



Europe's Agenda until 2020

The European Commission launched in March a strategy for overcoming the crisis and preparing the EU for the next ten years.

The Commission mentions three key factors for economic growth: **intelligent growth** by promoting knowledge, innovation, education and the digital community, a **sustainable growth** by a more competitive production which involves a more efficient use of the resources, as well as an **economic growth favourable to inclusion**, which supposes a greater participation to the employment market.

The progress will be monitored according to five indicators which are representative at the Community level:

- Employment of 75% of the population between 20-64 years old;
- Investment of 3% of the GDP in research and development;
- Achievement of climate objectives "20/20/20";
- Decrease of early school dropout down to 10% and university education for 40% of the young population;
- Reduction by 20 million of the number of people exposed to poverty.

In order to achieve these objectives, the Commission proposes a series of pilot initiatives: an innovation union, youth mobility, a digital agenda for Europe, a Europe which uses its resources efficiently, an industrial policy for a green economic growth, an agenda for new competences and jobs, the European platform against poverty.

Form more information, please visit:
www.ec.europa.eu/eu2020.

Mădălina Barbu
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EIR course: General training programme in European Affairs

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BOGDAN MĂNOIU

Minister, Head of the European Affairs Department

The "Europe 2020" Strategy – opportunities and challenges

The recently launched "Europe 2020" Strategy identifies a series of elements which are essential for ensuring an economic growth at EU and national level. Which are, in your opinion, the challenges that the European Union must cope with in its attempt to give a more important role to the local and regional authorities in the drawing up of these reform documents?



The new "Europe 2020" Strategy developed on the basis of the public consultation launched by the European Commission in November 2009, emphasises the importance of the regional actors' involvement in the process of implementation and monitoring of the strategy.

The Committee of the Regions, which launched in 2008 a large scale project of consulting the towns and regions regarding their involvement

in building a new Europe, has a determinant role in this process. In June 2009, the Committee of the Regions launched the White Book of the shared governance, which aims at encouraging the participation of the regions in the European project and increasing the efficiency of the Community actions. The approach involves the implementation of actions at the local/regional and central level, in order to define adequate reactions to the need for structural reforms.

In this context, the national authorities of the member states must find the most adequate methods to involve the regional and local authorities in the process of elaborating the national reform programmes, in order to stimulate the adoption of the strategic objectives and of the reform measures at these levels.

As for the financial dimension of the strategy, a special attention is needed for the coordination between the "Europe 2020" Strategy, the cohesion policy and the future budget of the European Union. How do you assess the relation between these three elements?

It is important to define the relation of the "Europe 2020" Strategy with other EU instruments and policies for ensuring its competitiveness and, consequently, its sustainable economic growth. From this point of view, Romania considers the Cohesion Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy to be essential, whose role in supporting the objectives of economic growth and employment being confirmed by the Spring European Council this year.

Financing the strategy involves Community financial instruments and national funds, as well as private funds. Therefore, we will endorse an adequate financing in the future financial perspective, for the two policies, considering their importance for the recovery of development gaps between the old and the new Member States and, to this purpose, for increasing the competitiveness of the new Member States.

How do you comment the participation of the civil society in the public consulting process for the substantiation of Romania's position towards the "Europe 2020" communication?

The Department for European Affairs involved the civil society in defining Romania's position regarding this strategy, by means of a large scale process of public consultation launched during the last quarter of 2009.

Moreover, at the end of last year, at DEA's initiative, the *Reflection Group for the Future of the Lisbon Strategy* was constituted, comprising representatives of universities, regional development agencies, trade unions, employers' organisations, NGOs.

Romania's position regarding the general framework of the "Europe 2020" Strategy has been finalised with the contributions of all ministries and central institutions and validated in the Government meeting on 24th March. Considering the fact that the actual strategy will be adopted by the Member States in June 2010, during the next period we will initiate consultations with all the national actors involved, with a view to establishing national targets related to the set of Community objectives proposed in the new strategy. The targets are to be correlated with the Community objectives, but they will take into account Romania's present economic situation, and mainly, our financial capacity and the development directions we have assumed in the Governing Programme.

I would like to mention that the civil society is also involved in the *New European Strategy for economic growth and employment - Europe 2020* study drawn up by EIR, which will contribute to the substantiation of the national targets and to the configuration of the next National Reform Programme.

The objectives proposed in the "Europe 2020" Strategy will be measured in relation with a series of reference indicators which are representative at EU level, that the Member States are invited to monitor. Which are the instruments that the Member States can use in order to monitor the evolution of these indicators?

For the member states, the Stability and Growth Programme (the *Convergence Programme*, in Romania's case) and the National Reform Programme are the main instruments for the coordination of measures intended to ensure the achievement of the national objectives of the "Europe 2020" Strategy. Because these two programmatic documents have different horizons and scopes, they will have to be supported by other operational instruments.

In implementing the National Reform Programme, Romania uses *Annual action plans* the evolution of which is monitored by relevant indicators. On the basis of the monitoring process, DEA draws up periodically progress reports for the Romanian Government.

Moreover, the academic environment, the social partners and the local administrations are involved in the adaptation and dimensioning of the national priorities in order to respond to the new challenges.

In this context, DEA has the role of coordinator.

Interview by **Agnes Nicolescu**

The European Institute of Romania and ECHR

On 12 March 2010, the *Collaboration Protocol between the European Institute of Romania, the Legal Science Society, the "Acad. Andrei Rădulescu" Legal Research Institute of the Romanian Academy – Centre for European Legal Studies and the Romanian Society of Community Law* has been signed¹.

Representatives of the above-mentioned institutions took part in the event, as well as representatives of the Superior Council of Magistracy, of the Council of Europe, university teachers, but also legal experts, translators and people interested in the ECHR case-law. Considering Romania's 4th rank in terms of number of applications lodged with the ECHR, following Russia, Turkey and Ukraine (these four states account for approximately 54% of all the applications lodged by nationals from the 47 contracting parties to the *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*), the importance of the ECHR case-law-related topics is constantly growing.

Therefore, the signing of the above-mentioned protocol also included the launch of the *ECHR Reports – recent cases against Romania, tome I*. This first volume includes the translations of 21 cases against Romania, given between January and July 2009². It represents an extremely useful tool, because of the relevance and novelty of the cases included. These have a wide range of addressees and can be used on a daily basis by law practitioners – judges, magistrates, lawyers, etc. – and theoreticians as well, by students and people studying the field of the ECHR case-law.

Its usefulness is doubled by its uniqueness on the Romanian market. It includes 21 translations that have never been published before and benefits from an easily accessible alphabetical index, whose structure is based on fields of law, articles of the Convention, the specific human rights violated, independent verbal structures, national legal institutions and other key-terms. The collaboration protocol signed in 2008 between the European Institute of Romania and the Superior Council of Magistracy³ represented the starting point for the selection of the cases included therein, but the final



selection was determined by the relevance and novelty of the different cases, on the one hand, and by the intention to cover as many fields as possible, on the other hand.

The ECHR field-related activity that the Translation Coordination Unit (TCU) started in 2009 will continue in 2010. 4,000 standard pages of ECHR case-law, representing 18% of the TCU's activity, have been translated and revised so far and the 6 people-team (Gabriela-Andreea Andreica, Costin Leonard Fălcuță, Oana Gherăsoiu-Roșu, Alice Olaru, Andrei Perciun și Daniela Rădulescu) working on the project will continue the ECHR case-law translation and revision activity, including the launch of a second volume of the *ECHR Reports* (estimated release date, November 2010) and of a *Guide for the translation of the ECHR case-law into Romanian*, of about 200 pages (estimated release date, July 2010).

Oana Gherăsoiu-Roșu
Translation Coordination Unit

Event

4 EIR events in March

The series of EIR events was opened in 2010 with four events in March, two of which were events from the series **Romania – France: together in Europe** and two book launches.

The first conference entitled "*The new financial regulations in the European Union*", which took place on **3 March**, had as a special guest **Mr Gérard Rameix**, National mediator for loan granting to undertakings, former Secretary-General of the Financial Markets Authority.

Mr Gérard Rameix opened his speech with the issue of the financial regulations, defining them as devices which allow the stabilization of a system and being based on a set of rules which, if observed, can create a favourable framework to the balance in

the European economic system. These regulations can be analysed from a double perspective, the first of prudential nature and the second regarding the regulations which are specific to the market. Presenting a short history of the financial regulations in the EU from the '80s up to the present day, the speaker pointed out that progress was slow and difficult, and it materialised by the establishment of the European Single Market and the introduction of competition in various fields of the economy.

As regards the financial regulations at the level of the European Union, it was found that it was necessary to create and use more efficient instruments, to be implemented in all states, with the purpose of reducing the shocks of the current economic crisis.

¹ For more information, see the summary of the event: http://www.ier.ro/documente/arhiva_evenimente_2010/rev_Sinteza_ev_12_03_20101.pdf

² http://www.ier.ro/documente/Jurisprudenta/culegere_jurisp_cedo_v1.pdf

³ http://www.ier.ro/index.php/site/departament_page/5



The path to follow, as **Mr Gérard Rameix** mentioned, supposes the consolidation of an European supervision of risks, a better positioning of the specialised European structures and assigning the finding of solutions to a team of European experts. The obvious conclusion arising after a troubled period is that the European institutions can not fully protect us from the transmission of economic shocks generated by globalisation, the markets being interconnected and the financial actions in a close and continuous interdependence.

On **12 March** EIR organised at its offices an event with double significance, the **Launching of the ECHR Reports – recent cases against Romania**, tome I, following the signature of the **Collaboration Protocol between EIR, LSS, CRLS and RSCL** within the framework of projects generated by Romania's integration process into the structures of the European Union.

The first tome of the **ECHR Reports – recent cases against Romania**, printed in November 2009, comprises the complete translation of 21 judgements ruled against Romania in the period January – July 2009. This work proves to be a very useful instrument considering it comprises relevant and up-to-date judgements with a wide target audience. It can be used by the law practitioners – judges, public prosecutors, advocates etc. – but also by the theorists, students or those who study human rights, in their daily activity.

On the occasion of signing the Collaboration Protocol between the European Institute of Romania, the Legal Science Society, the "Acad. Andrei Rădulescu" Legal Research Institute of the Romanian Academy – Centre for European Legal Studies and the Romanian Society of Community Law, the following subjects have been approached: developing common research projects on the method of applying the Community *acquis* provisions and the European Convention of Human Rights provisions in the Romanian law; supporting the continuous training activity; facilitating the access to the legislation and the case-law translated and revised in Romanian.

The European Institute of Romania organised on **17 March** the conference for **the launching of the Strategy and Policy Studies Project (SPOS 2009)**. The event enjoyed the presence of **Mr Leonard Orban**, Presidency Adviser, former European Commissioner, **Mr Titus Corlăţean**, President of the Commission for Foreign Policy of the Romanian Senate, Academician **Tudorel Postolache**, Honorary President of the Consultative Scientific Board of EIR, **Mr Florin Pogonaru**, President of the Administrative Board of EIR and President of Businessmen's Association of Romania, **Mr Constantin Ciupagea**, Director

at the Institute of Global Economy of the Romanian Academy, **Mrs Maria Baciu**, Director within the Department for European Affairs, as well as the presence of a wide audience, made up of the authors of the studies elaborated in the SPOS 2009 project, officials, decision makers and representatives of the central administration institutions who contributed to the elaboration of the reference terms of the SPOS 2009 studies.

In the opening of the conference, **Mrs Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, pointed out that that the event marks the seventh launching of studies in the period 2001 – 2010.

In his intervention, **Mr Leonard Orban** assessed the impact studies as a very useful instrument, stressing out at the same time the imperative character of the innovative nature and the opportunity of the issuing moment, in order to ensure the fulfilment of the objectives of national and European interest.

Mr Titus Corlăţean stressed out the importance of the studies drawn up within the framework of the SPOS 2009 project, naming particularly the study regarding the flexicurity from the perspective of the important themes it approaches: specific aspects of the employment market, unemployment or the quality of education.

Mr Constantin Ciupagea pointed out the role of connector between the European Institute of Romania and the researchers and the academia, on the one hand, and the experts from the institutions of the central administration, as well as from the NGOs and the business environment, on the other hand.

Mr Florin Pogonaru expressed his appreciation for EIR's continuity in publishing strategy and policy studies that offer a good debate platform for the decision makers as well as for the business community.

Mrs Maria Baciu noticed the utility of elaborating such research works, giving a short review of each of the studies drawn up within the SPOS 2009 project.

The event continued with interventions of the studies coordinators and debates.

The **Romania – France: together in Europe series** continued with a conference on "*The contribution of multilingualism and francophony to the European construction*" held by **Mr Jacques Toubon**, former Minister, former Member of Parliament, former President of the Eurimages Funds (2002 – 2009).

The use of several languages proves the freedom of cultural expression and the francophony, the second theme approached during the conference, is *an instrument for maintaining peace, democracy and human rights, a gate towards cultural and linguistic diversity in the age of economic globalisation*. Learning French as an international language gives access to knowledge of the cultural values specific to the country as well as to the development of human interaction. **Mr Jacques Toubon**, who participated this year to the ceremony organised for the 40th anniversary from the establishment of the International Organisation of Francophony, quotes from the statement of President Nicolas Sarkozy regarding the linguistic diversity: "*We are not a community under siege, ready to defend each square meter, we are the defenders of those who fear monolingualism*".

For summaries of the events, visit: http://www.ier.ro/index.php/site/arhiva_evenimente/.

VALENTINA VASILE

Scientific Director of The Institute of National Economy – Romanian Academy, Coordinator of the SPOS 2009 study *Improving vocational competencies among graduates and youths: a chance for the future*

The investment in education is sustainable, yet it generates mainly propagation effects on medium and long - term



Which is the *de facto* situation of youths' attendance in the education system in relation to the other EU Member States?

Last Eurostat data indicate a favourable development of youth participation to education. If we refer to school expectancy, Romania recorded an increase from an average of 13.9 years in 2000 to 15.9 years in 2007, diminishing the gap against the EU-27 average from 2.8 years in 2000 to 1.3 years in 2007 (EU-27, 17.2 years in 2007). Nevertheless, the participation rate to education of the population aged 18 and over remains, for all population strata of this age group, by 6.6 pp lower against the EU-27 average (69.9% as compared with 76.5%). As regards the importance of vocational education and training expressed by pupils in upper secondary education enrolled in the vocational stream, Romania records a favourable position by 71.9% in 2007 as compared with 56.8% EU-27 level. Finally, the quality and compatibility of education's outcomes with the labour market demand might be assessed globally by the employment rate on educational levels for the population aged 25 to 64 years. For ISCED/3-4 graduates in Romania this rate is of 63.5% (2008) against 70.6% in EU-27, and for ISCED/5-6 graduates the situation is reversed, respectively by 85.7% against 83.9% at EU-27 level. Even though after 2000 the trend is positive and more marked against the EU-27 average level, there are still important steps to undertake, under the aspect of improving quantitative performances, but particularly of the qualitative ones as well, on educational profiles and levels having in view to support economic competitiveness by valuing education outcomes in the business and social environment.

Which are the main factors that influenced the reform of the national education system during the entire transition period and under its multiple aspects?

There were multiple factors, at the same time favourable and unfavourable ones, and the reform intentions were to their majority good, yet the implementation performance was weak and sometimes with contrary effects. In general, the education reform as a principle was oriented on adjusting to the market competitiveness system; vast reforms were initiated on educational modules but much less correlated under the aspect of the system's coherence in ensuring an open, flexible educational path and then in developing a performance professional career. There's a lack of education orientation towards the demand on medium and long-term both with respect to the educational profile and the curriculum content: knowledge and competencies. As a result, the deficits became more marked for some professions (in general specializations in science and technique), concomitantly with graduates' inflation in some others (for instance, socio-humane sciences – economists, legal experts, etc.). The system's financing, the quality of the educators,

the updated curriculum, the performance educational technologies, the partnership school – business environment – RDI environment on the background of lacking orientation regarding the dynamics and diversification of the labour market demand represent some of the major factors of restricting school performances proven by covering/satisfying the labour market demand. Hence also the issues/difficulties in practical integration into the European education network: diploma recognition, mobility in the educational process, training quality, integration by outcomes within the European Qualification Framework, etc. Another key factor that diminished substantially the education performance and the efficiency of reform measures was represented by the volatility of changes/reform measures without leaving the required room for outcomes' assessment. A partial "justification" is also given by the implementation without enough preparation and rigorous substantiation of the changes, which generated – unfortunately – contrary effects mainly in the sphere of education quality in general and in the education outcomes in particular. The education system as a whole (and here I also take into account the continuous education during the entire active life) is still too rigid against the need for change, and the performance isles that were created are strongly obstructed or even washed-out from within the system. In addition, we should not omit the major lacks in the education culture, in its broad meaning, which favoured atypical behaviours – rigidities, opportunism, non-quality, etc.

Under the conditions of the present economic crisis do you think that financing the continuing training represents a profit generating solution, or one of losses?

Globalisation and the trigger effects of the crisis have shown that economic turnaround must follow an innovative "model" based on valuing RDI effects by developing new competitive products/services on the market that would promote the principles of sustainable development. The EU2020 strategic document underpins the need of a sustainable economic recovery that cannot be achieved without additional, consistent investment in education. The investment in education is sustainable, yet it generates mainly propagation effects on medium and long-term. The new jobs will require at least upper secondary education; hence education for the labour market will represent a major restrictive factor for maintaining market competitiveness. Additionally, the rate of RDI results absorption and also the increased crossdisciplinarity as a support of new market products/services diminishes substantially the "recovery" period of the investment in education but still maintains high also the demand for lifelong learning. Thus, the investment in education both public and private (through the business environment, but also the personal one) becomes indispensable for a society aiming to close the important gaps against EU performances.

What is lacking in the youths' training for the labour market?

Currently we are talking about the need of actual knowledge and competencies for the labour market, but also about the anticipatory character of education in order to meet the labour demand. As result, a balance is required between the two major objectives of education and this, as a background issue, with differences on educational levels and training forms. The education system must train the young graduate for professional life, active citizenship and sustainable human development. These aspects are not formal; they mean at least real competencies (generic and professional, specific), knowledge for today and tomorrow and participative behaviour/attitude. Currently, the Romanian school offers these much too less, and the young graduate is vulnerable when facing the requirements of active life. As a consequence, there is a lack of realism, concreteness of needs, correct perception and proactive attitude for adjustment. The school is much too far from the business environment and life's needs but also from its vocation of promoting excellence and supporting innovation for developing some attractive professional careers.

Which are the main deficiencies of the National Education Law Draft as concerns the professional competencies training among the youths?

The great advantage of the current draft is that it firmly stipulates the need of integrating education under all its forms (formal, informal and non-formal) and of acknowledging, as a principle, the

role of education in supporting professional development of active population as an important support in the individuals' education for life. But, in order to be successfully implemented and avoiding to remain a simple reform exercise, at least the following would be required: associating this framework law to some clear and concrete enforcement regulations, particularly as regards the coherence between the education systems and professional training levels; preparing implementation under all its forms; developing a real implementation strategy based on multiannual programmes and adequate financing, by supporting flexibility (yet also by maintaining educational performance requirements) of some open and inclusive lifelong educational paths as a support for social cohesion and sustainable human progress. Also, we should maintain the performance educational components that already exist and associate financing schemes to the financial power of sustaining education, households and economic agents. With a national minimum wage of about 142 Euro/month and an average income among the lowest in EU-27, with an investment of the business environment in education that ensures the continuing vocational training of only 1.7% of the personnel, a performance lifelong learning educational system cannot be built. The education reform exceeds the period of a legislative mandate and therefore political consensus is required associated with firmness and implementation continuity, with monitoring and periodical assessment followed by adjustment/improvement.

Interview by **Mihai Sebe**

Promo

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