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David KRÁL

Director of EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, Prague, Czech Republic



Since EUROPEUM has been developed as a think-tank focussed on activities related to the European integration process, would you share with us the most recent research project developed within your Institute? Could you elaborate a little bit on the main priorities that you and your colleagues envisage at present?

One of the major challenges we are facing at EUROPEUM is the rising scepticism of both the Czech political elites and the general public opinion towards the EU, especially in the wake of the Euro-zone debt crisis. The Czech political EU discourse

is totally captured by President Václav Klaus, with no relevant political forces (including the allegedly pro-European ones) able to counter him. The mainstream media have been fuelling this by presenting an overly pessimistic vision of the EU. The message is that the current problems do not concern us, as we are not in the Euro-zone, which we believe is fundamentally wrong. So we want to frame the debate in a more constructive way and base it on analysis rather than on ideology. What I would like to do is to examine possible scenarios of the current developments in the Euro-zone, including the looming risk of two-speed Europe and its consequences for the Czech Republic if we stay out. Subsequently, we want to put this on the table so that the Czech politicians can seriously start debating these scenarios and to reflect them in their strategic decisions ... **p. 2**

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event _____

EPIN Conference Strategic Thinking in the EU

The European Policy Institutes Network (EPIN) is a network of 32 dynamic think tanks and policy institutes around Europe, focusing on current EU political and policy debates. The members meet to discuss important issues on the EU agenda during three major EPIN events, organised on a yearly basis, in Brussels and other locations. The third event of this year, under the general heading of ... **p. 5**



... I know that in June 2010 you have been elected Chair of the Board of Directors of PASOS (Policy Association for an Open Society). Would you acquaint our readers with the objectives, scope and most important projects of this association? And also which would be the next steps that you have in mind for developing and strengthening this initiative?

PASOS emerged as a network of think-tanks from the region of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the former Soviet Union (including Central Asia) which came forward from the initiative of the Open Society Institute. The main goal of the association is to promote the values of open society, respect for human rights and good governance through policy-oriented research and international co-operation of think-tanks within the region. PASOS also serves as an advocacy platform vis-à-vis the EU institutions. For instance it has strongly engaged in monitoring the technical preparations for visa liberalisation between the EU and Western Balkans and is undertaking a similar exercise with the Eastern Partnership countries. For me, the most important policy goal today is to help and support the member institutes in countries currently facing backlash in democracy building and reforms – through training, capacity building and exchange of know-how – which has been the case in many countries across all the regions where we operate.

Given your experience in the EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies, do you envisage a new wave of EU enlargement in the next 5 years? If so, which would be the most important terms that the candidate states would have to work on to make it happen?

No, except for Croatia and Iceland. This is simply because no other country has launched the accession negotiations and even if they did, it would definitely take longer than 5 years to complete them. Turkey is being stuck on so many obstacles that I seriously doubt that the negotiations will lead anywhere close to full membership. Moreover, we can expect a major crisis with the upcoming Cypriot EU presidency next year unless the Cyprus issue is resolved, which I don't consider likely.

David Král has been the director of EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy since 2000. Since 2010 he has been senior adjunct fellow at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Washington D.C. He has lectured at the Metropolitan University in Prague and at Charles University - Faculty of Social Sciences. During the work of the Convention on the Future of Europe and the Intergovernmental Conference 2003/2004 he was a member of advisory groups of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister, and member of an advisory group on foreign relations to the Vice-Premier for EU affairs before and during the Czech EU presidency in 2009.

Since June 2010 he has served as the Chairman of the Board of PASOS (Policy Association for an Open Society), gathering think-tanks and policy institutes from Central and Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States.

His main areas of expertise include the EU constitutional and institutional issues, EU enlargement, European neighbourhood policy, Common Foreign and Security Policy and transatlantic relations.

Source: <http://www.europeum.org/index.php/en/staff/david-kral>

Would you share with us your opinion on the necessity to revise the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and also on the ways the Eastern Partnership can become a real opportunity for Ukraine and Republic of Moldova?

Yes, but not only towards the two countries you mention. If we consider the entire ENP, the developments in both the East and the South present enormous challenges that the EU needs to address in a different way than it did until now. The ENP review, presented by Ashton and Füle in May 2011, represents a good starting point. The emphasis on democracy and governance rather than on stability, the return to “more for more” principle or the need to engage more with the civil society and provide more flexibility in EU funding should definitely be welcomed. The most problematic point will be how to apply the “more for more” principle in practice. The Commission will have to decide whether the benchmarks proposed will be general or country-specific. Both can be very tricky – if they are general, there is a clear risk that this one-size-fits-all approach will simply not work and will underline the existing differences between the South and the East but also within both dimensions. If they are country specific, the EU might be accused of

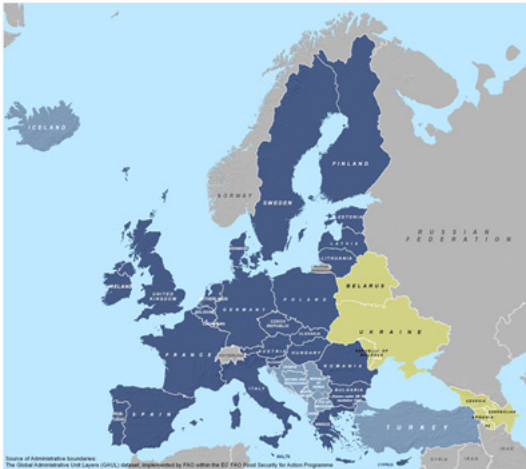
using double standards.

Finally, how do you think EUROPEUM and the European Institute of Romania should develop their cooperation relations in order to consolidate the EPIN network and its objectives?

I think EPIN needs a fresh boost in terms of large joint project, such as the one around which the network emerged - creating a think-tank version of the Convention on the Future of Europe. I think the current climate in the EU might call once again for an all-European project which will show the strength of the network and added value of think-tanks for EU policy making. I believe some of the research programmes, such as FP7 or its successor, could be a good opportunity, using the strong leadership of Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) that co-ordinates the network.

Interview by **Oana Mocanu**

The Eastern Partnership – reconfirmation of EU's commitments



A concept launched in May 2008, at the initiative of Poland and Sweden, and officially inaugurated in Prague on May 7th, 2009, the **Eastern Partnership** is an ambitious initiative to consolidate the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Addressing countries such as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Eastern Partnership was welcomed in different ways, depending on the interests and the objectives of each partner country. Promoted at EU level, including by countries favouring enlargement as a principle, significantly supported by some of the new EU Member States, the Eastern Partnership was not welcomed with too much enthusiasm by all partner states, considering their different degrees of economic and social development, and especially of commitment to European values, as well as their different aspirations regarding their relation to the European Union. Countries such as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, with declared hopes regarding a possible accession to the European Union, initially showed reservations about this project, as if designed to reconfirm their perpetual status of “neighbours” of the EU, not only geographically.

The ambitious proposals of the Eastern Partnership were outlined both at **bilateral** level (from the perspective of new association agreements and deep and comprehensive free trade agreements, mobility and security pacts, improvement of the administrative capacity at the level of partner countries), as well as at **multilateral** level, by setting up four *thematic platforms* (democracy, good governance and stability; economic integration and convergence with EU sectoral policies; energy security; contacts between people), as well as *flagship initiatives* meant to increase the EU's visibility in the region (the Integrated Border Management Programme; SME facility; regional electricity markets, energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy sources; development of a southern energy corridor; prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters). Benefiting from a financing system based mainly on the European Neighbouring Policy (ENP) instruments (the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, instruments of cross-border cooperation), supplemented by EBRD and EIB funds, bilateral assistance from EU Member States, the Eastern Partnership gained its reputation as the “*umbrella*” of EU's actions in the relationship with its Eastern partners, benefiting from a considerable capital of confidence, political will and promotion at European level. The main incentives the Eastern Partnership can offer to the partner countries, in the absence of the best incentive represented by the accession to the EU, focus particularly on the trade component (the gradual liberalisation of trade, creating, in perspective, a Neighbourhood Economic Community), as well as the liberalisation of the movement of persons (visa facilitation and going through all the stages towards visa-free regime within the EU).

The **Joint Communication¹ by the High Representative of The Union For Foreign Affairs And Security Policy and the European Commission** on May 25th, 2011 brings forward the need to revise the ENP. Focusing on the demographic and governance component, on elements of mobility, the promotion of regional partnerships, the Communication mentions the opportunity of making a clearer distinction, including different financing systems, between the EU's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood.

Given the current climate of profound instability in the EU's Southern neighbourhood, as well as the different levels of economic, social and political development in the EU's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, the regional element of the policy is stressed out. Analysts are raising more and more frequently the question of the usefulness/opportunity of the model of macro-regional strategies² (following the example of the Baltic Sea Strategy or the Danube Strategy) in the framework of the ENP.

What is certain is that developed structures will be oriented towards concrete projects and not so much towards diversifying or extending the already existing institutional framework.

The **Warsaw Summit**, held in **29-30 September 2011**, reaffirmed the European Union's commitments to support the partner countries in the reform process, with a view to accelerating their political association and economic integration with the European Union³. Reviewing the progress made so far by the partner states, in political reforms and especially from an economic and mobility perspective, the Joint Declaration highlighted the principles of differentiation and mutual accountability, which play a decisive role in strengthening sectoral cooperation. The negotiations on the Association agreements and the negotiations for an agreement on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) are the pillars of economic and trade cooperation. Visa facilitation and readmission agreements, designed to enhance mobility between the EU and the partner states, have showed evident progress in the last years.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com_11_303_en.pdf

² Kerry Longhurst, “Appraising the European Neighbourhood Policy: Background, Implementation and Recommendations”, article in *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 3, September 2011, European Institute of Romania, http://www.ier.ro/documente/rjea_vol_11_no_3/RJEA_2011_Vol_11_No_3_APPRAISING_THE_EUROPEAN_NEIGHBOURHOOD_POLICY.pdf

³ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/124843.pdf, p.1

The EU envisages a permanent bilateral engagement both in the political and economic field and in the cooperation in areas related to security and justice. Although there are countries with a high degree of corruption and a considerable democratic deficit, the ENP partner states benefit from permanent EU support in fighting against illegal migration, organised crime, trafficking in human beings, as well as applying the principles of a rule of law.

During the Summit, a separate Declaration signed by the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States was issued expressing their “deep concern at the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule of law situation in Belarus”. In addition, the EU’s support for Belarus under the aegis of the Eastern Partnership will be conditioned by the substantial “progress made towards respect for democracy, the rule of law and human rights, including the immediate release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners and the start of a political dialogue with the opposition.”⁴.

The participation of the partner states in EU programmes or agencies, which implies the element of co-financing, is also encouraged and supported by the European institutions.

The Civil Society Forum and the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, whose inaugural session, in which participated the Members of the European Parliament and representatives chosen from the six partner states, was held in Strasbourg on September 15th, 2011, will play a major role in supporting progress towards achieving the objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

The fields in which cooperation between the EU and the partner states needs consolidation are agriculture, the energy policy and the transport policy. A roadmap listing the objectives, instruments, action steps and the methods of monitoring them until the next summit of the Eastern Partnership, envisaged to be held in the second half of 2013, is expected to be issued by the end of this year.

Oana Mocanu

event

The International Conference **The Next EU Multiannual Financial Framework: How to stimulate growth and reduce development disparities among the EU regions?**

The European Institute of Romania, in partnership with the Representation of the European Commission in Bucharest and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Romania, organised the conference with the topic **The Next EU Multiannual Financial Framework: How to stimulate growth and reduce development disparities among the EU regions?** in Bucharest, on September 21st.

H.E. **Marek Szczygiel**, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Romania, stressed out the importance of the budget topic, one of the most complex topics for defining the future of the European Union in the next years.

Janusz Lewandowski, EU Commissioner for Financial Programming and Budget, presented the tense atmosphere, marked by the economic crisis, in which the debates on Multiannual Financial Framework were held. The draft budget will have to be discussed in the context of the economic crisis, which implies austerity but also the need to ensure economic growth and jobs. The specific feature of the European budget, in relation to national budgets, is that it grants 6% to administrative expenses and the rest of 94% to investments.

Elena Udrea, Minister of Regional Development and Tourism, noted the special opportunity represented by this conference for the debate on the Multiannual Financial Framework, which will have to outline certain priorities, long-term strategies, but also the driving forces necessary in order to reach the Europe 2020’s objectives. Romania will have to pay increased attention



to integrated planning and to outlining a realistic vision on the budget, having the obligation to implement and validate structures able to ensure real-time interconnectivity with EU mechanisms.

Leonard Orban, Minister of European Affairs, stated that Romania’s position at present is a preliminary one, the budget negotiations being complex. Thus, there are negotiations between those who want “more Europe” and those who want less, which risks to destroy everything that has been built during the last 60 years. The stake of the game is the future of the European Union, the will to have “more Europe” or to return to the situation before the Second World War.

⁴http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/124843.pdf, p. 9

Gheorghe Gherghina, Secretary of State, Ministry of Public Finance, highlighted the fact that the future debates on the Multiannual Financial Framework will contribute to finalising the budget. The Commission's proposal tries to respect the solidarity among Member States and to reduce the impact of the European budget on national budgets, by simplifying the calculation of contributions and by increasing the European Union's direct resources, as a result of introducing a financial transaction tax.

In the opening of the first session, **Challenges and opportunities in the next Multiannual Financial Framework**, the chairman, Professor **Gabriela Drăgan**, PhD, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, stressed out the sensitive nature of this topic.

Waldemar Stugocki, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Regional Development, Poland, brought up the framework of the Polish administrative reform and its subsequent evolution, with a view to improving the absorption of Structural Funds. If, at the beginning, operational programmes were not perfectly adapted to Polish regions, the Polish Government subsequently adopted a strategy designed to particularise them to the local specificity. Thus, the Ministry of Regional Development in Poland is currently managing a total of 4 national programmes, to which 16 regional programmes have been added. At the same time, Poland has elaborated a National Strategy for Regional Development that lays the foundation of the working practice for 2013 – 2020.

Luminița Odobescu, Director General for EU Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delivered the message of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Teodor Baconschi. The debate on the Multiannual Financial Framework must be brought beyond the financial-accounting calculation, since the future of the European Union is at stake. The difficult context in which the debates on this budget took place and the "state of fatigue" at European level were brought into discussion. Not only the crisis is to be blamed, but also the lack of unitary vision necessary for overcoming the crisis.

At the end of the session, **Marian-Jean Marinescu**, Member of the European Parliament, stressed out the difficult context in which the negotiations on the new budget took place, underlining the fact that the European Commission's proposal is based on the Europe 2020 Strategy. Ever since the beginning of the crisis, both the Commission and the European Parliament have been on the

same side of the barricade, defending the Community method in front of the Member States that were favouring the return to the intergovernmental method.

The second session of the conference, called **The next EU budget – experts' approach**, was chaired by **Cristian Ghinea**, Director of the Romanian Center for European Policy.

During this session, the first speech was delivered by Professor **Daniel Dăianu**, PhD., former Minister of Finance and former Member of the European Parliament, who stressed out the fact that the structure of the new Multiannual Financial Framework is not appropriate for the new world context – being unable to approach properly the asymmetric shocks – and that the new budget should respond to a greater extent to the challenges currently faced by the EU.

Stephen Tindale, Associate Fellow, Centre for European Reform, highlighted the predominant realistic aspect of the European Commission's proposal for the next budget of the EU and evoked several political priorities included in the European Commission's proposal, such as cohesion policy, infrastructure, research, Common Agricultural Policy.

Senior Lecturer **Liviu Voinea**, PhD, National School for Political and Administrative Studies, the Applied Economy Group, showed that the progress registered in convergence can be accompanied by an increase of public debt. The objective of the next EU budget is to stimulate economic growth and European integration.

The conclusions of the conference, presented by **Florin Pogonaru**, President of the Businessmen's Association of Romania, highlighted the fact that we are in a period when each state defines its own objectives and priorities, and when the negotiating ability makes all the difference. At the same time, in this critical moment, identifying alliances is vital, in a context in which Europe is already facing enough challenges.

The report of the event is available at: http://www.ier.ro/documente/arhiva_evenimente_2011/21.09_.2011_sinteza_conferinta_Polonia_.pdf

Mihai Sebe

EPIN Conference Strategic Thinking in the EU

The European Policy Institutes Network (EPIN) is a network of 32 dynamic think tanks and policy institutes around Europe, focusing on current EU political and policy debates. The members meet to discuss important issues on the EU agenda during three major EPIN events, organised on a yearly basis, in Brussels and other locations. The third event of this year, under the general heading of "**Strategic Thinking in the EU**", was organized by the European Institute of Romania (EIR) and the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS – Brussels), with the support of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania. The event took place in Bucharest, on September 30th.

Under the aegis of EPIN, the conference benefited from excellent contributions of high officials and representatives of the academia from European countries. The conference proposed to the audience (public administration, diplomatic members, academia, NGOs, media) topics related to the macro-regional strategies: Danube Strategy and Baltic Sea Strategy, the evolution and results of the Europe 2020 Strategy and certain key points on strategic thinking in EU foreign policy.

In the opening session, Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the European Institute of Romania introduced the key themes for the debate, at the same time enhancing the positive role of EPIN in building and developing the dialogue among the

research centers all over Europe in order to increase awareness on European integration and to develop further national and European policies in different areas of action.



Mr. Niculae Idu, Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania, addressed in the opening some of the key issues with which the European Union is currently confronted, such as: the future of the euro-zone, the Single Market perspectives, the situation in Greece, emphasizing the need for increased credibility for the euro and for the European project in general, the need for further changes in the Treaty, the increased role of the financial sector and the constant target of economic strengthening (growth and jobs).

The first session of the conference focused on “**Macro-regional strategies: Danube Strategy and Baltic Sea Strategy**”. Originally a Parliamentary initiative, set up in October 2009, the Baltic Sea Strategy was built around four pillars: environment, prosperity and economic development, accessibility and attractiveness, safety and security. Although the scope is very broad, gathering 15 priority areas, the idea of the strategy is about coordination.

As regards the Danube Strategy, it represents a macro-regional strategy, as a relaunch of the EU cohesion policy. Underlining the potential role in Romania’s economic development, the macro-regional strategies can represent a proper answer to the new economic crisis reality. The Danube Strategy, a Romanian-Austrian initiative, is to determine the redefinition of the regional cooperation concept, at the same time focussing on developing the transport, environment, energy security sectors.

The second session focused on the analysis of the “**Europe 2020 strategy. One year on**”, a Strategy that is relatively ignored. The current economic crisis undermines the survival of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the panel trying thus to offer an answer regarding its future.

The situation in Europe is currently clouded by the problem of fiscal sustainability of euro area sovereigns, a fact that has a series of negative consequences such as: a shift from long-term/strategic thinking to short-term/tactical thinking questioning some provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and finally a reluctance to finance a larger European budget.

The speakers identified three major effects of the debt crisis: the poisoning of the European economy, the hijacking of financial resources and the undermining of strategic decisions in favor of tactical ones. The high public debt affects the economic growth, being thus identified a series of four measures that would allow overcoming this crisis: a) economic growth; b) fiscal discipline/consolidation; c) inflation; d) fiscal repression.

The Europe 2020 Strategy continues to be relevant as there is no other way to exit the crisis. The main political question of today is: how can we overcome the crisis? Another challenge of the political class consists in convincing the people of the necessity to take the crisis exit measures and the identification of the right equilibrium solution between austerity and economic stimulus.

The third session of the conference focused on the “**Strategic thinking in EU Foreign Policy**”. The two tasks of the foreign policy of the European Union, as they were identified, are the global economic governance and the strategic relations with the USA and Canada.

The current global context is being characterized by the rise of new emerging powers in a world which is less and less European, marked by interconnectivity. Until recently, the motto of the EU referred to a global Europe, but this would come to an end, as we know that this is not possible. One idea of the panel was that the EU did not develop a strategic thinking, but instead it adopted by default, in the last decades, a certain approach to its external policy, i.e. liberal internationalism.

A possible success may be the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), a long-term project which hopefully will have results. The European Union tried to apply a strategic thinking to the ENP and we can consider there is a strategic thinking behind this policy. The problem concerning the ENP is that we are not facing a single region and that the relevance of this strategic policy is undermined by the fact that countries like Turkey or Russia are not integrated.



One question raised was the following: does the EU have effective strategies? The answer to that question is, at the same time, YES and NO, as the European Union has strategies that were not defined as such, for instance the four freedoms. In order for the EU to have a strategy there must be a common interest for all the 27 Member States.

The closing remarks were defined by Benjamin Franklin quota: “Either we hang around together or we hang separately”.

The Event report of this conference is available online at: http://www.ier.ro/documente/arhiva_evenimente_2011/30-09-2011_EPIN_conference.pdf and the media recording can be found at www.caleaeuropeana.ro

Mihai Sebe

End of project at Chişinău



Two events which have marked the conclusion of the project **Preparing Moldova for a comprehensive free trade agreement with the European Union** took place at Chişinău on 27-28 September. The project was financed by the German Marshall Fund of the United States through the Black Sea Trust initiative. The local partner of EIR was the *Institute for Development and Social Initiatives – IDIS “Viitorul”*, prestigious organization in the non-governmental environment of the Republic of Moldova.

The major objective of the project was to support the public administration of the Republic of Moldova directly involved in the negotiation process with the European Union. In order to achieve this goal the project was conceived on three dimensions – *training* (carrying out training courses in Chişinău for a transfer of know-how from Romanian specialists with experience in the field of the international negotiations), *studies* (elaborating a study by the Romanian and Moldavian experts which evaluates the impact of a large and comprehensive free trade area with the European Union) and *debates* (organizing a conference in which the conclusions of the study and training sessions are presented and the perspectives of the negotiation process are discussed).

The training component of the project ended with a new session organized on September 27th. The transfer of expertise was ensured, as during the first session in April, by the presence of Mrs. Victoria Câmpeanu as lector, Romanian negotiator with a large international experience. Mrs. Câmpeanu was the representative of Romania at the World Trade Organization, as well as a member in the Romanian delegation who carried out trade negotiations with the European Union.

The main discussion topics of the training session were: identifying the strengths of the negotiation team, determining the extremely sensitive fields for liberalization and their dynamic approach; using the statistical evolution of the bilateral exchanges with Member States for building up some alliances; preparing the negotiators and business environment for the new conditions; the importance of attracting industry, agriculture, service industry, think-tanks, chambers of commerce, professional associations and academic environment into the preparation of negotiations.

The conference marking the conclusion of the project took place on September 28th. The debate was attended by officials of the Republic of Moldova – Mrs. Natalia Gherman, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Mr. Victor Barbăneagră, Deputy Minister of Finance, as well as by leaders of the two partners of the project - Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, and Mr. Lubomir Chiriac, Executive Director of IDIS Viitorul. The study drawn up within the project *Consequences of a deep and comprehensive free trade area over the economy of the Republic of Moldova* was presented in its political dimension by Mr. Ciprian Ciucu, the coordinator of the study and from the economical and statistical perspective by Mr. Viorel Chivrigă, researcher and Director of Department for Functional Market Economy within IDIS. On this occasion, Mrs. Victoria Câmpeanu congratulated the strength and qualification of the team of negotiators of the Republic of Moldova.



All speakers welcomed the initiative of EIR – IDIS to support the administration of the Republic of Moldova in its negotiation efforts with EU and remarked the opportunity to develop similar projects exploring other areas of the negotiation process. Within the debate there have not been ignored the multiple challenges blocking the accession of the Republic of Moldova to the European structures: on the one hand, the international climate defined by the economic crisis, which is not favourable for EU enlargement and, on the other hand, the internal tensions existing in the Transnistrean region and the problems they could create to the trading relations of the Republic of Moldova with its European partners. It was also remarked the absence of a communication strategy of the Moldavian authorities in view of informing the public about the benefits and implications of the negotiation process with the EU. Nevertheless, there is hope that the option of modernization through Europeanization of the Republic of Moldova shall be irrevocable, a national effort at which should contribute – as Deputy Minister Natalia Gherman noticed – not only the Government, but also the business environment, media and non-governmental organizations.

The project, through its results (30 members of the central public administration of the Republic of Moldova trained in the field of European negotiations, 200 copies of the drawn up study, as well as the organization of a conference with the attendance of officials, media and interested persons of the Republic of Moldova), was a successful project and it is intended to represent the beginning of a sustained collaboration between EIR and its partners in the public and private sector of the Republic of Moldova.

Alina Arhire

Strasbourg plenary session: 12–15 September 2011

Two major themes defined this session: foreign policy and economic crisis.

The European Parliament addressed a profound debate to the new regulation of the Frontex Agency for the supervision of the European Union external borders, six years after its foundation, establishing and specifying the role and competences of this EU instrument in the immigration issue, especially in the context of the migratory pressure at the southern border. The EP members underlined that the new regulation brought a balance between the function of supervision and that of respect for human rights. The novelties brought were also highlighted: principle of solidarity between Member States as concerns the technical and staff assistance, creating an EU technical-material base, training of the agency staff and intervention forces in the human rights field. Nevertheless, there were voices which highlighted that there is no provision yet for monitoring the agency's actions, in order to prevent infringements of human rights and dramatic situations, which had generated tragic events in the past (about 2000 persons drowned). The problem of the massive immigration from the southern border was also approached through the need to renew the neighbourhood policy, the policy towards third countries from where the immigrants come, the technical support which EU Member States should grant to these countries. It was underlined the fact that the immigrants come on the EU territory in order to find material security (see the famine in East Africa, underdevelopment in many regions of Africa) or political security (see the dictatorial regimes, the conflict situations in the countries at the southern neighbourhood). **Cecilia Malmström**, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, participated at the debates. In her intervention, she referred to the increase of the migratory pressure in the last months at the southern border, to the increased number of requests from Member States for actions of Frontex ever since the year of its creation (2005).

Once again, the economic crisis and the Euro-zone problems were a focal point for parliamentary debates. The EP members asked for a joint European response, which may be done by adopting the economic governance legislative package. Explicitly referring at Greece, the European Parliament members insisted upon the fact that not only the European citizens but also the banks must bear the cost of the crisis, in order to avoid unwanted situations (Greece leaving the Euro-zone, the fall of the Euro or even the dissolution of the European Union).

The Polish Finance Minister, **Jan Vincent Rostowski**, quoted a recent study of the Swedish bank UBS, according to which leaving the Euro-zone would cost the less developed states significant percentages from GDP (40-50% in the first year and 10-20% per year in the following period), but it would also cost the richer states (10-25% in the first year). Other phenomena which would accompany this leaving would be the diminution of economic growth and increase in unemployment.

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, also intervened on this topic and declared that, in order to fight against crisis, the reform plan in Greece must be accomplished and the economic governance legislative package must be adopted. The action of the EU institutions must be rapid, in order to keep pace with the events from the financial markets. The president announced that the options to introduce the



European obligations shall be presented in the shortest time by the European Commission, together with details on the financial transaction tax. Answering at the repeated demands of the EP members about the European Union joint response, the President of the Commission gave assurances that this will take place as, in such moments, the intergovernmental agreements are not sufficient.

Although the foreign or financial policy problems held this session agenda, EP also dedicated to some aspects relating to environment policy (wholesale energy trade, Black Sea fisheries) or social policy (entrepreneurship, the statute of women in labour market). On September 15th, EP also adopted a resolution requesting the Commission to establish minimum rules on corruption (defining the phenomenon, the applicable sanctions), a current topic, especially after the disclosures in mass media of March this year about some EP members. EP asks Member States - some of them in full economic crisis - for a clear political commitment in order to put these rules into practice, particularly as, according to the estimations, corruption makes losses of about 120 billions Euro every year, the equivalent of the EU annual budget. For these reasons, the anti-corruption measures are urgent, warns EP.

In ordinary legislative procedure a draft regulation on energy was subject to debate, according to which the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) will have the role of monitoring the agreements concluded on the wholesale energy market, will inform Member States, which will accordingly take punitive measures.

The environment and natural resources problems made the object of a non-legislative resolution, adopted by the EP concerning the Black Sea fisheries, whose evolution is alarming: the Black Sea ecosystem is seriously affected by dynamic changes directly related to fisheries, by the climate change and pollution. The resolution asks for a future reform of the common fisheries policy, which shall also include the Black Sea Basin, in order to improve the level of the fish stocks.

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

Mariana Bara

The 3110th session of the Council of the European Union – Agriculture and Fisheries

The EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council is one of the Council's oldest configurations. Once a month, it brings together the Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries, the European Commissioners responsible for agriculture and rural development, fisheries and maritime affairs, as well as representatives of consumer health and protection.

The 3110th session of the Council of the European Union - Agriculture and Fisheries, under the presidency of Mr. Marek Sawicki, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland, took place in Brussels, on September 20th.

The Council has organised a debate on the review of the EU system for the distribution of food products to the most deprived in the Union, with the purpose of adapting it to the reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The presidency considered that no majority could be reached for ensuring the effective implementation of the new regulation proposed by the Commission, until the end of 2013, when the on-going financial programme ends. The Commission's initial proposal, forwarded to the Council in 2008, was amended and retransmitted in 2010. In both cases there emerged a blocking minority against the proposal.

The successive reforms of CAP led to a reduction of the stocks of agricultural products used for intervention, the main source of

the current system, initiated in 1987. If the adequate intervention stocks are not ensured, gaining markets for the purchase of food products for distribution would be authorised, according to the proposal, as permanent source of supply, not just temporary. The variety of food products would also be extended beyond the range of intervention products, for the purpose of improving the nutritional balance. The proposal provides the long-term planning and introduces co-financing of this food aid from the Union, as well as from the Member States in question. Some Member States consider that this type of measure should not be treated through the CAP, as it represents a matter of social policy rather than of agricultural policy.

Apart from this, the Council had an exchange of views about the energy use of biomass of agricultural origin. The discussion occurred as a result of the informal meeting of Ministers organized by the Polish presidency in July. The energy use of biomass is a potential stimulant for the rural development and a contribution at the EU policies concerning the climate change and energy.

Finally, the Ministers were informed about the crisis in the food and vegetables sector, as well as about the direct national complementary payments in 2012.

Iulian Oneaşcă

Interim economic forecast – September 2011

The European Commission, through the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs, updated the forecast on economic prospects in the Euro area and the entire European Union for 2011.

Starting from 2006, the Commission produces interim economic forecasts twice a year, in February and September, in order to update the fully-fledged spring and autumn forecasts. The interim forecasts update the economic outlook for the seven largest EU Member States, namely Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom and Spain. The update focuses on the real GDP growth and the inflation rate for the current year.

After a strong first quarter and a considerable softening in the second, the new projections for the remainder of the year suggest a slower economic recovery than the one envisaged in spring. The risks that can affect the growth prospects have increased, primarily due to concerns about the unresolved Euro-area crisis and its consequences on the health of financial markets, as well as due to the global growth slowdown.

The forecast for GDP growth for 2011 remains unchanged, standing at 1.6% in the Euro area and at 1.7% for the EU. In the second half of the year, a pronounced deceleration is expected. Downward revisions apply to both the third and fourth quarter, in the EU and in the Euro area. Quarterly GDP growth rates for both

areas have been revised down by 0.2 and 0.3 percentage points respectively.

The slowing growth is indicated by several factors: net export growth, the main engine of growth in the second quarter, is decelerating, while the business and consumer sentiment indicate a weakening of domestic demand. The financial market tension and the sovereign debt crisis are likely to reduce confidence and increase investment cost.

Some of the risks anticipated in the spring forecast have materialised, while the risks to economic growth remain pronounced. In the meantime the risks to the inflation outlook have become moderate. Inflation is expected to gradually slow down, after accelerating in the first half of the year, as a result of the rising energy prices. Reducing the prices of consumer goods and softening global demand, as well as moderate wage growth, are all expected to dominate inflationary pressures. The Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) for the EU and the Euro area is estimated to stand at 2.9% and 2.5%, respectively, for the entire year.

The next forecast is scheduled for November 10th, 2011.

Iulian Oneaşcă

THE CALENDAR OF TRAINING PROGRAMS ORGANISED BY EIR IN THE PERIOD OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2011

Development of competences for the translation and revision of legal texts

When? 24 – 28 October

What is the objective of the program?

This program is intended for all those who are interested in the translation and revision of legal texts and who have an advanced level of French and/or English.

Being highly practice-oriented, the program is structured into thematic modules intended to develop competences regarding: the main stages, instruments and standards for the translation, linguistic revision and legal revision of legal texts, as well as for the terminology research; elementary notions of law, especially on the European Union law and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights; a responsible attitude, a critical spirit and the communication and organisation skills in this field.

Integrated waste management systems in the context of European Law

When? 31 October – 2 November

What is the objective of the program?

This training offers to the participants both the instruments for identifying the benchmarks of European waste management policies in the context of sustainable development and the means to gather various categories of audience – business environment, NGOs and the population as a whole – in projects regarding environmental protection, projects that can only aim at improving the quality of life.

Economic and Monetary Union

When? 3 – 4 November

What is the objective of the program?

The training offers to the participants detailed information regarding the economic policies of the European Union, the Euro area and Romania's adoption of the Euro and is aimed at:

- understanding the basic concepts in the field, the evolution, as well as the current realities influencing the European economy;
- understanding the role of the monetary economy in regulating the mechanism of real economy;
- understanding the way in which the EU budget is drawn up and the connections between the budgetary and monetary policies;
- becoming familiar with the practical aspects of the process of introducing the European currency.

Expert in accessing European structural and cohesion funds – Program certified by the CNFPA (National Council for Adult Professional Training)

When? 14 – 18 November

What is the objective of the program?

The program is aimed at developing the necessary skills for identifying (types of funds, objectives, eligible applicants, activities, target groups, eligible expenses), accessing, drawing up (preparing a financing application), developing and implementing (applicable legislation, organising, carrying out and monitoring activities, progress assessment and reporting, human resources management, disseminating information and advertising, carrying out public procurement) a successful project.

Advantages of the training programs organised by the EIR

- rich information content, focused on developing concrete and up-to-date skills,
- highly practice-oriented courses, using interactive methods (case studies, group work, writing your own projects under the guidance of trainers),
- trainers certified by the CNFPA, with a sound experience in the subject of the programs, as well as in delivering training sessions in the respective field,
- moderate course fees,
- central location (European Institute of Romania, Bucharest, 7-9 Regina Elisabeta Bvd., 4th floor, conference hall).

We offer training discounts for early payment, for more than one participant from the same institution or for former EIR trainees.

For further information on these courses, please visit our web page http://www.ier.ro/index.php/site/programe_in_curs/

Editor-in-Chief: Oana Mocanu
Editors: Mariana Bara, Mihai Sebe, Diana Popa
Secretary General: Vlad Mihai
Graphics & DTP: Monica Dumitrescu
English version: Raluca Brad, Mona Răus

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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