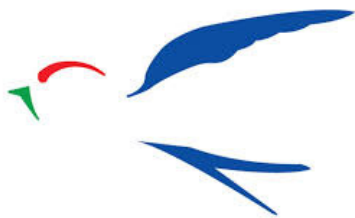


EU _____

in this issue _____

The Launch of the Italian Presidency of the EU Council



The Embassy of Italy in Romania organized on 2 July 2014 a press conference on the occasion of the launch of the Italian Presidency of the EU Council. The event benefited from the participation of H.E. Mr. Diego Brasioli, Ambassador of Italy in Romania, Mr. Titus Corlăţean, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs

and Mrs. Angela Filote, Head of the EC Representation in Romania. The event was attended by members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Bucharest and mass media representatives.

From 1 July 2014 Italy took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union from Greece. The rotating presidency will be held by Italy until 31 December 2014 then it will be passed on to Latvia and Luxembourg. The programme of the Presidency Trio (1 July 2014 - December 2015) sets as main objectives the full overcoming of the economic and financial crisis, the boosting of the Union's growth, the strengthening of the Union's capacity to deliver more jobs and to seize digital opportunities, the safeguarding of the fundamental rights and the strengthening of EU's role in an ever-changing world. The three presidencies have committed to create new jobs, to monitor social protection, to ensure financial stability, to outline an efficient energy policy, to invest in transport infrastructure, to deepen trade relations with emerging economies and to advance the accession negotiations with the Western Balkans countries and the ongoing negotiation process with Turkey ... **p.2**



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The Czech Official Development Cooperation at a Glance - guest article -

The strategic objective of the Czech Republic's development policy - which is an integral part of the Czech Republic's foreign policy - is to eradicate poverty and to promote security and prosperity through effective partnership, enabling poor and undeveloped countries to realize their development goals ... **p.5**



... **H.E. Mr. Diego Brasioli**, Ambassador of Italy in Romania, made a short presentation of the programme of the Italian presidency of the EU Council. Having as slogan “*Europe, a fresh start*”, the presidency has three main priorities: creating jobs and economic growth, providing a space for democracy, rights and freedoms, and boosting EU’s foreign policy. Regarding the first priority, the present presidency will focus on structural reforms, innovation, sustainable development, and supporting the “industrial renaissance” and investments in key sectors. In order for Europe to be closer to its citizens, the Italian presidency aims to promote transparency and digitalisation, and to protect the fundamental rights and the policy on migration and asylum. In order to strengthen the global role of the EU, the Italian presidency will focus on the Mediterranean area, North of Africa, Middle East and on the new Association Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as on advancing the discussion on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the U.S. Referring to Romania, the Ambassador of Italy expressed his support for Romania’s accession to the Schengen Area, which in his view should already be a member because it has met the criteria of membership since 2011.

Mr. Titus Corlăţean, Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted at the beginning of his speech Italy’s experience in the European integration process, as a founding member state and a country which held 11 times the rotating EU presidency. Mr. Corlăţean stated that Romania will support the priorities of the Italian presidency, as it is fully committed to the objectives of a more powerful, more integrated and more cohesive EU. Regarding the main priority, the European economy, Romania welcomes the promotion of concrete measures for economic recovery and

stimulating investments in order to combat unemployment, especially among young people, which is a matter of great interest for Romania. In the context of Italian presidency’s priority to act on the basis of respect for fundamental freedoms, including freedom of movement of EU citizens, it is essential to strengthen Schengen, Romania counting on Italy’s support in advancing the accession negotiations to the Schengen area. Regarding the objective of strengthening EU’s external role, it was highlighted that Romania completed its presidency of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC), which aimed both to strengthen the regional cooperation and to synchronize with the EU enlargement agenda. A priority issue on the Italian presidency’s agenda, of particular interest for Romania, is the EU’s Southern and Eastern neighborhood, Mr. Corlăţean welcoming the signing of Association Agreements with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine.

Mrs. Angela Filote, Head of the EC Representation in Romania, underlined the challenges that the Italian presidency will face, namely a less cooperative Parliament as a result of the European elections held this year, and highlighted Italy’s overall strategic vision, especially as regards the crisis exit strategy and rethinking the Europe 2020 strategy. She also pointed out the importance of solidarity in reaching the set priorities, which can only be achieved through proper distribution of the benefits of economic growth to the citizens. Regarding the EU’s global role, the recent events in its proximity inevitably lead to a rethinking of the soft power policy.

Andreea Popescu,
EIR Communication intern

EP Sessions in Strasbourg: 1 – 3 July and 14 – 17 July 2014

In the first session of the new EP, between 1 and 3 July, the new President of EP and 14 Vice-Presidents were elected. Appointments were also made to the Parliamentary Committees and the Parliamentary Groups were set up. **Martin SCHULZ**, of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, has been re-elected President of EP.

The EP debated the Conclusions of the European Council meeting (26-27 June 2014) presented in the statement of the European Council and Commission. Herman Van Rompuy, Permanent President of the European Council and José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, attended the debates. The results of the Greek Presidency were analysed after declarations made by Antonis Samaras, President-in-Office of the Council, and José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission.

The key items on the agenda of the Italian Presidency (July - December 2014) presented by Prime-Minister Matteo Renzi are growth, citizens, external action. José Manuel Barroso saluted the reform proposed by Matteo Renzi, promised support and reaffirmed the stability of the Euro.



In the second session of the new EP, candidate **Jean-Claude JUNCKER**, of the EPP Group, presented his program in the final debate with the leaders of the political groups. It is for the first time that the EP elects the President of the European Commission. Although his program was appreciated by most MEPs, there were voices which pointed to the fact that the parliamentary elections had a very low turnout and that the euphoric atmosphere is unjustified. He was elected by MEPs' vote and his name was announced in plenary session on 15 July, with a delay of nearly two hours from the time initially announced.

Jean-Claude JUNCKER had been proposed on 27 July by the heads of state and government and supported by the party which gathered most votes in the European Parliament - EPP. With 422 votes in his favour and 250 against, **Jean-Claude JUNCKER became the new President of the European Commission** with a 5 year mandate. The new President stated that there will be no new member states in the following 5 years. His declaration that the Euro currency does not divide Europe, on the contrary, it protects it, was received with applause, although some MEPs disapproved. However, his declaration that nationalism leads to wars has prompted the opposition of the British MEPs.

The agenda also included a declaration of the Commission, *Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investments Partnership (TTIP)* and a declaration of the Council and Commission on the *Directive on maternity leave* which, in its new form extends the minimum paid maternity leave from 14 to 20 weeks. The Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy made a declaration on *Destruction of Syria's chemical weapons in the Mediterranean Sea, between Greece and Italy*.

Four members of the European Commission were appointed - Jyrki KATAINEN (FI), Jacek DOMINIŁ (PL), Ferdinando NELLI FEROCI (IT), Martine REICHERTS (LU) - in place of the commissioners who have become MEPs.

Commissioner László ANDOR made a declaration on *Youth employment*. On the same topic, EP recommendations on approaching youth employment and implementing the *Youth Guarantee* were debated and adopted.

Other items on the EP agenda concerned the *Number of members of inter-parliamentary delegations; the Payment situation in the EU budget given the unprecedented level of outstanding EU commitments*

EP approved the adoption by Lithuania of the Euro currency as of 1 January 2015; thus Lithuania will be the 19th member state of the euro zone.

In an EP resolution, the violence between Israel and Palestine was condemned and a ceasefire was called for. The MEPs examined the dramatic situation in Irak and recent events in Ukraine. The situation in Irak was also the object of a declaration by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

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

Mariana Bara

opinion

Transition Experience from the Central and Eastern European Countries and the EU's International Development Policy - guest article -

There has been extensive research on the effects of the EU on the Central and Eastern European (CEE) international development policies which emerged after the turn of the Millennium, but CEE impact on the EU's development policy has received much less attention. The CEE countries have achieved some results in shaping EU development policy, but government officials and NGOs seem unsatisfied. This brief contribution examines why CEE influence has not been as successful as hoped, using the example 'transition experience'

as a case study. We try to explain why the CEE countries have not been more successful in convincing the EU to make greater use of their transition experience in its development policy.

Transition experience

Transition experience (the collective body of knowledge that the CEE countries have accumulated in their process of transition from autocracy to democracy, command economy

to market economy and integration in the European Union since 1989) is seen to be the 'comparative advantage' of these countries in international development cooperation. Many developing countries are trying to cope with processes of economic or political transition, and CEE experience could be helpful in these processes. The narrative of transition experience is present in policy documents, and dedicated programmes, funds and agencies have been created. A number of national policy documents stress the importance of transition experience, such as the Czech Republic's Development Cooperation Strategy for 2010-2017 and the Hungarian International Development Policy Strategy for 2014-2020. Transition experience is integrated into bilateral assistance as outlined by Romanian aid: bilateral aid provides us 'with the means to efficiently promote the expertise we accumulated during the transition period to the benefit of our priority states'.

Limited results

The concept of transition experience has been mentioned in EU documents as well. These include the European Consensus for Development (2006) - Article 33, which states that "the EU will capitalize on new Member States' experience (such as transition management) and help strengthen the role of these countries as new donors." The European Transition Compendium created in 2011 was also seen to be an important document and both the Council Conclusions on the EU Support for Sustainable Change in Transition Societies (2013) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument's regulation make reference to the importance of transition experience.

However, it is clear that the CEE states have not been as successful as they would have liked in 'uploading' their preferences onto the EU level. In 2011 the CEE states issued a Non-paper which called for mainstreaming transition experience into all external programmes and earmarked funds. The evidence to date suggests that CEE actors possessing transition experience do very poorly in winning EU grants for projects in developing countries. The following sections analyse why the CEE countries have achieved less than they hoped for.

Why limited uploading?

Development is not a priority policy for CEE countries, which means that governments are unlikely to put their full weight behind it. CEE states are relatively new at the EU game and perhaps have lacked the skills at alliance building and bargaining. Combining these two factors means that other

states are unlikely to see transition experience as a deal breaker, i.e. something that the CEE states will fight to defend. CEE development policy is run by diplomats who often have no background in development. There is a high staff turnover and low institutional memories. In many cases there are limited instructions from the capitals for the national diplomats in Brussels. All these factors combine to weaken the policy preferences and also help send a message that development policy is not a salient issue for the CEE states.

The CEE states also lack the ability to argue that a given policy proposal is actually in the Community interest. CEE states have yet to find a narrative that links transition experience with the community interest. Finding this narrative is important because some older member states feel that transition experience is a threat to the EU development policy's poverty reduction agenda and focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, as transition experience is seen most transferable to the Post-Soviet neighbourhood. Transition experience is also seen to promote bad aid practices, as it is seen to be donor-driven, tied, and unaligned to recipient priorities.

Summary

We can see that the weak influence of CEE states is compounded by the relatively low weight they ascribe to development policy. Policies like structural and regional policy or agricultural policy are highly salient for the new member states, and development is not. Academic analysis highlights that in areas of political salience, the new Member States (NMS) can influence EU policy preferences. Given the lack of salience, it is perhaps unsurprising that the NMS have not been successful at building alliances or bargaining as they have very little to bargain in this policy area. Admittedly, the CEE states are only just learning how to play the game in Brussels in relation to building alliances. The example of the Eastern Partnership, proposed jointly by Poland and Sweden, shows that some states are able to join forces with other member states and pitch a policy proposal as being in the Community interest. The lack of capacity in relation to skilful diplomats, a clear policy position, instructions from the capital etc., add to the factors that hamper the influence of the NMS in development policy.

Full academic paper and references are available on request from the authors.

Balázs Szent-Iványi and Simon Lightfoot

Balázs Szent-Iványi is Associate Professor of International Political Economy at Corvinus University, Budapest, Hungary. He has published extensively on development policies of the new EU member states. His latest paper on CEE transition experience is forthcoming in September 2014 in the Journal *Europe-Asia Studies*.

Simon Lightfoot is a Senior Lecturer in European Politics at the University of Leeds, UK and editor of *Development Policies of Central and Eastern European States: From Aid Recipients to Aid Donors* (with Ondřej Horký-Hlucháň, Routledge 2013).

The Czech Official Development Cooperation at a Glance

- guest article -

The strategic objective of the Czech Republic's development policy - which is an integral part of the Czech Republic's foreign policy - is to eradicate poverty and to promote security and prosperity through effective partnership, enabling poor and undeveloped countries to realize their development goals.



The Czech Republic supports the implementation of development projects, offers scholarships for foreign students, provides humanitarian aid, and performs a number of related activities. At the same time, it actively participates in international organisations that deal with issues of developing countries. The Czech Republic focuses on projects where it may benefit from its comparative advantages, including its experience with the process of transition towards a democratic political system and a market oriented economy.

The Czech Republic's development policy is based on partnership with recipient countries. It is driven by demand from partner countries. The Czech Republic accentuates the involvement of local actors (governments, elected representatives, civil society organizations) at all stages of the project cycle in order to strengthen ownership and thus the effectiveness of cooperation.

Before 1989, the former Czechoslovakia was a significant donor; however, the Czechoslovak foreign aid was mostly politically motivated and influenced by the world's bipolar partition. The contemporary development cooperation system (ODA system) was established in 1995 when the Czech Republic joined the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Thus, the Czech Republic became the first transition country in Central and Eastern Europe to renew its government foreign aid programme.

The accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union in 2004 has brought some changes to the ODA system. However, it was not until the first special review was conducted by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD (DAC/OECD) in 2007 that the Czech Republic made a significant effort to enhance its ODA system in line with its ambition to become a progressive emerging donor. The recommendations from the special review triggered a crucial transformation of the Czech ODA system starting in 2008. The transformation culminated in the new ODA system with strengthened competences of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the establishment of the Czech Development Agency (CzDA, in January 2008) and the Czech Council for Development Cooperation, and finally the ratification of the Act on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (July 2010), where the ODA is clearly defined as (quotation): *“development cooperation” shall mean the set of activities financed from the national budget aimed at contributing to the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development, including the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals, to economic and social development, to environmental protection, and to the promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance in developing countries.* The first stage of the ODA system transformation was completed in 2013, when the Czech Republic joined the DAC/OECD as a full member.

At “strategic” level, there is also the Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2010-2017; this key document determines the direction to be taken by development cooperation over the medium term and defines the priority countries and sectors.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains the coordination role in bilateral “project-focused” aid and multilateral aid to the UN, EU and other multilateral organizations, prepares strategic documents and annual Plans of Bilateral Development Cooperation, and is responsible for the humanitarian aid and also the evaluation of development projects and programmes. The Czech Development Agency is responsible for the implementation of bilateral development cooperation, including the identification of projects, the organisation of selection procedures (both public tenders and grants), the signing of contracts and project monitoring. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the Czech Republic's engagement in international financial organizations, financial bodies of the OECD, European Union and other international financial institutions. Representatives of different line ministries meet in the Council on Development Cooperation, which ensures inter-ministerial coordination and coherence of the goals and priorities of development cooperation and other instruments of government policy.

The Czech Republic strives continuously to fulfil its commitment to increase its ODA volume. In 2013, the Czech Republic provided a total ODA worth of approx. 158 million euros (bilateral ODA 27 % and multilateral ODA 73 %) with the internationally recognised ODA to GNI indicator reaching 0.11 %. In line with international recommendations, the Czech Republic reduced the number of priority countries during the past ten years. Currently, the Czech bilateral project-focused ODA is present in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Mongolia, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Serbia (and also in smaller volumes in so-called *phase-out* countries: Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia).

The Czech ODA system incorporates several groups of actors - in the first place CSOs/NGOs and private enterprises as crucial partners and main implementing bodies. It is closely collaborating with academia (including universities), research institutes and also specialized governmental institutions. In order to raise public awareness and general public support for ODA, the

Martin Náprstek (Deputy Director of the Czech Development Agency, Head of the project identification and monitoring department) is mainly responsible for cooperation with Civil Society organizations and NGOs, and also for identification of project ideas and monitoring of Czech development projects in priority countries of the Czech ODA (in particular: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Palestine). He has twelve years of experience in the field of Development Cooperation. Currently, he is also a PhD student at the Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Humanities (focusing on the role of NGOs in development cooperation).

Main sources of general information about Czech ODA:

<http://www.mzv.cz/aid>

<http://www.czda.cz/?lang=en>

Czech Republic has formed some instruments - especially a grant scheme for NGOs and other eligible actors to support their projects focused on global development education, public awareness raising and development research.

After almost 25 years of democratic development, the Czech Republic is among the 38 richest countries in the world, making it morally obliged to help less prosperous regions. Development activities also strengthen bilateral political, economic and cultural relations with individual countries, while improving the Czech Republic's position on the international scene. Effective development cooperation also contributes to an improved security situation, at both regional and global levels.

Martin Náprstek
Deputy Director, Czech Development Agency

event

Free Movement of Romanian Workers in the EU: Realities and Trends from Economic, Employment and Social Perspectives

On 8 July 2014, the European Institute of Romania organized the debate entitled *Free Movement of Romanian Workers in the EU: Realities and Trends from Economic, Employment and Social Perspectives*, as part of the promotion initiative for the study which deals with *The estimation of the impact of free movement of Romanian workers in EU region from 01.01.2014; realities and trends from economic, employment and social perspectives, at national and European level*.

The event benefited from the participation of Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, PhD Professor and Director General of the European Institute of Romania, Mr. **Codrin Scutaru**, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and of the Elderly, Mr. **Bogdan Badea**, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. **Camelia Mihalcea**, Director of National Agency for Employment, Mrs. **Valentina Vasile**, Director, Senior Researcher of the Institute of National Economy, Professor at "Nicolae Titulescu" University, author and coordinator of the research team, Mrs. **Iolanda Stăniloiu**, Consultant, former Spokesperson of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and of the Elderly, Mrs. **Maria Voica**, Project Coordinator, O.I.M Romania and Mrs. **Victoria Stoiciu**, Project Coordinator, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The conference was

moderated by Mrs. **Maria-Denise Theodoru**, Journalist at "Radio Romania Actualitati". The event was attended by representatives of the business sector, political sphere, members of the civil society, as well as Master and Doctoral degree students.

In the opening of the conference, Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan** provided an overview of the debate by making reference to the importance of the discussion theme from the perspective of the view held by certain states regarding the so called 'invasion' of the Romanian workers, and the risks of abuse the free movement can bring about. One of the strong benefits of the study is that it helps dismiss the gloomy preconception linked to the impact created by the right of free movement in EU, starting with 01.01.2014.

Mrs. **Maria-Denise Theodoru** made reference to the negative effects that campaigns from different states had on the status of Romanian workers, effects that are still present.

Mr. **Codrin Scutaru** discussed more in depth the topic of Romanian workers' mobility and highlighted the positive



impact it had on the European economy. The freedom of movement is a fundamental right of the European structures, which cannot be restrained. Mr. Scutaru brought attention to the negative campaign of the United Kingdom regarding the Romanian workers, and more importantly, to the fact that the majority of Romanians who work in UK have average and higher work qualifications and at the same time contribute to the host country's revenue. Moreover, the consequences in the economic and employment sector were mentioned, as a noticeable decrease in the numbers of qualified personnel was noticed. Thus, considering the Romanians' pro-European focus and their assumed European citizenship, it is mandatory that a dialogue aimed at solving the current difficulties is initiated.

Mr. **Bogdan Badea** valued the richness of the data and the in-depth nature of the study in his speech. The guest mentioned that the freedom of movement of Romanian workers is subject to specific regulations including in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. Mr. Badea mentioned a series of research studies conducted within EU which expose the benefits of the labour movement in Central and East Europe for the economy of the host countries. Furthermore, he noted the small extent of labour movement at the European level, in comparison with that taking place in the USA and Australia. The improvement of the free movement is viable only in the context of eliminating the prejudices and if an efficient labour market is kept in place. When considering frauds caused by individuals, it is the responsibility of one particular national state to regulate the situation and implement the measures the country considers to be suitable. This issue should not put any pressure on the right of free movement, on the contrary, the labour mobility at the European level should be stimulated and supported.

Mrs. **Camelia Mihalcea** gave a detailed overview of the means of support ANOFM can provide to the Romanian citizens who are interested in working abroad. Mrs. Mihalcea highlighted the relevance of the EURES portal where experts offer concrete information about the requirements and the job offers available within EU. She also mentioned the issue of Romanian workers' lack of information regarding job offers abroad and the technical procedures implied by their status in the host countries.

Mrs. **Valentina Vasile**, coordinator of the research study, discussed the implications of the research that was conducted, and focused on the conclusions that it yielded. The results proved wrong the negative predictions regarding the effects of eliminating restrictions to free movement for Bulgaria and Romania. The 'invasion' that was talked about in the Western press was invalidated by the reality of the last six months.

The conclusions of the study were developed on three main directions: firstly, the theme of remittances was covered, which showed signs of stabilization due to changes in the behaviour of the Romanian nationals abroad. Therefore, the expectations need to be realistic, in Mrs. Vasile's opinion. Alterations in the profile of the Romanian worker abroad were brought to attention. The Romanian worker is characterized in two ways: the labourer is either the young graduate who is not attracted by the job offers available in the current market, or the unqualified worker whose job is poorly paid. The analysis of the two cases showed that the personnel with higher qualifications find jobs easier in EU. Finally, the researchers approached the loss of intellectual capital, as studies prove that the Romanian youth decides to relocate in other member states of the EU due to the opportunities available there.

Mrs. **Iolanda Stăniloiu** covered the social dimension of the free movement theme by addressing the prejudices held within EU. The guest also encouraged the promotion of the current research study in the business sector, in mass media, and at the level of trade unions. Lastly, she mentioned the improvement in steps taken by Romanian authorities in order to correct the imbalanced situation of the labour market.

Mrs. **Maria Voica** presented the relevant information regarding O.I.M's role and the activities it promotes. Mrs. Voica mentioned abuses whose victims were Romanian citizens searching for employment opportunities abroad, most of them caused by the lack of sufficient information. Moreover, the speaker drew a parallel between the growth of the global population and the increase in migration practices, while arguing that it is necessary to normalise this trend in accord with the geopolitical, economic and social context.

Mrs. **Victoria Stoiciu** discussed the conclusions of the study called 'Impact of free labour movement in EU'. According to the aforementioned paper, after the removal of labour restrictions for Romanian and Bulgarian workers in the EU, the foreseen increase in migration did not take place. On the contrary, a slower increase compared to the period before the economic crisis was noticed. The comparative analysis conducted for the case of Italy and Spain in 2011 showed a general trend which was determined by other factors than the restrictions imposed by the EU member states, the governmental policies being very significant in this case. The impact of free labour movement was deemed beneficial in the long run for the EU member states, whose GDP increased visibly. Thus, it was estimated that the alleviation of the economic crisis in Western Europe was determined to a certain degree by the employment of workers from Central and East Europe. As for Romania's situation, even if the impact is positive for a short period, in the long run, negative perspectives are outlined concerning the evolution of the social, economic and professional structure.

The conference ended with a short Q&A session, and representatives of the Parliament and of the business sector seized this opportunity to express their views. Topics such as the necessity of creating new policies tailored to the real needs of the Romanian citizens in the European context were discussed, as well as the importance to redesign and alter the way economic activity is handled.

EIR Studies and Analyses Unit

Lobbying in Romania vs. Lobbying in the European Union

The European Institute of Romania (EIR) organized on 10 July 2014 a debate entitled *Lobbying in Romania vs. Lobbying in the European Union*, part of a project that will be carried out under the coordination of EIR in the period June - November 2014, concerning an analysis on the issue of lobbying in the European Union and Romania. The event benefited from the participation of Mrs. **Gabriela Crețu**, Senator, European Affairs Committee, Romanian Senate, Mr. **Răzvan Horațiu Radu**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. **Monica Loloiu**, Counselor to the Political Rapporteur, EC Representation in Romania, Mrs. **Simina Tănăsescu**, PhD Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Bucharest, coordinator of the team of authors of the study *Lobbying in Romania vs. Lobbying in the European Union*, Mrs. **Laura Florea**, Managing partner, Point Public Affairs, President of the Romanian Lobbying Registry Association and Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General, EIR. The conference was moderated by Mr. **Ovidiu Nahoi**, journalist, Money Channel. The event was attended by representatives of the diplomatic, academic and research institutions, civil society, media etc.



Mr. **Ovidiu Nahoi** outlined Romania's current situation regarding lobby activities, highlighting the fact that Romania is deficient in terms of legitimate lobbying, stakeholder participation being low compared to the EU average.

Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, EIR's Director General, referred in her speech to the fact that lobbying existed and will always exist; therefore the current situation at European level, namely the proposal to make the registration in the Transparency Register compulsory, represents an appropriate time for debating this subject. Mrs. Drăgan underlined that it is important to keep a balance of interests that are promoted to influence the legislative decision, and that it is essential for the lobby activity not to discriminate.

Mrs. **Simina Tănăsescu**, PhD Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Bucharest, coordinator of the authors' team, stated that the basis for the study *Lobbying in Romania vs. Lobbying in the European Union* was the need for a special regulation of the lobbying activity. The study starts from the premise that there is a need to review current regulations, internal regulations and other potential regulations, and will focus on four dimensions. Firstly, the study will clarify the concepts, namely it will analyze the relation between activities carried out to influence the decision-making processes and internal regulations in terms of transparency and influence. The legal dimension aims to analyze the regulation of the lobbying activities, both in Romania and the EU. The study will examine how lobbying was carried out concretely in Romania. It will also approach ethical issues. In this context it was highlighted that the lobbying activity was not related with influence peddling and corruption. Mrs. Tănăsescu mentioned that the study will provide both a quantitative analysis, by identifying key actors, and a sociological perspective, namely the social effects of lobbying activities.

Mrs. **Monica Loloiu**, Counselor to the Political Rapporteur, EC Representation in Romania, gave a presentation of the European framework which is based on a constant interaction between the EU institutions and the business environment, NGOs, consulting firms, syndicates, think tanks, which is essential in order to acquire citizens' trust and the legitimacy of the decision-making process. The legal basis of transparency consists mainly of provisions of the Treaty on European Union, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Mrs. Loloiu underlined the importance of the Transparency Register, a key instrument for implementing the transparency policy, which includes an online database, a Code of conduct, alerts and complaints, and in which the entries are voluntary. The speaker outlined the profile of a good lobbyist, characterized by transparency, ability to support arguments with evidence, enrollment in the Transparency register and compliance with the Code of conduct. Regarding the lobbying activity in Brussels, it was mentioned that this is the second capital of lobbying, after Washington, with approximately 6000 entities registered in the Transparency register. From a European perspective, the main benefit of lobbying is that it provides access for social and economic actors to the political process.

Mr. **Răzvan Horațiu Radu**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the significance of lobbying at European level, as a set of actions carried out by people or organizations, which have an interest to support and promote trends and opinions, made with the express intention to influence decision makers. However, at European level, this issue is not regulated in a harmonized manner, therefore the member states decide on the opportunities to develop a systematic legal framework. The speaker discussed two specific examples of member states in which the lobbying activity is regulated, Austria and Poland. Austria stands as a model of success with the transparency law that came into force in early 2013 establishing penalties for non-compliance, while Poland is not a positive example because the lobbying law led to increased bureaucracy and had no impact on transparency.

Mrs. **Gabriela Crețu**, Senator, European Affairs Committee, Romanian Senate, underlined the fact that the law should represent a balanced solution, to protect common interest and to treat equally those who have the same interests. In this context, lobbying has nothing to do with participatory democracy, but with money, as only those with financial resources can present their point of view, thus becoming a source of imbalance. Comparing Romania's concept of lobbying with those of other countries, one can notice that it is closer to the American concept, being viewed as a positive practice, while in Brussels there is pressure to reduce lobbying. However, an alarm must be sounded regarding this issue, because there is a possibility for Romania to understand this phenomenon as a regulation of influence peddling. In her view, the term lobbying is strictly a paid activity made by a group of professionals employed by companies. Therefore, the fact that the Transparency register is a mix between lobbyists and other entities, such as NGOs, has watered down the significance. Mrs. Crețu underlined the importance of regulation, the Transparency register representing the first important step in this direction.

Mrs. **Laura Florea**, Managing partner, Point Public Affairs, President of the Romanian Lobbying Registry Association, made a short presentation of the association she represents, which aims to promote lobbying. The association, founded in 2010, currently has 14 members and is self-regulated. Mrs. Florea also mentioned the most important associations in the field of lobbying at European level, namely EPACA (European Public Affairs Consultancies' Association), which supports the mandatory imposition of the Transparency register, and SEAP (Society of European Affairs Professionals). It was underlined that the largest share of the Transparency register is represented by business associations, followed by NGOs, while consultancies represent only 5%.

This way a good deal of the influence on policies is conducted by interest groups directly, through in-house lobby, without paid consultants. It was also highlighted that the European lobby industry wants equal access for all parties to the public policy making process, but it also wants that all parties have the obligation to provide the same level of transparency.

The event ended with a short Q&A session, in which the first intervention belonged to Mr. **Liviu Stancu**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, who underlined the importance of the theme for the institution he represents, and expressed his interest for the final result of this research to support the development of future norms for lobbying activities.

Andreea Popescu,
EIR Communication intern

Roma Inclusion Policies in EU Member States

The European Institute of Romania (EIR) organized on 15 July 2014 a debate on the study *Roma Inclusion Policies in EU Member States*, part of the campaign for promoting and disseminating the results of the research project Strategy and Policy Studies (SPOS) 2013. The event benefited from the participation of Mr. **Codrin Scutaru**, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and of the Elderly, Mr. **Daniel Vasile**, State Secretary, President of the National Agency for Roma, Mr. **Sorin Cace**, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, author and coordinator of the research team, Mr. **Gelu Duminiță**, Executive Director of "Împreună" Agency for Community Development, Mrs. **Salomeea Romanescu**, President of the Association Pro-Education of Roma in the context of Euro-Atlantic and Global Integration, Mr. **Iulian Stoian**, facilitator/trainer, ROMED2/ROMACT Programme, Romania Council of Europe and Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General, EIR. The conference was moderated by Mrs. **Manuela Preoteasa**, Journalist at Euractiv. The event was attended by representatives of the central public administration, of the beneficiary institutions, and experts of the academic and research environment, members of the civil society, students, media, etc.

Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan** mentioned the research themes of the Strategy and Policy Studies (SPOS) 2013 and highlighted the importance of the topic addressed in the present study. The Roma issue is of common interest, both for the member states

and for the EU institutions. This common interest is shown through the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, which was established in 2011. The importance of the study resides in the fact that the Roma population is the largest ethnic community in Europe, estimated at about 10 million people, and the Council of Europe estimates that Roma people represent 8.6% of the total population of Romania. Also, the Roma community faces numerous issues of discrimination and social exclusion, as well as a poor access to education, a low employment rate and limited access to health services and housing.

Mrs. **Manuela Preoteasa** summarized the issues pointed out in the study, which refer to areas such as education, health, employment, and are in fact the problems of our society as a whole.

Mr. **Codrin Scutaru** made reference to the effort to finalize this year the Strategy for Roma inclusion 2014-2020. The lifting of labour restrictions on 1 January 2014 has led to new challenges, some member states expressing concern about a possible "invasion" of Romanians abroad. Moreover, there was concern that most Romanians who will exercise their right to free movement, which is an earned right, could be Roma. The response of the Romanian authorities to this concern was firm, Mr. Scutaru stating that the Ministry of Labour and the Government will continue to defend the rights of every

Romanian citizen to free movement. In this context, it is important for the member states to be aware of the efforts undertaken by Romania for the Roma population, regarding employment - through employment caravans, health - through health mediators, and poverty reduction.

According to Mr. **Daniel Vasile**, an accurate and realistic definition of the Roma community does not exist, a reason being the multicultural diversity of this minority. He underlined that in the context of Europe's identity crisis, even though Roma people are sometimes an uncomfortable minority that is trying to find its way, they are the only transnational minority in Europe. Also, Roma people are an invaluable resource for both Romania and EU. Mr. Vasile highlighted the discrepancies between statistics, which represent the number of Romanian citizens who assumed their Roma ethnicity, and the reality. The Council of Europe estimated a Roma population approximately three times greater than the National Statistics Institute of Romania. The guest made reference to the data of the last census, especially the differences between urban and rural areas, which require a rethinking of public policies for Roma people, and the distribution and level of education among Roma, the number of Roma graduates being very low. Referring to the inclusion policy, Mr. Vasile believes it was not very well-defined and adapted to the specific issues of the Roma community. A sectoral policy with four main areas of intervention, it is not sustainable and does not meet the specificity of the Roma population, which requires an integrated approach. In order to reach a political and civic consensus, it is necessary for the leaders of the Roma community, civil society and politicians to assume the failure of policies regarding the Roma minority. Mr. Vasile considers the National Agency for Roma a failed project, due to the extremely limited human and financial resources.

Mr. **Sorin Cace** considers that definitions of Roma community in response to the specific needs of different communities do exist and that there are differences between the types of Roma communities in rural and urban areas, which require a reappraisal of the census data. In his view, the integrative approach is the most appropriate solution in this area, but it requires finding institutional levers to facilitate this process. In this context, it is necessary to rethink and strengthen the institutional position of the National Agency for Roma. Regarding the programming period 2014 - 2020, it can represent an appropriate time for a simple strategy, which may be applied more easily. The study, based upon the European Framework for Roma Inclusion, highlights several best practices from a comparative perspective and analyses sectoral development priorities from an integrative perspective. Mr. Cace suggests using *non-targeting* or *mainstreaming* as a national solution for policy synchronization.

Mr. **Gelu Duminiță** presented in a concrete and realistic manner the stereotypes and preconceptions about Roma population, with an emphasis on the frequently used negative connotation of the term Roma. Thus, the Roma issue can be attributed in some way to the prejudice of the whole society. It was underlined the fact that both at European and national level, Roma people are treated as a vulnerable group, but this approach is not adequate, the current issue of the Roma community representing the failure of anti-poverty and development policies for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, assigning Roma employment to the National Agency for Roma and the employment of all other citizens to the Ministry of Labour, is not a fair approach at all, especially given the



institutional position of the NAR. In his opinion, there is a real “anti-Gypsyism” when some aspects of migration are enhanced using ethnic arguments, because as he exemplified, the current Roma migration does not differ from that of the Italians after the World War II, the Greeks in the ‘60s or the Irish in the ‘80s. Given the diversity of the Roma community, a strategy can not be effective in this case, and requires that the problems/issues related to poverty and Roma inclusion not be treated differently from similar ones of other vulnerable groups.

Mrs. **Salomeea Romanescu** made reference to the Educational pilot project involving children from Roma communities in Vălenii Lăpușului, which was carried out in the ‘90s. The project involved raising external funds by the Ethnic Federation of Roma to build housing and set up a school which was integrated in the education system. Mrs. Romanescu highlighted the importance of an integrated vision, both at European and member states level, and the role of the association she represents, namely to try to reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma, in order for this minority to become an aggregation factor in a common European and global civilization. She also stressed the need for an integralist approach and a common vision, so as to achieve the goals set forth regarding the Roma issue.

Mr. **Iulian Stoian** believes there already is a paradigm of active citizenship and underlined the importance of local actors, which have the responsibility for implementing public policy measures through coherent programs. Mr. Stoian made a presentation of the first phase of the ROMED programme, which aimed to train health and school mediators, and the second stage of this programme ROMED2, which aims to mobilize Roma communities to form local initiative groups. Thus, these citizen groups will be recognized by the public authorities as a partner for dialogue, in order to improve living and working conditions in these communities. The new phase of the ROMACT programme, launched this year, intends to strengthen the organisational capacity of local authorities to develop local action plans in order to support the Roma community.

After the interventions of the speakers, Mrs. **Mihaela Popa**, Senator, Vicepresident of the European Affairs Committee, addressed the audience. The Senator underlined the positive changes of the last 20 years regarding the Roma issue, and the uniqueness of the positive discrimination policy of Roma people for high school and college admission. She also launched a proposal to organize a larger debate in Parliament

on the issue of Roma inclusion, and expressed her entire willingness to support such an event.

The conference ended with a short Q&A session, in which Mrs. **Onorica Abrudanu**, inspector within the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, made reference to the actions taken in the area of responsibility of the Ministry she represents, namely the pilot project for

building social housing, and underlined the involvement of the public authorities in the Roma issue. Topics such as the job fair dedicated to Roma people, the National Strategy for Roma, the funding of this Strategy and the need to implement an integrated approach versus a targeted approach were also discussed in this session.

Andreea Popescu,
EIR Communication intern

publications

Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration - Romanian version -

In July 2014, the *European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights* (FRA) based in Vienna made available the Romanian version of the **Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration**. The brochure is the result of the collaboration between the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

The handbook provides an overview of the laws applicable to asylum, border management and immigration in relation to European Union (EU) law and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Also, the manual represents an accessible guide to different European standards concerning asylum, borders and immigration. The targeted population groups are the third-country nationals, as foreigners are regarded by the EU, and not EU citizens since they are not subject to restrictions to free-movement between member states.

The Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration consists of nine chapters that deal with various topics, starting from access to the EU territory, associated documentation and legal support, to economic and social rights and forced returns. Each chapter illustrates the legal provisions that are found in each of the two European legal systems, which allows a clear understanding of aspects which make them different.

The aim of the brochure is to provide assistance to legal practitioners who are not specialised in the field of asylum, borders, and immigration. Furthermore, it targets lawyers, judges, prosecutors, border guards, immigration officials and other persons working with the national authorities, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which deal with legal aspects covered in the manual.

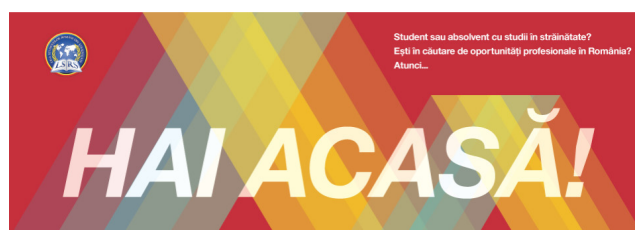
The electronic version of the manual can be downloaded from the web page of FRA (<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/handbook-european-law-relating-asylum-borders-and-immigration>), or the web page of the European Court of Human Rights (http://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=echrpublications/other&c=#n13729238669275624205289_pointer).

Nicol Vintilescu,
EIR Communication intern

projects

The European Institute of Romania - Host of SMART Internships Initiative

Between July-September 2014, the European Institute of Romania collaborates with the League of Romanian Students Abroad by taking part in the *SMART Internships* programme. The project is carried out for the first time at EIR and marks its second edition among other public institutions in Bucharest. The SMART Internships initiative targets Romanian students and young graduates who have an international academic preparation and impressive accomplishments, and are motivated to gain professional experience in the public sector of Romania.



For the period of the project, EIR opened 12 internship positions distributed within the following units: Communication and Marketing; Translations; Projects in European Affairs; Studies and Analyses; Training in EU affairs; as well as at the Director General's Office. The students who were selected to participate in the programme have academic preparation at renowned universities from France, UK, the Netherlands and the US.

Additionally, three internship vacancies were opened at Europe Direct Center in Bucharest, organization hosted by EIR. Among the assigned responsibilities, the interns are motivated to contribute to the specific activities of each department, as well as to put their theoretical knowledge in practice, and promote the activities of EIR through participation in the process of writing projects proposals concerned with European Affairs. The Europe Direct Center in Bucharest made available internships in the coordination team, where interns will participate in the organization's promotion through its online platforms, as well as in editorial activities related to the EUROPE 2020 brochure.

By participating in the SMART Internships project, the European Institute of Romania and Europe Direct Centre in Bucharest intend to strengthen their operational capacity and create opportunities for the professional development of potential future leaders of the public sector of Romania.

Oana Mocanu

Europe, my family – events at placement centres in Bucharest and Ilfov County

Europe Direct Bucharest Information Centre (EDIC) hosted by the European Institute of Romania (EIR) organised this year two events dedicated to children in placement centres in the Bucharest-Ilfov region. These two activities, under the title “*Europe, my family*”, were organised on 24 June at the Emergency Reception Centre “Cireşarii”, 5th District, Bucharest and on 26 July at the Placement Centre no. 5, Periş, Ilfov County.

The first event was attended by 40 children and youngsters aged 5 to 21, together with the head of the centre, Mrs. Antonica Simion and the employees. The event also enjoyed the presence and participation of students from “Octav Onicescu” National College of Bucharest alongside their teacher Mrs. Elena Milaş, who delighted the children with artistic programmes of music and dance. The second event was attended by 50 children and youngsters aged 5 to 26, along with the centre staff. At this activity there were also present Mrs. Mihaela Vâjâitu from the “Media” Technical College of Bucharest and Gherasim Alexandru, student in the 10th grade at the same high school. On this occasion, the participants learned useful information on the European Union and its member states through various games and educational activities that helped them interact with each other, working in team together with the Europe Direct Centre interns who managed to capture their attention and arouse their interest for European topics.

The purpose of these events was to stimulate the creativity on European issues and to promote communication and interaction between the target groups of our activities, that is high school students who participated in the European information seminars and creativity workshops, and the children and youth from placement centres. Thus, under the guidance and coordination of the teachers, the children had the opportunity to express their ideas and skills concerning the way European issues can be put into practice (through collages, paintings, drawings, music and dance).

The EDIC Bucharest representatives offered all participants gifts consisting in school supplies, sweets and customised t-shirts, pens and caps bearing the message “Europe, my family” and various informative materials. The children and youngsters from these placement centres were very excited and happy that they attended these events and expressed their wish that we organise other events together. The participants showed they have knowledge about the European Union, its history, European institutions and member states.



For additional information in Romanian language about these events or to see the photographs, please access: <http://europedirectbucuresti.ier.ro/evenimente/evenimentul-europa-familia-mea-dedicat-copiilor-de-la-centrul-de-primire-regim-de-urgenta-ciresarii-din-bucuresti/> and <http://europedirectbucuresti.ier.ro/evenimente/evenimentul-europa-familia-mea-dedicat-copiilor-de-la-centrul-de-plasament-nr-5-din-peris-jud-ilfov/>.

Diana Filip



<http://www.eucommunication.eu/Descriere-18/>

Editor-in-Chief: Oana Mocanu
Editors: Mariana Bara, Mihai Sebe
Graphics & DTP: Monica Dumitrescu
Translations RO-EN / EN-RO: Ionela Haralambie, Mihaela Papa, Andreea Popescu (intern), Nicol Vintilescu (intern)

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European Institute of Romania
7-9, Regina Elisabeta Bvd., RO - 030016, Bucharest, Romania
Phone: (+4021) 314 26 96/ 133 / Fax: (+4021) 314 26 66
Contact: newsletter@ier.ro, Web: www.ier.ro