

event

Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Starting with 1 January 2020, Croatia is holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU for the first time since it joined the Union, in 2013. Part of the trio made up of the presidencies of Romania and Finland, Croatia is implementing the six-month programme under the motto "A strong Europe in a world of challenges". Thus, the priorities¹ envisaged by the Croatian Presidency for this period of time are the following: a Europe that develops; a Europe that connects; a Europe that protects; an influential Europe.



Hrvatsko predsjedanje
Croatian Presidency of the
Vijećem Europske unije
Council of the European Union

The priority focused on a **Europe that develops** entails actions meant to strengthen the internal market, encourage the digitalization of the economy and society, support investments in research and innovation, improve the quality of life for the European citizens, protect the environment and support the fight against climate change. As regards the priority of a **Europe that connects**, the Croatian Presidency aims to support the development of transport, energy and digital infrastructure and territorial cohesion. The focus will also be placed on supporting policies in the field of education, culture and sport, as areas that can facilitate a better understanding between European citizens. An important challenge for the Croatian Presidency will be the advancement of negotiations for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and the need to find a compromise among Member States.

The objective of an **influential Europe** could be achieved by developing the capacities and tools needed for joint action to strengthen the Union's role at global level. In specific terms, this objective is closely linked to the promotion of European values, supporting multilateralism and European cooperation on security and defence. The Croatian Presidency aims to further support the Enlargement Policy of the European Union, and in this respect an increased attention will be put on the Western Balkans, by unlocking discussions on North Macedonia and Albania. Moreover, an informal European summit in Zagreb on enlargement is scheduled to take place in May 2020. Domestically, during the Croatian ...p. 2

EIR

in this issue

Communication in European Affairs

In the first half of 2019, the experts from the Communication and Marketing Unit (*Communication Unit - SCOM starting with 1 August 2019*) mainly focussed their efforts on the **three conferences organised in the context of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union: Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy** (22 March 2019, Bucharest University of Economic Studies), *Europe of Convergence: growth, competitiveness, connectivity* (17 May 2019, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași) and *Europe after the European Parliament Elections* (31 May 2019, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest). Also, under the aegis of the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council, EIR was the partner of the European Semester Directorate within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in organising the Conference *The coordination of economic policies at EU level, a renewed role for the European Semester* (4 April 2019, National Library).

Throughout the whole year, inter-institutional partnerships continued to be a key element in terms of institutional image promotion and building. Thus, we carried forward our cooperation with the Institute for Eastern Studies (IES, Warsaw) to organise debates in the framework ...p. 2

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Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

[...] Presidency, the UK's exit from EU becomes a reality, after the British Parliament voted on the agreement that stipulates the withdrawal conditions, and the European Parliament expressed its final vote on this decision.

Last but not least, the priority of a *Europe that protects* can best be understood by the attention paid to the security of European citizens. Specifically, this means supporting the efficiency of external border control, ensuring full interoperability of IT systems, and strengthening European resilience to hybrid or cyber security threats. It is worth noting the references found in the Presidency programme on Russia's responsibility to contribute to the security and stability of the European continent, the development of the cooperation framework with China, with a focus on interconnectivity, the strengthening of relations between the European Union and Africa, and enhancing the strategic partnership between Europe and Latin America.

Nevertheless, we should also take note that the start of the Croatian mandate was marked by national presidential elections, with the second round taking place just a few days after. The results of the elections confirmed that there will be a change in the Croatian political leadership, with the new president expected to begin his term in mid-February 2020.

Eliza Vaş
European Studies Unit

¹ More details can be found here: https://vlada.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti/2019/12%20prosinac/31%20prosinca/web_FINAL_PROGRAMME_EN_FINAL.pdf.

EIR

Communication in European Affairs

[...] of two large-scale events: the *European Congress of Local Governments/ECLG* (8-9 April 2019, Krakow) and the *Economic Forum* (3-5 September 2019, Krynica Zdroj).

A project worth mentioning was the *European Democracy Promoters* developed by the Liaison Office of the European Parliament in Romania (BLPE), under which two SCOM experts were involved in the selection of the 30 participants for this project. The *European Democracy Forum* (21-22 November, Bucharest) marked the end of last year's edition, in the presence of more than 120 participants. Moreover, under the auspices of our partnership with BLPE, on 27 September there was a debate on the *Impact of UK's withdrawal from the European Union*.



In 2019, the annual conference of EIR, a traditional yearly event organised since 2010, marked the **20 years of EIR's activity**. Thus, the Conference on *A New Vision for the European Union* took place on 5 December 2019 and enjoyed the presence of many official representatives, well-known experts and analysts specialised in the field of European Affairs. Like every year, debates were followed by the EIR Excellence Awards Ceremony for promoting the European spirit and values, the 10th edition. In this anniversary year, the focus was on some of the great figures who coordinated EIR's activity during its first 20 years of existence: presidents of EIR's Administrative Board and general directors.

As for the revenue-generating projects, the SCOM experts were involved in organizing and running specific activities carried out under the following projects: *EDIC Bucharest*, *Euranet* and *DG Regio*. In 2019, we continued to disseminate the results of the projects implemented by EIR (for instance, the promotion and dissemination of the brochure about the outcome of the *EuroImpact* Conference from October 2018, organised under the DG Regio-financed project; organisation of a debate on the *Protection of personal data in employment relations* (27 March, organised under the Eurofound Project). Moreover, on 9 May, EIR and EDIC Bucharest organised the outdoor event *You are Europe!*, meant to celebrate Europe Day, while on 18 December the event *A Fairytale Chirstmas* took place with the participation of the students from the Secondary School "Dor Mărunt", Călărași County.

In terms of **promotion and visibility**, EIR was well-represented at many national and international events, both at management level (President of the Administrative Board and Director-General) and at expert level. Besides, information about the activity carried out by the Institute was actively promoted on [EIR's website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Furthermore, all communication events organised by EIR were reflected in the media content, particularly online. For more information about the activities and instruments used for communication in European affairs, please visit <http://ier.gov.ro/en/home-en/>.

Florentina Costache
Communication Unit

Research in European Affairs at EIR in 2019

The year 2019 has brought changes regarding the research activities within the European Institute of Romania, as the Studies and Analyses Unit became the new European Studies Unit. The first part of the year was focused on disseminating the results of the SPOS 2018 project, which resulted in the publication of four studies, as follows:

1. *The multiannual financial framework post-2020: risks and opportunities for Romania*, coordinated by Daniel Dăianu;
2. *The revival of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region - between economic interests and political priorities*, coordinated by Sorin Ioniță;
3. *The transition towards a circular economy. From waste management to a green economy in Romania*, coordinated by Valentina Târțiu;
4. *The European Pillar of Social Rights: the reduction of social inequalities and disparities in Romania. Developments of European policies and initiatives in the youth field*, coordinated by Dragoș Pîslaru.



At the same time, the project: **”Consolidating and promoting Romania’s position as a relevant actor in the decision-making process at the European level”** code SIPOCA 400 / code SMIS2014+ 115759 represented an important activity for the European Studies Unit during 2019, temporarily replacing the annual SPOS project.

The European Institute of Romania has the capacity as Partner in the project and is coordinating, through the European Studies Unit, part of the administrative work necessary to facilitate the drafting of five thematic analyses, as following:

1. *The role and relevance of impact studies in defining the national positions at the EU level*, coordinated by Iordan Bărbulescu;
2. *The simplification of the cohesion policy for post-2020 period: possible solutions for streamlining the implementation*, coordinated by Dumitru Miron;
3. *The impact of digitisation on the architecture and implementation of the European policies designed to strengthening the internal market*, Adrian Curaj;
4. *Artificial intelligence - the impact at the EU level on the productivity of the companies and on the labour market (Case-study: Romania)*, coordinated by Adina Florea;
5. *Ways of deepening the Eastern Partnership for 2020 and beyond*, coordinated by Mircea Brie.

All the proposed topics have stimulated the interest of various researchers, insofar as 38 teams submitted their applications, with a high level of quality and from researchers with important expertise in the thematic areas proposed. The research activity of the selected teams will be done in the first half of 2020, consisting in both actual research, and taking part in thematic workshops and public debates, with the final objective of ensuring the highest scientific standards for the dedicated reports.

Besides these research projects, the members of the European Studies Unit were actively involved in the publication of the academic journal of EIR, in writing articles and analyses on current events at EU level, as well as the publication of EIR’s Newsletter.

During 2019, the **Romanian Journal of European Affairs**, the academic journal of EIR, brought to its readers’ attention topics such as: illiberalism, the new world order, threats to the global financial system, economic convergence, the costs of Brexit, new forms of conditionality for Western Balkans, the challenges to the EU-Armenia Partnership Agreement, the impact of Brexit on the EU development policy, the political support at EU level for energy and environmental policies, the impact of the 4th industrial revolution on the world order, the areas of political cooperation between Poland and Romania in EU context, the EU Member States and the crisis in Ukraine, the factors behind the collapse of Estonian transit sector and a book review on capital in Post-communist Romania.

As a publication included in various international databases, such as *EBSCO*, *ProQuest*, *Scopus*, the **Romanian Journal of European Affairs** was selected to be part of *Clarivate Analytics* (former Thomson Reuters), starting with June 2017. The journal is therefore still indexed in the **Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)**. The [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/romanian.journal.of.european.affairs/) page of the journal (<https://www.facebook.com/romanian.journal.of.european.affairs/>), meant to provide a better dissemination of the academic articles in the online environment, continued to constantly grow in 2019, reaching 872 likes.

The six numbers of EIR’s Newsletter hosted pieces of news and opinion articles on topics such as: the Romania’s Presidency of EU Council in the first half of 2019, events organized in Brussels (CEPS Ideas Lab 2019), Bucharest (Inter-parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defense Policy) and Iași (Model European Union 2019), the Sibiu Summit, the future of common agricultural policy (CAP), publications and the main projects implemented by EIR.

The June edition of the Newsletter included a special dossier on the first Presidency of Romania of the Council of the European Union. Within this framework, contributions sent by decision-makers involved directly in managing the

Presidency, opinions from academics and social society representatives, were published. It is important to mention that the edition of November 2019 was an anniversary one, the Newsletter celebrating its 100th number.

The **micro-studies collection of EIR** became richer with a new publication, titled: *The New Party Politics of the European Union* (WP no. 37). The paper draws the attention towards the participation of the European Parliament in EU legislation making on migration and in the EU management of the migration crisis of the last seven years. The research was done by Fulvio Attinà, Professor of Political Science and International Relations, and Jean Monnet Chair Ad Personam at the University of Catania, Italy.

A paper on *Local and Regional Authorities: Enablers or Bystanders in the Digital Single Market* (Policy Brief no. 6) was also published within the micro-studies collection. The policy brief assessed the presence of Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) within the overall Digital Single Market strategy. The research was done by Mirela Mărcuț, assistant professor at the Department of International Relations and European Studies, University of Oradea.

In the second half of 2019, a collective study with the title “*Connectivity-Related Projects in Europe and China: Opportunities and Challenges to Increased Synergies*” was published on EIR’s website. The study was coordinated by Doru Costea, former Romanian Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China and Mongolia.

Besides all of these, within the framework of **EPIN project Towards a Citizens’ Union (2CU)**, co-financed through Erasmus+ (Jean Monnet Networks), in which EIR is a partner, three members of the Unit published a chapter, titled “The Europeanisation of Representative Democracy in Romania” in the collective volume *Representative Democracy in the EU. Recovering Legitimacy*, presenting the “Europeanisation” of the representative democracy in Romania. The volume is available online at <https://www.ceps.eu/ceps-publications/representative-democracy-in-the-eu/>.

Last, but not least, the European Studies Unit contributed to the organisation of various events within the framework of Romania’s Presidency at the Council of the European Union, as well as writing the syntheses. Members of the Unit intervened in a number of academic events, at the national and international level, presenting the results of their research and the activity of EIR, published on different occasions informative materials on European topics.

Mihai Sebe
European Studies Unit

Training in European Affairs in 2019

The year 2019 represented a challenge for the Training Unit (TU) due to the fact that it was divided into two distinct parts. The first part of the year was focused on the analysis of training needs in the public administration, a survey applied at the end of 2018 and interpreted in 2019, meant to identify the relevant trends from the TU’s point of view. The second part of the year marked the restart of courses included in the EIR’s traditional offer, after a break of almost two years, meaning the time spent on the organization of the courses for the preparation of the Romanian Presidency to the Council of the EU.

Starting from the results of the needs analysis, EIR introduced in 2019 two new courses, *Introduction to European Affairs* and the *European Union Regulatory System*, trainings that we have presented extensively in the previous issues of the newsletter. The pilot courses validated the structure proposed by the TU team in collaboration with the trainers, and these titles will be found from 2020 in our standard offer.

Last year, we organized 13 vocational training sessions, for a total of 258 participants. Depending on the course, the participants received either certificates offered by the ministries of Labour and Social Justice or National Education, through the National Qualifications Authority (ANC), or certificates issued by EIR.

The courses organized by EIR are mainly open to employees from local and central public institutions, but also to other categories of interested participants. Thus, in 2019, 165 participants (64%) belonged to public institutions, 54 (21%) to the private sector, 21 (8%) were connected to universities, 15 (6%) were part of the diplomatic corps and 3 (1%) recommended themselves as independent persons.

Last year, the overwhelming majority of the courses were initiated in-house, according to the needs observed on the market we are addressing to, but TU has also the experience of delivering courses tailored to the needs expressed by other entities, as well. Thus, in 2019 EIR completed an English course offered to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and organized a Public Procurement course at the request of the Metropolitan Buildings Trust of Bucharest.

The EIR’s training programs cover a wide range of fields and topics, but the issue of European Affairs is dominant. In addition to the two pilot courses organized, the standard courses registered a special interest: *Protection of personal data in the European Union, Prevention and fight against corruption, Norms and procedures of legislative technique, Waste recovery management*.

A special mention should be made regarding the course *Prevention and fight against corruption*, which has returned in an updated format, of three days, much more interactive for the participants and more useful from the perspective of discussing practical situations related to the fight against corruption.

Also, last year brought with it the last ANC licensed courses organized by EIR, the *Public Procurement Expert* course being specially sought by participants. We were delighted to see that 98% of the participants who entered the exam passed it with the maximum score!

As tradition goes, the team of the Training Unit takes pride in the the team of collaborators it has developed. All the trainers involved in EIR courses were and are top experts in their fields of activity, bringing to the classroom both solid theoretical knowledge and practical experience of working effectively on the issues under discussion.

The year 2020 will bring with it an already settled offer, courses that have received positive reviews and which have proven their usefulness through the information recognized by the participants as necessary and up to date. For the next months we have planned one new course, which we will introduce, most probably, in the second part of the year. However, we are more than happy to answer any interest expressed by our stakeholders.

The course calendar for 2020 is already in place, so we invite you to visit the web page <http://ier.gov.ro/en/home-en/> periodically, in the Training section, to be updated with the latest programs for which EIR opens the registration.

Dan Drăghia
Training Unit



European projects implemented by EIR

In 2019, the Projects Unit of EIR was instrumental in implementing, together with other departments, a series of projects with funding from the previous years or endorsed in 2019.

Thus, the Project “**Network of Eurofound Correspondents: Romania**” (2018-2022) continued to run. Resulting deliverables included various case studies, reports and factsheets for Romania, with all the information being uploaded into the Eurofound database. Among the activities carried out in 2019, we mention the project outcome dissemination and the Eurofound publications, by online promotion actions and debates. In the first quarter of 2019, we organised an event on the *Protection of personal data - provisions applicable to employment relations*. The debate took place on 27 March 2019 and enjoyed the presence of over 25 participants, together with speakers from the National Supervisory Authority for Personal Data Processing, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the Association for Technology and Internet and the National Council for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.



The Project ‘Informing and improving communication on EU Cohesion Policy in Romania’ (16 April 2018 - 15 April 2019)

The project was the result of participation of the two partners, EIR and HotNews, in the call launched by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy in September 2017, on the ‘Support for information actions regarding the EU Cohesion policy’ funding area.

The project mainly aimed to raise the Romanian general public’s awareness of the instruments and impact that EU Cohesion Policy entails for the country’s development and to enable debates and experience exchanges among relevant stakeholders with respect to current and future EU-funded projects.

In particular, the project contributed to the improvement of the Romanian citizens’ knowledge about the role and impact of the EU Cohesion Policy on Romania’s development, including the effects generated by EU-funded projects. The project also enabled and fostered civic engagement together with knowledge and idea sharing regarding the implementation of the EU Cohesion policy in Romania.

Over a period of one year, EIR (as Project Coordinator) and HotNews (as Project Beneficiary) implemented the following activities: a) an online information and communication campaign deployed at national level, b) a three-day international information and communication event, in Bucharest, meant to boost the general public’s perception, confidence and understanding of the EU Cohesion Policy in Romania.

Starting with 15 July 2019, the European Institute of Romania has been implementing the project ‘**A Key Access to EU Rights - EUREKA**’. The project is co-financed by the European Commission under the European Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme and implemented by IDOS and 10 partners from 6 EU Member States (Romania, Germany, Italy, Portugal, France and Croatia).

The purpose of this project is to help enable the use of the EU mobile citizens' rights to free movement, inclusion and participation in the host Member States, through a common local, national and transnational capacity/expertise and increased access/usage of digital information.

The project aims to:

- Identify, share and disseminate best practices in six EU Member States, and thus provide experience-based knowledge in the field;
- Develop and test an innovative web portal (one-stop shop) and a tool (application/APP) able to provide easy online access to practical information, assistance and geolocation services at local/regional level in four Member States;
- Promote the usage of the technological tools provided by the project among the EU mobile citizens, raise awareness of their rights, and thus empower them based on information and advice;
- Ensure the networking/cooperation among public/private stakeholders and their permanent involvement in the project activities;
- Increase the visibility and dissemination of results, and thus support the transfer of the project output to other EU Member States and ensure its sustainability.

The **Project EuranetPlus** consists of a series of international radio broadcasts made in co-production and focusing on European topics, with the financial support of the Directorate-General for Communications Network, Content and Technology of the European Commission. Under this project, as per the partnership agreement, EIR (as partner of the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company/SRR), weekly publishes on its website at least three articles on European topics produced by SRR (RRI) under the EuranetPlus editorial project, with a link to the covered article, and weekly sends to SRR (RRI) the links to at least one article on European topics, for publication on the partner's website. Under this partnership, EIR has sent SRR (RRI) a number of 140 articles to be published on their website and has received for publication over 270 articles produced by RRI. December marked the renewal of the partnership agreement between EIR and the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company, valid during the new implementation period of the EuranetPlus project: 2019-2021.

By identifying new funding sources, the projects to be submitted during 2020 will continue to be closely related to EIR's expertise in the field of European Affairs.

Livia Mirescu
Projects Unit

Ten years of expertise in translating and revising the ECHR case-law

The year 2019 marked for the Translation Coordination Unit (TCU) 10 years of expertise in the field of translating and revising the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

The main activities carried out by the TCU focused on fulfilling the EIR's objective of improving the access to the ECHR case-law by facilitating its understanding and implementation, especially by means of translating and then revising and indexing the ECHR cases, by means of terminological research, writing articles in this field and disseminating the results on the EIR website and elsewhere.

With regard to the ECHR case-law, the TCU considers that its translations are coordinated and unified from a terminological point of view at the national level. National coordination is made possible with the substantial support of the Government Agent for the European Court of Human Rights from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), which sets the national priorities in terms of the selection of the ECHR cases and information material that need to be translated/reviewed in the Romanian language. The planning for translating/revising documents related to the ECHR case-law (joint list from MFA-Superior Council of Magistracy-EIR) is available on the EIR website.

The ECHR cases translated and revised by the TCU are submitted to the MFA and the Superior Council of Magistracy, to be subsequently uploaded in the HUDOC database (<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/>), the ECHR online database containing documents in 33 languages. Aside from the official languages (English and French), the Romanian language ranks third, right after Turkish and Russian, in terms of the number of translated documents that are available online.

The new EIR website, now updated and reorganised, provides information on human rights in specific sections: ECHR case-law (database containing ECHR judgments, decisions and summaries), legislation (the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols, the Court's Rules of procedure), guides, research reports, factsheets and country profiles (all the Court's factsheets and all the country profiles on Romania).

Following the link: <http://ier.gov.ro/traduceri/drepturile-omului/jurisprudenta/>, the interested public can search the revised cases using filters such as invoked articles and key words, whereas the URL <http://ier.gov.ro/traduceri/terminologie/> provides the validated terminology (more than 33 200 entries).

Certain aspects of the ECHR case-law and terms encountered while translating and revising the texts have been raised in articles published in the EIR Newsletter and on the website of Radio Romania International, the latter under the EURANET Plus project.

In addition, one TCU member contributed to the White Paper: *Sustainable Language Data Sharing to Support Language Equality in Multilingual Europe - Why Language Data Matters*, launched at the ELRC annual conference (*European Language Resource Coordination*), available at http://lr-coordination.eu/sites/default/files/ELRC_Conference/ELRCWhitePaper.pdf. The White Paper analyses the state of the practices of sharing linguistic data in each EU Member State, plus Iceland and Norway, and makes recommendations to overcome barriers in this area.

The ELRC network supports the ongoing collection of linguistic resources for all the official languages of the EU and of the countries associated to the Connecting Europe Facility and promotes the importance of linguistic resources and of cooperation among participant countries for the development of automated translation solutions.

In order to improve the quality of translations into Romanian in automated translation systems, EIR provided ELRC with four types of linguistic resources: an SDL Trados translation memory for ECHR texts, terminology export from MultiTerm, Word files in Romanian and English from the EIR Newsletter (2009-March 2011) and SPOS - Strategy and Policy Studies (2011-2017).

We invite you to visit the dedicated section on [Human rights](#) on the EIR website, which is updated at the start of every translation of a new document from the ECHR case-law.

Laura Mihăilescu
Translation Coordination Unit



Main activities of the Europe Direct Information Centre Bucharest in 2019

According to the structure of EDIC Bucharest project for 2018-2020, the specific activities for 2019 included: communication activities (public communication management, website, social networks, etc.), organising events, drawing up and printing publications (Brochure "*Young entrepreneurs share their success stories*"), delivering communication support materials, issuing the e-newsletter every two months, all in order to promote European values among the citizens of Bucharest-Ilfov region, with a focus on disadvantaged youth, NEETS and people in the rural area of Ilfov County.

The specific objectives of EDIC Bucharest for 2019 mainly matched the communication priorities of the European Commission and of the European Parliament, namely: the European Parliament elections in 2019 and the future of the European Union. All EDIC Bucharest activities were focused on these overall priorities.

The most important part of EDIC Bucharest activity lies in the events we organised: 31 events attended by 1602 participants. In addition, we can mention the participation of our team members in other 29 additional activities organised by our partners.

In February 2019, the *Forum Theatre Road Show "It's up to you to make a change!"* was launched. The main objectives in this case were to inform young people about their rights as European citizens and to engage them in debates and activities aimed at highlighting how important it is to exercise one's right to vote for the European Parliament elections from 2019 and to actively take part in the society. The *Forum Theatre Road Show* was comprised of 15 shows performed by our volunteers in Bucharest and Ilfov County, out of which 9 performances on the European Parliament elections and 6 on the future of the European Union. The young actors/volunteers were students from "Jean Monnet", "Ion Creangă" and "Mihail Sadoveanu" high schools in Bucharest. Our partners in the project were the Associations "Youth for Tomorrow's Europe" and "ARTFusion".

In September 2019, we organised the *Summer School "My voice in Europe"*, in partnership with EDIC Argeş and EDIC Bistriţa, which took place in Oradea. The main target of the summer school was to consolidate the participants' knowledge of the European values and of the benefits deriving from EU membership, by means of a nonformal method called PhotoVoice. The young volunteers of the three Centres were thus challenged to create a story of Europe while discovering a new shooting method. The PhotoVoice method is meant to convey a strong message by showcasing "living pictures", and Oradea, a Romanian city having developed extensively with the help of European funds, was the ideal venue for deployment.

During 2019, we organised a series of *nonformal actions taking the form of "world café" and "open space" events*. Thus, considering the importance of the European Parliament elections from 2019 and in order to increase youth turnout, in the first half of the year we organised two world café-type events meant to bring to the attention of young people, especially of the first time voters, what does a member of the European Parliament actually do (the world café "*What is it like to be a MEP*") and which are the benefits of taking part in the European election process (the world café "*I'm young and I'm voting for the future of Europe*"). Two "open space" events continued this series of nonformal educational activities in the second half of the year: "*Education - how to draw our youth back home*", organised in partnership with Eurodesk Network Romania and the Faculty of International Business and Economics (Bucharest

University of Economic Studies), where participants got information about the various mobility opportunities within the EU and tried to identify solutions for luring the young people back home; *“The right to health - a European right”*, event organised in partnership with the Romanian-American University, with the support of experts from the Faculty of Kinesitherapy of RAU, the SMURD Foundation, the Medical Students’ Society in Bucharest and the National Programme *“We’ve got no blood”*, where different health-related topics were discussed in groups, such as the importance of prevention in health matters or the need for online promotion of first-aid sessions.

Also, falling under nonformal events, we should mention the two *academic debate competitions* on European issues, called *“EU dezbat/I debate”*. These two events were organised in partnership with the Faculty of Letters (University of Bucharest) and the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the debates focussing on the introduction of compulsory voting in the European elections in all Member States being held by high school students from *“Sfântul Sava”*, *“Spiru Haret”*, *“Iulia Haşdeu”* and *“Jean Monnet”* National Colleges in Bucharest.



In 2019, based on the good cooperation with our colleagues from EDIC Vâlcea and Model European Union Iaşi we organised *two simulation sessions of the decision-making process in the EU “My decision shapes my future”*, with the participation of some high school students from Bucharest-Ilfov region and Vâlcea County. The first event of this kind was hosted by the European Institute of Romania in Bucharest and consisted of a simulation of the decision-making process in the Council of the European Union. The students acted like ministers representing the EU Member States for a day and discussed about the topicality and need to fight fake news at EU level. The second event took place in the Auditorium of *“Antim Ivireanu”* County Library in Râmnicu Vâlcea, this time the simulation being focused on a European Council Summit.

Like every year, we celebrated *Europe Day/9 May* with an outdoor, colourful and catchy event called *“Tu eşti Europa! - YOU are EU!”*. Together with our partners from the European Public Space, we tried to get Europe as close to its citizens as possible. The programme featured a simulation of the European election process by voting European values, a cultural treasure hunt, as well as an artistic programme.

We also carried forward the tradition of organising *“Europe Direct Clubs”*. Among these, we can mention: *EDIC Bucharest Interns’ Gala*, the event *“Culture Connects. Education empowers”*, *“YOUthSHOULDVOTE” Awards Ceremony* and the event *“A Fairytale Christmas”*.

Bottom line, 2019 was an extremely active and exciting year. We are looking forward to implementing the planned activities for the current year. So keep an eye on us as we have plenty of surprises in store for you!

Liliana Comănescu, Loredana Licuța
Europe Direct Information Centre Bucharest

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