) in order to encourage the consumers and the small and medium enterprises by reducing the operating costs and increasing the efficiency of the electronic communications infrastructure.

Lithuania will host, together with the European Commission, the ICT 2013 high-level conference, 6-8 November, in Vilnius, with the aim to bring about, among other important issues, the development of a modern EU energy infrastructure and to discuss a first list of energy projects of common interest.

All these measures are taken for the citizens’ benefit. A threatening problem nowadays is the growing social exclusion, as youth unemployment has reached extremely high rates in most of the EU countries. The Lithuanian Presidency has committed to implement the Youth Employment Package and to offer more protection for workers’ rights, including migrant workers. Last but not least, a growing Europe also signifies a greener economy, greater environmental awareness and sustainable growth at a new macro-regional level.

Finally, the third objective targets an open Europe, aiming to expand its free, fair and open trade area for a safe Eastern European Neighbourhood, the 28-29 November 2013 Summit in Vilnius marking further cooperation with the Eastern

partners for a more democratic-based legal environment. The Lithuanian Presidency will also show great interest in the enlargement agenda. As Croatia has become the 28th EU Member State, the way is open for other Western Balkans Countries such as Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, as well as for Turkey to earn their place in the EU family, based on principles like their own merits and clear conditionality. As an international actor, the EU also mediates trade negotiations with the US and Japan and invigorates trade terms with Russia

and China. The Council of the EU through the Lithuanian Presidency also raises the awareness on global environment, continues the work in the humanitarian aid field and further develops the Security and Defence Policy.

More information can be found at: http://static.eu2013.lt/uploads/documents/Programos/Programa_EN.pdf

Adriana Petre, intern

Promo

Training programmes at the European Institute of Romania, September – December 2013

TOP MANAGER 11-13 September, Bucharest
ECHR - PROCEDURAL AND ADMISSIBILITY CONDITIONS OF APPLICATIONS 16-17 September, Bucharest
COMPUTER ASSISTED TRANSLATION COMPETENCES 18-20 September, Bucharest
PROJECT MANAGER 7-11 October, Bucharest
EUROPEAN UNION'S ENVIRONMENT POLICY 17-18 October, Bucharest
EXPERT IN ACCESSING EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND COHESION FUNDS 4-8 November, Bucharest
THE NEW CIVIL CODE Theoretical and practical perspectives 11-13 December, Bucharest

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